

Weltschmerz

You ask why I am sad to-day,
I have no cares, no griefs, you say?
Ah, yes, 't is true, I have no grief —;
But - is there not the falling leaf?

The bare tree there is mourning left
With all of autumn's gray bereft;
It is not what has happened me,
Think of the bare, dismantled tree.

The birds go South along the sky,
I hear their lingering, long good-bye.
Who goes reluctant from my breast?
And yet — the lone and wind-swept nest.

The mourning, pale-flowered hearse goes by,
Why does a tear come to my eye?

Is it the March rain blowing wild?

I have no dead, I know no child.

I am no widow by the bier

Of him I held supremely dear.

I have not seen the choicest one

Sink down as sinks the westering sun.

Faith unto faith have I beheld,

For me, few solemn notes have swelled;

Love beckoned me out to the dawn,

And happily I followed on.

And yet my heart goes out to them

Whose sorrow is their diadem;

The falling leaf, the crying bird,

The voice to be, all lost, unheard —

Not mine, not mine, and yet too much

The thrilling power of human touch,
While all the world looks on and scorns
I wear another's crown of thorns.

Count me a priest who understands
The glorious pain of nail-pierced hands;
Count me a comrade of the thief
Hot driven into late belief.

Oh, mother's tear, oh, father's sigh,
Oh, mourning sweetheart's last good-bye,
I yet have known no mourning save
Beside some brother's brother's grave.