

PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER

Reeds only and a fleet of lotus-leaves
Sailing through them, as though to take walled Thebes!
Oh, how I hate yon hot, white splendour—Thebes!
Here by the stream, let me forget those eyes—
Eyes of the women who have been defiled.
O Fairy Fleet! take me a prisoner;
Bear me away among the bending reeds,
Past all the temples and the palaces;
Make me forget the whiplash and the cry
Of slaves; make me forget the haunting faces.
There is forgetting here—and joy—and peace.

Naked and unafraid, O Mother Nile!
I come to feel thine arms about my body.
Kiss me! Let me lie dreaming on thy breast,
Watching the flight of birds above the palms—
Green and like plumes along the yellow sand.
There is a line of crimson, where the rocks
Are crossed and re-crossed with adventuring vines
That grow red berries,—there a glimpse of blue
Against the purple of the mountain peak.
I hear the dip of buckets and the sound
Of wheels that lift to pour among the fields
Streams of life-giving waters. How the land
Laughs at thy coming, O dear Mother Nile!
Olives and grapes; wheat and the clustered corn;
Great Iris-blooms and figs and honey-dates;
The sloping fields of grass that feed the flocks