

BOO TO BUDDHA

So it is eighteen years,
 Helena, since we met!
A season so endears,
 Nor you nor I forget
The fresh young faces that once clove
In that most fiery dawn of love.

We wandered to and fro,
 Who knew not how to woo,
Those eighteen years ago,
 Sweetheart, when I and you
Exchanged high vows in heaven's sight
That scarce survived a summer's night.

What scourge smote from the stars?
 What madness from the moon?
That night we broke the bars
 Was quintessential June,
When you and I beneath the trees
Bartered our bold virginities.

Eighteen—years, months, or hours?
 Time is a tyrant's toy!
Eternal are the flowers!
 We are but girl and boy
Yet—since love leapt as swift to-night
As it had never left the light!

For fiercer from the South
 Still flames your cruel hair,
And Trojan Helen's mouth
 Still not so ripe and rare
As Helena's—nor love nor youth
So leaps with lust or thrills with truth.

Helena, still we hold
 Flesh firmer, still we mix
Black hair with hair as gold.
 Life has but served to fix
Our hearts; love lingers on the tongue,
And who loves once is always young.

The stars are still the same;
 The changeful moon endures;
Come without fear or shame,
 And draw my mouth to yours!

Youth fails, however flesh be fair;
Manhood and womanhood attain.

Life is a string of pearls,
And you the first I strung.
You left—first flower of girls!—
Life lyric on my tongue,
An indefatigable dance,
An inexhaustible romance!

Blush of love's dawn, bright bud
That bloomed for my delight,
First blossom of my blood,
Burn in that blood to-night!
Helena, Helena, fiercely fresh,
Your flesh flies fervent to my flesh.

What sage can dare impugn
Man's immortality?
Our godhead swims, immune
From death and destiny.
Ignored the bubble in the flow
Of love eighteen short years ago!

Time—I embrace all time
As my arm rings your waist.
Space—you surpass, sublime,
As, taking me, we taste
Omnipotence, sense slaying sense,
Soul slaying soul, omniscience.