

ERNEST DOWSON

“Transition” (1890)

A little while to walk with me, dear child;
 To lean on thee my weak and weary head;
Then evening comes: the winter sky is wild,
 The leafless trees are black, red leaves long dead.

A little while to hold the hand to stand,
 By harvest-field of bending golden corn:
Then the predestined silence, and thine hand,
 Lost in the night, long and weary and forlorn.

A little while to love thee, scarcely time
 To love thee well enough; then time to part,
To fair through wintry fields alone and climb
 The frozen hills, not knowing where thou art.

Short summer-time and then, my heart's desire,
 The winter and the darkness: one by one
The roses fall, the pale roses expire
 Beneath the slow decadence of the sun.