

The Valse

When to sweet music my lady is dancing
My heart to mild frenzy her beauty inspires.
Into my face are her brown eyes a-glancing,
And swift my whole frame thrills with tremulous fires.
Dance, lady, dance, for the moments are fleeting,
Pause not to place yon refractory curl;
Life is for love and the night is for sweetening;
Dreamily, joyously, circle and whirl.

Oh, how those viols are throbbing and pleading;
A prayer is scarce needed in sound of their strain.
Surely and lightly as round you are speeding,
You turn to confusion my heart and my brain.
Dance, lady, dance to the viol's soft calling,
Skip it and trip it as light as the air;
Dance, for the moments like rose leaves are falling,
Strikes, now, the clock from its place on the stair.

Now sinks the melody lower and lower,
The weary musicians scarce seeming to play,
Ah, love, your steps now are slower and slower,
The smile on your face is more sad and less gay.
Dance, lady, dance to the brink of our parting,
My heart and your step must not fail to be light.
Dance! Just a turn — tho' the tear-drop be starting.
Ah — now it is done — so — my lady, good-night!