

## STRAY BIRDS



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TORONTO

# STRAY BIRDS

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FRONTISPIECE IN COLOUR

BY WILLY POGÁNY

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TO  
T. HARA  
OF  
YOKOHAMA





# STRAY BIRDS

1

STRAY birds of summer come to my window to sing and fly away.

And yellow leaves of autumn, which have no songs, flutter and fall there with a sigh.

2

O TROUPE of little vagrants of the world, leave your footprints in my words.

3

THE world puts off its mask of vastness to its lover.

It becomes small as one song, as one kiss of the eternal.

4

It is the tears of the earth that keep her smiles in bloom.



## STRAY BIRDS

5

THE mighty desert is burning for  
the love of a blade of grass who  
shakes her head and laughs and flies  
away.

6

IF you shed tears when you miss  
the sun, you also miss the stars.

7

THE sands in your way beg for your  
song and your movement, dancing  
water. Will you carry the burden of  
their lameness?

8

HER wistful face haunts my dreams  
like the rain at night.





## STRAY BIRDS

9

ONCE we dreamt that we were  
strangers.

We wake up to find that we were  
dear to each other.

10

SORROW is hushed into peace in  
my heart like the evening among the  
silent trees.

11

SOME unseen fingers, like idle breeze,  
are playing upon my heart the music  
of the ripples.

12

“WHAT language is thine, O sea?”

“The language of eternal question.”

“What language is thy answer, O sky?”

“The language of eternal silence.”



## STRAY BIRDS

13

LISTEN, my heart, to the whispers  
of the world with which it makes love  
to you.

14

THE mystery of creation is like the  
darkness of night — it is great. De-  
lusions of knowledge are like the fog  
of the morning.

15

Do not seat your love upon a preci-  
pice because it is high.

16

I SIT at my window this morning  
where the world like a passer-by stops  
for a moment, nods to me and goes.

[ 10 ]



## STRAY BIRDS

17

THESE little thoughts are the rustle  
of leaves ; they have their whisper of  
joy in my mind.

18

WHAT you are you do not see, what  
you see is your shadow.

19

MY wishes are fools, they shout  
across thy songs, my Master.  
Let me but listen.

20

I CANNOT choose the best.  
The best chooses me.



## STRAY BIRDS

21

THEY throw their shadows before  
them who carry their lantern on their  
back.

22

THAT I exist is a perpetual surprise  
which is life.

23

“WE, the rustling leaves, have a  
voice that answers the storms, but  
who are you so silent?”

“I am a mere flower.”

24

REST belongs to the work as the  
eyelids to the eyes.

25

MAN is a born child, his power is  
the power of growth.



## STRAY BIRDS

26

GOD expects answers for the flowers  
he sends us, not for the sun and the  
earth.

27

THE light that plays, like a naked  
child, among the green leaves happily  
knows not that man can lie.

28

O BEAUTY, find thyself in love, not  
in the flattery of thy mirror.

29

MY heart beats her waves at the  
shore of the world and writes upon  
it her signature in tears with the  
words, "I love thee."



## STRAY BIRDS

30

“MOON, for what do you wait?”

“To salute the sun for whom I must  
make way.”

31

THE trees come up to my window  
like the yearning voice of the dumb  
earth.

32

HIS own mornings are new surprises  
to God.

33

LIFE finds its wealth by the claims  
of the world, and its worth by the  
claims of love.

34

THE dry river-bed finds no thanks  
for its past.

## STRAY BIRDS



35

THE bird wishes it were a cloud.  
The cloud wishes it were a bird.

36

THE waterfall sings, "I find my  
song, when I find my freedom."

37

I CANNOT tell why this heart languishes in silence.

It is for small needs it never asks,  
or knows or remembers.

38

WOMAN, when you move about in  
your household service your limbs sing  
like a hill stream among its pebbles.





## STRAY BIRDS

39

THE sun goes to cross the Western sea, leaving its last salutation to the East.

40

Do not blame your food because you have no appetite.

41

THE trees, like the longings of the earth, stand a-tiptoe to peep at the heaven.

42

You smiled and talked to me of nothing and I felt that for this I had been waiting long.



## STRAY BIRDS

43

THE fish in the water is silent, the  
animal on the earth is noisy, the bird  
in the air is singing,

But Man has in him the silence of  
the sea, the noise of the earth and the  
music of the air.

44

THE world rushes on over the strings  
of the lingering heart making the music  
of sadness.

45

HE has made his weapons his gods.  
When his weapons win he is de-  
feated himself.

46

God finds himself by creating.

## STRAY BIRDS

47

SHADOW, with her veil drawn, follows  
Light in secret meekness, with her  
silent steps of love.

48

THE stars are not afraid to appear  
like fireflies.

49

I THANK thee that I am none of the  
wheels of power but I am one with the  
living creatures that are crushed by it.

50

THE mind, sharp but not broad,  
sticks at every point but does not  
move.

## STRAY BIRDS

51

YOUR idol is shattered in the dust to prove that God's dust is greater than your idol.

52

MAN does not reveal himself in his history, he struggles up through it.

53

WHILE the glass lamp rebukes the earthen for calling it cousin, the moon rises, and the glass lamp, with a bland smile, calls her, — "My dear, dear sister."

## STRAY BIRDS

54

LIKE the meeting of the seagulls  
and the waves we meet and come near.  
The seagulls fly off, the waves roll  
away and we depart.

55

MY day is done, and I am like a  
boat drawn on the beach, listening to  
the dance-music of the tide in the  
evening.

56

LIFE is given to us, we earn it by  
giving it.

57

WE come nearest to the great when  
we are great in humility.



## STRAY BIRDS

58

THE sparrow is sorry for the peacock at the burden of its tail.

59

NEVER be afraid of the moments —  
thus sings the voice of the everlasting.

60

THE hurricane seeks the shortest road by the no-road, and suddenly ends its search in the Nowhere.

61

TAKE my wine in my own cup,  
friend.

It loses its wreath of foam when  
poured into that of others.

## STRAY BIRDS

62

THE Perfect decks itself in beauty  
for the love of the Imperfect.

63

GOD says to man, "I heal you therefore I hurt, love you therefore punish."

64

THANK the flame for its light, but  
do not forget the lampholder standing  
in the shade with constancy of patience.

65

TINY grass, your steps are small,  
but you possess the earth under your  
tread.

## STRAY BIRDS

66

THE infant flower opens its bud  
and cries, "Dear World, please do  
not fade."

67

GOD grows weary of great kingdoms,  
but never of little flowers.


68

WRONG cannot afford defeat but  
Right can.

69

"I GIVE my whole water in joy,"  
sings the waterfall, "though little of  
it is enough for the thirsty."





## STRAY BIRDS

70

WHERE is the fountain that throws  
up these flowers in a ceaseless outbreak  
of ecstasy?

71

THE woodcutter's axe begged for  
its handle from the tree.  
The tree gave it.

72

IN my solitude of heart I feel the  
sigh of this widowed evening veiled  
with mist and rain.

73

CHASTITY is a wealth that comes  
from abundance of love.





## STRAY BIRDS

74

THE mist, like love, plays upon the heart of the hills and brings out surprises of beauty.

75

WE read the world wrong and say that it deceives us.

76

THE poet wind is out over the sea and the forest to seek his own voice.

77

EVERY child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged of man.

## STRAY BIRDS

78

THE grass seeks her crowd in the  
earth.

The tree seeks his solitude of the  
sky.

79

MAN barricades against himself.

80

YOUR voice, my friend, wanders in  
my heart, like the muffled sound of  
the sea among these listening pines.

81

WHAT is this unseen flame of dark-  
ness whose sparks are the stars?

[ 26 ]

## STRAY BIRDS

82

LET life be beautiful like summer flowers and death like autumn leaves.

83

HE who wants to do good knocks at the gate; he who loves finds the gate open.

84

IN death the many becomes one; in life the one becomes many.

Religion will be one when God is dead.

85

THE artist is the lover of Nature, therefore he is her slave and her master.

[ 27 ]

## STRAY BIRDS

86

“How far are you from me, O  
Fruit?”

“I am hidden in your heart, O  
Flower.”

87

THIS longing is for the one who is  
felt in the dark, but not seen in the  
day.

88

“YOU are the big drop of dew under  
the lotus leaf, I am the smaller one  
on its upper side,” said the dewdrop  
to the lake.

89

THE scabbard is content to be dull  
when it protects the keenness of the  
sword.

## STRAY BIRDS

90

IN darkness the One appears as uniform ; in the light the One appears as manifold.

91

THE great earth makes herself hospitable with the help of the grass.

92

THE birth and death of the leaves are the rapid whirls of the eddy whose wider circles move slowly among stars.

93

POWER said to the world, "You are mine."

The world kept it prisoner on her throne.

## STRAY BIRDS

Love said to the world, "I am  
thine."

The world gave it the freedom of  
her house.

94

THE mist is like the earth's desire.  
It hides the sun for whom she cries.

95

BE still, my heart, these great trees  
are prayers.

96

THE noise of the moment scoffs at  
the music of the Eternal.

## STRAY BIRDS

97

I THINK of other ages that floated  
upon the stream of life and love and  
death and are forgotten, and I feel  
the freedom of passing away.

98

THE sadness of my soul is her  
bride's veil.

It waits to be lifted in the night.

99

DEATH's stamp gives value to the  
coin of life; making it possible to buy  
with life what is truly precious.

[ 31 ]

## STRAY BIRDS

100

THE cloud stood humbly in a corner  
of the sky.

The morning crowned it with splendour.

101

THE dust receives insult and in  
return offers her flowers.

102

Do not linger to gather flowers to  
keep them, but walk on, for flowers  
will keep themselves blooming all your  
way.

103

Roots are the branches down in  
the earth.

Branches are roots in the air.





## STRAY BIRDS

104

THE music of the far-away summer  
flutters around the Autumn seeking  
its former nest.

105

Do not insult your friend by lend-  
ing him merits from your own pocket.

106

THE touch of the nameless days  
clings to my heart like mosses round  
the old tree.

107

THE echo mocks her origin to prove  
she is the original.

## STRAY BIRDS

108

GOD is ashamed when the prosperous  
boasts of His special favour.

109

I CAST my own shadow upon my  
path, because I have a lamp that has  
not been lighted.

110

MAN goes into the noisy crowd to  
drown his own clamour of silence.

111

THAT which ends in exhaustion is  
death, but the perfect ending is in the  
endless.

## STRAY BIRDS

112

THE sun has his simple robe of light. The clouds are decked with gorgeousness.

113

THE hills are like shouts of children who raise their arms, trying to catch stars.

114

THE road is lonely in its crowd for it is not loved.

115

THE power that boasts of its mischiefs is laughed at by the yellow leaves that fall, and clouds that pass by.



## STRAY BIRDS

116

THE earth hums to me to-day in the  
sun, like a woman at her spinning,  
some ballad of the ancient time in  
a forgotten tongue.

117

THE grass-blade is worthy of the  
great world where it grows.

118

DREAM is a wife who must talk,  
Sleep is a husband who silently  
suffers.

119

THE night kisses the fading day  
whispering to his ear, "I am death, your  
mother. I am to give you fresh birth."



## STRAY BIRDS

120

I FEEL thy beauty, dark night, like  
that of the loved woman when she  
has put out the lamp.

121

I CARRY in my world that flourishes  
the worlds that have failed.

122

DEAR friend, I feel the silence of  
your great thoughts of many a deep-  
ening eventide on this beach when I  
listen to these waves.

123

THE bird thinks it is an act of kind-  
ness to give the fish a lift in the air.

## STRAY BIRDS

124

“IN the moon thou sendest thy love letters to me,” said the night to the sun.

“I leave my answers in tears upon the grass.”

125

THE Great is a born child ; when he dies he gives his great childhood to the world.

126

NOT hammerstrokes, but dance of the water sings the pebbles into perfection.



## STRAY BIRDS

127

BEES sip honey from flowers and  
hum their thanks when they leave.

The gaudy butterfly is sure that the  
flowers owe thanks to him.

128

To be outspoken is easy when you  
do not wait to speak the complete  
truth.

129

ASKS the Possible to the Impossible,  
“Where is your dwelling place?”

“In the dreams of the impotent,”  
comes the answer.

130

IF you shut your door to all errors  
truth will be shut out.





## STRAY BIRDS

131

I HEAR some rustle of things behind  
my sadness of heart, — I cannot see  
them.

132

LEISURE in its activity is work.  
The stillness of the sea stirs in waves.

133

THE leaf becomes flower when it  
loves.

The flower becomes fruit when it  
worships.

134

THE roots below the earth claim no  
rewards for making the branches fruit-  
ful.





## STRAY BIRDS

135

THIS rainy evening the wind is restless.

I look at the swaying branches and ponder over the greatness of all things.

136

STORM of midnight, like a giant child awakened in the untimely dark, has begun to play and shout.

137

THOU raisest thy waves vainly to follow thy lover, O sea, thou lonely bride of the storm.

[ 41 ]

## STRAY BIRDS

138

“I AM ashamed of my emptiness,”  
said the Word to the Work.

“I know how poor I am when I see  
you,” said the Work to the Word.

139

TIME is the wealth of change, but  
the clock in its parody makes it mere  
change and no wealth.

140

TRUTH in her dress finds facts too  
tight.

In fiction she moves with ease.

[ 42 ]

## STRAY BIRDS

141

WHEN I travelled to here and to there, I was tired of thee, O Road, but now when thou leadest me to everywhere I am wedded to thee in love.

142

LET me think that there is one among those stars that guides my life through the dark unknown.

143

WOMAN, with the grace of your fingers you touched my things and order came out like music.

[ 43 ]



## STRAY BIRDS

144

ONE sad voice has its nest among  
the ruins of the years.

It sings to me in the night, — “I  
loved you.”

145

THE flaming fire warns me off by  
its own glow.

Save me from the dying embers  
hidden under ashes.

146

I HAVE my stars in the sky,  
But oh for my little lamp unlit in  
my house.



## STRAY BIRDS

147

THE dust of the dead words clings  
to thee.

Wash thy soul with silence.

148

GAPS are left in life through which  
comes the sad music of death.

149

THE world has opened its heart of  
light in the morning.

Come out, my heart, with thy love  
to meet it.

150

MY thoughts shimmer with these  
shimmering leaves and my heart sings  
with the touch of this sunlight; my  
[ 45 ]

## STRAY BIRDS

life is glad to be floating with all things  
into the blue of space, into the dark of  
time.

151

God's great power is in the gentle  
breeze, not in the storm.

152

THIS is a dream in which things are  
all loose and they oppress. I shall  
find them gathered in thee when I  
awake and shall be free.

153

"WHO is there to take up my  
duties?" asked the setting sun.

"I shall do what I can, my Master,"  
said the earthen lamp.

## STRAY BIRDS

154

By plucking her petals you do not  
gather the beauty of the flower.

155

SILENCE will carry your voice like  
the nest that holds the sleeping birds.

156

THE Great walks with the Small  
without fear.

The Middling keeps aloof.

157

THE night opens the flowers in secret  
and allows the day to get thanks.



## STRAY BIRDS

158

POWER takes as ingratitude the writhings of its victims.

159

WHEN we rejoice in our fulness, then we can part with our fruits with joy.

160

THE raindrops kissed the earth and whispered, — “We are thy homesick children, mother, come back to thee from the heaven.”

161

THE cobweb pretends to catch dew-drops and catches flies.



## STRAY BIRDS

162

LOVE! when you come with the  
burning lamp of pain in your hand, I  
can see your face and know you as  
bliss.

163

“THE learned say that your lights  
will one day be no more.” said the fire-  
fly to the stars.

The stars made no answer.

164

IN the dusk of the evening the bird  
of some early dawn comes to the nest of  
my silence.

## STRAY BIRDS

165

THOUGHTS pass in my mind like  
flocks of ducks in the sky.

I hear the voice of their wings.

166

THE canal loves to think that rivers  
exist solely to supply it with water.

167

THE world has kissed my soul with  
its pain, asking for its return in songs.

168

THAT which oppresses me, is it my  
soul trying to come out in the open,  
or the soul of the world knocking at  
my heart for its entrance?

## STRAY BIRDS

169

THOUGHT feeds itself with its own words and grows.

170

I HAVE dipped the vessel of my heart into this silent hour; it has filled with love.

171

EITHER you have work or you have not.

When you have to say, "Let us do something," then begins mischief.

172

THE sunflower blushed to own the nameless flower as her kin.

The sun rose and smiled on it, saying, "Are you well, my darling?"

## STRAY BIRDS

173

“WHO drives me forward like fate?”  
“The Myself striding on my back.”

174

THE clouds fill the watercups of the  
river, hiding themselves in the distant  
hills.

175

I SPILL water from my water jar as I  
walk on my way,  
Very little remains for my home.

176

THE water in a vessel is sparkling ;  
the water in the sea is dark.

The small truth has words that are  
clear ; the great truth has great silence.

## STRAY BIRDS

177

YOUR smile was the flowers of your own fields, your talk was the rustle of your own mountain pines, but your heart was the woman that we all know.

178

It is the little things that I leave behind for my loved ones, — great things are for everyone.

179

WOMAN, thou hast encircled the world's heart with the depth of thy tears as the sea has the earth.



## STRAY BIRDS

180

THE sunshine greets me with a smile.  
The rain, his sad sister, talks to my  
heart.

181

MY flower of the day dropped its  
petals forgotten.

In the evening it ripens into a golden  
fruit of memory.

182

I AM like the road in the night listen-  
ing to the footfalls of its memories in  
silence.

183

THE evening sky to me is like a win-  
dow, and a lighted lamp, and a waiting  
behind it.



## STRAY BIRDS

184

HE who is too busy doing good finds  
no time to be good.

185

I AM the autumn cloud, empty of  
rain, see my fulness in the field of  
ripened rice.

186

THEY hated and killed and men  
praised them.

But God in shame hastens to hide  
its memory under the green grass.

187

TOES are the fingers that have for-  
saken their past.

## STRAY BIRDS

188

DARKNESS travels towards light, but  
blindness towards death.

189

THE pet dog suspects the universe  
for scheming to take its place.

190

SIT still my heart, do not raise your  
dust.

Let the world find its way to you.

191

THE bow whispers to the arrow before  
it speeds forth — "Your freedom is  
mine."



## STRAY BIRDS

192

WOMAN, in your laughter you have  
the music of the fountain of life.

193

A MIND all logic is like a knife all  
blade.

It makes the hand bleed that uses it.

194

GOD loves man's lamp lights better  
than his own great stars.

195

THIS world is the world of wild storms  
kept tame with the music of beauty.

[ 57 ]

## STRAY BIRDS

196

“MY heart is like the golden casket  
of thy kiss,” said the sunset cloud to  
the sun.

197

BY touching you may kill, by keep-  
ing away you may possess.

198

THE cricket's chirp and the patter of  
rain come to me through the dark, like  
the rustle of dreams from my past  
youth.

199

“I HAVE lost my dewdrop,” cries the  
flower to the morning sky that has lost  
all its stars.



## STRAY BIRDS

200

THE burning log bursts in flame and cries, — “This is my flower, my death.”

201

THE wasp thinks that the honey-hive of the neighbouring bees is too small.

His neighbours ask him to build one still smaller.

202

“I CANNOT keep your waves,” says the bank to the river.

“Let me keep your footprints in my heart.”

203

THE day, with the noise of this little earth, drowns the silence of all worlds.

## STRAY BIRDS

204

THE song feels the infinite in the air,  
the picture in the earth, the poem in  
the air and the earth ;

For its words have meaning that  
walks and music that soars.

205

WHEN the sun goes down to the  
West, the East of his morning stands  
before him in silence.

206

LET me not put myself wrongly to  
my world and set it against me.

[ 60 ]

## STRAY BIRDS

207

PRAISE shames me, for I secretly beg  
for it.

208

LET my doing nothing when I have  
nothing to do become untroubled in its  
depth of peace like the evening in the  
seashore when the water is silent.

209

MAIDEN, your simplicity, like the  
blueness of the lake, reveals your  
depth of truth.

210

THE best does not come alone.

It comes with the company of the all.

## STRAY BIRDS

211

God's right hand is gentle, but  
terrible is his left hand.

212

My evening came among the alien  
trees and spoke in a language which my  
morning stars did not know.

213

NIGHT's darkness is a bag that bursts  
with the gold of the dawn.

214

Our desire lends the colours of the  
rainbow to the mere mists and vapours  
of life.

## STRAY BIRDS

215

GOD waits to win back his own  
flowers as gifts from man's hands.

216

MY sad thoughts tease me asking me  
their own names.

217

THE service of the fruit is precious,  
the service of the flower is sweet, but  
let my service be the service of the  
leaves in its shade of humble devotion.

218

MY heart has spread its sails to the  
idle winds for the shadowy island of  
Anywhere.

## STRAY BIRDS

219

MEN are cruel, but Man is kind.

220

MAKE me thy cup and let my fulness  
be for thee and for thine.

221

THE storm is like the cry of some god  
in pain whose love the earth refuses.

222

THE world does not leak because  
death is not a crack.

223

LIFE has become richer by the love  
that has been lost.



## STRAY BIRDS

224

MY friend, your great heart shone  
with the sunrise of the East like the  
snowy summit of a lonely hill in the  
dawn.

225

THE fountain of death makes the  
still water of life play.

226

THOSE who have everything but  
thee, my God, laugh at those who  
have nothing but thyself.

227

THE movement of life has its rest in  
its own music.

## STRAY BIRDS

228

KICKS only raise dust and not crops  
from the earth.

229

OUR names are the light that glows  
on the sea waves at night and then dies  
without leaving its signature.

230

LET him only see the thorns who has  
eyes to see the rose.

231

SET bird's wings with gold and it  
will never again soar in the sky.

## STRAY BIRDS

232

THE same lotus of our clime blooms  
here in the alien water with the same  
sweetness, under another name.

233

IN heart's perspective the distance  
looms large.

234

THE moon has her light all over the  
sky, her dark spots to herself.

235

Do not say, "It is morning," and dis-  
miss it with a name of yesterday.  
See it for the first time as a new-born  
child that has no name.

[ 67 ]



## STRAY BIRDS

236

SMOKE boasts to the sky, and Ashes  
to the earth, that they are brothers to  
the fire.

237

THE raindrop whispered to the jas-  
mine, "Keep me in your heart for  
ever."

The jasmine sighed, "Alas," and  
dropped to the ground.

238

TIMID thoughts, do not be afraid of  
me.

I am a poet.



## STRAY BIRDS

239

THE dim silence of my mind seems  
filled with crickets' chirp — the grey  
twilight of sound.

240

ROCKETS, your insult to the stars  
follows yourself back to the earth.

241

THOU hast led me through my  
crowded travels of the day to my  
evening's loneliness.

I wait for its meaning through the  
stillness of the night.

## STRAY BIRDS

242

THIS life is the crossing of a sea,  
where we meet in the same narrow ship.

In death we reach the shore and go  
to our different worlds.

243

THE stream of truth flows through  
its channels of mistakes.

244

MY heart is homesick to-day for the  
one sweet hour across the sea of time.

245

THE bird-song is the echo of the  
morning light back from the earth.

[ 70 ]

## STRAY BIRDS

246

“ARE you too proud to kiss me?”  
the morning light asks the buttercup.

247

“How may I sing to thee and worship,  
O Sun?” asked the little flower.

“By the simple silence of thy purity,”  
answered the sun.

248

MAN is worse than an animal when  
he is an animal.

249

DARK clouds become heaven's  
flowers when kissed by light.

[ 71 ]



## STRAY BIRDS

250

LET not the sword-blade mock its  
handle for being blunt.

251

THE night's silence, like a deep lamp,  
is burning with the light of its milky  
way.

252

AROUND the sunny island of Life  
swells day and night death's limitless  
song of the sea.

253

Is not this mountain like a flower,  
with its petals of hills, drinking the  
sunlight?



## STRAY BIRDS

254

THE real with its meaning read wrong  
and emphasis misplaced is the unreal.

255

FIND your beauty, my heart, from  
the world's movement, like the boat  
that has the grace of the wind and the  
water.

256

THE eyes are not proud of their sight  
but of their eyeglasses.

257

I LIVE in this little world of mine and  
am afraid to make it the least less.  
Lift me into thy world and let me have  
the freedom gladly to lose my all.

[ 73 ]

## STRAY BIRDS

258

THE false can never grow into truth  
by growing in power.

259

MY heart, with its lapping waves of  
song, longs to caress this green world  
of the sunny day.

260

WAYSIDE grass, love the star, then  
your dreams will come out in flowers.

261

LET your music, like a sword, pierce  
the noise of the market to its heart.

## STRAY BIRDS

262

THE trembling leaves of this tree  
touch my heart like the fingers of an  
infant child.

263

THIS sadness of my soul is her bride's  
veil.

It waits to be lifted in the night.

264

THE little flower lies in the dust.  
It sought the path of the butterfly.

265

I AM in the world of the roads.

The night comes. Open thy gate,  
thou world of the home.

[ 75 ]

## STRAY BIRDS

266

I HAVE sung the songs of thy day.  
In the evening let me carry thy lamp  
through the stormy path.

267

I do not ask thee into the house.  
Come into my infinite loneliness, my  
Lover.

268

DEATH belongs to life as birth does.  
The walk is in the raising of the foot  
as in the laying of it down.

269

I HAVE learnt the simple meaning of  
thy whispers in flowers and sunshine —  
teach me to know thy words in pain  
and death.



## STRAY BIRDS

270

THE night's flower was late when the morning kissed her, she shivered and sighed and dropped to the ground.

271

THROUGH the sadness of all things I hear the crooning of the Eternal Mother.

272

I CAME to your shore as a stranger, I lived in your house as a guest, I leave your door as a friend, my earth.

273

LET my thoughts come to you, when I am gone, like the afterglow of sunset at the margin of starry silence.

[ 77 ]

## STRAY BIRDS

274

LIGHT in my heart the evening star  
of rest and then let the night whisper  
to me of love.

275

I AM a child in the dark.  
I stretch my hands through the coverlet  
of night for thee, Mother.

276

THE day of work is done. Hide my  
face in your arms, Mother.  
Let me dream.

277

THE lamp of meeting burns long ; it  
goes out in a moment at the parting.

[ 78 ]

## STRAY BIRDS

278

ONE word keep for me in thy silence,  
O World, when I am dead, "I have  
loved."

279

WE live in this world when we love  
it.

280

LET the dead have the immortality  
of fame, but the living the immortality  
of love.

281

I HAVE seen thee as the half-  
awakened child sees his mother in the  
dusk of the dawn and then smiles and  
sleeps again.

## STRAY BIRDS

282

I SHALL die again and again to know  
that life is inexhaustible.

283

WHILE I was passing with the crowd  
in the road I saw thy smile from the  
balcony and I sang and forgot all noise.

284

LOVE is life in its fulness like the cup  
with its wine.

285

THEY light their own lamps and sing  
their own words in their temples.

But the birds sing thy name in thine  
own morning light, — for thy name is  
joy.





## STRAY BIRDS

286

LEAD me in the centre of thy silence  
to fill my heart with songs.

287

LET them live who choose in their  
own hissing world of fireworks.

My heart longs for thy stars, my God.

288

LOVE's pain sang round my life  
like the unplumbed sea, and love's joy  
sang like birds in its flowering groves.

289

PUT out the lamp when thou wishest.  
I shall know thy darkness and shall  
love it.



## STRAY BIRDS

290

WHEN I stand before thee at the  
day's end thou shalt see my scars and  
know that I had my wounds and also  
my healing.

291

SOME day I shall sing to thee in the  
sunrise of some other world, "I have  
seen thee before in the light of the  
earth, in the love of man."

292

CLOUDS come floating into my life  
from other days no longer to shed rain  
or usher storm but to give colour to  
my sunset sky.



## STRAY BIRDS

293

TRUTH raises against itself the storm  
that scatters its seeds broadcast.

294

THE storm of the last night has  
crowned this morning with golden  
peace.

295

TRUTH seems to come with its final  
word ; and the final word gives birth to  
its next.

296

BLESSED is he whose fame does not  
outshine his truth.



## STRAY BIRDS

297

SWEETNESS of thy name fills my heart when I forget mine — like thy morning sun when the mist is melted.

298

THE silent night has the beauty of the mother and the clamorous day of the child.

299

THE world loved man when he smiled. The world became afraid of him when he laughed.

300

GOD waits for man to regain his childhood in wisdom.



## STRAY BIRDS

301

LET me feel this world as thy love  
taking form, then my love will help it.

302

THY sunshine smiles upon the winter  
days of my heart, never doubting of its  
spring flowers.

303

GOD kisses the finite in his love and  
man the infinite.

304

THOU crossest desert lands of barren  
years to reach the moment of fulfil-  
ment.



## STRAY BIRDS

305

GOD's silence ripens man's thoughts  
into speech.

306

THOU wilt find, Eternal Traveller,  
marks of thy footsteps across my songs.

307

LET me not shame thee, Father, who  
displayest thy glory in thy children.

308

CHEERLESS is the day, the light  
under frowning clouds is like a pun-  
ished child with traces of tears on its  
pale cheeks, and the cry of the wind is  
like the cry of a wounded world. But  
I know I am travelling to meet my  
Friend.



## STRAY BIRDS

309

TO-NIGHT there is a stir among the palm leaves, a swell in the sea, Full Moon, like the heart throb of the world. From what unknown sky hast thou carried in thy silence the aching secret of love?

310

I DREAM of a star, an island of light, where I shall be born and in the depth of its quickening leisure my life will ripen its works like the ricefield in the autumn sun.

311

THE smell of the wet earth in the rain rises like a great chant of praise from the voiceless multitude of the insignificant.



312

THAT love can ever lose is a fact  
that we cannot accept as truth.

313

WE shall know some day that death  
can never rob us of that which our  
soul has gained, for her gains are one  
with herself.

314

GOD comes to me in the dusk of my  
evening with the flowers from my  
past kept fresh in his basket.

315

WHEN all the strings of my life  
will be tuned, my Master, then at  
every touch of thine will come out the  
music of love.





## STRAY BIRDS

316

LET me live truly, my Lord, so that  
death to me become true.

317

MAN'S history is waiting in patience  
for the triumph of the insulted man.

318

I FEEL thy gaze upon my heart this  
moment like the sunny silence of the  
morning upon the lonely field whose  
harvest is over.

319

I LONG for the Island of Songs across  
this heaving Sea of Shouts.



## STRAY BIRDS

320

THE prelude of the night is commenced in the music of the sunset, in its solemn hymn to the ineffable dark.

321

I HAVE scaled the peak and found no shelter in fame's bleak and barren height. Lead me, my Guide, before the light fades, into the valley of quiet where life's harvest mellow into golden wisdom.

322

THINGS look phantastic in this dimness of the dusk — the spires whose bases are lost in the dark and tree tops like blots of ink. I shall wait for the morning and wake up to see thy city in the light.

## STRAY BIRDS



323

I HAVE suffered and despaired and known death and I am glad that I am in this great world.

324

THERE are tracts in my life that are bare and silent. They are the open spaces where my busy days had their light and air.

325

RELEASE me from my unfulfilled past clinging to me from behind making death difficult.

326

LET this be my last word, that I trust in thy love.

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