

IN THE WATER

THE sea is awake, and the sound of the song of the joy
of her waking is rolled
From afar to the star that recedes, from anear to the
wastes of the wild wide shore.
Her call is a trumpet compelling us homeward : if dawn
in her east be acold,
From the sea shall we crave not her grace to rekindle
the life that it kindled before,
Her breath to requicken, her bosom to rock us, her
kisses to bless as of yore ?
For the wind, with his wings half open, at pause in the
sky, neither fettered nor free,
Leans waveward and flutters the ripple to laughter : and
fain would the twain of us be
Where lightly the wave yearns forward from under the
curve of the deep dawn's dome,
And, full of the morning and fired with the pride of the
glory thereof and the glee,
Strike out from the shore as the heart in us bids and
beseches, athirst for the foam.

Life holds not an hour that is better to live in : the past
is a tale that is told,
The future a sun-flecked shadow, alive and asleep, with
a blessing in store.
As we give us again to the waters, the rapture of limbs
that the waters enfold
Is less than the rapture of spirit whereby, though the
burden it quits were sore,
Our souls and the bodies they wield at their will are
absorbed in the life they adore—
In the life that endures no burden, and bows not the
forehead, and bends not the knee—
In the life everlasting of earth and of heaven, in the laws
that atone and agree,
In the measureless music of things, in the fervour of
forces that rest or that roam,
That cross and return and reissue, as I after you and as
you after me
Strike out from the shore as the heart in us bids and
beseeches, athirst for the foam.

For, albeit he were less than the least of them, haply the
heart of a man may be bold
To rejoice in the word of the sea as a mother's that
saith to the son she bore,
Child, was not the life in thee mine, and my spirit the
breath in thy lips from of old ?

Have I let not thy weakness exult in my strength, and
thy foolishness learn of my lore ?
Have I helped not or healed not thine anguish, or
made not the might of thy gladness more ?
And surely his heart should answer, The light of the love
of my life is in thee.
She is fairer than earth, and the sun is not fairer, the wind
is not blither than she :
From my youth hath she shown me the joy of her bays
that I crossed, of her cliffs that I clomb,
Till now that the twain of us here, in desire of the dawn
and in trust of the sea,
Strike out from the shore as the heart in us bids and
beseeches, athirst for the foam.

Friend, earth is a harbour of refuge for winter, a covert
whereunder to flee
When day is the vassal of night, and the strength of
the hosts of her mightier than he ;
But here is the presence adored of me, here my desire
is at rest and at home.
There are cliffs to be climbed upon land, there are ways
to be trodden and ridden : but we
Strike out from the shore as the heart in us bids and
beseeches, athirst for the foam.