

Please take a look at the important information in this header.
We encourage you to keep this file on your own disk, keeping an
electronic path open for the next readers. Do not remove this.

Welcome To The World of Free Plain Vanilla Electronic Texts

Etexts Readable By Both Humans and By Computers, Since 1971

These Etexts Prepared By Hundreds of Volunteers and Donations

Information on contacting Project Gutenberg to get Etexts, and
further information is included below. We need your donations.

Renaissance and Other Poems by Edna St. Vincent Millay

February, 1994 [Etext #109]

**The Project Gutenberg Etext of Edna St. Vincent Millay Poems*

*****This file should be named ednam10.txt or ednam10.zip*****

Corrected EDITIONS of our etexts get a new NUMBER, ednam11.txt
VERSIONS based on separate sources get new LETTER, ednam10a.txt

Proofed by alight@rock.concert.net [Street Address: Alan Light,
7407-B Waxhaw Creek Road, Waxhaw, NC, 28173. (704) 843-3352].

Renascence and Other Poems

by Edna St. Vincent Millay

Contents:

<i>Renascence</i>	
<i>All I could see from where I stood</i>	1
<i>Interim</i>	
<i>The room is full of you! -- As I came in</i>	7
<i>The Suicide</i>	
<i>"Curse thee, Life, I will live with thee no more!</i>	14
<i>God's World</i>	
<i>O world, I cannot hold thee close enough!</i>	19
<i>Afternoon on a Hill</i>	
<i>I will be the gladdest thing</i>	20
<i>Sorrow</i>	
<i>Sorrow like a ceaseless rain</i>	21
<i>Tavern</i>	
<i>I'll keep a little tavern</i>	22
<i>Ashes of Life</i>	
<i>Love has gone and left me and the days are all alike;</i>	23
<i>The Little Ghost</i>	
<i>I knew her for a little ghost</i>	24

<i>Kin to Sorrow</i>	
<i>Am I kin to Sorrow,</i>	25
<i>Three Songs of Shattering</i>	
<i>I</i>	
<i>The first rose on my rose-tree</i>	26
<i>II</i>	
<i>Let the little birds sing;</i>	26
<i>III</i>	
<i>All the dog-wood blossoms are underneath the tree!</i>	27
<i>The Shroud</i>	
<i>Death, I say, my heart is bowed</i>	28
<i>The Dream</i>	
<i>Love, if I weep it will not matter,</i>	29
<i>Indifference</i>	
<i>I said, -- for Love was laggard, O, Love was slow to come, --</i>	30
<i>Witch-Wife</i>	
<i>She is neither pink nor pale,</i>	31
<i>Blight</i>	
<i>Hard seeds of hate I planted</i>	32
<i>When the Year Grows Old</i>	
<i>I cannot but remember</i>	33

Sonnets

- I
Thou art not lovelier than lilacs, -- no, 34
- II
Time does not bring relief; you all have lied 35
- III
Mindful of you the sodden earth in spring, 36
- IV
Not in this chamber only at my birth -- 37
- V
If I should learn, in some quite casual way, 38
- VI *Bluebeard*
This door you might not open, and you did; 39

*Renascence and Other Poems**Renascence*

*All I could see from where I stood
Was three long mountains and a wood;
I turned and looked another way,
And saw three islands in a bay.
So with my eyes I traced the line
Of the horizon, thin and fine,
Straight around till I was come
Back to where I'd started from;
And all I saw from where I stood
Was three long mountains and a wood.
Over these things I could not see;
These were the things that bounded me;
And I could touch them with my hand,
Almost, I thought, from where I stand.
And all at once things seemed so small
My breath came short, and scarce at all.
But, sure, the sky is big, I said;
Miles and miles above my head;
So here upon my back I'll lie
And look my fill into the sky.
And so I looked, and, after all,
The sky was not so very tall.
The sky, I said, must somewhere stop,
And -- sure enough! -- I see the top!
The sky, I thought, is not so grand;
I 'most could touch it with my hand!
And reaching up my hand to try,
I screamed to feel it touch the sky.
I screamed, and -- lo! -- Infinity
Came down and settled over me;
Forced back my scream into my chest,*

*Bent back my arm upon my breast,
 And, pressing of the Undefined
 The definition on my mind,
 Held up before my eyes a glass
 Through which my shrinking sight did pass
 Until it seemed I must behold
 Immensity made manifold;
 Whispered to me a word whose sound
 Deafened the air for worlds around,
 And brought unmuffled to my ears
 The gossiping of friendly spheres,
 The creaking of the tented sky,
 The ticking of Eternity.
 I saw and heard, and knew at last
 The How and Why of all things, past,
 And present, and forevermore.
 The Universe, cleft to the core,
 Lay open to my probing sense
 That, sick'ning, I would fain pluck thence
 But could not, -- nay! But needs must suck
 At the great wound, and could not pluck
 My lips away till I had drawn
 All venom out. -- Ah, fearful pawn!
 For my omniscience paid I toll
 In infinite remorse of soul.
 All sin was of my sinning, all
 Atoning mine, and mine the gall
 Of all regret. Mine was the weight
 Of every brooded wrong, the hate
 That stood behind each envious thrust,
 Mine every greed, mine every lust.
 And all the while for every grief,
 Each suffering, I craved relief
 With individual desire, --
 Craved all in vain! And felt fierce fire
 About a thousand people crawl;
 Perished with each, -- then mourned for all!
 A man was starving in Capri;*

*He moved his eyes and looked at me;
 I felt his gaze, I heard his moan,
 And knew his hunger as my own.
 I saw at sea a great fog bank
 Between two ships that struck and sank;
 A thousand screams the heavens smote;
 And every scream tore through my throat.
 No hurt I did not feel, no death
 That was not mine; mine each last breath
 That, crying, met an answering cry
 From the compassion that was I.
 All suffering mine, and mine its rod;
 Mine, pity like the pity of God.
 Ah, awful weight! Infinity
 Pressed down upon the finite Me!
 My anguished spirit, like a bird,
 Beating against my lips I heard;
 Yet lay the weight so close about
 There was no room for it without.
 And so beneath the weight lay I
 And suffered death, but could not die.*

*Long had I lain thus, craving death,
 When quietly the earth beneath
 Gave way, and inch by inch, so great
 At last had grown the crushing weight,
 Into the earth I sank till I
 Full six feet under ground did lie,
 And sank no more, -- there is no weight
 Can follow here, however great.
 From off my breast I felt it roll,
 And as it went my tortured soul
 Burst forth and fled in such a gust
 That all about me swirled the dust.*

*Deep in the earth I rested now;
 Cool is its hand upon the brow
 And soft its breast beneath the head*

*Of one who is so gladly dead.
 And all at once, and over all
 The pitying rain began to fall;
 I lay and heard each pattering hoof
 Upon my lowly, thatched roof,
 And seemed to love the sound far more
 Than ever I had done before.
 For rain it hath a friendly sound
 To one who's six feet underground;
 And scarce the friendly voice or face:
 A grave is such a quiet place.*

*The rain, I said, is kind to come
 And speak to me in my new home.
 I would I were alive again
 To kiss the fingers of the rain,
 To drink into my eyes the shine
 Of every slanting silver line,
 To catch the freshened, fragrant breeze
 From drenched and dripping apple-trees.
 For soon the shower will be done,
 And then the broad face of the sun
 Will laugh above the rain-soaked earth
 Until the world with answering mirth
 Shakes joyously, and each round drop
 Rolls, twinkling, from its grass-blade top.
 How can I bear it; buried here,
 While overhead the sky grows clear
 And blue again after the storm?
 O, multi-colored, multiform,
 Beloved beauty over me,
 That I shall never, never see
 Again! Spring-silver, autumn-gold,
 That I shall never more behold!
 Sleeping your myriad magics through,
 Close-sepulchred away from you!
 O God, I cried, give me new birth,
 And put me back upon the earth!*

*Upset each cloud's gigantic gourd
 And let the heavy rain, down-poured
 In one big torrent, set me free,
 Washing my grave away from me!*

*I ceased; and through the breathless hush
 That answered me, the far-off rush
 Of herald wings came whispering
 Like music down the vibrant string
 Of my ascending prayer, and -- crash!
 Before the wild wind's whistling lash
 The startled storm-clouds reared on high
 And plunged in terror down the sky,
 And the big rain in one black wave
 Fell from the sky and struck my grave.
 I know not how such things can be;
 I only know there came to me
 A fragrance such as never clings
 To aught save happy living things;
 A sound as of some joyous elf
 Singing sweet songs to please himself,
 And, through and over everything,
 A sense of glad awakening.
 The grass, a-tiptoe at my ear,
 Whispering to me I could hear;
 I felt the rain's cool finger-tips
 Brushed tenderly across my lips,
 Laid gently on my sealed sight,
 And all at once the heavy night
 Fell from my eyes and I could see, --
 A drenched and dripping apple-tree,
 A last long line of silver rain,
 A sky grown clear and blue again.
 And as I looked a quickening gust
 Of wind blew up to me and thrust
 Into my face a miracle
 Of orchard-breath, and with the smell, --
 I know not how such things can be! --*

*I breathed my soul back into me.
 Ah! Up then from the ground sprang I
 And hailed the earth with such a cry
 As is not heard save from a man
 Who has been dead, and lives again.
 About the trees my arms I wound;
 Like one gone mad I hugged the ground;
 I raised my quivering arms on high;
 I laughed and laughed into the sky,
 Till at my throat a strangling sob
 Caught fiercely, and a great heart-throb
 Sent instant tears into my eyes;
 O God, I cried, no dark disguise
 Can e'er hereafter hide from me
 Thy radiant identity!
 Thou canst not move across the grass
 But my quick eyes will see Thee pass,
 Nor speak, however silently,
 But my hushed voice will answer Thee.
 I know the path that tells Thy way
 Through the cool eve of every day;
 God, I can push the grass apart
 And lay my finger on Thy heart!*

*The world stands out on either side
 No wider than the heart is wide;
 Above the world is stretched the sky, --
 No higher than the soul is high.
 The heart can push the sea and land
 Farther away on either hand;
 The soul can split the sky in two,
 And let the face of God shine through.
 But East and West will pinch the heart
 That can not keep them pushed apart;
 And he whose soul is flat -- the sky
 Will cave in on him by and by.*

Interim

*The room is full of you! -- As I came in
And closed the door behind me, all at once
A something in the air, intangible,
Yet stiff with meaning, struck my senses sick! --*

*Sharp, unfamiliar odors have destroyed
Each other room's dear personality.
The heavy scent of damp, funereal flowers, --
The very essence, hush-distilled, of Death --
Has strangled that habitual breath of home
Whose expiration leaves all houses dead;
And wheresoe'er I look is hideous change.
Save here. Here 'twas as if a weed-choked gate
Had opened at my touch, and I had stepped
Into some long-forgot, enchanted, strange,
Sweet garden of a thousand years ago
And suddenly thought, "I have been here before!"*

*You are not here. I know that you are gone,
And will not ever enter here again.
And yet it seems to me, if I should speak,
Your silent step must wake across the hall;
If I should turn my head, that your sweet eyes
Would kiss me from the door. -- So short a time
To teach my life its transposition to
This difficult and unaccustomed key! --
The room is as you left it; your last touch --
A thoughtless pressure, knowing not itself
As saintly -- hallows now each simple thing;
Hallows and glorifies, and glows between
The dust's grey fingers like a shielded light.*

*There is your book, just as you laid it down,
 Face to the table, -- I cannot believe
 That you are gone! -- Just then it seemed to me
 You must be here. I almost laughed to think
 How like reality the dream had been;
 Yet knew before I laughed, and so was still.
 That book, outspread, just as you laid it down!
 Perhaps you thought, "I wonder what comes next,
 And whether this or this will be the end";
 So rose, and left it, thinking to return.*

*Perhaps that chair, when you arose and passed
 Out of the room, rocked silently a while
 Ere it again was still. When you were gone
 Forever from the room, perhaps that chair,
 Stirred by your movement, rocked a little while,
 Silently, to and fro. . .*

*And here are the last words your fingers wrote,
 Scrawled in broad characters across a page
 In this brown book I gave you. Here your hand,
 Guiding your rapid pen, moved up and down.
 Here with a looping knot you crossed a "t",
 And here another like it, just beyond
 These two eccentric "e's". You were so small,
 And wrote so brave a hand!*

*How strange it seems
 That of all words these are the words you chose!
 And yet a simple choice; you did not know
 You would not write again. If you had known --
 But then, it does not matter, -- and indeed
 If you had known there was so little time
 You would have dropped your pen and come to me
 And this page would be empty, and some phrase
 Other than this would hold my wonder now.
 Yet, since you could not know, and it befell
 That these are the last words your fingers wrote,
 There is a dignity some might not see*

*In this, "I picked the first sweet-pea to-day."
 To-day! Was there an opening bud beside it
 You left until to-morrow? -- O my love,
 The things that withered, -- and you came not back!
 That day you filled this circle of my arms
 That now is empty. (O my empty life!)
 That day -- that day you picked the first sweet-pea, --
 And brought it in to show me! I recall
 With terrible distinctness how the smell
 Of your cool gardens drifted in with you.
 I know, you held it up for me to see
 And flushed because I looked not at the flower,
 But at your face; and when behind my look
 You saw such unmistakable intent
 You laughed and brushed your flower against my lips.
 (You were the fairest thing God ever made,
 I think.) And then your hands above my heart
 Drew down its stem into a fastening,
 And while your head was bent I kissed your hair.
 I wonder if you knew. (Beloved hands!
 Somehow I cannot seem to see them still.
 Somehow I cannot seem to see the dust
 In your bright hair.) What is the need of Heaven
 When earth can be so sweet? -- If only God
 Had let us love, -- and show the world the way!
 Strange cancellings must ink th' eternal books
 When love-crossed-out will bring the answer right!
 That first sweet-pea! I wonder where it is.
 It seems to me I laid it down somewhere,
 And yet, -- I am not sure. I am not sure,
 Even, if it was white or pink; for then
 'Twas much like any other flower to me,
 Save that it was the first. I did not know,
 Then, that it was the last. If I had known --
 But then, it does not matter. Strange how few,
 After all's said and done, the things that are
 Of moment.*

Few indeed! When I can make

*Of ten small words a rope to hang the world!
 "I had you and I have you now no more."
 There, there it dangles, -- where's the little truth
 That can for long keep footing under that
 When its slack syllables tighten to a thought?
 Here, let me write it down! I wish to see
 Just how a thing like that will look on paper!*

*"*I had you and I have you now no more*."*

*O little words, how can you run so straight
 Across the page, beneath the weight you bear?
 How can you fall apart, whom such a theme
 Has bound together, and hereafter aid
 In trivial expression, that have been
 So hideously dignified? -- Would God
 That tearing you apart would tear the thread
 I strung you on! Would God -- O God, my mind
 Stretches asunder on this merciless rack
 Of imagery! O, let me sleep a while!
 Would I could sleep, and wake to find me back
 In that sweet summer afternoon with you.
 Summer? 'Tis summer still by the calendar!
 How easily could God, if He so willed,
 Set back the world a little turn or two!
 Correct its griefs, and bring its joys again!*

*We were so wholly one I had not thought
 That we could die apart. I had not thought
 That I could move, -- and you be stiff and still!
 That I could speak, -- and you perforce be dumb!
 I think our heart-strings were, like warp and woof
 In some firm fabric, woven in and out;
 Your golden filaments in fair design
 Across my duller fibre. And to-day
 The shining strip is rent; the exquisite
 Fine pattern is destroyed; part of your heart
 Aches in my breast; part of my heart lies chilled*

*In the damp earth with you. I have been torn
 In two, and suffer for the rest of me.
 What is my life to me? And what am I
 To life, -- a ship whose star has guttered out?
 A Fear that in the deep night starts awake
 Perpetually, to find its senses strained
 Against the taut strings of the quivering air,
 Awaiting the return of some dread chord?*

*Dark, Dark, is all I find for metaphor;
 All else were contrast, -- save that contrast's wall
 Is down, and all opposed things flow together
 Into a vast monotony, where night
 And day, and frost and thaw, and death and life,
 Are synonyms. What now -- what now to me
 Are all the jabbering birds and foolish flowers
 That clutter up the world? You were my song!
 Now, let discord scream! You were my flower!
 Now let the world grow weeds! For I shall not
 Plant things above your grave -- (the common balm
 Of the conventional woe for its own wound!)
 Amid sensations rendered negative
 By your elimination stands to-day,
 Certain, unmixed, the element of grief;
 I sorrow; and I shall not mock my truth
 With travesties of suffering, nor seek
 To effigy its incorporeal bulk
 In little wry-faced images of woe.*

*I cannot call you back; and I desire
 No utterance of my immaterial voice.
 I cannot even turn my face this way
 Or that, and say, "My face is turned to you";
 I know not where you are, I do not know
 If Heaven hold you or if earth transmute,
 Body and soul, you into earth again;
 But this I know: -- not for one second's space
 Shall I insult my sight with visionings*

*Such as the credulous crowd so eager-eyed
Beholds, self-conjured, in the empty air.
Let the world wail! Let drip its easy tears!
My sorrow shall be dumb!*

*-- What do I say?
God! God! -- God pity me! Am I gone mad
That I should spit upon a rosary?
Am I become so shrunken? Would to God
I too might feel that frenzied faith whose touch
Makes temporal the most enduring grief;
Though it must walk a while, as is its wont,
With wild lamenting! Would I too might weep
Where weeps the world and hangs its piteous wreaths
For its new dead! Not Truth, but Faith, it is
That keeps the world alive. If all at once
Faith were to slacken, -- that unconscious faith
Which must, I know, yet be the corner-stone
Of all believing, -- birds now flying fearless
Across would drop in terror to the earth;
Fishes would drown; and the all-governing reins
Would tangle in the frantic hands of God
And the worlds gallop headlong to destruction!*

*O God, I see it now, and my sick brain
Staggers and swoons! How often over me
Flashes this breathlessness of sudden sight
In which I see the universe unrolled
Before me like a scroll and read thereon
Chaos and Doom, where helpless planets whirl
Dizzily round and round and round and round,
Like tops across a table, gathering speed
With every spin, to waver on the edge
One instant -- looking over -- and the next
To shudder and lurch forward out of sight --*

* * * * *

*Ah, I am worn out -- I am wearied out --
It is too much -- I am but flesh and blood,
And I must sleep. Though you were dead again,
I am but flesh and blood and I must sleep.*

The Suicide

*"Curse thee, Life, I will live with thee no more!
 Thou hast mocked me, starved me, beat my body sore!
 And all for a pledge that was not pledged by me,
 I have kissed thy crust and eaten sparingly
 That I might eat again, and met thy sneers
 With deprecations, and thy blows with tears, --
 Aye, from thy glutted lash, glad, crawled away,
 As if spent passion were a holiday!
 And now I go. Nor threat, nor easy vow
 Of tardy kindness can avail thee now
 With me, whence fear and faith alike are flown;
 Lonely I came, and I depart alone,
 And know not where nor unto whom I go;
 But that thou canst not follow me I know."*

*Thus I to Life, and ceased; but through my brain
 My thought ran still, until I spake again:*

*"Ah, but I go not as I came, -- no trace
 Is mine to bear away of that old grace
 I brought! I have been heated in thy fires,
 Bent by thy hands, fashioned to thy desires,
 Thy mark is on me! I am not the same
 Nor ever more shall be, as when I came.
 Ashes am I of all that once I seemed.
 In me all's sunk that leapt, and all that dreamed
 Is wakeful for alarm, -- oh, shame to thee,
 For the ill change that thou hast wrought in me,
 Who laugh no more nor lift my throat to sing!
 Ah, Life, I would have been a pleasant thing
 To have about the house when I was grown*

*If thou hadst left my little joys alone!
 I asked of thee no favor save this one:
 That thou wouldst leave me playing in the sun!
 And this thou didst deny, calling my name
 Insistently, until I rose and came.
 I saw the sun no more. -- It were not well
 So long on these unpleasant thoughts to dwell,
 Need I arise to-morrow and renew
 Again my hated tasks, but I am through
 With all things save my thoughts and this one night,
 So that in truth I seem already quite
 Free and remote from thee, -- I feel no haste
 And no reluctance to depart; I taste
 Merely, with thoughtful mien, an unknown draught,
 That in a little while I shall have quaffed."*

*Thus I to Life, and ceased, and slightly smiled,
 Looking at nothing; and my thin dreams filed
 Before me one by one till once again
 I set new words unto an old refrain:*

*"Treasures thou hast that never have been mine!
 Warm lights in many a secret chamber shine
 Of thy gaunt house, and gusts of song have blown
 Like blossoms out to me that sat alone!
 And I have waited well for thee to show
 If any share were mine, -- and now I go!
 Nothing I leave, and if I naught attain
 I shall but come into mine own again!"
 Thus I to Life, and ceased, and spake no more,
 But turning, straightway, sought a certain door
 In the rear wall. Heavy it was, and low
 And dark, -- a way by which none e'er would go
 That other exit had, and never knock
 Was heard thereat, -- bearing a curious lock
 Some chance had shown me fashioned faultily,
 Whereof Life held content the useless key,
 And great coarse hinges, thick and rough with rust,*

Whose sudden voice across a silence must,
 I knew, be harsh and horrible to hear, --
 A strange door, ugly like a dwarf. -- So near
 I came I felt upon my feet the chill
 Of acid wind creeping across the sill.
 So stood longtime, till over me at last
 Came weariness, and all things other passed
 To make it room; the still night drifted deep
 Like snow about me, and I longed for sleep.

But, suddenly, marking the morning hour,
 Bayed the deep-throated bell within the tower!
 Startled, I raised my head, -- and with a shout
 Laid hold upon the latch, -- and was without.

* * * * *

Ah, long-forgotten, well-remembered road,
 Leading me back unto my old abode,
 My father's house! There in the night I came,
 And found them feasting, and all things the same
 As they had been before. A splendour hung
 Upon the walls, and such sweet songs were sung
 As, echoing out of very long ago,
 Had called me from the house of Life, I know.
 So fair their raiment shone I looked in shame
 On the unlovely garb in which I came;
 Then straightway at my hesitancy mocked:
 "It is my father's house!" I said and knocked;
 And the door opened. To the shining crowd
 Tattered and dark I entered, like a cloud,
 Seeing no face but his; to him I crept,
 And "Father!" I cried, and clasped his knees, and wept.
 Ah, days of joy that followed! All alone
 I wandered through the house. My own, my own,
 My own to touch, my own to taste and smell,
 All I had lacked so long and loved so well!
 None shook me out of sleep, nor hushed my song,

Nor called me in from the sunlight all day long.

*I know not when the wonder came to me
Of what my father's business might be,
And whither fared and on what errands bent
The tall and gracious messengers he sent.
Yet one day with no song from dawn till night
Wondering, I sat, and watched them out of sight.
And the next day I called; and on the third
Asked them if I might go, -- but no one heard.
Then, sick with longing, I arose at last
And went unto my father, -- in that vast
Chamber wherein he for so many years
Has sat, surrounded by his charts and spheres.
"Father," I said, "Father, I cannot play
The harp that thou didst give me, and all day
I sit in idleness, while to and fro
About me thy serene, grave servants go;
And I am weary of my lonely ease.
Better a perilous journey overseas
Away from thee, than this, the life I lead,
To sit all day in the sunshine like a weed
That grows to naught, -- I love thee more than they
Who serve thee most; yet serve thee in no way.
Father, I beg of thee a little task
To dignify my days, -- 'tis all I ask
Forever, but forever, this denied,
I perish."*

*"Child," my father's voice replied,
"All things thy fancy hath desired of me
Thou hast received. I have prepared for thee
Within my house a spacious chamber, where
Are delicate things to handle and to wear,
And all these things are thine. Dost thou love song?
My minstrels shall attend thee all day long.
Or sigh for flowers? My fairest gardens stand
Open as fields to thee on every hand.
And all thy days this word shall hold the same:*

*No pleasure shalt thou lack that thou shalt name.
But as for tasks --" he smiled, and shook his head;
"Thou hadst thy task, and laidst it by", he said.*

God's World

*O world, I cannot hold thee close enough!
 Thy winds, thy wide grey skies!
 Thy mists, that roll and rise!
 Thy woods, this autumn day, that ache and sag
 And all but cry with colour! That gaunt crag
 To crush! To lift the lean of that black bluff!
 World, World, I cannot get thee close enough!*

*Long have I known a glory in it all,
 But never knew I this;
 Here such a passion is
 As stretcheth me apart, -- Lord, I do fear
 Thou'st made the world too beautiful this year;
 My soul is all but out of me, -- let fall
 No burning leaf; prithee, let no bird call.*

Afternoon on a Hill

*I will be the gladdest thing
Under the sun!
I will touch a hundred flowers
And not pick one.*

*I will look at cliffs and clouds
With quiet eyes,
Watch the wind bow down the grass,
And the grass rise.*

*And when lights begin to show
Up from the town,
I will mark which must be mine,
And then start down!*

Sorrow

*Sorrow like a ceaseless rain
Beats upon my heart.
People twist and scream in pain, --
Dawn will find them still again;
This has neither wax nor wane,
Neither stop nor start.*

*People dress and go to town;
I sit in my chair.
All my thoughts are slow and brown:
Standing up or sitting down
Little matters, or what gown
Or what shoes I wear.*

Tavern

*I'll keep a little tavern
Below the high hill's crest,
Wherein all grey-eyed people
May set them down and rest.*

*There shall be plates a-plenty,
And mugs to melt the chill
Of all the grey-eyed people
Who happen up the hill.*

*There sound will sleep the traveller,
And dream his journey's end,
But I will rouse at midnight
The falling fire to tend.*

*Aye, 'tis a curious fancy --
But all the good I know
Was taught me out of two grey eyes
A long time ago.*

Ashes of Life

*Love has gone and left me and the days are all alike;
Eat I must, and sleep I will, -- and would that night were here!
But ah! -- to lie awake and hear the slow hours strike!
Would that it were day again! -- with twilight near!*

*Love has gone and left me and I don't know what to do;
This or that or what you will is all the same to me;
But all the things that I begin I leave before I'm through, --
There's little use in anything as far as I can see.*

*Love has gone and left me, -- and the neighbors knock and borrow,
And life goes on forever like the gnawing of a mouse, --
And to-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow
There's this little street and this little house.*

The Little Ghost

*I knew her for a little ghost
That in my garden walked;
The wall is high -- higher than most --
And the green gate was locked.*

*And yet I did not think of that
Till after she was gone --
I knew her by the broad white hat,
All ruffled, she had on.*

*By the dear ruffles round her feet,
By her small hands that hung
In their lace mitts, austere and sweet,
Her gown's white folds among.*

*I watched to see if she would stay,
What she would do -- and oh!
She looked as if she liked the way
I let my garden grow!*

*She bent above my favourite mint
With conscious garden grace,
She smiled and smiled -- there was no hint
Of sadness in her face.*

*She held her gown on either side
To let her slippers show,
And up the walk she went with pride,
The way great ladies go.*

*And where the wall is built in new
And is of ivy bare
She paused -- then opened and passed through
A gate that once was there.*

Kin to Sorrow

*Am I kin to Sorrow,
That so oft
Falls the knocker of my door --
Neither loud nor soft,
But as long accustomed,
Under Sorrow's hand?
Marigolds around the step
And rosemary stand,
And then comes Sorrow --
And what does Sorrow care
For the rosemary
Or the marigolds there?
Am I kin to Sorrow?
Are we kin?
That so oft upon my door --
Oh, come in!*

Three Songs of Shattering

I

*The first rose on my rose-tree
 Budded, bloomed, and shattered,
 During sad days when to me
 Nothing mattered.*

*Grief of grief has drained me clean;
 Still it seems a pity
 No one saw, -- it must have been
 Very pretty.*

II

*Let the little birds sing;
 Let the little lambs play;
 Spring is here; and so 'tis spring; --
 But not in the old way!*

*I recall a place
 Where a plum-tree grew;
 There you lifted up your face,
 And blossoms covered you.*

*If the little birds sing,
 And the little lambs play,
 Spring is here; and so 'tis spring --
 But not in the old way!*

III

*All the dog-wood blossoms are underneath the tree!
Ere spring was going -- ah, spring is gone!
And there comes no summer to the like of you and me, --
Blossom time is early, but no fruit sets on.*

*All the dog-wood blossoms are underneath the tree,
Browned at the edges, turned in a day;
And I would with all my heart they trimmed a mound for me,
And weeds were tall on all the paths that led that way!*

The Shroud

*Death, I say, my heart is bowed
Unto thine, -- O mother!
This red gown will make a shroud
Good as any other!*

*(I, that would not wait to wear
My own bridal things,
In a dress dark as my hair
Made my answerings.*

*I, to-night, that till he came
Could not, could not wait,
In a gown as bright as flame
Held for them the gate.)*

*Death, I say, my heart is bowed
Unto thine, -- O mother!
This red gown will make a shroud
Good as any other!*

The Dream

*Love, if I weep it will not matter,
And if you laugh I shall not care;
Foolish am I to think about it,
But it is good to feel you there.*

*Love, in my sleep I dreamed of waking, --
White and awful the moonlight reached
Over the floor, and somewhere, somewhere,
There was a shutter loose, -- it screeched!*

*Swung in the wind, -- and no wind blowing! --
I was afraid, and turned to you,
Put out my hand to you for comfort, --
And you were gone! Cold, cold as dew,*

*Under my hand the moonlight lay!
Love, if you laugh I shall not care,
But if I weep it will not matter, --
Ah, it is good to feel you there!*

Indifference

*I said, -- for Love was laggard, O, Love was slow to come, --
"I'll hear his step and know his step when I am warm in bed;
But I'll never leave my pillow, though there be some
As would let him in -- and take him in with tears!" I said.
I lay, -- for Love was laggard, O, he came not until dawn, --
I lay and listened for his step and could not get to sleep;
And he found me at my window with my big cloak on,
All sorry with the tears some folks might weep!*

Witch-Wife

*She is neither pink nor pale,
And she never will be all mine;
She learned her hands in a fairy-tale,
And her mouth on a valentine.*

*She has more hair than she needs;
In the sun 'tis a woe to me!
And her voice is a string of colored beads,
Or steps leading into the sea.*

*She loves me all that she can,
And her ways to my ways resign;
But she was not made for any man,
And she never will be all mine.*

Blight

*Hard seeds of hate I planted
That should by now be grown, --
Rough stalks, and from thick stamens
A poisonous pollen blown,
And odors rank, unbreathable,
From dark corollas thrown!*

*At dawn from my damp garden
I shook the chilly dew;
The thin boughs locked behind me
That sprang to let me through;
The blossoms slept, -- I sought a place
Where nothing lovely grew.*

*And there, when day was breaking,
I knelt and looked around:
The light was near, the silence
Was palpitant with sound;
I drew my hate from out my breast
And thrust it in the ground.*

*Oh, ye so fiercely tended,
Ye little seeds of hate!
I bent above your growing
Early and noon and late,
Yet are ye drooped and pitiful, --
I cannot rear ye straight!*

*The sun seeks out my garden,
No nook is left in shade,
No mist nor mold nor mildew
Endures on any blade,
Sweet rain slants under every bough:
Ye falter, and ye fade.*

When the Year Grows Old

*I cannot but remember
When the year grows old --
October -- November --
How she disliked the cold!*

*She used to watch the swallows
Go down across the sky,
And turn from the window
With a little sharp sigh.*

*And often when the brown leaves
Were brittle on the ground,
And the wind in the chimney
Made a melancholy sound,*

*She had a look about her
That I wish I could forget --
The look of a scared thing
Sitting in a net!*

*Oh, beautiful at nightfall
The soft spitting snow!
And beautiful the bare boughs
Rubbing to and fro!*

*But the roaring of the fire,
And the warmth of fur,
And the boiling of the kettle
Were beautiful to her!*

*I cannot but remember
When the year grows old --
October -- November --
How she disliked the cold!*

Sonnets

I

*Thou art not lovelier than lilacs, -- no,
Nor honeysuckle; thou art not more fair
Than small white single poppies, -- I can bear
Thy beauty; though I bend before thee, though
From left to right, not knowing where to go,
I turn my troubled eyes, nor here nor there
Find any refuge from thee, yet I swear
So has it been with mist, -- with moonlight so.*

*Like him who day by day unto his draught
Of delicate poison adds him one drop more
Till he may drink unharmed the death of ten,
Even so, inured to beauty, who have quaffed
Each hour more deeply than the hour before,
I drink -- and live -- what has destroyed some men.*

II

*Time does not bring relief; you all have lied
Who told me time would ease me of my pain!
I miss him in the weeping of the rain;
I want him at the shrinking of the tide;
The old snows melt from every mountain-side,
And last year's leaves are smoke in every lane;
But last year's bitter loving must remain
Heaped on my heart, and my old thoughts abide!*

*There are a hundred places where I fear
To go, -- so with his memory they brim!
And entering with relief some quiet place
Where never fell his foot or shone his face
I say, "There is no memory of him here!"
And so stand stricken, so remembering him!*

III

*Mindful of you the sodden earth in spring,
And all the flowers that in the springtime grow,
And dusty roads, and thistles, and the slow
Rising of the round moon, all throats that sing
The summer through, and each departing wing,
And all the nests that the bared branches show,
And all winds that in any weather blow,
And all the storms that the four seasons bring.*

*You go no more on your exultant feet
Up paths that only mist and morning knew,
Or watch the wind, or listen to the beat
Of a bird's wings too high in air to view, --
But you were something more than young and sweet
And fair, -- and the long year remembers you.*

IV

*Not in this chamber only at my birth --
When the long hours of that mysterious night
Were over, and the morning was in sight --
I cried, but in strange places, steppe and firth
I have not seen, through alien grief and mirth;
And never shall one room contain me quite
Who in so many rooms first saw the light,
Child of all mothers, native of the earth.*

*So is no warmth for me at any fire
To-day, when the world's fire has burned so low;
I kneel, spending my breath in vain desire,
At that cold hearth which one time roared so strong,
And straighten back in weariness, and long
To gather up my little gods and go.*

V

*If I should learn, in some quite casual way,
That you were gone, not to return again --
Read from the back-page of a paper, say,
Held by a neighbor in a subway train,
How at the corner of this avenue
And such a street (so are the papers filled)
A hurrying man -- who happened to be you --
At noon to-day had happened to be killed,
I should not cry aloud -- I could not cry
Aloud, or wring my hands in such a place --
I should but watch the station lights rush by
With a more careful interest on my face,
Or raise my eyes and read with greater care
Where to store furs and how to treat the hair.*

VI *Bluebeard*

*This door you might not open, and you did;
So enter now, and see for what slight thing
You are betrayed. . . . Here is no treasure hid,
No cauldron, no clear crystal mirroring
The sought-for truth, no heads of women slain
For greed like yours, no writhings of distress,
But only what you see. . . . Look yet again --
An empty room, cobwebbed and comfortless.
Yet this alone out of my life I kept
Unto myself, lest any know me quite;
And you did so profane me when you crept
Unto the threshold of this room to-night
That I must never more behold your face.
This now is yours. I seek another place.*

End of the Project Gutenberg Etext of Renaissance and Other Poems

We are now trying to release all our books one month in advance of the official release dates, for time for better editing. We have this as a goal to accomplish by the end of the year but we cannot guarantee to stay that far ahead every month after that.

Please note: neither this list nor its contents are final till midnight of the last day of the month of any such announcement. The official release date of all Project Gutenberg Etexts is at Midnight, Central Time, of the last day of the stated month. A preliminary version may often be posted for suggestion, comment and editing by those who wish to do so. To be sure you have an up to date first edition [xxxxx10x.xxx] please check file sizes in the first week of the next month. Since our ftp program has a bug in it that scrambles the date [tried to fix and failed] a look at the file size will have to do, but we will try to see a new copy has at least one byte more or less.

Information about Project Gutenberg (one page)

We produce about two million dollars for each hour we work. The fifty hours is one conservative estimate for how long it we take to get any etext selected, entered, proofread, edited, copyright searched and analyzed, the copyright letters written, etc. This projected audience is one hundred million readers. If our value per text is nominally estimated at one dollar then we produce \$4 million dollars per hour this year as we release some eight text files per month: thus upping our productivity from \$2 million.

The Goal of Project Gutenberg is to Give Away One Trillion Etext Files by the December 31, 2001. [10,000 x 100,000,000=Trillion] This is ten thousand titles each to one hundred million readers, which is 10% of the expected number of computer users by the end of the year 2001.

We need your donations more than ever!

All donations should be made to "Project Gutenberg/IBC", and are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law ("IBC" is Illinois Benedictine College). (Subscriptions to our paper newsletter go to IBC, too)

For these and other matters, please mail to:

Project Gutenberg
P. O. Box 2782
Champaign, IL 61825

When all other email fails try our Michael S. Hart, Executive Director:
hart@vmd.cso.uiuc.edu (internet) hart@uiucvmd (bitnet)

We would prefer to send you this information by email

(Internet, Bitnet, Compuserve, ATTMAIL or MCImail).

If you have an FTP program (or emulator), please
FTP directly to the Project Gutenberg archives:
[Mac users, do NOT point and click. . .type]

```
ftp mrcnext.cso.uiuc.edu
login: anonymous
password: your@login
cd etext/etext91
or cd etext92
or cd etext93 [for new books] [now also in cd etext/etext93]
or cd etext/articles [get suggest gut for more information]
dir [to see files]
get or mget [to get files. . .set bin for zip files]
GET 0INDEX.GUT
for a list of books
and
GET NEW GUT for general information
and
MGET GUT* for newsletters.
```

Information prepared by the Project Gutenberg legal advisor
(Three Pages)

START**THE SMALL PRINT!**FOR PUBLIC DOMAIN ETEXTS**START
Why is this "Small Print!" statement here? You know: lawyers.
They tell us you might sue us if there is something wrong with
your copy of this etext, even if you got it for free from
someone other than us, and even if what's wrong is not our
fault. So, among other things, this "Small Print!" statement
disclaims most of our liability to you. It also tells you how
you can distribute copies of this etext if you want to.

BEFORE! YOU USE OR READ THIS ETEXT
By using or reading any part of this PROJECT GUTENBERG-tm
etext, you indicate that you understand, agree to and accept
this "Small Print!" statement. If you do not, you can receive
a refund of the money (if any) you paid for this etext by
sending a request within 30 days of receiving it to the person
you got it from. If you received this etext on a physical
medium (such as a disk), you must return it with your request.

ABOUT PROJECT GUTENBERG-TM ETEXTS

This PROJECT GUTENBERG-tm etext, like most PROJECT GUTENBERG-
tm etexts, is a "public domain" work distributed by Professor
Michael S. Hart through the Project Gutenberg Association at
Illinois Benedictine College (the "Project"). Among other
things, this means that no one owns a United States copyright
on or for this work, so the Project (and you!) can copy and
distribute it in the United States without permission and
without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth
below, apply if you wish to copy and distribute this etext
under the Project's "PROJECT GUTENBERG" trademark.

To create these etexts, the Project expends considerable
efforts to identify, transcribe and proofread public domain
works. Despite these efforts, the Project's etexts and any

medium they may be on may contain "Defects". Among other things, Defects may take the form of incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other etext medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

LIMITED WARRANTY; DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES

But for the "Right of Replacement or Refund" described below, [1] the Project (and any other party you may receive this etext from as a PROJECT GUTENBERG-tm etext) disclaims all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees, and [2] YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE OR UNDER STRICT LIABILITY, OR FOR BREACH OF WARRANTY OR CONTRACT, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES, EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGES.

If you discover a Defect in this etext within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending an explanatory note within that time to the person you received it from. If you received it on a physical medium, you must return it with your note, and such person may choose to alternatively give you a replacement copy. If you received it electronically, such person may choose to alternatively give you a second opportunity to receive it electronically.

THIS ETEXT IS OTHERWISE PROVIDED TO YOU "AS-IS". NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, ARE MADE TO YOU AS TO THE ETEXT OR ANY MEDIUM IT MAY BE ON, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE.

Some states do not allow disclaimers of implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of consequential damages, so the above disclaimers and exclusions may not apply to you, and you may have other legal rights.

INDEMNITY

You will indemnify and hold the Project, its directors, officers, members and agents harmless from all liability, cost and expense, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following that you do or cause: [1] distribution of this etext, [2] alteration, modification, or addition to the etext, or [3] any Defect.

DISTRIBUTION UNDER "PROJECT GUTENBERG-tm"

You may distribute copies of this etext electronically, or by disk, book or any other medium if you either delete this "Small Print!" and all other references to Project Gutenberg, or:

- [1] Only give exact copies of it. Among other things, this requires that you do not remove, alter or modify the etext or this "small print!" statement. You may however, if you wish, distribute this etext in machine readable binary, compressed, mark-up, or proprietary form, including any form resulting from conversion by word processing or hypertext software, but only so long as

EITHER:

- [*] The etext, when displayed, is clearly readable, and does *not* contain characters other than those intended by the author of the work, although tilde (~), asterisk (*) and underline (_) characters may be used to convey punctuation intended by the author, and additional characters may be used to indicate hypertext links; OR
 - [*] The etext may be readily converted by the reader at no expense into plain ASCII, EBCDIC or equivalent form by the program that displays the etext (as is the case, for instance, with most word processors); OR
 - [*] You provide, or agree to also provide on request at no additional cost, fee or expense, a copy of the etext in its original plain ASCII form (or in EBCDIC or other equivalent proprietary form).
- [2] Honor the etext refund and replacement provisions of this "Small Print!" statement.
- [3] Pay a trademark license fee to the Project of 20% of the net profits you derive calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. If you don't derive profits, no royalty is due. Royalties are payable to "Project Gutenberg Association / Illinois Benedictine College" within the 60 days following each date you prepare (or were legally required to prepare) your annual (or equivalent periodic) tax return.

WHAT IF YOU *WANT* TO SEND MONEY EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE TO?
The Project gratefully accepts contributions in money, time, scanning machines, OCR software, public domain etexts, royalty free copyright licenses, and every other sort of contribution you can think of. Money should be paid to "Project Gutenberg Association / Illinois Benedictine College".

This "Small Print!" by Charles B. Kramer, Attorney
Internet (72600.2026@compuserve.com); TEL: (212-254-5093)
*END*THE SMALL PRINT! FOR PUBLIC DOMAIN ETEXTS*Ver.04.29.93*END*