

HERMAN MELVILLE

**WEEDS AND WILDINGS,  
With a Rose or Two.**

*London: Constable  
1924.*

'Alms for oblivion.'

'Youth is the proper, permanent, and genuine condition of man.'  
NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

'Yes, decay is often a gardener.'  
ANONYMOUS.

Clover Dedication.

WEEDS AND WILDINGS.

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A ROSE OR TWO.

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The Rose Farmer.

L'Envoi.

CLOVER.

'Ye field flowers! the garden's eclipse you, 'tis true,  
Yet wildings of Nature, I dote upon you.'

CAMPBELL

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## CLOVER DEDICATION.

To  
WINNEFRED

With you and me, Winnie, Red Clover has always been one of the dearest of the flowers of the field: an avowal by the way as you well ween, which implies no undelight as to this ruddy young brother's demure little half-sister, White Clover. Our feeling for both sorts originates in no fanciful associations egotistic in kind. It is not, for example, because in any exceptional way we have verified in experience the aptness of that pleasant figure of speech, *Living in clover*—not for this do we so take to the Ruddy One, for all that we once dwelt annually surrounded by flushed acres of it. Neither have we, jointly or severally, so frequently lighted upon that rare four-leaved variety accounted of happy augury to the finder; though, to be sure, on my part, I yearly remind you of the coincidence in my chancing on such a specimen by the wayside on the early forenoon of the fourth day of a certain bridal month, now four years more than four times ten years ago.

But, tell, do we not take to this flower—for flower it is, though with the florist hardly ranking with the floral clans—not alone that in itself it is a thing of freshness and beauty, but also that being no delicate foster-child of the nurseryman, but a hardy little creature of out-of-doors accessible and familiar to every one, no one can monopolize its charm. Yes, we are communists here.

Sweet in the mouth of that brindled heifer, whose breath you so loved to inhale, and doubtless pleasant to her nostril and eye; sweet as well to the like senses in ourselves, prized by that most radical of men, the farmer, to whom wild amaranths in a pasture, though emblems of immortality, are but weeds and anathema; finding favour even with so peevish a busybody as the bee; is it not the felicitous fortune of our favourite to incur no creature's displeasure, but to enjoy, and without striving for it, the spontaneous goodwill of all? Why it is that this little peasant of the flowers revels in so enviable an immunity and privilege, not in equal degree shared by any of us mortals however gifted and good; that indeed is something the reason whereof may not slumber very deep. But—*In pace*; always leave a sleeper to his repose.

How often at our adopted homestead on the hillside—now ours no more—the farm-house, long ago shorn by the urbane barbarian succeeding us in the proprietorship—shorn of its gambrel roof and dormer windows, and when I last saw it indolently settling in serene contentment of natural decay; how often, Winnie, did I come in from my ramble early in the bright summer mornings of old, with a handful of these cheap little cheery roses of the meek, newly purloined from the fields to consecrate them on that bit of a maple-wood mantel—your altar, somebody called it—in the familiar room facing your beloved South! And in October most did I please myself in gathering them from the moist matted aftermath in an enriched little hollow near by, soon to be snowed upon and for consecutive months sheeted from view. And once—you remember it—having culled them in a sunny little flurry of snow, winter's frolic skirmisher in advance, the genial warmth of your chamber melted the fleecy flakes into dewdrops rolling off from the ruddiness, “Tears of the happy,” you said.

Well, and to whom but to thee, Madonna of the Trefoil, should I now dedicate these “Weeds and Wildings,” thriftless children of quite another and yet later spontaneous aftergrowth, and bearing indications, too apparent it may be, of that terminating season on which the offerer verges. But take them. And for aught suggestion of the “melting mood” that any may possibly betray, call to mind the dissolved snowflakes on the ruddy oblation of old, and remember your “Tears of the Happy.”

# WEEDS AND WILDINGS.

## PART I: THE YEAR.

## THE LOITERER.

1

She will come tho' she loiter, believe,  
Her pledge it assigns not the day;  
Why brood by the embers night after night,  
Sighing over their dying away—  
Well, let her delay;  
She is everywhere longed for as here;  
A favorite, freakish and young:  
Her can we gladden, then us she can cheer?  
Let us think no wrong.

2

But watch and wait:  
Wait by the pasture-bars  
Or watch by the garden-gate;  
For, after coming, tho' wide she stray,  
First ever she shows on the slender way—  
Slim sheep-track threads the hill-side brown,  
Or foot-path leads to the garden down.

3

While snow lingered under the fir,  
Loth to melt from embrace of the earth,  
And ashy red embers of logs  
In moonlight dozed on the hearth;  
And in cage by the window sun-warmed  
Our bird was enheartened to song;  
It was then that, as yearly before,  
By the self-same foot-path along,  
She drew to the weather-beat door  
That was sunned thro' the skeleton-tree:  
Nothing she said, but seemed to say—  
"Old folks, aren't ye glad to see *me!*"  
And tears brimmed our eyes—bless the day!

Then she turned; revisited in sort—  
She was here—she was there,  
Peeping eager everywhere,  
Like one who revisits scenes never forgot.

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## WHEN FORTH THE SHEPHERD LEADS THE FLOCK.

When forth the shepherd leads the flock,  
White lamb and dingy ewe,  
And there's dibbling in the garden,  
Then the world begins anew.

When Buttercups make bright  
The meadows up and down,  
The Golden Age returns to fields  
If never to the town.

When stir the freshening airs  
Forerunning showers to meads,  
And Dandelions prance,  
Then Heart-Free shares the dance—  
A Wilding with the Weeds!

But alack and alas  
For things of wilding feature!  
Since hearsed was Pan  
Ill befalls each profitless creature—  
Profitless to man!

Buttercup and Dandelion,  
Wildings, and the rest,  
Commoners and holiday-makers,  
Note them in one test:  
The farmers scout them,  
Yea, and would rout them,  
Hay is better without them—  
Tares in the grass!  
The florists pooh-pooh them;  
Few but children do woo them,  
Love them, relieve them,  
Retrieve and inweave them,  
Never sighing—*Alas!*

## THE LITTLE GOOD FELLOWS.

Make way, make way, give leave to rove  
Under your orchard as above;  
A yearly welcome if ye love!  
And all who loved us alway throve.

Love for love. For ever we  
When some unfriended man we see  
Lifeless under forest-eaves,  
Cover him with buds and leaves;  
And charge the chipmunk, mouse, and mole—  
Molest not this poor human soul!

Then let us never on green floor  
Where your paths wind round about,  
Keep to the middle in misdoubt,  
Shy and aloof, unsure of ye;  
But come like grass to stones on moor,  
Wherever mortals be.  
But toss your caps, O maids and men,  
Snow-bound long in farm-house pen:  
We chase Old Winter back to den.  
See our red waistcoats! Alive be then—  
Alive to the bridal-favors when  
They blossom your orchards every Spring,  
And cock-robin curves on a bridegroom's wing!

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## CLOVER.

The June day dawns, the joy-winds rush,  
Your jovial fields are dresst;  
Rosier for thee the Dawn's red flush,  
Ruddier the Ruddock's breast.

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## MADCAPS.

Through the orchard I follow  
Two children in glee.  
From an apple-tree's hollow  
They startle the bee.  
The White Clover throws  
Perfume in their way  
To the hedge of Red Rose;  
Between Roses and Clover  
The Strawberry grows.  
It is Lily and Cherry  
Companioned by Butterflies  
Madcaps as merry!

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## THE OLD FASHION.

Now youthful is Ver  
And the same, and forever,  
Year after year;  
And her bobolinks sing,  
And they vary never  
In juvenile cheer.

Old-fashioned is Ver  
Tho' eternally new,  
And her bobolink's young  
Keep the old fashion true:  
*Chee, Chee!* they will sing  
While the welkin is blue.

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## BUTTERFLY DITTY.

Summer comes in like a sea,  
Wave upon wave how bright;  
Thro' the heaven of summer we'll flee  
And tipple the light!

From garden to garden,  
Such charter have we,  
We'll rove and we'll revel,  
And idlers we'll be!

We'll rove and we'll revel,  
Concerned but for this,—  
That Man, Eden's bad boy,  
Partakes not the bliss.

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## THE BLUE-BIRD.

Beneath yon Larkspur's azure bells  
That sun their bees in balmy air  
In mould no more the Blue-Bird dwells  
Tho' late he found interment there.

All stiff he lay beneath the Fir  
When shrill the March piped overhead,  
And Pity gave him sepulchre  
Within the Garden's sheltered bed.

And soft she sighed—Too soon he came;  
On wings of hope he met the knell;  
His heavenly tint the dust shall tame;  
Ah, some misgiving had been well!

But, look, the clear ethereal hue  
In June it makes the Larkspur's dower;  
It is the self-same welkin-blue—  
The Bird's transfigured in the Flower.

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## THE LOVER AND THE SYRINGA BUSH.

Like a lit-up Christmas Tree,  
Like a grotto pranked with spars,  
Like white corals in green sea,  
Like night's sky of crowded stars—  
To me like these you show, Syringa  
Such heightening power has love, believe,  
While here by Eden's gate I linger  
Love's tryst to keep, with truant Eve.

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## THE DAIRYMAN'S CHILD.

Soft as the morning  
    When South winds blow,  
Sweet as peach-orchards  
    When blossoms are seen,  
Pure as a fresco  
    Of roses and snow,  
    Or an opal serene.

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# TROPHIES OF PEACE.

ILLINOIS IN 1840

Files on files of Prairie Maize:  
On hosts of spears the morning plays!  
Aloft the rustling streamers show:  
The floss embrowned is rich below.

When Asia scarfed in silks came on  
Against the Greek and Marathon,  
Did each plume and pennon dance  
Sun-lit thus on helm and lance  
Mindless of War's sickle so?

For them, a tasseled dance of death:  
For these—the reapers reap them low.  
Reap them low, and stack the plain  
With Ceres' trophies, golden grain.

Such monuments, and only such,  
O Prairie! termless yield,  
Though trooper Mars disdainful flout  
Nor Annals fame the field.

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## IN THE PAUPER'S TURNIP-FIELD.

Crow, in pulpit lone and tall  
Of yon charred hemlock, grimly dead,  
Why on me in preachment call—  
Me, by nearer preachment led  
Here in homily of my hoe.  
The hoe, the hoe,  
My heavy hoe  
That earthward bows me to foreshow  
A mattock heavier than the hoe.

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## A WAY-SIDE WEED.

By orchards red he whisks along,  
A charioteer from villa fine;  
With passing lash o' the whip he cuts  
A way-side Weed divine.

But knows he what it is he does?  
He flouts October's god  
Whose sceptre is this Way-side Weed,  
This swaying Golden Rod?

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## THE CHIPMUNK.

*Heart of autumn!*  
*Weather meet,*  
*Like to sherbert*  
*Cool and sweet.*

Stock-still I stand,  
And *him* I see  
Prying, peeping  
From Beech-tree;  
Crickling, crackling  
Gleefully!  
But, affrighted  
By wee sound,  
Presto! vanish—  
Whither bound?

So did Baby,  
Crowing mirth  
E'en as startled  
By some inkling  
Touching Earth,  
Flit (and whither?)  
From our hearth!

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## FIELD ASTERS.

Like the stars in commons blue  
Peep their namesakes, Asters here,  
Wild ones every autumn seen—  
Seen of all, arresting few.

Seen indeed. But who their cheer  
Interpret may, or what they mean  
When so inscrutably their eyes  
Us star-gazers scrutinize.

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## ALWAYS WITH US!

Betimes a wise guest  
His visit will sever.  
Yes, absence endears.  
Revisit he would,  
So remains not forever.

Well, Robin the wise one  
He went yestreen,  
Bound for the South  
Where his chums convene.

Back, he'll come back  
In his new Spring vest  
And the more for long absence  
Be welcomed with zest.

But thou, black Crow,  
Inconsiderate fowl,  
Wilt never away—  
Take elsewhere they cowl?

From the blasted hemlock's  
Whitened spur;  
Whatever the season,  
Or Winter or Ver  
Or Summer or Fall,  
Croaker, foreboder,  
We hear thy call—  
*Caw! Caw! Caw!*

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## STOCKINGS IN THE FARM-HOUSE CHIMNEY.

Happy, believe, this Christmas Eve  
Are Willie and Rob and Nellie and May—  
Happy in hope! in hope to receive  
These stockings well stuffed from Santa Claus' sleigh.

O the delight to believe in a wight  
More than mortal, with something of man,  
Whisking about, an invisible spright,  
Almoner blest of Oberon's clan.

Stay, Truth, O stay in a long delay!  
Why should these little ones find you out?  
Let them forever with fable play,  
Evermore hang the Stocking out!

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# A DUTCH CHRISTMAS UP THE HUDSON.

IN THE TIME OF PATROONS

Over the ruddy hearth, lo, the green bough!  
In house of the sickle and home of the plough,  
Arbored I sit and toast apples now!

Hi, there in barn! have done with the flail.  
Worry not the wheat, nor winnow in the gale:  
'Tis Christmas and holiday, turkey too and ale!

Creeping round the wainscot of old oak red,  
The ground-pine, see—smell the sweet balsam shed!

Leave off, Katrina, to tarry there and scan:  
The cream will take its time, girl, to rise in the pan.  
Meanwhile here's a knocking, and the caller it is *Van*—  
Tuenis Van der Blumacher, your merry Christmas man.

Leafless the grove now where birds billed the kiss:  
To-night when the fiddler wipes his forehead, I wis,  
And panting from the dance come our Hans and Cousin Chris,  
Yon bush in the window will never be amiss!

But oats have ye heaped, men, for horses in stall?  
And for each heifer young and the old mother-cow  
Have ye raked down the hay from the aftermath-mow?  
The Christmas let come to the creatures one and all!  
Tho' the pedlar, peering in, doubtless deemed it but folly,  
The yoke-cattle's horns did I twine with green holly.  
Good to breathe their sweet breath this blest Christmas morn,  
Mindful of the ox, ass, and Babe new-born.

The snow drifts and drifts, and the frost it benumbs:  
Elsie, pet, scatter to the snow-birds your crumbs.

Sleigh-bells a' jingle! 'Tis Santa Claus: hail!  
Villageward he goes thro' the spooming of the snows;  
Yea, hurrying to round his many errands to a close,  
A mince-pie he's taking to the one man in jail.—  
What! drove right out between the gate-posts here?  
Well, well, little Sharp-Eyes, blurred panes we must clear!

Our Santa Claus a clever way has and a free:

Gifts from him some will take who would never take from me.  
For poor hereabouts there are none:—none so poor  
But that pudding for an alms they would spurn from the door.

All the same to all in the world's wide ways—  
Happy harvest of the conscience on many Christmas Days.

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## PART II: THIS, THAT AND THE OTHER.

## TIME'S BETRAYAL.

The tapping of a mature maple for the syrup, however recklessly done, does not necessarily kill it. No; since being an aboriginal child of Nature, it is doubtless blest with a constitution enabling it to withstand a good deal of hard usage. But systematically to bleed the immature trunk, though some sugar-makers, detected in the act on ground not their own, aver that it does the sylvan youngster a deal of good, can hardly contribute to the tree's amplest development or insure patriarchal long life to it. Certain it is, that in some young maples the annual tapping would seem to make precocious the autumnal ripening or change of the leaf And such premature change would seem strikingly to enhance the splendor of the tints.

Someone, whose morals need mending,  
Sallies forth like the pillaging bee;  
He waylays the syrup ascending  
In anyone's saccharine tree;  
So lacking in conscience indeed,  
So reckless what life he makes bleed,  
That to get at the juices, his staple,  
The desirable sweets of the Spring,  
He poignards a shapely young maple,  
In my second-growth coppice—its King.  
Assassin! secure in a crime never seen,  
The underwood dense, e'en his victim a screen,  
So be. But the murder will out,  
    Never doubt, never doubt:  
In season the leafage will tell,  
    Turning red ere the rime  
Yet, in turning, all beauty excell  
    For a time, for a time!

Small thanks to the scamp. But, in vision, to me  
A goddess mild pointing the glorified tree,  
"So they change who die early, some bards who life render:  
Keats, stabbed by the Muses, his garland's a splendor!"

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## PROFUNDITY AND LEVITY.

An owl in his wonted day-long retirement ruffled by the meadow-lark curvetting and caroling in the morning-sun high over the pastures and woods, comments upon that rollicker, and in so doing lets out the meditation engrossing him when thus molested. But the weightiness of the wisdom ill agrees with its somewhat trilling expression; an incongruity attributable doubtless to the contagious influence of the reprehended malapert's overruling song.

So frolic, so flighty,  
Leaving wisdom behind,  
Lark, little you ween  
Of the progress of mind.

While fantastic you're winging,

Up-curving and singing,  
A skylarking dot in the sun;  
Under eaves here in wood  
My wits am I giving

To this latest theme:

Life blinks at strong light,  
Life wanders in night like a dream—  
Is then life worth living?

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# INSCRIPTION

FOR A BOULDER NEAR THE SPOT WHERE THE LAST HARDHACK WAS LAID LOW  
BY THE NEW PROPRIETOR OF THE HILL OF ARROWHEAD.

A weed grew here.—Exempt from use,  
Weeds turn no wheel, nor run;  
Radiance pure or redolence  
Some have, but this had none.  
And yet heaven gave it leave to live  
And idle it in the sun.

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## THE CUBAN PIRATE.

Some of the more scintillant West Indian humming-birds are in frame hardly bigger than a beetle or bee.

Buccaneer in gemmed attire—  
Ruby, amber, emerald, jet—  
Darkling, sparkling dot of fire,  
Still on plunder are you set?

Summer is your sea, and there  
The flowers afloat you board and ravage,  
Yourself a thing more dazzling fair—  
Tiny, plumed, bejewelled Savage!

Midget! yet in passion a fell  
Furioso, Creoles tell.  
Wing'd are you Cupid in disguise  
You flying spark of Paradise?

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# IRIS.

(1865)

When Sherman's March was over  
And June was green and bright,  
She came among our mountains,  
A freak of new delight;  
Provokingly our banner  
Salutes with Dixie's strain,—  
Little rebel from Savannah,  
Three Colonels in her train.

Three bearded Puritan colonels:  
But O her eyes, her mouth—  
Magnolias in their languor  
And sorcery of the South.  
High-handed rule of beauty,  
Are wars for man but vain?  
Behold, three disenslavers  
Themselves embrace a chain!  
But, loveliest invader,  
Out of Dixie did ye rove  
By sallies of your raillery  
To rally us, or move?  
For under all your merriment  
There lurked a minor tone;  
And of havoc we had tidings  
And a roof-tree overthrown.

Ah, nurtured in the trial—  
And ripened by the storm,  
Was your gaiety your courage,  
And levity its form?  
O'er your future's darkling waters,  
O'er your past, a frozen tide,  
Like the petrel would you skim it,  
Like the glancing skater glide?

But the ravisher has won her  
Who the wooers three did slight;  
To his fastness he has borne her

By the trail that leads thro' night.  
With Peace she came, the rainbow,  
And like a Bow did pass,  
The balsam-trees exhaling,  
And tear-drops in the grass.  
Now laughed the leafage over  
Her pranks in woodland scene:  
Hath left us for the revel  
Deep in Paradise the green?  
In truth we will believe it  
Under pines that sigh a balm,  
Though o'er thy stone be trailing  
Cypress-moss that drapes the palm.

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## THE AVATAR.

Bloom or repute for graft or seed  
In flowers the flower-gods never heed.  
The rose-god once came down and took—  
Form in a rose? Nay, but indeed  
The meeker form and humbler look  
Of Sweet-Briar, a wilding or weed.

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## THE AMERICAN ALOE ON EXHIBITION.

It is but a floral superstition, as everybody knows, that this plant flowers only once in a century. When in any instance the flowering is for decades delayed beyond the normal period, (eight or ten years at furthest) it is owing to something retarding in the environment or soil.

But few they were who came to see

    The Century-Plant in flower:

Ten cents admission—price you pay

    For bon-bons of the hour.

In strange inert blank unconcern

    Of wild things at the Zoo,

The patriarch let the sight-seers stare—

    Nor recked who came to view.

But lone at night the garland sighed

    While moaned the aged stem:

“At last, at last! but joy and pride

    What part have I with them?”

Let be the dearth that kept me back

    Now long from wreath decreed;

But, Ah, ye Roses that have passed

    Accounting me a weed!

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# A GROUND VINE

INTERCEDES WITH THE QUEEN OF FLOWERS FOR THE MERITED RECOGNITION OF CLOVER.

Hymned down the years from ages far,  
The theme of lover, seer, and king,  
Reign endless, Rose! for fair you are,  
Nor heaven reserves a fairer thing.  
To elfin ears the bell-flowers chime  
Your beauty, Queen, your fame;  
Your titles, blown thro' Ariel's clime,  
Thronged trumpet-flowers proclaim.  
Not less with me, a groundling, bear,  
Here bold for once, by nature shy:—  
If votaries yours be everywhere,  
And flattering you the laureats vie,—  
Meekness the more your heart should share.

O Rose, we plants are all akin,  
Our roots enlock; Each strives to win  
The ampler space, the balmier air.  
But beauty, plainness, shade, and sun—  
Here share-and-share-alike is none!

And, ranked with grass, a flower may dwell,  
Cheerful, if never high in feather,  
With pastoral sisters thriving well  
In bloom that shares the broader weather;  
Charmful, mayhap, in simple grace,  
A lowlier Eden mantling in her face.

My Queen, so all along I lie,  
But creep I can, scarce win your eye.  
But, O, your garden-wall peer over,  
And, if you blush, 'twill barely be  
At owning kin with Cousin Clover  
Who winsome makes the low degree.

## PART III: RIP VAN WINKLE'S LILAC.

## TO A HAPPY SHADE.

Under the golden maples where thou now reclinest, sharing fame's Indian Summer with those mellowing Immortals who as men were not only excellent in their works but pleasant and love-worthy in their lives; little troublest thou thyself, O Washington Irving, as to who peradventure may be poaching in that literary manner which thou leftest behind. Still less is it thou, happy Shade, that wilt charge with presumption the endeavor to render something tributary to the story of that child of thy heart—Rip Van Winkle. For aught I, or anybody, knows to the contrary, thy vision may now be such that it may even reach here where I write, and thy spirit be pleased to behold me inspired by whom but thyself.

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## RIP VAN WINKLE.

Riverward emerging toward sunset in leafy June from a dark upper clove or gorge of the Kattskills, dazed with his long sleep in an innermost hollow of those mountains, the good-hearted good-for-nothing comes to an upland pasture.

Hearing his limping footfall in the loneliness, the simpletons of young steers, there left to themselves for the summer, abruptly lifting their heads from the herbage, stand as stupified with astonishment while he passes.

In further descent he comes to a few raggedly cultivated fields detached and apart; but no house as yet, and presently strikes a wood-chopper's winding road lonesomely skirting the pastoral uplands, a road for the most part unfenced, and in summer so little travelled that the faint wheeltracks were traceable but on forming long, parallel depressions in the natural turf. This slant descending way the dazed one dimly recalls as joining another less wild and leading homeward. Even so it proved. For anon he comes to the junction. There he pauses in startled recognition of a view only visible in perfection at that point; a view deeply stamped in his memory, he having been repeatedly arrested by it when going on his hunting or birding expeditions. It was where, seen at the far end of a long vistaed close, the head of one distant blue summit peered over the shoulder of a range not so blue as less lofty and remote. To Rip's present frame of mind, by no means normal, that summit seemed like a man standing on tiptoes in a crowd to get a better look at some extraordinary object. Inquisitively it seemed to scrutinise him across the green solitudes, as much as to say "Who, I wonder, art thou? And where, pray, didst thou come from?" This freak of his disturbed imagination was not without pain to poor Rip. That mountain, so well remembered on his part, *him* had it forgotten? quite forgotten him, and in a day? But the evening now drawing on revives him with the sweet smells it draws from the grasses and shrubs. Proceeding on his path he after a little becomes sensible of a prevailing fragrance wholly new to him, at least in that vicinity, a wafted deliciousness growing more and more pronounced as he nears his house, one standing all by itself and remote from others. Suddenly, at a turn of the road it comes into view. Hereupon, something that he misses there, and quite another thing that he see, brings him amazed to a stand. Where, according to his hazy reminiscences, all had been without floral embellishment of any kind save a small plot of pinks and hollyhocks in the sunny rear of the house—a little garden tended by the Dame herself—lo, a Lilac of unusual girth and height stands in full flower hard by the open door, usurping, as it were, all but the very spot which he could only recall as occupied by an immemorial willow.

Now Rip's humble abode, a frame one, though indeed, as he remembered it, quite habitable, had in some particulars never been carried to entire completion; the builder and original proprietor, a certain honest woodman, while about to give it the last touches having been summoned away to join his progenitors in that paternal house where the Good Book assures us are many mansions. This sudden arrest of the work left the structure in a condition rather slatternly as to externals. Though a safe shelter enough from the elements, ill-fitted was it as a nuptial bower for the woodman's heir, none other than Rip, his next living kin; who, enheartened by his inheritance boldly took the grand venture of practical life—matrimony. Yes, the first occupants were Rip and his dame, then the bride. A winsome bride it was too, with attractiveness all her own; her dowry consisting of little more than a chest of clothes, some cooking utensils, a bed and spinning-wheel. A fair shape, cheeks of down, and black eyes were hers, eyes indeed with a rogueish twinkle at times, but apparently as little capable of snapping as two soft sable violets.

Well, after a few days occupying of the place, returning thereto at sunset from a romantic ramble among the low-whispering pines, Rip the while feelingly rehearsing to his beloved some memories of his indulgent mother now departed, she suddenly changed the subject. Pointing to the unfinished house, she amiably suggested to the bridegroom that he could readily do what was needful to putting it in trim; for was not her dear Rip a bit of a carpenter? But Rip, though rather taken at unawares, delicately pleaded something to the effect that the clattering hammer and rasping saw would be a rude disturbance to the serene charm of the honeymoon. Setting out a little orchard for future bearing, would suit the time better, and this he engaged shortly to do. "Sweetheart," he said in conclusion, with sly magnetism, twining an arm round her jimp waist, "Sweetheart, I will take up the saw and hammer in good time." That good time proved very dilatory; in fact, it never came. But, good or bad, time has a persistent, never-halting way of running on, and by so doing brings about wonderful changes and transformations. Ere very long the bride developed into the dame; the bridegroom into that commonplace entity, the married man. Moreover, some of those pleasing qualities which in the lover had won the inexperienced virgin's affections, turned out to be the points least desirable, as of least practical efficiency in a husband, one not born to fortune, and who therefor, to advance himself in the work-a-day world, must needs energetically elbow his way therein, quite regardless of the amenities while so doing; either this, or else resort to the sinuous wisdom of the serpent.

Enough. Alike with the unfinished house, and its tenants new to the complexities of the lock wedlock, things took their natural course. As to the house, never being treated to a protective coat of paint, since Rip's exchequer was always at low ebb, it soon contracted, signally upon its northern side, a gray weather-stain, supplying one topic for Dame VanWinkle's domestic reproaches; for these in the end came, though, in the present instance, they did not wholly originate in any hard utilitarian view of matters.

Women, more than men, disrelishing the idea of old age, are sensitive, even the humblest of them, to aught in any way unpleasantly suggestive of it. And the gray weatherstain not only gave the house the aspect of age, but worse; for in association with palpable evidences of its recentness as an erection, it imparted a look forlornly human, even the look of one grown old before his time. The roof quite as much as the clapboards contributed to make notable in it the absence of that spirit of youth which the sex, however hard the individual lot, inheriting more of the instinct of Paradise than ourselves, would fain recognise in everything.

The shingles there, with the supports for the shingler—which temporary affairs had through Rip's remissness been permanently left standing—these it too, but a few autumns to veneer with thin mosses, especially in that portion where the betrayed purpose expressed by the uncompleted abode had been lamented over by a huge willow—the object now missing—a willow of the weeping variety, under whose shade the house had originally been built. Broken bits of rotted twigs and a litter of discolored leaves were the tears continually wept by this ancient Jeremiah upon the evergreening roof of the house fatally arrested in course of completion.

No wonder that so untidy an old inhabitant had always been the object of Dame Van Winkle's dislike. And when Rip, no longer the bridegroom, in obedience to her imperative command, attacking it with an axe none the sharpest, and finding the needful energetic blows sorely jarring to the natural quiescence of his brain-pan, ignominiously gave it up, the indignant dame herself assaulted it. But the wended trunk was of inordinate diameter, and, under the wens, of an obtuse soft toughness all but invincible to the dulled axe. In brief the venerable old tree long remained a monument of the negative victory of a stub [b]orn inertia over spasmodic activity and an ineffectual implement.

But the scythe that advances forever and never needs whetting, sweeping that way at last, brought the veteran to the sod. Yes, during Rip's sylvan sumbers the knotty old inhabitant had been gathered to his fathers. Falling prone, and luckily away from the house, in time it made its own lowly monument; an ever-crumbling one, to be sure, yet, all the more for that, tenderly dressed by the Spring: an "mber-lined mound of mellow punk, mossed in spots, with wild violets springing from it here and there, attesting the place of the departed, even the same

place where it fell.

But, behold: shooting up above the low, dilapidated eaves, the Lilac now laughed where the inconsolable willow had wept. Lightly it dropt upon the green roof the pink little bells from its bunched blossoms in place of the old willow's yellowed leaves. Seen from the wood, as Rip in his reappearance viewed it, in part it furnished a gay screen to the late abode, now a tenantless ruin, hog-backed at last by the settling of the ridge-pole in the middle, abandoned to leisurely decay, and to crown its lack of respectability, having a scandalous name as the nightly rendezvous of certain disreputable ghosts, including that of poor Rip himself. Nevertheless, for all this sad decay and disrepute, there must needs have been something of redeeming attractiveness in those deserted premises, as the following incident may show, the interest whereof may perchance serve to justify its insertion even at this critical point.

In the month of blossoms long after Rip's disappearance in the mountain forests, followed in time by the yet more mysterious evanishment of his dame under the sod of the lowlands, a certain meditative vagabondo, to wit, a young artist, in his summer wanderings after the Picturesque, was so taken by the pink Lilac relieved against the greenly ruinous home, that camping under his big umbrella before those admirable objects one fine afternoon he opened his box of colors, brushes, and so forth, and proceeded to make a study.

While thus quietly employed he arrested the attention of a gaunt hatchet-faced stony-eyed individual, with a gray sort of salted complexion like that of a died cod-fish, jogging by on a lank horse. The stranger alighted, and after satisfying his curiosity as to what the artist was about, expressed his surprise that such an object as a miserable old ruin should be thought worth painting. "Why," said he, "if you *must* idle it this way—can find nothing more useful to do, paint something respectable, or, better, something godly; paint our new tabernacle—there is it," pointing right ahead to a rectangular edifice stark on a bare hill-side, with an aspiring wooden steeple whereon the distant blue peaks of the Cattskills placidly looked down, peradventure mildly wondering whether any rivalry with them was intended. "Yes, paint *that* now," he continued; "just the time for it; it got its last coat only the other day. Ain't it white, though!"

A cadaver! shuddered the artist to himself, glancing at it, and instantly averting his eyes. More vividly than ever he felt the difference between dead planks or dead iron smeared over with white-lead; the difference between these and white marble, when new from the quarry sparkling with the minute mica in it, or, mellowed by ages, taking on another and more genial tone endearing it to that Pantheistic antiquity, the sense whereof is felt or latent in every one of us. In visionary flash he saw in their prime the perfect temples of Attica flushed with Apollo's rays on the hill-tops, or on the plain at eve disclosed in glimpses through the sacred groves around them. For the moment, in this paganish dream he quite lost himself.

"Why don't you speak?" irritably demanded the other; "won't you paint it?"

"It is sufficiently painted already, heaven knows," said the artist coming to himself with a discharging sigh, and now resignedly setting himself to work.

"You will stick to this wretched old ruin, then, will you?"

"Yes, and the Lilac."

"The Lilac? and black what-do-you-call-it—lichen, on the trunk, so old is it. It is half-rotten, and its flowers spring from the rottenness under it, just as the moss on those eaves does from the rotting shingles."

"Yes, decay is often a gardener," assented the other.

"What's that gibberish? I tell you this beggarly ruin is no more a fit object for a picture than the disreputable vagabond who once lived in it."

"Ah!" now first pricking his ears; "who was he? Tell me."

And straightway the hatchet-faced individual rehearsed, and in a sort of covertly admonitory tone, Rip's unheroic story up to the time of his mysterious disappearance. This, by the way, he imputed to a Providential visitation overtaking a lazy reprobate whose chief occupation had been to loaf "p and down the country with a

gun and game-bag, much like some others with a big umbrella and a box.

“Thank you, friend,” said the sedate one, never removing his eyes from his work, “Thank you; but what should we poor devils of Bohemians do for the Picturesque, if Nature was in all things a precisian, each building like that church, and every man made in your image.—But, bless me, what am I doing? I must tone down the green here!”

“Providence will take you in hand one of these days, young man,” in high dudgeon exclaimed the other; “Yes, it will give you a *toning down* as you call it. *Made in my image!* You wrest Holy Writ; I shake the dust off my feet and leave you for profane.”

“Do,” was the mildly acquiescent and somewhat saddish response; and the busy brush intermitted not, while the lean visitor, remounting his lank albino, went on his way.

But presently in an elevated turn of the hilly road man and horse, outlined against the vivid blue sky, obliquely crossed the Bohemian’s sight, and the next moment as if swallowed by the grave disappeared in the descent.

“What is that verse in the Apocalypse,” murmured the artist to himself, now suspending the brush and ruminatingly turning his head sideways, “the verse that prompted Benjamin West to his big canvas?—*’And I looked and beheld a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was Death.*’—Well, I won’t allegorise and be mystical, and all that, nor even say that Death dwells not under the cemetery turf, since rather it is Sleep inhabits there; no, only this much will I say, that to-day have I seen him, even Death, seen him in the guise of a living man on a living horse; that he dismounted and had speech with me; and that though an unpleasant sort of person, and even a queer threatener withal, yet, if one meets him, one must get along with his as one can; for his ignorance is extreme. And what under heaven indeed should such a phantasm as Death know, for all that the Appearance tacitly claims to be somebody that knows much?”

Luck is a good deal in this world. Had the Bohemian, instead of chancing that way when he did, come into the same season but a few years later, the period of the present recital, who knows but that the opportunity might have been furnished him of sketching tattered Rip himself in his picturesque resurrection bewildered and at a stand before his own door, even as erewhile we left him.

Ere sighting the premises, Rip’s doddering faculties had been sufficiently nonplussed by various unaccountable appearances, such as branch-roads which he could not recall, and fields rustling with young grain where he seemed to remember waving woods; so that now the absence of the old willow and its replacement by the lilac—a perfect stranger, standing sentry at his own door, and, as it were, challenging his right to further approach—these phenomena quite confound him.

Recovering his senses a little, while yet with one hand against his wrinkled brow remaining bodily transfixed, in wandering sort half unconsciously he begins:

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## RIP VAN WINKLE'S LILAC.

“Ay,—no!—My brain is addled yet;  
With last night’s flagons—full I forget.  
But look.—Well, well, it so must be,  
For there it *is*, and, sure, I see.  
Yon Lilac is all right, no doubt,  
Tho’ never before, Rip—spied him out!  
But where’s the willow?—Dear, dear me!  
This is the hill-side,—sure; the stream  
Flows yon; and *that*, wife’s house would seem  
But for the silence. Well, may be,  
For this one time—Ha! do I see  
Those burdocks going in at door?  
They only loitered round before!  
No,—ay!—Bless me, it is the same!  
But yonder Lilac! how now came—  
Rip, where does Rip van Winkle live?  
Lilac?—a lilac? Why, just there,  
If my cracked memory don’t deceive,  
'Twas *I* set out a Lilac fair,  
Yesterday morning, seems to me.  
Yea, sure, that it might thrive and come  
To plead for me with wife, tho’ dumb.  
I found it—dear me—well, well, well,  
Squirrels and angels they can tell!  
My head!—whose head?—Ah, Rip, (I’m Rip)  
*That* lilac was a little slip,  
And yonder lilac is a tree! “  
But why rehearse in every section  
The withered good-fellow’s resurrection,  
Happily told by happiest Irving  
Never from genial verity swerving;  
And, more to make the story rife,  
By Jefferson acted true to life.  
Me here it but behooves to tell  
Of things that postumously fell.  
It came to pass as years went on  
(An Indian file in stealthy flight

With purpose never man has known)  
A villa brave transformed the sight  
Of Rip's abode to nothing gone,  
Himself remanded into night.  
Each June the owner joyance found  
In one prized tree that held its ground,  
One tenant old where all was new,—  
Rip's Lilac to its youth still true.  
Despite its slant ungainly trunk  
Atwist and black like strands in junk,  
Annual yet it flowered aloft  
In juvenile pink, complexion soft.

That owner hale, long past his May,  
His children's children—every one  
Like those Rip romped with in the sun—  
Merrily plucked the clusters gay.  
The place a stranger scented out  
By Boniface told in vinous way—  
“Follow the fragrance!” Truth to own  
Such reaching wafture ne'er was blown  
From common Lilac. Came about  
That neighbors, unconcerned before  
When bloomed the tree by lowly door,  
Craved now one little slip to train;  
Neighbor from neighbor begged again.  
On every hand stem shot from slip,  
Till, lo, that region now is dowered  
Like the first Paradise embowered,  
Thanks to the poor good-for-nothing Rip!

Some think those parts should bear his name;  
But no—the blossoms take the fame.  
Slant finger-posts by horsemen scanned  
Point the green miles—*To Lilac Land.*

Go ride there down one charming lane,  
O reader mine, when June's at best,  
A dream of Rip shall slack the rein,  
For there his heart flowers out confessed.  
And there you'll say,—O, hard ones, truce!  
See, where man finds in man no use,  
Boon Nature finds one—Heaven be blest!

# A ROSE OR TWO.

## PART I: AS THEY FELL.

## AMOROSO.

Rosamond, my Rosamond  
Of roses is the rose;  
Her bloom belongs to summer,  
Nor less in winter glows,  
When, mossed in furs all cosey,  
We speed it o'er the snows  
By ice-bound streams enchanted,  
While red Arcturus, he  
A huntsman ever ruddy,  
Sees a ruddier star by me.

O Rosamond, Rose Rosamond,  
Is yonder Dian's reign?  
Look, the icicles despond  
Chill drooping from the fane!  
But Rosamond, Rose Rosamond,  
In us, a plighted pair,  
First makes with flame a bond,—  
One purity they share.  
To feel your cheek like ice,  
While snug the furs inclose—  
This is spousal love's device  
This is Arctic Paradise,  
And wooing in the snows!  
Rosamond, my Rosamond,  
Rose Rosamond, Moss-Rose!

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## HEARTH-ROSES.

The Sugar-Maple embers in bed  
Here fended in Garden of Fire,  
Like the Roses yield musk,  
Like the Roses are Red,  
Like the Roses expire  
    Lamented when low;  
But, excelling the flower,  
    Are odorous in ashes  
    As e'en in their glow.

Ah, Love, when life closes,  
Dying the death of the just,  
May we vie with Hearth-Roses,  
Smelling sweet in our dust.

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## UNDER THE GROUND.

Between a garden and old tomb  
Disused, a foot-path threads the clover;  
And there I met the gardener's boy  
Bearing some dewy chaplets over.

I marvelled, for I just had passed  
The charnel vault and shunned its gloom:  
"Stay, whither wend you, laden thus;  
Roses! you would not these inhume?"  
"Yea, for against the bridal hour  
My Master fain would keep their bloom;  
A charm in the dank o'the vault there is,  
Yea, we the rose entomb."

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## THE AMBUSCADE.

Meek crossing of the bosom's lawn  
Averted revery veil-like drawn,  
Well beseem thee, nor obtrude  
The cloister of thy virginhood.  
And yet, white nun, that seemly dress  
Of purity pale passionless,  
A May-snow is; for fleeting term,  
Custodian of love's slumbering germ—  
Nay, nurtures it, till time disclose  
How frost fed Amor's burning rose.

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## THE NEW ROSICRUCIANS.

To us, disciples of the Order  
Whose rose-vine twines the Cross,  
Who have drained the rose's chalice  
Never heeding gain or loss;  
For all the preacher's din  
There is no mortal sin—  
No, none to us but Malice!  
Exempt from that, in blest recline  
We let life's billows toss;  
If sorrow come, anew we twine  
The Rose-Vine round the Cross.

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## THE VIAL OF ATTAR.

Lesbia's lover when bereaved  
In pagan times of yore  
Ere the gladsome tidings ran  
Of reunion evermore,  
He wended from the pyre  
Now hopeless in return—  
Ah, the vial hot with tears  
For the ashes cold in urn!

But I, the Rose's lover,  
When *my* beloved goes  
Followed by the Asters  
Toward the sepulchre of snows,  
Then, solaced by the Vial  
Less grieve I for the Tomb,  
Not widowed of the fragrance  
If parted from the bloom—  
Parted from the bloom  
That was but for a day;

Rose! I dally with thy doom:  
The solace will not stay!  
There *is* nothing like the bloom;  
And the Attar poignant minds me  
Of the bloom that's passed away.

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## ROSE WINDOW.

The preacher took from *Solomon's Song*  
Four words for text with mystery rife—  
*The Rose of Sharon*,—figuring Him  
The Resurrection and the Life;  
And, pointing many an urn in view,  
How honied a homily he drew.

There in the slumberous afternoon,  
Through minster gray, in lullaby rolled  
The brimmed metheglin charged with swoon  
Drowsy, my decorous hands I fold  
Till sleep overtakes with dream for boon.

I saw an Angel with a Rose  
Come out of Morning's garden-gate,  
And lamp-like hold the Rose aloft,  
He entered a sepulchral Strait.  
I followed. And I saw the Rose  
Shed dappled down upon the dead;  
The shrouds and mort-cloths all were lit  
To plaids and chequered tartans red.

I woke, the great Rose-Window high,  
A mullioned wheel in gable set,  
Suffused with rich and soft in dye  
Where Iris and Aurora met;  
Aslant in sheaf of rays it threw  
From all its foliate round of panes  
Transfiguring light on dingy stains,  
While danced the motes in dusty pew.

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# ROSARY BEADS.

1

## THE ACCEPTED TIME

Adore the Roses; nor delay  
    Until the rose-fane fall,  
Or ever their censers cease to sway:  
    “To-day!” the rose-priests call.

2

## WITHOUT PRICE

Have the Roses. Needs no pelf  
    The blooms to buy,  
Nor any rose-bed to thyself  
    Thy skill to try:  
But live up to the Rose’s light,  
Thy meat shall turn to roses red,  
    Thy bread to roses white.

3

## GRAIN BY GRAIN

Grain by grain the Desert drifts  
Against the Garden-Land:  
Hedge well thy Roses, head the stealth  
Of ever-creeping Land.

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## THE DEVOTION OF THE FLOWERS TO THEIR LADY.

Attributed to Clement Drouon, monk, a Provençal of noble birth in the 11th century. In earlier life a troubadour, a devotee of Love and the Rose, but eventually, like some others of his stamp in that age, for an unrevealed cause retiring from the gay circles where he had long been a caressed favorite and ultimately disappearing from the world in a monastery.

### TO OUR QUEEN

O Queen, we are loyal: shall sad ones forget?

We are natives of Eden—

Sharing its memory with you, and your handmaidens yet.

You bravely dissemble with looks that beguile

Musing mortals to murmur

Reproachful "So festal, O Flower, we but weary the while?

What nothing has happened? no event to make wan,

Begetting things hateful—

Old age, decay, and the sorrows, devourers of man?"

They marvel and marvel how came you so bright,

Whence the splendor, the joyance—

Florid revel of joyance,

The Cypress in sight!

Scarce *you* would poor Adam upbraid that his fall

Like a land-slide by waters

Rolled an out-spreading impulse disordering all;

That the Angel indignant, with eyes that foreran

The betrayed generations,

Cast out the flowers wherewith Eve decked her nuptials with man.

Ah, exile is exile, tho' spiced be the sod,

In Shushan we languish—

Languish with the secret desire for the garden of God.

But all of us yet—

We the Lilies whose palor is passion,

We the Pansies that muse nor forget—

In harbinger airs how we freshen,

When, clad in the amice of gray silver-hemmed

Meek coming in twilight and dew,

The Day-Spring, with pale priestly hand and begemmed,

Touches, and coronates you:—

Breathing, O daughter of far descent,

Banished, yet blessed in banishment,

Whereto is appointed a term;

Flower, voucher of Paradise, visible pledge,

Rose, attesting it spite of the Worm.

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## PART II: THE ROSE FARMER.

## THE ROSE FARMER.

*Coming through the rye:*

Thereof the rural poet whistles;  
But who the flute will try  
At *scrambling through the thistles!*  
Nor less upon some roseate way  
Emerge the prickly passage may.

But we who after ragged scrambles  
Through fate's blessed thorns and brambles  
Come unto our roses late—  
Aright to manage the estate,  
This indeed it well may task us  
Quite inexperienced as we be  
In aught but thickets that unmasque us  
Of man's ennobling drapery.

Indigence is a plain estate:  
Riches imply the complicate.  
What peevish pestering wants surprise,  
What bothering ambitions rise!  
Then, too, Fate loans a lot luxurious  
At such hard cent-per-cent usurious!  
Mammon, never meek as Moses,  
Gouty, matted on moss-roses,  
A crumpled rose-leaf makes him furious.  
Allow, as one's purveyor here  
Of sweet content of Christian cheer,  
"Vile Pelf" we overestimate.  
Howbeit, a rose-farm nigh Damascus  
Would Dives change at even rate  
For Lazarus' snow-farm in Alaskus?

But that recalls me: I return.—  
A friend, whose shadow has decreased,  
For whom they reared a turbaned urn,  
A corpulent grandee of the East,  
Whose kind good will to me began  
When I against his Rhamadan  
Prepared a *chowder* for his feast,

Well dying, he remembered me:  
A brave bequest, a farm in fee  
Forever consecrate to roses,  
And laved by streams that sacred are,  
Pharpar and twin-born Abana,  
Which last the pleasure-ground incloses,  
At least winds half-way roundabout—  
That garden to caress, no doubt.

But, ah, the stewardship it poses!  
Every hour the bloom, the bliss  
Upbraid me that I am remiss.  
For still I dally,—I delay,—  
Long do hesitate, and say,  
“Of fifty thousand Damask Roses,—  
(For my rose-farm no great matter),  
Shall I make me heaps of posies,  
Or some crystal drops of Attar?  
To smell or sell or for a boon.  
Quick you cull a rose and easy;  
But Attar is not got so soon,  
Demanding more than gesture breezy.  
Yet this same Attar, I suppose,  
Long time will last, outlive indeed  
The rightful sceptre of the rose  
And coronations of the weed.

Sauntering, plunged in this debate,  
And somewhat leaning to elect  
The thing most easy to effect,  
I chanced upon a Persian late,  
A sort of gentleman-rose-farmer  
On knees beside his garden-gate  
Telling his beads, just like a palmer.  
Beads? coins, I meant. Each golden one  
Upon a wire of silver run;  
And every time a coin he told  
His brow he raised and eyes he rolled  
Devout in grateful orison.

Surely, methought, this pious man,  
A florist, too, will solve my doubt.  
Saluting him, I straight began:  
“Decide, I pray, a dubious matter—”  
And put the Roses and the Attar.  
Whereat the roses near and far—

For all his garden was a lawn  
Of roses thick as daisies are  
In meads from smoky towns withdrawn—

They turned their heads like ladies, when  
They hear themselves discussed by men.  
But he, he swerved a wrinkled face,  
Elderly, yet with ruddy trace—  
Tinged doubly by warm flushings thrown  
From sunset's roses and his own;  
And, after scanning me and sounding,  
“And you?—an older man than I?  
Late come you with your sage propounding:  
Allah! your time has long gone by.”—  
“Alack, Sir, but so ruled the fate  
I came unto my roses late.  
What then? these gray hairs but disguise,  
Since down in heart youth never dies—  
O, sharpened by the long delay,  
I'm eager for my roses quite;  
But first would settle this prime matter—  
Touching the Roses and the Attar:  
I fear to err there; set me right.”

Meseemed his purs'd eyes grateful twinkled  
Hearing of veteran youth unwrinkled,  
Himself being old. But now the answer  
Direct came, like a charging lancer:  
“Attar? Go ask the Parsee yonder.  
Lean as a rake with his distilling,  
Cancel his debts, scarce worth a shilling!  
How he exists I frequent wonder.  
No neighbor loves him: sweet endeavor  
Will get a nosegay from him never;  
No, nor even your ducats will;  
A very save-all for his still!  
Of *me*, however, all speak well:  
You see, my little coins I tell;  
I give away, but more I sell,  
In mossy pots, or bound in posies,  
Always a market for my roses.  
But attar, why, it comes so dear  
Tis far from popular, that's clear.  
I flourish, I; yon heavens they bless me,  
My darlings cluster to caress me.”  
At that fond sentence overheard,



“But now, Sir, for your urgent matter.  
Every way—for wise employment,  
Repute and profit, health, enjoyment,  
I am for roses—*sink* the Attar!”

And hereupon the downright man  
To tell his rosary re-began.  
And never a rose in all the garden  
Blushed deeper there to hear their warden  
So forcefully express his mind.  
Methought they even seemed to laugh—  
True ladies who, in temper kind,  
Will pardon aught, though unrefined,  
Sincerely vouched in their behalf.

Discreet, in second thought’s immersion  
I wended from this prosperous Persian  
Who, verily, seemed in life rewarded  
For sapient prudence not amiss,  
Nor transcendental essence hoarded  
In hope of quintessential bliss:  
No, never with painstaking throes  
Essays to crystallize the rose.  
But here arrest the loom—the line.  
Though damask be your precious stuff,  
Spin it not out too superfine:  
The flower of a subject is enough.

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## L'ENVOI.

Rosy dawns the morning Syrian,  
    Youthful as in years of Noah:  
    Why then aging at three-score?  
Do moths infest your mantle Tyrian?  
    Shake it out where the sun-beams pour!  
Time, Amigo, does but masque us—  
    Boys in gray wigs, young at core.  
Look, what damsels of Damascus,  
    Roses, lure the Pharpar's shore!  
Sigh not—Age, dull tranquilizer,  
    And arid years that filed before,  
For flowers unfit us. Nay, be wiser:  
    Wiser in relish, if sedate  
    Come gray-beards to their roses late.

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