

1827

STANZAS

Edgar Allan Poe

Poe, Edgar Allan (1809-49) - American poet, short-story writer, and critic who is best known for his tales of ratiocination, his fantastical horror stories, and his genre-founding detective stories. Poe, whose cloudy personal life is a virtual legend, considered himself primarily a poet. Stanzas (1827) - One of Poe's poems. Opening lines: In youth have I known one with whom the Earth, / In secret, communing held- as he with it, ...

STANZAS

How often we forget all time, when lone
 Admiring Nature's universal throne;
 Her woods- her wilds- her mountains- the intense
 Reply of HERS to OUR intelligence! [BYRON, The Island.]

I

In youth have I known one with whom the Earth
 In secret communing held- as he with it,
 In daylight, and in beauty from his birth:
 Whose fervid, flickering torch of life was lit
 From the sun and stars, whence he had drawn forth
 A passionate light- such for his spirit was fit
 And yet that spirit knew not, in the hour
 Of its own fervor what had o'er it power. -

II

Perhaps it may be that my mind is wrought
 To a fever by the moonbeam that hangs o'er,
 But I will half believe that wild light fraught
 With more of sovereignty than ancient lore
 Hath ever told- or is it of a thought
 The unembodied essence, and no more,
 That with a quickening spell doth o'er us pass
 As dew of the night-time o'er the summer grass?

III

Doth o'er us pass, when, as th' expanding eye
 To the loved object- so the tear to the lid
 Will start, which lately slept in apathy?
 And yet it need not be- (that object) hid
 From us in life- but common- which doth lie
 Each hour before us- but then only, bid
 With a strange sound, as of a harp-string broken,
 To awake us- 'Tis a symbol and a token

IV

Of what in other worlds shall be- and given
 In beauty by our God, to those alone
 Who otherwise would fall from life and Heaven
 Drawn by their heart's passion, and that tone,
 That high tone of the spirit which hath striven,
 Tho' not with Faith- with godliness- whose throne
 With desperate energy 't hath beaten down;
 Wearing its own deep feeling as a crown. - -

THE END