

The Link Anthology



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THE
LINK ANTHOLOGY

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MISS FINE'S SCHOOL

The Link

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FOREWORD

THE tragedy of so much that is accomplished during school days is its evanescence. This small anthology of verse is an attempt to record more permanently some of the literary effort during the past seven years of the pupils of Miss Fine's School. The poems have been selected by a committee of girls in the high school and further considered by the editors of *THE LINK*. Three poems recently written by alumnae have been added. The limit of seven years was imposed because in 1950 a fund was established by Professor T. Leslie Shear to provide prizes for poetry written by students of the school. These prizes have not been competed for, but have from time to time been awarded. Some of the poems included gained these awards or won honorable mention; they have been marked with an asterisk.

We present this collection with the hope that in addition to the pleasure it may bring to students and friends it may serve as an inspiration to yet more successful efforts.

We gratefully acknowledge permissions to reprint: from Miss Ada L. F. Snell, editor of *Mount Holyoke College Verse, Second Volume*, for *First Snow—New York*; and from Marion Lineaweaver Bonthron and Independent Woman for *For My Old Age*. We also owe special acknowledgment for assistance in publication to the Shear poetry fund.

THE EDITORS OF *THE LINK*

*SOUNION

The moon is rising from a wind-swept sea;
The cliffs are black and silver in its light,
And at their feet there thunders in its might
The deep, with sounding voice that trumpets free.
In crystal fountains 'gainst the rock débris
The sparkling diamonds scatter in the night,
And measuring the steep's whole shadowed height
Fall back in jewelled showers mistily.
Above, in silvered white, slim columns rise;
Here great Poseidon ruled in templed sway
With dance and song and solemn sacrifice;
But now the only music that doth stray
Where on the height the ruined temple lies
Is from the dark Aegean's stormy fray.

1931

MARGARET RUSSELL, XI

*DREAMS

Dreams are woven
On a delicate loom
In intricate patterns.
Dreams are woven curiously.

Dreams are moon-madness.
Surf pounding
Against translucent cliffs
Thinly etched in the moonlight.

Dreams are fantasies.
Masquerade—
Slim perfumed hands, music
And bright mocking laughter.

Dreams are a longing.
Pierrot
In porcelain, sings to the stars
Of one gone, and one forsaken.

Dreams are moments
Remembered
Suddenly. A new heart's pain
At an old forgetting.

* * *

Dreams are stardust
Flung in the eyes.

Dreams are woven
On a delicate loom
In intricate patterns.
Dreams are woven into my heart.

HOKKU OF WINTER

A cluster of snow
Clung exultantly atop
Crescent boughs of spruce.

An elfin oak-tree
Chuckled at the icicle
Hanging foolishly. †

Snowy fields shimmered
Beneath the stripling shadows
Of slender white birch.

A skittish squirrel
Scampered through the snow, searching,
Flicked his tail and fled.

A startled titmouse,
Chattering inquisitively,
Scanned his snow-clad tail.

THE CHURCHYARD

A stone gate marks and ends the leafy path:
The walls are gone that held the churchyard's peace;
The birds nest where two stone hearts link to form
A grey stone window in the ruined church.
The walls are roofless; as in pagan times
The altar stands beneath the open sky.
The ivy twists about the threshold stones,
The ivy twines itself around the graves,
Hiding the names—those very names are carved
By lovers now upon the beech-trees' trunks.
. . . The ivy twines itself about the graves,
The beeches dapple them with gold and dark.
Here grows the greying moss on greying slabs;
Here slips the rabbit through the tangled vines;
Here lie the dead—the high wood all around—
The still fields yonder in the sunlight grow.

1931

MARY CONSTABLE, XI

GOSSAMER

When, in the fragrant morn, the sun
Rolls up his golden wheel above the wood
And sends ten thousand gilded darts
To pierce the shadowed greenery,
Then over meadows deep in honeyed grass,
Where clovers grow and daisies drift in white,
The airy silken threads of gossamer
Flow out and up from every bud and stem,
Each one a-glisten in the rosy light.

MIST

Soft blue vapor
veiling the mountains,
pale, ethereal,
full of mystery.

Morning mist
lying in the valleys,
wreathing the hilltops,
pink in the sunrise.

Drenching sea-fog,
milk-white, salty,
dense as a curtain
shrouding the ocean.

FEBRUARY

I was sittin' on top of a hill
An' I was keepin' mos' awful still,
An' I had to wait right there until
Sumpin' mos' dref'ly 'portant happened.

So I sat all wiv sticked-in toes:
I had mittens on—you know those
Nice new woolly ones—an' my nose
Almost freezed right off while I waited.

Telled my puppy-dog, "Run away—
I's mos' frightf'ly busy today;
Afterwards I will come an' play."
He runned away an' didn't see anyfing.

Then!

Great big wood-chuck, furry an' brown,
Clome right out of his hole in the groun',
Saw his shadow an' turned aroun':
An' I knew there was six more weeks of winter.

1931

PATRICIA HERRING, XI

THE VEERY

His little throat swells with song;
The hills ring,
The moon is like a silver plate in the sky.
The veery's song echoes from hill to hill.

1951

LILLIAN FOERSTER, IV

ICE

The ice is so much fun!
It gleams like a thousand mirrors
In the sun.
When midday comes
It melts, and falls
Into little pools;
And when the evening shadows
Dance among the trees,
It is then that the little rippling pools
Turn to still and silent
Gleaming glass.

1931

BILLY MEREDITH, IV

THE KING'S SURPRISE

O King of the flowers,
O see this surprise
For you and your friends!
It is a golden crown,
And a green gun,
And a golden bird-bath,
And a golden fiddle.
Oh! said the King.

1931

BOBS WICKS, II

WHITE MYRTLE

Design for a Block-Print Wall Paper

Double jonquil, daffodils, grape hyacinth;
Sweetbriar rose, white day lilies, trumpet vine,
Yellow day lilies, damask roses, peonies,
Pale gold and ivory, scarlet, and heaven blue.
Spring and summer at Morven, summer and spring
In the garden . . . pale gold and ivory, scarlet,
And heaven blue.

* * *

Annis Stockton treads the velvety smoothness
Of the lawn with grace, an eighteenth century figure
In hoop-skirted brocade, tight-laced, and quaintly formal,
Touching flower petals with cool white fingertips
And a grave proprietary air.
Spring at Morven and Richard distant in England.
Annis bends down to wonder at the blueness
Of a hyacinth.
Spring at Morven and a letter from Richard.
The paper crackles stiffly as she unfolds it.
"My dear," in fine, thin penmanship, "I am making
A charming collection of bulbous roots for you
Which shall be sent the first of April, time enough
I believe for you to put them in your own sweet garden.
Also I design soon a ride to Twickenham,
Proposing to view the garden of Mr. Pope."
Spring at Morven . . . Annis bends her small dark head
Over the pale gold petals of a daffodil.

Sweetbriar rose, white day lilies, peonies,
Damask roses . . . gold and ivory, and scarlet.
Summer at Morven.
Annis Stockton treads the velvety smoothness
Of the lawn with grace, Richard beside her;
She in brocaded skirts, rustling delicately
Across the grass, he in a coat with silver buttons,
Lace at his wrists and throat—dark head and fair head together.
Annis touches a bit of myrtle at her breast,
Myrtle brought from the gardens at Twickenham
To grow at Morven. Myrtle trailing over the ground
With thick green leaves and bride-white flowers.
Summer at Morven . . . Annis bends her dark head
Over the cool petals of myrtle.

* * *

Double jonquil, daffodils, grape hyacinth;
Sweetbriar rose, white day lilies, trumpet vine,
Yellow day lilies, damask roses, peonies,
Pale gold and ivory, scarlet, and heaven blue.
Spring and summer at Morven, summer and spring
In the garden . . . But nowhere the cool white petals
Of myrtle. No later mistress of Morven
Has been able to make it grow. Knowing, they say,
That it would miss her small dark head, the delicate rustle
Of brocaded skirts across the grass,
She took it to heaven with her.

1932

CAROLYN MORSE, XII

MOONBEAMS

I am gliding down
The moonbeams bright.
All in the silvery night
I see the fairies dancing
 On the stars,
Like golden islands
In silvery water.
Faster and faster I go
 Through the night.
My diamond nightgown
Glitters in the moonlight.
I will glide down
Till I drop to my bed
And sleep till
 Light.

1932

DOROTHEA KISSAM, III

ESCAPE OF THE BALLOON

Delicate, elusive
Bubble of silver,
Like a tip of a straying cloud,
Slips from the fingers
Grown careless a moment
And puffs out of reach of the crowd.

1932

MARGARET AMEY, XI

SIGNS OF SPRING

Out of their shells
The little chicks come;
In the sweet daffodils
The honey-bees hum.

Peepers are calling
Down in the marsh.
Grackles are crying,
Their voices are harsh.

1932

BILLY FLEMER, IV

*INDIAN COUNTRY

Out in the woods
Where the streams run over the pebbles,
Where the sagebrush grows,
Up on the top of the mountains
Where the mesa stands,
Where the sun sets,
Where the purple and pink hills gleam,
That's where the Indians stay.

1933

ANNE HAMBLÉN, II

Cinquains

DUSK

Dusk came
And pointed long
Grey fingers up the lake
And smoothed the curling ripples out
For night.

MARGARET AMEY, XII

THE LAKE

The lake,
Expanding blue
Beneath the towering cliffs,
Is rippled by a pebble that
I threw.

ELIZABETH FIELD, XI

MYSTERY

Blinking
Faintly, green-blue
On the black horizon,
A tiny light far out at sea
Passes.

MARY EMMA HOWELL, XII

THE KITTEN

I held
The grey kitten
Purring against my throat
And wondered how it felt to be
So small.

1933

MARGARET AMEY, XII

Rondeaux

TWO FABLETS

The Bubble

The bubble burst, but soon, as fair
Another daughter of the air
Rose iridescent from the clay,
A puff of rainbow jeweled, gay—
The last and best beyond compare.

“Shall anyone my triumphs share,”
She cried, “my beauty debonair?
Behold, behold my grace, I pray.”
The bubble burst.

But now another do-and-dare
Magnificent hung sparkling there,
And waxing ever, would not stay,
But dreamed that she might thrive away.
The bubble burst.

The Road to Heaven

“The road to heaven,” parson said,
(Parson with milk and gruel fed)
“Is not for those who feast in Lent,
Who quaff and bridge and smoke their bent
And e’en to dance are sometimes led.

“Give me the hard and thorny bed,
The hairy shirt, the cape of lead;
Such means I take to tread intent
The road to heaven.”

Surely, for those whom youth has fled
Earth’s vanities are easy shed;
And would they preach the eggs of Lent
Could they with aught else find content
Than roads to heaven?

THE ARMCHAIR BUCCANEER

The household slumbers, but the printed page
Sparkles with high Romance . . . My easy chair
Becomes a full-rigged ship, sails on to dare
The devil and New Main. Great lines engage
Stout craft in hard-fought actions. Pirates wage
Unholy war—grim boarders are repelled,
Lee shores out-run; bold mutineers are quelled—
(The hearth-cat purrs in sympathetic rage).

'Tis pleasant thus to dare—to do or die.
I doze to hear the bo'sun's pipe, and then
The call to battle quarters: "Lively, men!
Man starboard guns—main tops'l sheets let fly!"
I wake—my good ship now a chair instead—
And sigh . . . The hall clock says six bells and bed.

1933

INGRID SHELLABARGER, XI

*VIRGIL'S ÆNEID, BOOK I

(lines 157-169)

*A translation made for the Memorial Number of The Link
in memory of Miss Fine's love for the Æneid.*

Now well exhausted from that storm at sea,
Æneas with his Trojans strains to land
Upon the strange and desolate Libyan strand.
The hero's ship ploughs through the frothy deep
Full by an island, where the frothy sea
Ruffles its brim and slaps incessantly.
All seven warships sail past raging surf
To limp into a placid shimmering bay,
Whose glassy surface reflects night and day
That mighty image of twin headlands green.
See! Regal mountains tower to the sky.
Silent, they guard the Trojans passing by.
Then to the nigh-dead leader is displayed
A forest's cooling green and bristling shade.
Here jagged rock juts out above the foam
To form a sheltering cave—the Oreads' home.
Within, a laughing spring so crystal pure
Gurgles its way 'round rocks of living stone.
Without, rest peacefully those ships of Troy—
Survivors of the tempest's rough rebuke—
Upon the bay. No mooring's here nor anchor fluke.

December, 1933

JANE LEWIS, XII

THE CAEDMON CROSS

There where Caedmon stood
Watching the sea below him,
Watching the angry foam
Break o'er the edge of the cliffs,

There where the seagulls swoop
Grey as the clouds above them,
He saw where the sullen seas
Join hands with the peaceful sky.

On the edge of the cliff his cross now stands,
In the shadow of Whitby Abbey;
Straight and somber as Caedmon stood,
Surveying the bleak North Sea.

1934

ALISON STUART, X

NIGHT THOUGHTS WITH GRANDMA

Grandma, what do you do when you can't get to sleep,
Do you figure out puzzles or try counting sheep?
"Yes, I've tried to plan gardens and houses galore,
But I just can't seem to plan any more."

Do you think about days' work that ought to be done,
Or about the grown folks who are up having fun?
Sometimes do you lie there and think things to do,
To play or to talk or to read? "I do."

1933

JUDY DAVIES, VII

NEW YORK

Home from the matinée,
Riding on the bus,
All the park was silver-gray,
Mist all over us.

Little dogs in raincoats
To keep them warm and dry,
Little dogs in raincoats
With longing in their eye,
Sniffing, wiggling, yelping,
At every passer-by.

Bobby pointed out a light,
She said, "There's a shop
Where we get funny papers
But never a lollipop."

1935

CAROLYN MUNRO, V

*ANNICULUS

- JANUARY Frost has put on his
Wee silvery skates to dance
On the window pane.
- FEBRUARY Staccato tapping
Of tiny feet: an ice elf
Is giving a ball.
- MARCH Pale Snowdrop curtsies
To smiling Crocus, who wears
A bright spring bonnet.
- APRIL The soft rain has fled,
Leaving tiny mirrors for
The vain earth's fancy.
- MAY Michaelmas Daisy
Is to wed today. A grass
Is her stalwart groom.
- JUNE On velvety couch
Of softest rose, Ladybird
Imbibes sweetest dew.
- JULY In shady pools sly
Sunbeams dance with minnows to
Dragonfly's bass viol.
- AUGUST A cicada drones
A drowsy song, and dust lies
Asleep in the heat.
- SEPTEMBER Goldenrod waves
To a scornful bee, in search
Of a saffron rose.

- OCTOBER A blue-eyed girl in
 An orange smock spills red paint
 On a yellow leaf.
- NOVEMBER In a black forest
 A lone shivering rabbit
 Nibbles red berries.
- DECEMBER A filmy snowflake
 Has fallen today. Fairies
 Will weep for their star.

1936

FLORENCE BREWER, XII
JOAN FIELD, XII

A SHERATON TEA-CADDY

Brownish-bronze in the sun
It stands, dreaming of days
Gone by.
And round it is spun
A silken-thread inlay,
Pure gold
Like my lady's hair.
Teacups gay and teacups sad
Have graced my lady's tray,
But never more shall I hear
Her say,
"Two lumps or three, my dear?"

1935

FLORENCE BREWER, XI

*THE SNAKES THAT SLEW LAOCOÖN AND HIS SONS

(The *Aeneid*, Book II, lines 199-213)

Laocoön, chosen by lot to be a priest
Of Neptune, stands before the holy shrine
To make his yearly offering of a bull.
Behold—two serpents huge upon the sea
Lie heavily and swiftly make their way,
As if in line of battle, toward the shore—
I shudder at the thought.—Their bodies breast
The breaking waves but bloody crests ride high
O'er troubled waters, and their twisting tails
Trail out behind them in the widening wake.
They undulate their broad and slimy backs
In coils each larger than the one before
And hiss incessantly through surging spume.
And now they reach the shore, their fiery fangs
Quivering in and out and red with blood,
Their eyes suffused with fire. We paled and fled
In all directions at the fearful sight,
But they crawled swiftly up along the shore
Straight to the man they sought, Laocoön.

1936

JOAN FIELD, XII

*A POE

Once I dreamed that, tired, I had died
Alone, in a cool dark mossy well
Where tiny ripples whispered, laughed and sighed
And my thoughts echoed 'round me like a bell,
And, like a bell, meant nothing.

1936

AGNES AGAR, VIII

* I LOVE—

These are the things I love:
A wind, high and clean, sweeping
Before it dead leaves or rain.
A fire, playing with itself and leaping
High from the embers where it has lain.
A bubble, floating upwards, full of color and light,
That trembling waits to burst into soapy air.
The long fingers of the evening sun, bright
With dusty gold, making common things look rare.
I love the wild swoop of the flight of a bird,
And a winter sea on a lonely, gusty day.
I love a clumsy young puppy, small and absurd,
Strutting and growling at himself in play.
A village, seen from a hill when night has almost come,
A jewel, blue, or red, or green, glowing from its place
Of honor. The coming of a storm, with roll of drum
And flash of torch. A tiger, moving with wary grace
And mystery. The smell of boat-yards: tarry
And very salt. Snow, falling softly on a quiet day.
Hillsides in spring, fragrant, shy, and starry
With little flowers. A thrush in gentle rain, gay
And almost mad with joy. A summer wind
Kissing a field of yellow, waving wheat.
Linen, smelling of sun and rain and, flapping, pinned
To a line. The marks of tiny animal feet
In new snow.
How can I say, when I do not know,
How many things I love?

*HENS

Blank, sleepy eyes and drooping heads,
Billows of feathery breasts set in beds
Of soft, hot, happy dust;
A thin erratic, peaceful croon
Wavering in a breathless noon;
Here, warmed in a slow disgust
For all things active, wise and deep
In motionless peace, are hens, asleep.

*PUDDLE

Within its round and shining self there lies,
Condensed, the blue of soaring April skies;
A brilliant joyful blue that shouts and sings.
It is, of all the clean and sparkling things
On earth, a lowly thing; not clean nor sweet;
A thing to touch not with one's very feet;
Not fit to echo purely heaven's mood:
A puddle in the marsh where cows have stood.

1937

AGNES AGAR, IX

*LE PARESSEUX

He wasn't really so very aged,
Fifty-nine isn't too old by most standards.
His strange, tufty hair, framing the pink face,
Had been white since he was sixteen.
Long years of indulgent inertia
Had made an originally none-too-well-set-up body
A sagging, flesh-hung rack
That strained his clothes at every point.
Everything about him suggested laziness
Seeping gradually into his mind, his brain,
Chasing little hunted incentives to initiative to the wall,
Catching them inevitably, drugging them irrevocably,
So that even the most patronizing pity
Failed to arouse any feeling—
The sardonic, sullen mouth but relaxed a few degrees more.

1937

ELEANOR MORGAN, XI

*FOR A SUNDAY MORNING WITH NATURE

I would lie in the tall grass
And watch the laurel blowing in the wind,
With its bunches of cool pink blossoms—clear-cut
Against shiny, deep-green leaves—flashing in the sunlight.
I would pluck a small flower, to observe its beauty more closely,
And I would see the tiny stamens supporting the frail pink
dome
Like miniature buttresses upholding each petal.
There by these tiny cathedrals I would worship
With Nature's smallest folk.

1937

ANNE WELCH, X

CINQUAINS

Willows

Cascades
Of pale new green
Flow quietly over
Fairy wands, fresh water finding—
Willows.

1936

JOAN TAYLOR, X

Vanity

A swan
Floating proudly
Over the sparkling lake,
In calm waters deigns to kiss
Her image.

1937

LILY BUCHANAN, XI

An Owl

An owl,
With yellow eyes
And rumped, soft, warm breast,
Sits small and frightened blinking in
The light.

1937

AGNES AGAR, IX

Swan

A languid lady
On one continuous mirror
Serenely sailing.

1937

KATHARINE EISENHART, XI

ALUMNAE

CHATEAUBRIAND TO HIS CAT

Once long ago, in indolence like this
You lay across a desk, your golden eyes
Half-closed in that inscrutable, strange bliss
Of your own secret thoughts; and when the wise
Old cardinal returned, your side-long glance,
And on the important document, the trail
Of inky footprints, all the arrogance
Of head held high and silver-pluméd tail
Brought only a stern smile, a swift caress.
Richelieu felt the supple grace that wins
The heart. Again you, for your loveliness,
Are granted pardon for your many sins.

Smith College
1936

CAROLYN MORSE, '32

FIRST SNOW—NEW YORK

She skips with light toes
On pavements of velvet,
Silver heels, swirling cloak,
In the first snow.
White gnats dance in the dusk,
Stinging swarms with antennae of tinsel;
In the whispering silence
The city piles to the stars
Golden honeycombs veiled, sparkling.
She spreads her cloak like a moth,
And the snow takes her.
White stars cling to her fur,
Blown crystal drifts on her hair;
The air is tremulous
With something half-known,
A man's smile or his kiss,
A song played on a violin
In a castle garden,
And she sighs with love,
Love for nothing—for anything,
In the white dusk,
In the first snow.

Mount Holyoke College
1936

JANET WICKS, '31

FOR MY OLD AGE

I want to own this house, and these brown hills
That face the north and every battering storm
That swings in from the sea. These window sills
Have heaped the drifted snow and held the warm
Insistent heaviness of summer's hand.
Year after year this roof has lifted high,
Crowning the circled wilderness of land,
A pillar for the great arch of the sky.

I want no sheltered place with cluttering trees
To filter out the day and make the rain
A puny, driveling thing, no sighing breeze
To teach me how to languish and complain.
Here I could love the years of growing old,
Weathered by sunlight, stung by winter's cold.

1937

MARION LINEAWEAVER (BONTHRON), ex '29

