

LYRICAL

When my hand passed from wire to wire
 It quenched, with sound like falling dew,
 The whirling and the wandering fire;
 But lift a mournful ulahu,
 For the kind wires are torn and still,
 And I must wander wood and hill
 Through summer's heat and winter's cold.
*They will not hush, the leaves a-futter round me, the beech
 leaves old.*

70

10 *The Stolen Child*

Where dips the rocky highland
 Of Sleuth Wood in the lake,
 There lies a leafy island
 Where flapping herons wake
 The drowsy water-rats;
 There we've hid our faery vats,
 Full of berries
 And of reddest stolen cherries.
*Come away, O human child!
 To the waters and the wild
 With a faery, hand in hand,
 For the world's more full of weeping than you can
 understand.*

10

Where the wave of moonlight glosses
 The dim grey sands with light,
 Far off by furthest Rosses
 We foot it all the night,
 Weaving olden dances,
 Mingling hands and mingling glances
 Till the moon has taken flight;
 To and fro we leap
 And chase the frothy bubbles,
 While the world is full of troubles
 And is anxious in its sleep.

20

CROSSWAYS

*Come away, O human child!
 To the waters and the wild
 With a faery, hand in hand,
 For the world's more full of weeping than you can
 understand.*

19

Where the wandering water gushes
 From the hills above Glen-Car,
 In pools among the rushes
 That scarce could bathe a star,
 We seek for slumbering trout
 And whispering in their ears
 Give them unquiet dreams;
 Leaning softly out
 From ferns that drop their tears
 Over the young streams.
*Come away, O human child!
 To the waters and the wild
 With a faery, hand in hand,
 For the world's more full of weeping than you can
 understand.*

40

Away with us he's going,
 The solemn-eyed:
 He'll hear no more the lowing
 Of the calves on the warm hillside
 Or the kettle on the hob
 Sing peace into his breast,
 Or see the brown mice bob
 Round and round the oatmeal-chest.
*For he comes, the human child,
 To the waters and the wild
 With a faery, hand in hand,
 From a world more full of weeping than he can
 understand.*

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Handwritten notes:
 Crossways
 The world's more full of weeping than you can understand.

11 *To an Isle in the Water*

Shy one, shy one,
 Shy one of my heart,
 She moves in the firelight
 Pensively apart.

She carries in the dishes,
 And lays them in a row.
 To an isle in the water
 With her would I go.

She carries in the candles,
 And lights the curtained room,
 Shy in the doorway
 And shy in the gloom;

10

And shy as a rabbit,
 Helpful and shy.
 To an isle in the water
 With her would I fly.

12 *Down by the Salley Gardens*

Down by the salley gardens my love and I did meet;
 She passed the salley gardens with little snow-white feet.
 She bid me take love easy, as the leaves grow on the tree;
 But I, being young and foolish, with her would not agree.

In a field by the river my love and I did stand,
 And on my leaning shoulder she laid her snow-white hand.
 She bid me take life easy, as the grass grows on the weirs;
 But I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears.

13 *The Meditation of the Old Fisherman*

You waves, though you dance by my feet like children at
 play,
 Though you glow and you glance, though you purr and
 you dart;

In the Junes that were warmer than these are, the waves
 were more gay,
When I was a boy with never a crack in my heart.

The herring are not in the tides as they were of old;
 My sorrow! for many a creak gave the creel in the cart
 That carried the take to Sligo town to be sold,
When I was a boy with never a crack in my heart.

And ah, you proud maiden, you are not so fair when his
 oar

Is heard on the water, as they were, the proud and
 apart,

10

Who paced in the eve by the nets on the pebbly shore,
When I was a boy with never a crack in my heart.

14 *The Ballad of Father O'Hart*

Good Father John O'Hart
 In penal days rode out
 To a shoneen who had free lands
 And his own snipe and trout.

In trust took he John's lands;
 Sleiveens were all his race;
 And he gave them as dowrs to his daughters,
 And they married beyond their place.

But Father John went up,
 And Father John went down;

10

18 *Fergus and the Druid*

Fergus. This whole day have I followed in the rocks,
And you have changed and flowed from shape to
shape,

First as a raven on whose ancient wings
Scarcely a feather lingered, then you seemed
A weasel moving on from stone to stone,
And now at last you wear a human shape,
A thin grey man half lost in gathering night.

Druid. What would you, king of the proud Red Branch
kings?

Fergus. This would I say, most wise of living souls:
Young subtle Conchubar sat close by me
When I gave judgment, and his words were wise,
And what to me was burden without end,
To him seemed easy, so I laid the crown
Upon his head to cast away my sorrow.

Druid. What would you, king of the proud Red Branch
kings?

Fergus. A king and proud! and that is my despair.
I feast amid my people on the hill,
And pace the woods, and drive my chariot-wheels
In the white border of the murmuring sea;
And still I feel the crown upon my head.

Druid. What would you, Fergus?

Fergus.
Be no more a king
But learn the dreaming wisdom that is yours.

Druid. Look on my thin grey hair and hollow cheeks
And on these hands that may not lift the sword,
This body trembling like a wind-blown reed.
No woman's loved me, no man sought my help.

Fergus. A king is but a foolish labourer
Who wastes his blood to be another's dream.

Druid. Take, if you must, this little bag of dreams;
Unloose the cord, and they will wrap you round.

Fergus. I see my life go drifting like a river
From change to change; I have been many things –
A green drop in the surge, a gleam of light
Upon a sword, a fir-tree on a hill,
An old slave grinding at a heavy quern,
A king sitting upon a chair of gold –
And all these things were wonderful and great;
But now I have grown nothing, knowing all.
Ah! Druid, Druid, how great webs of sorrow
Lay hidden in the small slate-coloured thing!

19 *Cuchulain's Fight with the Sea*

A man came slowly from the setting sun,
To Emer, raddling raiment in her dun,
And said, 'I am that swineherd whom you bid
Go watch the road between the wood and tide,
But now I have no need to watch it more.'

Then Emer cast the web upon the floor,
And raising arms all raddled with the dye,
Parted her lips with a loud sudden cry.

That swineherd stared upon her face and said,
'No man alive, no man among the dead,
Has won the gold his cars of battle bring.'

'But if your master comes home triumphing
Why must you blench and shake from foot to crown?'
Thereon he shook the more and cast him down
Upon the web-heaped floor, and cried his word:
'With him is one sweet-throated like a bird.'

LYRICAL

'You dare me to my face,' and thereupon
 She smote with raddled fist, and where her son
 Herded the cattle came with stumbling feet,
 And cried with angry voice, 'It is not meet
 To idle life away, a common herd.'

20

'I have long waited, mother, for that word:
 But wherefore now?'

'There is a man to die;
 You have the heaviest arm under the sky.'

'Whether under its daylight or its stars
 My father stands amid his battle-cars.'

'But you have grown to be the taller man.'

'Yet somewhere under starlight or the sun
 My father stands.'

'Aged, worn out with wars
 On foot, on horseback or in battle-cars.'

30

'I only ask what way my journey lies,
 For He who made you bitter made you wise.'

'The Red Branch camp in a great company
 Between wood's rim and the horses of the sea.
 Go there, and light a camp-fire at wood's rim;
 But tell your name and lineage to him
 Whose blade compels, and wait till they have found
 Some feasting man that the same oath has bound.'

Among those feasting men Cuchulain dwelt,
 And his young sweetheart close beside him knelt,
 Stared on the mournful wonder of his eyes,
 Even as Spring upon the ancient skies,
 And pondered on the glory of his days;
 And all around the harp-string told his praise,
 And Conchubar, the Red Branch king of kings,
 With his own fingers touched the brazen strings.

40

THE ROSE

35

At last Cuchulain spake, 'Some man has made
 His evening fire amid the leafy shade.
 I have often heard him singing to and fro,
 I have often heard the sweet sound of his bow.
 Seek out what man he is.'

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One went and came.

'He bade me let all know he gives his name
 At the sword-point, and waits till we have found
 Some feasting man that the same oath has bound.'

Cuchulain cried, 'I am the only man
 Of all this host so bound from childhood on.'

After short fighting in the leafy shade,
 He spake to the young man, 'Is there no maid
 Who loves you, no white arms to wrap you round,
 Or do you long for the dim sleepy ground,
 That you have come and dared me to my face?'

60

'The dooms of men are in God's hidden place.'

'Your head a while seemed like a woman's head
 That I loved once.'

Again the fighting sped,

But now the war-rage in Cuchulain woke,
 And through that new blade's guard the old blade
 broke,
 And pierced him.

'Speak before your breath is done.'

'Cuchulain I, mighty Cuchulain's son.'

'I put you from your pain. I can no more.'
 While day its burden on to evening bore,
 With head bowed on his knees Cuchulain stayed;
 Then Conchubar sent that sweet-throated maid,
 And she, to win him, his grey hair caressed;
 In vain her arms, in vain her soft white breast.
 Then Conchubar, the subtlest of all men,
 Ranking his Druids round him ten by ten,

70

Spake thus: 'Cuchulain will dwell there and brood
 For three days more in dreadful quietude,
 And then arise, and raving slay us all.
 Chant in his ear delusions magical,
 That he may fight the horses of the sea.'
 The Druids took them to their mystery,
 And chaunted for three days.

80

Cuchulain stirred,
 Stared on the horses of the sea, and heard
 The cars of battle and his own name cried;
 And fought with the invulnerable tide.

20 *The Rose of the World*

Who dreamed that beauty passes like a dream?
 For these red lips, with all their mournful pride,
 Mournful that no new wonder may betide,
 Troy passed away in one high funeral gleam,
 And Usna's children died.

We and the labouring world are passing by:
 Amid men's souls, that waver and give place
 Like the pale waters in their wintry race,
 Under the passing stars, foam of the sky,
 Lives on this lonely face.

10

Bow down, archangels, in your dim abode:
 Before you were, or any hearts to beat,
 Weary and kind one lingered by His seat;
 He made the world to be a grassy road
 Before her wandering feet.

21 *The Rose of Peace*

If Michael, leader of God's host
 When Heaven and Hell are met,

Looked down on you from Heaven's door-post
 He would his deeds forget.
 Brooding no more upon God's wars
 In his divine homestead,
 He would go weave out of the stars
 A chaplet for your head.

And all folk seeing him bow down,
 And white stars tell your praise,
 Would come at last to God's great town,
 Led on by gentle ways;

10

And God would bid His warfare cease,
 Saying all things were well;
 And softly make a rosy peace,
 A peace of Heaven with Hell.

22 *The Rose of Battle*

Rose of all Roses, Rose of all the World!
 The tall thought-woven sails, that flap unfurled
 Above the tide of hours, trouble the air,
 And God's bell buoyed to be the water's care;
 While hushed from fear, or loud with hope, a band
 With blown, spray-dabbled hair gather at hand.

*Turn if you may from battles never done,
 I call, as they go by me one by one,
 Danger no refuge holds, and war no peace,
 For him who hears love sing and never cease,
 Beside her clean-swept hearth, her quiet shade:
 But gather all for whom no love hath made
 A woven silence, or but came to cast*

10

*A song into the air, and singing passed
 To smile on the pale dawn; and gather you
 Who have sought more than is in rain or dew,
 Or in the sun and moon, or on the earth,
 Or sighs amid the wandering, starry mirth,*

*Or comes in laughter from the sea's sad lips,
And wage God's battles in the long grey ships.
The sad, the lonely, the insatiable,
To these Old Night shall all her mystery tell;
God's bell has claimed them by the little cry
Of their sad hearts, that may not live nor die.*

20

Rose of all Roses, Rose of all the World!
You, too, have come where the dim tides are hurled
Upon the wharves of sorrow, and heard ring
The bell that calls us on: the sweet far thing.
Beauty grown sad with its eternity
Made you of us, and of the dim grey sea.
Our long ships loose thought-woven sails and wait,
For God has bid them share an equal fate;
And when at last, defeated in His wars,
They have gone down under the same white stars,
We shall no longer hear the little cry
Of our sad hearts, that may not live nor die.

30

23 A Faery Song

*Sung by the people of Faery over Diarmuid and Grania, in their bridal
sleep under a Cromlech.*

We who are old, old and gay,
O so old!
Thousands of years, thousands of years,
If all were told:
Give to these children, new from the world,
Silence and love;
And the long dew-dropping hours of the night,
And the stars above:
Give to these children, new from the world,
Rest far from men.

10

Is anything better, anything better?
Tell us it then:
Us who are old, old and gay,
O so old!
Thousands of years, thousands of years,
If all were told.

39

24 The Lake Isle of Innisfree

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattle made:
Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping
slow,

Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket
sings;

There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

10

25 A Cradle Song

The angels are stooping
Above your bed;
They weary of trooping
With the whimpering dead.
God's laughing in Heaven
To see you so good;
The Sailing Seven
Are gay with His mood.