

A PORTRAIT

Fair faces crowd on Christmas night Like seven suns a-row, But all beyond
is the wolfish wind And the crafty feet of the snow.

But through the rout one figure goes With quick and quiet tread; Her robe
is plain, her form is frail-- Wait if she turn her head.

I say no word of line or hue, But if that face you see, Your soul shall know
the smile of faith's Awful frivolity.

Know that in this grotesque old masque Too loud we cannot sing, Or dance
too wild, or speak too wide To praise a hidden thing.

That though the jest be old as night, Still shaketh sun and sphere An
everlasting laughter Too loud for us to hear.