

MARY'S POEMS

COCKTAIL PARTY

She was a pretty thing
And knew it.
I made a pass
and blew it

Had I but won her attention
Or even got honorable mention
The evening would have ended
Differently.

I nurse my drink
and think
of all the possibilities.

(no date)

A REQUIEM

When the flowers come
There will I be,
When the birds sing
Remember me.

I an gone now from the winter
My face is to the sun,
Murmur when the night falls
"Thy will be done".

Albany

April 19, 1968

HIS EVENING AT THE THEATRE

Brushing against her at the bar
Maneuvering a warmish drink,
I prayed a passionate third Act
Would yield a dividend for me.

The journey home was promising
But when at last we reached her place,
She put a charming hand in mine
And washed the theatre from her face.

Talk of an early morning flight
Scattered my hopes upon the night.
"I'm ready for bed", she said with a sigh.
Oh lady! So was I. So was I.

Gainesville
April 1990

HER EVENING AT THE THEATRE

Pressed against him at the bar
I realised with some dismay
His scenario for the evening
Went far beyond the play.

The journey home confirmed my fears
So when we reached the door
I turned a charming face to his
And spilt his evening on the floor

"Reports to read" "Heathrow at eight"
All pointed to an early bed.
Thespians both, we knew our parts.
"Perhaps some other time", he said

June, '90

(no title)

Passion still stalks in my head
Tiger-like on padded feet.
Dreaming I embrace the dead.
Fiercely, fiercely do we meet.

But when I no longer call
Will he lie without a sound?
When love ceases. Do we all
Lie unsummoned in the ground?

August '90

1939

The summer was all we wanted
The sea within easy reach.
Fields ran green and golden
Down to a sunlit beach.

There would be colder beaches
And darker sands by far.
The castles we were building
Would not survive the war.

I went back in the winter
Barbed wire rolled on the beach.
The mine-strewn sands were hostile.
The sea was out of reach.

MD 1988

Nov. 12. 1982. After Fourteen years

So this, finally, is how it is:
Memories flying upward like sparks,
The quick glance, the nuance, the odd remark,
The swift exchange, the laughter.
All gaiety, all provocation, all delight.

And softly, like falling leaves, the memories
Are shed;
Soon one will remember only the good times
And one will forget
The Anguish, the longing, the regret.

WHIT FRIDAY

Hush! He said and lifted me onto his shoulder.
If you listen quietly you will hear them soon.
The Black Dyck are coming over the hills.
Listen now. They are almost here.

This was the start of the Whitsun morning
Soon the banners were lifted into careful hands.
New frocks streamed and the flower baskets fluttered
St. Johns was always the first down the hill.

People waved from doors and the old ones smiled.
Look! She's walking still. Always with the choir.
What a pretty child! Who's the dark haired girl?
Even the Roman Queen was graciously admired.

A very Christian thing, these Whitsun walks
Everyone greeting the walking churches.
But far back in the hills Old Wodin smiled
And all Wensleydale stirred in sleep.

It didn't seem too long ago to him
That three young girls in white were led
Ready for sacrifice on this Whitsun morn
To his known presence in the dales.

THE PROPOSAL

Hold my hand, said the laughing boy
And we'll be happy for ever and ever.
I'll hold your hand, said the grave-eyed girl,
I'll hold it for ever and ever.
And when laughter's gone and boyhood fled
I'll comfort the man who lies in my bed.

CONVERSAZIONE WITH A BABY

Margaretta, Margaretta
You are crying far too loud!
Are you hungry? Are you hurting?
What caused the thunder-cloud?

Margaretta, Margaretta,
Will you give a little smile?
I am trying hard to please you,
Could you go that extra mile?

Margaretta, Margaretta,
Why are you laughing so?
What are you waving your arms at?
Why are you chewing your toe?

Margaretta, Margaretta,
We must have a little talk.
I need to understand you.
Shall I take you for a walk?

THE AMERICAN GIRL

Oh, lovely, long, and leggy,
The American Girl is a dream.
She's as smooth and golden as butter
And sweet and shiny as cream

The American Man can't deserve her
or he'd find some way to preserve her.

1957

(No title)

Where is the world? The new-born cried
Here, said the mother
Here by my side

Is this the world? The child enquired
Oh yes! Said the teacher
It's all that's required.

Is the world watching? The hero cried
As he shot the goal
And the crowd went wild.

You are the world. The young man lied
To the tender girl
Who lay by his side.

So this is the world. The soldier said
As he shook with anger
And counted the dead.

It's a curious world. The Chairman mused
Power and money
And a life unused.

With a world like this. The old man said
'd really just as soon be dead.

FOR RUTH

You wore a yellow dress in Kotor
Against the gray walls.
The narrow streets were shuttered.
There was no sun.
Even the church was closed.

The mountains, dark and steep, closed in.
And on the sea walls an empty shrine
Watched sightless still
For Venetian sail or Turkish fleet.

A solitary child played silently,
The rain clouds came landwards.
And carefully I shot your yellow dress
Against the gray walls.

ADMONITIONS

Do not: -

Walk:

On the grass;
On the roped-off carpet in the museum;
On the wrong side of the street;
Away from me.

Run:

Off; away from it all;
Around; my life;
Yourself into the ground.

Sit:

There; like patience on a monument.
In Judgment; Around, doing nothing.

Stand:

Still; There; About;

Go:

Silently, the poet said;
Away

ADMONITIONS II

You can: -

Walk:

Tall;
In beauty, like the night

Run:

Things; The country
Like the wind (if necessary)

Sit:

Still, quietly, down, it out
And think

Stand:

And deliver;
Up; for what is right and good
Fast.

Come:

Forward;
Here; Again, my love.
To me;