

SONNET *

By JAMES GRAY

When you are very old, at candle eve,
Your hands engrossed in mending memories,
You'll sing my wild poetic reveries,
The lines I made for you without your leave;
And when you sing, the world may then believe
That all my praise for you in former days
Was more than youthful lovers' roundelays
Or garlands that pretending suitors weave.
Where darkened myrtles flourish I shall lie,
My spirit quenched that now is leaping flame;
Then your declining form will wither fast
And love rejected mock you from the sky. . .
Oh dearest heart, revoke to-morrow's blame
And pluck with me the roses that will last!

*After Ronsard's "Quand vous serez bien vieille, au soir a la chandelle," from *Les Amours de Cassandre*.