

THE BALLET

They crush together--a rustling heap of flesh -
Of more than flesh, a heap of souls; and then

 They part, enmesh,
 And crush together again,
Like the pink petals of a too sanguine rose
 Frightened shut just when it blows.

Though all alike in their tinsel livery,
And indistinguishable at a sweeping glance,
 They muster, maybe,
 As lives wide in irrelevance;
A world of her own has each one underneath,
 Detached as a sword from its sheath.

Daughters, wives, mistresses; honest or false, sold, bought;
Hearts of all sizes; gay, fond, gushing, or penned,
 Various in thought
 Of lover, rival, friend;
Links in a one-pulsed chain, all showing one smile,

Yet severed so many a mile!