

TELEPATHY
To Euphemia L—

(His thought.) FROM gloomy London oversea
My lady sends a letter.
My credit's gone : the Deity
May write me down a debtor,
For I had thought that I was free—
I find I have a fetter !

(Her thought.) Yea ; must some god announce afresh
No more they are twain ; they are one
flesh ?”

For here I sit and laugh and smoke
And play with youth and pleasure ;
Life is a dream, and death a joke,
And love a thing of leisure—
The dance is done, the spell is broke,
And marred the merry measure !

Yea ; my small kiss is somehow worth
The love of all the boys on earth !

The shy sweet smiles, the tender eyes
And bodies slim that woo me ;
The sobs, the sighs, the throbs, the cries
Of love are nothing to me.
My lady's magic madness flies
Like poison through and through me !

Yea, love ; my echo is as loud
As all the cries of all the crowd.

The shaft of love she shot in May
Still rankles in September;
The flames in June that died away
Have yet a lively ember.
I force myself to dream all day:
Night wakes me—I remember.

Yea; in the night thou lackest me.
And I? Ah surely I lack thee!

I must remember how we stood
And let mad Paris pass us
(Holding one moment to be good,
For all the years surpass us.)
And touched in our beatitude
The peak of Mount Parnassus.

Yea; we did well to break the bars,
And dwell one moment with the stars!

We played the ancient Comedy
That Pan taught to the Satyrs.
We slew the victim rightfully:
We tore his soul to tatters,
Still laughing through the tragedy—
We knew that nothing matters!

Yea; fitted that strange play of Pan
For Gods and fiends; but not for man!

Unless—unless—unless—unless
Our priestly hands were steaming
With other life (sweet murderess!)
That his that lay there screaming

Between our knives—Or blood! confess
The truth; or am I dreaming?

Yea; floating on that cold pale flood
Were two red stars of our own blood.

We left our laugh, a smouldering coal
Upon his naked middle:
We ravelled out his love; we stole
His heart-strings for our fiddle:
Strange tortured music from his soul
We wrung, a writhing riddle!

Yea: our mouths took a subtle curve
As we devoured him nerve by nerve.

We danced, obscenely delicate,
The dance of cup and thyrsus;
We made him love, we made him hate,
We made him bless and curse us
Yea, O my darling, we were Fate.
Then how should Fate reverse us?

Yea, love; how cruelly we played
With the poor worm that we had made!

It cannot be (it cannot be!)
That we ourselves are taken
In the sweet snare, my Dorothy!
Did Love, true love, awaken?
And, even so, dear, why should we
Be wildly wit-forsaken?

Yea ; for we digged a wanton pit.
Ourselves are fallen into it.

Our dance grew fierce—self-stirred, self-willed !
And Bacchus shewed his forehead
Jutting sharp horns ; his grape distilled
A liquor harsh and florid.
Our cool sweet kisses throbbed and thrilled
From temperate to torrid.

Yea ; the new wine burns up our brain.
Like molten gold our kisses rain.

The month of love had curled our lips
In tense perverted fancies :
Our eyes were sunk in black eclipse
To rise in glittering trances :
Our belly-muscles tight as whips
By dint of Arab dances !

Yea ; all our love is glittering steel
Sharpened on torture's aching wheel.

My Dorothy ! my Dorothy !
Our mouths were wried and bleeding.
Love's eucharistic mystery !
Their suckling lips were feeding
At the black breasts of ecstasy,
Of ecstasy exceeding !

Yea ; at the paps of Isis we
Drained starry milk of ecstasy.

O thou close-fitted to my soul,
Close-fitted to my skin,
Moving as one delicious whole
Without us and within!
How have we lost the iron control
That curbed and spurred our sin?

Yea; like one snake's death-spasm we were.
How taken in the serpent-snare?

Indeed, indeed, blind fools we passed
From light and light's dominion
To some black cavern of the vast
On some demonic pinion.
And here we lie—discrowned at last—
A monarch grown a minion.

Yea; we are come from the bright God
To some most desolate abode.

Or is it crowned, thrice crowned, we are?
Crowned with long thorns sharp-gleaming,
So that bright blood jets out afar
From starry brains a-streaming?
Yea! in our night there shines a star
Beyond our dearest dreaming.

Yea; there is born a fearful light
Proceeding from the Infinite.

However that may be, 'tis clear
What duty bids endeavour:
To find you out in London, dear,—
A 'now' is worth a 'never'!—

To make to-day a heaven of cheer,
And make to-day 'for ever'!

Yea; though we know how springs run dry,
We'll trust our future, you and I.

Ah, madman! was there ever yet
A love that lived a lustre
That's the last folly, to forget,
To cling to her, to trust her!
She's but one star—supremely set,
I grant!—but in a cluster!

Yea; we may tire; the sea holds yet
More fish than ever came to net!