

Two Songs

By Frances Nicholson

I—Ophelia

O^H, tender night !
Lay my head on thy lap and dull me
With deep-drugged breath
Of sweet-lipped violet
Or heavy woodbine wreath,
That I may soon forget
How hope no more may lull me
To dreams of light.

Oh, pitying earth !
Bid thy far-wandering streamlets tell me
Some place of rest
'Neath sedgy banks that yet
With yellow buds are drest,
That I may soon forget
Such sorrow erst befell me
In true love's dearth.

II—Before The Dawn

I N the weird stillness just before the dawn
Low sang the waves, like murmuring tones that bless,
Along the far, dim shore, by cape and ness,
And furtive winds blew soft across the lawn,
Touching with spirit-lips in faint caress
The virgin-lilies, white and motionless,
In the weird stillness just before the dawn.

Was it a dream, or did you really come
'Twixt the wan glimmer of my casement, where
The sweet wind followed you? Did I not hear
Your low voice, passion-thrilled, I, speechless, dumb?
While in the tender gloom, near and more near,
Your fond lips drew to mine and rested there —
Was it a rapturous dream, or did you come?