

The Burden of Pity

By A. Bernard Miall

WALK straitly in your ways, O sweet,
For very pity of my love ;
There is one pathway for your feet,
One valley in cool hills above,
A way that I sought out for you
In dreams, because my love was true.

Belovèd, will you think that God
In His own shape had fashioned man,
And watched the path His creature trod
That ended foul, that fair began ;
With great love, though His eyes were dim
For pity ; could you weep for Him ?

But I a perfect image wrought
Of all I would have had you be
In likeness of my holiest thought :
And you have grown less fair to see,
And I more pitiful than God,
Knowing the way you might have trod.

Yet

Yet I will deem your heart as pure
As I have wished it every day,
And call each fault the signature
Of pain that came and passed away ;
And I will love you more, my sweet,
For every stain on those white feet.

And every wound shall be a mouth
To sing of what you should have grown
Did winds blow ever from the south,
If you had never been alone :
My love, that came too late to aid,
For pity shall be threefold made.

Yet, wild rose that the wind has flawed,
But else more fair than all your kind,
O snowflake on white eyelids thawed
To leave a falling tear behind,
O wherefore are you not complete,
Or, being ruined, wherefore sweet ?