

The seasons came and the seasons went
And the woodland music rang ;
And under her wide umbrageous tent,
Hidden forever from mortal eye,
She sang earth's beauty and wonderment.
But men never knew the spirit that sang
This music too wondrous to die.

Only nature, forever young,
And her children forever true,
Knew the beauty of her who sung
And her tender, glad love for the tree ;
Till on her music the wild hawk hung
From his eyrie high in the blue
To drink her melody free.

And the creatures of earth would creep from their haunts
To stare with their wilding eyes,
To hearken those rhythms of earth's romance,
That never the ear of mortal hath heard ;
Till the elfin squirrels would caper and dance,
And the hedgehog's sleepy and shy surprise
Would grow to the thought of a bird.

And the pale wood-flowers from their cradles of dew
Where they rocked them the whole night long,
While the dark wheeled round and the stars looked through
Into the great wood's slumbrous breast,
Till the grey of the night like a mist outblew ;
Hearkened the piercing joy of her song
That sank like a star in their rest.

But all things come to an end at last
When the wings of being are furled.
And there blew one night a maddening blast,
From those wastes where ships dismantle and drown,
That ravaged the forest and thundered past ;
And in the wreck of that ruined world
The dryad's tree went down.

When the pale stars dimmed their tapers of gold,
And over the night's round rim,
The day rose sullen and ragged and cold,
Over that wind-swept, desolate wild,
Where the huge trunks lay like giants of old,
Prone, slain on some battlefield, silent and grim ;
The wood-creatures, curious, mild,

Searching their solitudes, found her there
Like a snowdrift, out in the morn ;
One lily arm round the beech-trunk bare,
One curved, cold, under her elfin head,
With the beechen shine in her nut-brown hair,
And the pallor of dawn on her face, love-lorn,
Beautiful, passionless, dead.

William Wilfred Campbell.