

IN THE DARK

A BLOTCH of pallor stirs beneath the high  
Square picture-dusk, the window of dark sky.

A sound subdued in the darkness: tears!  
As if a bird in difficulty up the valley steers.

"Why have you gone to the window? Why don't  
you sleep?  
How you have wakened me! But why, why do  
you weep?"

"I am afraid of you, I am afraid, afraid!  
There is something in you destroys me--!"

"You have dreamed and are not awake, come here  
to me."

"No, I have wakened. It is you, you are cruel to  
me!"

"My dear!"--"Yes, yes, you are cruel to me. You  
cast

A shadow over my breasts that will kill me at last."

"Come!"--"No, I'm a thing of life. I give

You armfuls of sunshine, and you won't let me live."

"Nay, I'm too sleepy!"--"Ah, you are horrible;  
You stand before me like ghosts, like a darkness  
upright."

"I!"--"How can you treat me so, and love me?  
My feet have no hold, you take the sky from above me."

"My dear, the night is soft and eternal, no doubt  
You love it!"--"It is dark, it kills me, I am put out."

"My dear, when you cross the street in the sun-  
shine, surely  
Your own small night goes with you. Why treat  
it so poorly?"

"No, no, I dance in the sun, I'm a thing of life--"  
"Even then it is dark behind you. Turn round,  
my wife."

"No, how cruel you are, you people the sunshine  
With shadows!"--"With yours I people the  
sunshine, yours and mine--"

"In the darkness we all are gone, we are gone

with the trees  
And the restless river;--we are lost and gone  
with all these."

"But I am myself, I have nothing to do with these."

"Come back to bed, let us sleep on our mys-  
teries.

"Come to me here, and lay your body by mine,  
And I will be all the shadow, you the shine.

"Come, you are cold, the night has frightened you.  
Hark at the river! It pants as it hurries through

"The pine-woods. How I love them so, in their  
mystery of not-to-be."

"--But let me be myself, not a river or a tree."

"Kiss me! How cold you are!--Your little breasts  
Are bubbles of ice. Kiss me!--You know how  
it rests

"One to be quenched, to be given up, to be gone  
in the dark;  
To be blown out, to let night dowse the spark.

"But never mind, my love. Nothing matters,  
save sleep;  
Save you, and me, and sleep; all the rest will  
keep."