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Poem In Two Parts

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Poem In Two Parts

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POEM IN TWO PARTS

I

My love rests in my will. I hear
Yeats sigh that love is brief and near
Pregnant in its moment, wroth to squeeze
Its breathless blossom forth and seize
The hands of new and lonely wanderers.
I hear the carefree Blake say
Love tomorrow, yesterday,
Today and everyday anew
Find thirst and quenching equal true
Make old love's embers new love's spark
... But I can hear a song in from the dark
Etching shop of a lifetime's love
For an aging wife. Many he will move
With his sometimes song, but not himself nor me.
I have run the maddening myth of all
Your heroes, Lawrence, tall hearts, tall
Thoughts. I laugh with Miller, walk
With Prufrock, note the witty talk
Of Wilde. I would like the *Odyssey*
Replayed each day, arranged in every key.
As long as I can sleep in your games
Or remember a few of the names
Of the thousands of lovers on the earth
Your stories have magic, tickle, and the worth
Of what is true but once.

II

But she is so real
that what others and myself
have meant by love
and by pain, tragedy, beauty,
desire, suffering, confusion
and worth has nothing at all
to do with us.
Poetry and music are probably
man's only respite in the noise
and they may be but measured noise.
But what I love for her
is soundless and one and the color
of rainbow before it springs
from the rain.
And all the poem, all the living noise
is what I do not know about my love,
except that it is in my will
before my will that she precedes
the motion of my blood.
If she could cease,
my will and thus my love
could cease.
But if she echoes
even as the long and distant shadow of the wind
she will remain a once and only thing
and I and my love will be unique
— three once and only darknesses
— one night against the dawn
— alone, unknown, not wanting to be known
— outside of Yeats, outside Byzantium.

Gerald Ivan Locklin