

SUN BATH

WALTER ABELL

Summer!

Deep light and deeper shadows on the spruces,
High walls of golden green,
Broad floors of flowers:
The world a blue-domed temple, Byzantine,
Mosaiced richly, spacious and serene,
Sunny and high and alabaster-windowed.

Summer—

And at the crest! The golden age!
Come, take this hour; it gives itself to you.
Lie with it on the grass.
Drink in the sun—drink in with every pore:
Give yourself up.
This lover comes a hundred million miles,
Pressing in swift delight,
Robed in transfiguring light,
Vivid in splendor of compelling might.
Mad flight!
Impassioned light!
Supreme delight!

Lie still and do not tremble. This is fire!
Burn in and in!
Burn to the heart—burn to the very soul!
Flood through the alabaster,
Press deeper, pour yet faster,
(Oh, rain! Oh, shaken laughter!)
Fill up the spacious halls,
Flash from mosaic walls,
Till every shadow is consumed in gold,
Till green and blue are gold and gold is fire!

Burn in and in!

Oh, singing waves! Oh, epoch-spanning rhythms!
 Torch of the spaces ere the world began,
 Life-giver to the first dim groping,
 Light-bearer through all destinies of man—
 Age-old forever and forever new—
 Shining when gods awoke in Grecian marbles,
 Singing while Dante dreamed and Titian drew!
 Singing across the spaces, on and on,
 Leaping from star to star,
 Past one world and another, never stopping.
 Singing! Singing and ringing!
 Swift leaping, far flinging,
 Gold bringing!

And coming now!

Eternal down time's stretches,
 Masters of starry reaches,
 And coming here and now—this hour—to me!
 Oh, singing waves! Oh, soul-unloosing rhythms!
 I have you and will never let you go.
 The final shadow is consumed in gold,
 The farthest aisle has flamed;
 The inner halls are left forever bright,
 For in the ecstasy of this mad flight,
 Divisions crumble, sense is swept away:
 Light reels with darkness and the dark is light,
 Day blackens into night:
 No night can come but after-glow of day.

Let me lie quiet. Let me feel no more.
 Or just enough to catch the Latin chanting
 Chaired by the spruces and the answering breeze.
 Summer can pass. I do not need it now.
 I have it and will never let it go.
 Come the invader through the northern mountains,
 Come the barbarian wind, the serried snow,
 It matters not. The golden age was here.
 The world was spacious and the space serene,
 Richly mosaiced, blue-domed, Byzantine;
 The sun leaped down from alabaster windows.