

1896

**VITAE SUMMA BREVIS SPEM NOS  
VETAT INCOHARE LONGAM**

Ernest Dowson

**Dowson, Ernest (1867-1900)** - English poet who lived a brief and reckless life. He fell in love with a waitress (Dowson's "Cynara") and wrote his best work for her. "Cynara", unable to understand his verse, ran away with a waiter and Dowson spent the rest of his life in squalor. *Vitae Summa Brevis Spem Nos Vetat Incohare Longam* (1896) - Title is from Horace's Ode I: "The shortness of life prevents us from entertaining far-off hopes." Opening line: They are not long, the weeping and the laughter,

## **VITAE SUMMA BREVIS**

They are not long, the weeping and the laughter,  
Love and desire and hate;  
I think they have no portion in us after  
We pass the gate.

They are not long, the days of wine and roses:  
Out of a misty dream  
Our path emerges for a while, then closes  
Within a dream.

**THE END**