



CLASSIC LIVING BOOK

POEMS BY
A LITTLE GIRL

Hilda Conkling

COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED



Poems by a Little Girl

HILDA CONKLING



This edition published 2020
by Living Book Press
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ISBN: 978-1-922348-18-0

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A catalogue record for this
book is available from the
National Library of Australia

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FIRST SONGS

I

*R*osy plum-tree, think of me
When Spring comes down the world!

II

There's dozens full of dandelions
Down in the field:
Little gold plates,
Little gold dishes in the grass.
I cannot count them,
But the fairies know every one.

III

*Oh wrinkling star, wrinkling up so wise,
When you go to sleep do you shut your eyes?*

IV

The red moon comes out in the night.
When I'm asleep, the moon comes pattering up
Into the trees.
Then I peep out my window
To watch the moon go by.

V

*Sparkle up, little tired flower
Leaning in the grass!
Did you find the rain of night
Too heavy to hold?*

VI

The garden is full of flowers
All dancing round and round.
 John-flowers,
 Mary-flowers,
 Polly-flowers,
 Cauli-flowers,
They dance round and round
And they bow down and down
To a black-eyed daisy.

VII

There is going to be the sound of bells
And murmuring.
This is the brook dance:
There is going to be sound of voices,
And the smallest will be the brook:
It is the song of water
You will hear,
A little winding song
To dance to . . .

VIII

*Blossoms in the growing tree,
Why don't you speak to me?
I want to grow like you,
Smiling . . . smiling . . .*

IX

If I find a moon,
I will sing a moon-song.
If I find a flower,
What song shall I sing,
Rose-song or clover-song?

X

*The blossoms will be gone in the winter:
Oh apples, come for the June!
Can you come, will you bloom?
Will you stay till the cold?*

XI

I will sing you a song,
Sweets-of-my-heart,
With love in it,
(How I love you!)
And a rose to swing in the wind,
The wind that swings roses!

XII

*Will you love me to-morrow after next,
As if I had a bird's way of singing?*

FIVE TO SIX YEARS OLD

GARDEN OF THE WORLD

The butterfly swings over the violet
That stands by the water,
In the garden that sings
All day.
The sun goes up in the dawn,
The water waves softly.
In the trees are little breezes,
In the garden trees.
Blue hills and blue waters I
The big blue ocean lies around in the sun
Watching his waves toss . . .

THEATRE-SONG

Eagles were flying over the sky
And mermaids danced in the gold waters.
Eagles were calling over the sky
And the water was the color of blue flowers.
Sunshine was 'flected in the waves
Like meadows of white buds.
This is what I saw
On a morning long ago . . .

VELVETS

By a Bed of Pansies

This pansy has a thinking face
Like the yellow moon.
This one has a face with white blots:
I call him the clown.
Here goes one down the grass
With a pretty look of plumpness;
She is a little girl going to school
With her hands in the pockets of her pinafore.
Her name is Sue.
I like this one, in a bonnet,
Waiting,
Her eyes are so deep!
But these on the other side,
These that wear purple and blue,
They are the Velvets,
The king with his cloak,
The queen with her gown,
The prince with his feather.
These are dark and quiet
And stay alone.
*I know you, Velvets,
Color of Dark,
Like the pine-tree on the hill
When stars shine!*

TWO SONGS

After Hearing the Wagner Story-book

I

The birds came to tell Siegfried a story,
A story of the woods out of a tree:
How the ring was fairy
And there were things it could do for him
Day and night:
How the river flowed green and wavy
Under the Rainbow Bridge,
And Brunnhilda slept in a wreath of fire.
Grane watched her, standing close beside,
Grane the big white horse,
Dear Grane of her heart.
She dreamed she was far from her father,
But Siegfried was coming,
Siegfried, through the big trees,
Up the hill,
Through the fire!

II

“Siegfried, hear us!
Give us back the ring!”
The lady with the shell,
The water-lady with the green hair,
Calling, cried “Siegfried!”
But he laughed to hear her,
Laughed in the sun
And went into the woods laughing:
He was happy in his heart,
And he had golden hair
Till the sun loved him.
“Siegfried!”
I will call him!
“Siegfried!”
But he will not hear me.
He could talk to birds and rivers,
And he is gone.

MOON SONG

There is a star that runs very fast,
That goes pulling the moon
Through the tops of the poplars.
It is all in silver,
The tall star:
The moon rolls goldenly along
Out of breath.
Mr. Moon, does he make you hurry?

SUNSET

Once upon a time at evening-light
A little girl was sad.
There was a color in the sky,
A color she knew in her dreamful heart
And wanted to keep.
She held out her arms
Long, long,
And saw it flow away on the wind.
When it was gone
She did not love the moonlight
Or care for the stars.
She had seen the rose in the sky.

*Sometimes I am sad
Because I have a thought
Of this little girl.*

MOUSE

Little mouse in gray velvet,
Have you had a cheese-breakfast?
There are no crumbs on your coat,
Did you use a napkin?
I wonder what you had to eat,
And who dresses you in gray velvet?

SHORT STORY

I *found the gold on the hill;*
I found the hid gold!

The wicked queen
Stole the gold,
Hid it under a stone
And never told.

The selfish queen
Rolling away
In her white limousine,
Never knew nor dreamed
That I searched all day
Till I found the gold,
The gold!

BY LAKE CHAMPLAIN

I was bare as a leaf
And I felt the wind on my shoulder.
The trees laughed
When I picked up the sun in my fingers.
The wind was chasing the waves,
Tangling their white curls.
“Willow trees,” I said,
“O willows,
Look at your lake!
Stop laughing at a little girl
Who runs past your feet in the sand!”

SPRING SONG

I love daffodils.
I love Narcissus when he bends his head.
I can hardly keep March and spring and Sunday and daffodils
Out of my rhyme of song.
Do you know anything about the spring
When it comes again?
God knows about it while winter is lasting.
Flowers bring him power in the spring,
And birds bring it, and children.
He is sometimes sad and alone
Up there in the sky trying to keep his worlds happy.
I bring him songs
When he is in his sadness, and weary.
I tell him how I used to wander out
To study stars and the moon he made,
And flowers in the dark of the wood.
I keep reminding him about his flowers he has forgotten,
And that snowdrops are up.
What can I say to make him listen?
“God,” I say,
“Don’t you care!
Nobody must be sad or sorry
In the spring-time of flowers.”

WATER

The world turns softly
Not to spill its lakes and rivers.
The water is held in its arms
And the sky is held in the water.
What is water,
That pours silver,
And can hold the sky?

SHADY BRONN

When the clouds come deep against the sky
I sit alone in my room to think,
To remember the fairy dreams I made,
Listening to the rustling out of the trees.
The stories in my fairy-tale book
Come new to me every day.
But at my farm on the hill-top
I have the wind for a fairy,
And the shapes of things:
Shady Bronn is the name of my little farm:
It is the name of a dream I have
Where leaves move,
And the wind rings them like little bells.

CHICKADEE

The chickadee in the appletree
Talks all the time very gently.
He makes me sleepy.
I rock away to the sea-lights.
Far off I hear him talking
The way smooth bright pebbles
Drop into water . . .
Chick-a-dee-dee-dee . . .

THE CHAMPLAIN SANDMAN

The Sandman comes pattering across the Bay:
His hair is silver,
His footstep soft.
The moon shines on his silver hair,
On his quick feet.
The Sandman comes searching across the Bay:
He goes to all the houses he knows
To put sand in little girls' eyes.
That is why I go to my sleepy bed,
And why the lake-gull leaves the moon alone.
There are no wings to moonlight any more,
Only the Sandman's hair.

ROSE-MOSS

Little Rose-moss beside the stone,
Are you lonely in the garden?
There are no friends of you,
And the birds are gone.
Shall I pick you?”
“Little girl up by the hollyhock,
I am not lonely.
I feel the sun burning,
I hold light in my cup,
I have all the rain I want,
I think things to myself that you don't know,
And I listen to the talk of crickets.
I am not lonely,
But you may pick me
And take me to your mother.”

ABOUT MY DREAMS

Now the flowers are all folded
And the dark is going by.
The evening is arising . . .
It is time to rest.
When I am sleeping
I find my pillow full of dreams.
They are all new dreams:
No one told them to me
Before I came through the cloud.
They remember the sky, my little dreams,
They have wings, they are quick, they are sweet.
Help me tell my dreams
To the other children,
So that their bread may taste whiter,
So that the milk they drink
May make them think of meadows
In the sky of stars.
Help me give bread to the other children
So that their dreams may come back:
So they will remember what they knew
Before they came through the cloud.
Let me hold their little hands in the dark,
The lonely children,
The babies that have no mothers any more.
Dear God, let me hold up my silver cup
For them to drink,
And tell them the sweetness
Of my dreams.