

FOUR SONNETS

I

Through ghosts and visions of a past that's gone,
 Through mists and sunshine of swift-flowing dreams,
 Through flowery fields and glorious glittering streams,
 Fresh with the breath of an unsullied morn,—
 Thou comest with thy beauty as of dawn,
 With streaming hair all shot with golden gleams,
 And tender thoughtful face that hopeful beams.—
 My love was on thy soul ere thou wert born!
 Thy love, now glad with hope, now sad with fear,
 Has filled my failing heart with hope anew:
 Thy beauty, soft and calm though sweet and clear,
 To thy soul's goodness gives the rhythmic clue.
 Thy purity so lovingly severe
 Has shed o'er my dark soul heaven's freshest dew.

II

How beauteous are the heavens after rain!
 'Cross wreck of sun and cloud and blue-specked skies,
 Magnificent with hope the rainbows rise,
 Bridging with watery hues each cloudy chain.—
 How beauteous are the meadows after rain!
 The newly-freshened grass, strong-scented, lies
 All glittering and gleaming glorious-wise
 Seeking to rival the strong sun in vain.
 But far more beauteous, Love, than these art thou,
 With golden drops on golden scented hair
 Which seek in vain to excel thine eyes' twin glow,
 With rain-dashed odorous face, so fresh and fair,
 And murmuring silver voice, so faint and low,
 Filling with love all the surrounding air.

III

ON THE DEATH OF FORTUNATO MIZZI

O summer!— The glowing country smiles
 With light of roses numerous fair:
 Lighthearted birds fly happily in the air,
 And Summer's honeyed sweetness reconciles
 Long-suffering man to life with luscious wiles.—
 What though the roses wither and be rare?
 Though Summer goeth, it goes not for e'er,
 But soon returns enwreathed in fresher guiles.
 Thou, only Thou, wilt come again no more!—
 Though Malta were again her robe of flow'rs,
 The fairest flower of all will bloom no more!—
 Others may come with more fruit-bearing pow'rs:
 Others may come in hopeful happier hours:—
 Thou only with thy love wilt come no more!

IV

KEATS

A dream half-dreamt bursts forth in song and dies.—
 A woman's form replete with Nature's might,
 Her face a dream of rosy auroral light,
 Her tresses made in twilight's glowing guise.
 Her breath is ocean-breezes' scent: her eyes
 Have all the sadness of the star-lit night:
 Her voice, the voice of ancient song's delight,
 Above the dreaming dying poet flies:—
 "My iridescent power doth transcend
 The limitless expanse of space and time.—
 'Twas I, thy unrelenting love and friend,
 Who showed thee crowning Fame and bade thee
 Thy life, thy love, thy light is at an end: [climb!—
 Death seals thy lips with an unuttered rhyme."

A. L.