

Rondeaux d'Amour

By Dolf Wyllarde

I

BEFORE the night come, and the day expire,
The blossoms redden with the sun's desire—
 Only the passion-flowers are colourless,
 Burnt up and wasted with their own excess,
And tinted like the ashes of their fire.

Look down and see the reddest rose aspire
To touch your hand—he climbs the trellis-wire,
 Burning to reach your indolent caress,
 Before the night.

Ah, Love, be wise! for all too soon we tire,
When once the longed-for guerdon we acquire.
 The wonder that we think not to possess,
 Once in our keeping, holds us less and less.
Nay—let us love, nor all too much inquire,
 Before the night.

During

II

During the night I felt you breathing deep
 Against my heart—and yet I did not weep
 With perfect passion!—fearing only this,
 One golden moment of the night to miss—
 The sacred night that was not made for sleep!

The stairs of life stretch upward, dim and steep,
 Midway between a grief and joy I creep—
 But let us just for once have tasted bliss,
 During the night.

Strained to my breast I felt your pulses leap,
 And this is the remembrance I shall keep
 When all the serpents of oblivion hiss—
 Of two who only clung too close to kiss.
 We sowed in love—in passion do we reap,
 During the night.

III

After the night Love wearied of his powers,
 He fell asleep among the passion-flowers.
 I felt the darkness solemnly withdrawn.
 A dewy whiteness glimmered on the lawn,
 Day weeping for this dear dead night of ours.

Vague

Vague, greyish lights, that first had threatened showers,
Deepened to golden, till the rosy hours
 Trembled with tender passion to the dawn,
 After the night.

Wan in the daylight looked our crystal towers,
Rising above the blossom-tinted bowers.
 The world looked strangely on us in the morn.
 Love shuddered in his sleep as one forsworn—
Poor Love! who trembles at himself, and cowers,
 After the night.