

## The Lesson

My cot was down by a cypress grove,  
And I sat by my window the whole night long,  
And heard well up from the deep dark wood  
A mocking bird's passionate song.

And I thought of myself so sad and lone,  
And my life's cold winter that knew no spring;  
Of my mind so weary and sick and wild,  
Of my heart too sad to sing.

But e'en as I listened the mock-bird's song,  
A thought stole into my saddened heart,  
And I said, "I can cheer some other soul  
By a carol's simple art."

For oft from the darkness of hearts and lives  
Come songs that brim with joy and light,

As out of the gloom of the cypress grove

The mocking-bird sings at night.

So I sang a lay for a brother's ear

In a strain to soothe his bleeding heart,

And he smiled at the sound of my voice and lyre,

Tho' mine was a feeble art.

But at his smile, I smiled in turn

And into my soul there came a ray:

In trying to soothe another's woes

Mine own had passed away.