

Cawein Madison Julius

Shapes and Shadows



Madison Cawein

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Shapes and Shadows:

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Under the Stars and Stripes

High on the world did our fathers of old,
Under the stars and stripes,
Blazon the name that we now must uphold,
Under the stars and stripes.
Vast in the past they have builded an arch
Over which Freedom has lighted her torch.
Follow it! Follow it! Come, let us march
Under the stars and stripes!

We in whose bodies the blood of them runs,
Under the stars and stripes,
We will acquit us as sons of their sons,
Under the stars and stripes.
Ever for justice, our heel upon wrong,
We in the light of our vengeance thrice strong!
Rally together! Come tramping along
Under the stars and stripes!

Out of our strength and a nation's great need,
Under the stars and stripes,

Heroes again as of old we shall breed,
Under the stars and stripes.
Broad to the winds be our banner unfurled!
Straight in Spain's face let defiance be hurled!
God on our side, we will battle the world
Under the stars and stripes!

Madison Cawein.

From "Poems of American Patriotism," selected by R. L. Paget.

The Dedication

*Ah, not for us the Heavens that hold
God's message of Promethean fire!
The Flame that fell on bards of old
To hallow and inspire.
Yet let the Soul dream on and dare
No less Song's height that these possess:
We can but fail; and may prepare
The way to some success.*

The Evanescent Beautiful

Day after Day, young with eternal beauty,
Pays flowery duty to the month and clime;
Night after night erects a vasty portal
Of stars immortal for the march of Time.

But where are now the Glory and the Rapture,
That once did capture me in cloud and stream?
Where now the Joy that was both speech and silence?
Where the beguillance that was fact and dream?

I know that Earth and Heaven are as golden
As they of olden made me feel and see;
Not in themselves is lacking aught of power
Through star and flower – something's lost in me.

*Return! Return! I cry, O Visions vanished,
O Voices banished, to my Soul again!—*
The near Earth blossoms and the far Skies glisten,
I look and listen, but, alas! in vain.

August

I

Clad on with glowing beauty and the peace,
Benign, of calm maturity, she stands
Among her meadows and her orchard-lands,
And on her mellowing gardens and her trees,
Out of the ripe abundance of her hands,
Bestows increase
And fruitfulness, as, wrapped in sunny ease,
Blue-eyed and blonde she goes,
Upon her bosom *Summer's* richest rose.

II

And he who follows where her footsteps lead,
By hill and rock, by forest-side and stream,
Shall glimpse the glory of her visible dream,
In flower and fruit, in rounded nut and seed:
She in whose path the very shadows gleam;
Whose humblest weed

Seems lovelier than *June's* loveliest flower, indeed,
And sweeter to the smell
Than *April's* self within a rainy dell.

III

Hers is a sumptuous simplicity
Within the fair Republic of her flowers,
Where you may see her standing hours on hours,
Breast-deep in gold, soft-holding up a bee
To her hushed ear; or sitting under bowers
Of greenery,
A butterfly a-tilt upon her knee;
Or, lounging on her hip,
Dancing a cricket on her finger-tip.

IV

Aye, let me breathe hot scents that tell of you:
The hoary catnip and the meadow-mint,
On which the honour of your touch doth print
Itself as odour. Let me drink the hue
Of ironweed and mist-flow'r here that hint,
With purple and blue,

The rapture that your presence doth imbue
Their inmost essence with,
Immortal though as transient as a myth.

V

Yea, let me feed on sounds that still assure
Me where you hide: the brooks', whose happy din
Tells where, the deep retired woods within,
Disrobed, you bathe; the birds', whose drowsy lure
Tells where you slumber, your warm-nestling chin
Soft on the pure
Pink cushion of your palm ... What better cure
For care and memory's ache
Than to behold you so and watch you wake!

The Higher Brotherhood

To come in touch with mysteries
Of beauty idealizing Earth,
Go seek the hills, grown old with trees,
The old hills wise with death and birth.

There you may hear the heart that beats
In streams, where music has its source;
And in wild rocks of green retreats
Behold the silent soul of force.

Above the love that emanates
From human passion, and reflects
The flesh, must be the love that waits
On Nature, whose high call elects

None to her secrets save the few
Who hold that facts are far less real
Than dreams, with which all facts indue
Themselves approaching the Ideal.

Gramarye

There are some things that entertain me more
Than men or books; and to my knowledge seem
A key of Poetry, made of magic lore
Of childhood, opening many a fabled door
Of superstition, mystery, and dream
Enchantment locked of yore.

For, when through dusking woods my pathway lies,
Often I feel old spells, as o'er me flits
The bat, like some black thought that, troubled, flies
Round some dark purpose; or before me cries
The owl that, like an evil conscience, sits
A shadowy voice and eyes.

Then, when down blue canals of cloudy snow
The white moon oars her boat, and woods vibrate
With crickets, lo, I hear the hautboys blow
Of Elf-land; and when green the fireflies glow,
See where the goblins hold a Fairy Fête
With lanthorn row on row.

Strange growths, that ooze from long-dead logs and spread
A creamy fungus, where the snail, uncoiled,
And fat slug feed at morn, are Pixy bread

Made of the yeasted dew; the lichens red,
Besides these grown, are meat the Brownies broiled
Above a glow-worm bed.

The smears of silver on the webs that line
The tree's crook'd roots, or stretch, white-wove, within
The hollow stump, are stains of Faëry wine
Spilled on the cloth where Elf-land sat to dine,
When night beheld them drinking, chin to chin,
O' the moon's fermented shine.

What but their chairs the mushrooms on the lawn,
Or toadstools hidden under flower and fern,
Tagged with the dotting dew! – With knees updrawn
Far as his eyes, have I not come upon
Puck seated there? but scarcely 'round could turn
Ere, presto! he was gone.

And so though Science from the woods hath tracked
The Elfin; and with prosy lights of day
Unhallowed all his haunts; and, dulling, blacked
Our eyesight, still hath Beauty never lacked
For seers yet; who, in some wizard way,
Prove Fancy real as Fact.

Dreams

My thoughts have borne me far away
To Beauties of an older day,
Where, crowned with roses, stands the Dawn,
Striking her seven-stringed barbiton
Of flame, whose chords give being to
The seven colours, hue for hue;
The music of the colour-dream
She builds the day from, beam by beam.

My thoughts have borne me far away
To Myths of a diviner day,
Where, sitting on the mountain, Noon
Sings to the pines a sun-soaked tune
Of rest and shade and clouds and skies,
Wherein her calm dreams idealize
Light as a presence, heavenly fair,
Sleeping with all her beauty bare.

My thoughts have borne me far away
To Visions of a wiser day,
Where, stealing through the wilderness,
Night walks, a sad-eyed votaress,
And prays with mystic words she hears
Behind the thunder of the spheres,

The starry utterance that's hers,
With which she fills the Universe.

The Old House

Quaint and forgotten, by an unused road,
An old house stands: around its doors the dense
Blue iron-weeds grow high;
The chipmunks make a highway of its fence;
And on its sunken flagstones slug and toad
Silent as lichens lie.

The timid snake upon its hearth's cool sand
Sleeps undisturbed; the squirrel haunts its roof;
And in the clapboard sides
Of closets, dim with many a spider woof,
Like the uncertain tapping of a hand,
The beetle-borer hides.

Above its lintel, under mossy eaves,
The mud-wasps build their cells; and in the floor
Of its neglected porch
The black bees nest. Through each deserted door,
Vague as a phantom's footsteps, steal the leaves,
And dropped cones of the larch.

But come with me when sunset's magic old
Transforms the ruin of that ancient house;
When windows, one by one, —

Like age's eyes, that youth's love-dreams arouse, —
Grow lairs of fire; and glad mouths of gold
Its wide doors, in the sun.

Or let us wait until each rain-stained room
Is carpeted with moonlight, pattered oft
With the deep boughs o'erhead;
And through the house the wind goes rustling soft,
As might the ghost – a whisper of perfume —
Of some sweet girl long dead.

The Rock

Here, at its base, in dinged deeps
Of spice-bush, where the ivy creeps,
The cold spring scoops its hollow;
And there three mossy stepping-stones
Make ripple murmurs; undertones
Of foam that blend and follow
With voices of the wood that drones.

The quail pipes here when noons are hot;
And here, in coolness sunlight-shot
Beneath a roof of briers,
The red-fox skulks at close of day;
And here at night, the shadows gray
Stand like Franciscan friars,
With moonbeam beads whereon they pray.

Here yawns the ground-hog's dark-dug hole;
And there the tunnel of the mole
Heaves under weed and flower;
A sandy pit-fall here and there
The ant-lion digs and lies a-lair;
And here, for sun and shower,
The spider weaves a silvery snare.

The poison-oak's rank tendrils twine
The rock's south side; the trumpet-vine,
With crimson bugles sprinkled,
Makes green its eastern side; the west
Is rough with lichens; and, gray-pressed
Into an angle wrinkled,
The hornets hang an oblong nest.

The north is hid from sun and star,
And here, – like an Inquisitor
Of Faëry Inquisition,
That roots out Elf-land heresy, —
Deep in the rock, with mystery
Cowled for his grave commission,
The Owl sits magisterially.

Rain

Around, the stillness deepened; then the grain
Went wild with wind; and every briery lane
Was swept with dust; and then, tempestuous black,
Hillward the tempest heaved a monster back,
That on the thunder leaned as on a cane;
And on huge shoulders bore a cloudy pack,
That gullied gold from many a lightning-crack:
One great drop splashed and wrinkled down the pane,
And then field, hill, and wood were lost in rain.

At last, through clouds, – as from a cavern hewn
Into night's heart, – the sun burst, angry roon;
And every cedar, with its weight of wet,
Against the sunset's fiery splendour set,
Frightened to beauty, seemed with rubies strewn;
Then in drenched gardens, like sweet phantoms met,
Dim odours rose of pink and mignonette;
And in the East a confidence, that soon
Grew to the calm assurance of the Moon.

Standing-Stone Creek

A weed-grown slope, whereon the rain
Has washed the brown rocks bare,
Leads tangled from a lonely lane
Down to a creek's broad stair
Of stone, that, through the solitude,
Winds onward to a quiet wood.

An intermittent roof of shade
The beech above it throws;
Along its steps a balustrade
Of beauty builds the rose;
In which, a stately lamp of green
At intervals the cedar's seen.

The water, carpeting each ledge
Of rock that runs across,
Glints 'twixt a flow'r-embroidered edge
Of ferns and grass and moss;
And in its deeps the wood and sky
Seem patterns of the softest dye.

Long corridors of pleasant dusk
Within the house of leaves
It reaches; where, on looms of musk,

The ceaseless locust weaves
A web of summer; and perfume
Trails a sweet gown from room to room.

Green windows of the boughs, that swing,
It passes, where the notes
Of birds are glad thoughts entering,
And butterflies are motes;
And now a vista where the day
Opens a door of wind and ray.

It is a stairway for all sounds
That haunt the woodland sides;
On which, boy-like, the southwind bounds,
Girl-like, the sunbeam glides;
And, like fond parents, following these,
The oldtime dreams of rest and peace.

The Moonmen

I stood in the forest on Huron Hill
When the night was old and the world was still.

The Wind was a wizard who muttering strode
In a raven cloak on a haunted road.

The Sound of Water, a witch who crooned
Her spells to the rocks the rain had runed.

And the Glean of the Dew on the fern's green tip
Was a sylvan passing with robe a-drip.

The Light of the Stars was a glimmering maid
Who stole, an elfin, from glade to glade.

The Scent of the Woods in the delicate air,
A wildflower shape with chilly hair.

And Silence, a spirit who sat alone
With a lifted finger and eyes of stone.

And it seemed to me these six were met
To greet a greater who came not yet.

And the speech they spoke, that I listened to,
Was the archetype of the speech I knew.

For the Wind clasped hands with the Water's rush,

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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