

THE WILD COMMON

The quick sparks on the gorse-bushes are leaping
Little jets of sunlight texture imitating flame;
Above them, exultant, the peewits are sweeping:
They have triumphed again o'er the ages, their screamings proclaim.

Rabbits, handfuls of brown earth, lie
Low-rounded on the mournful turf they have bitten down to the
 quick.
Are they asleep?—are they living?—Now see, when I
Lift my arms, the hill bursts and heaves under their spurting kick!

The common flaunts bravely; but below, from the rushes
Crowds of glittering king-cups surge to challenge the blossoming
 bushes;
There the lazy streamlet pushes
His bent course mildly; here wakes again, leaps, laughs, and gushes

Into a deep pond, an old sheep-dip,
Dark, overgrown with willows, cool, with the brook ebbing through
 so slow;
Naked on the steep, soft lip
Of the turf I stand watching my own white shadow quivering to
 and fro.

What if the gorse-flowers shrivelled, and I were gone?
What if the waters ceased, where were the marigolds then, and the
 gudgeon?
What is this thing that I look down upon?
White on the water wimples my shadow, strains like a dog on a
 string, to run on.

RHYMING POEMS

How it looks back, like a white dog to its master!
I on the bank all substance, my shadow all shadow looking up to
me, looking back!
And the water runs, and runs faster, runs faster,
And the white dog dances and quivers, I am holding his cord quite
slack.

But how splendid it is to be substance, here!
My shadow is neither here nor there; but I, I am royally here!
I am here! I am here! screams the peewit; the may-blobs burst out
in a laugh as they hear!
Here! flick the rabbits. Here! pants the gorse. Here! say the insects
far and near.

Over my skin in the sunshine, the warm, clinging air
Flushed with the songs of seven larks singing at once, goes kissing
me glad.
You are here! You are here! We have found you! Everywhere
We sought you substantial, you touchstone of caresses, you naked
lad!

Oh but the water loves me and folds me,
Plays with me, sways me, lifts me and sinks me, murmurs: Oh
marvellous stuff!
No longer shadow!—and it holds me
Close, and it rolls me, enfolds me, touches me, as if never it could
touch me enough.

Sun, but in substance, yellow water-blobs!
Wings and feathers on the crying, mysterious ages, peewits wheeling!
All that is right, all that is good, all that is God takes substance! a
rabbit lobs
In confirmation, I hear sevenfold lark-songs pealing.