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AFTER THE HARVEST

Come to the park they say is dead, and you
Will see the glint of smiling shores beyond,
Pure clouds with rifts of unexpected blue
Diffuse a light on patterned path and pond.

Take the grey tinge of boxwood and the charm
Of burning-yellow birch. The wind is warm.
Late roses still have traces of their hue,
So kiss, and gather them, and wreath them too.

Do not forget the asters — last of all —
And not the scarlet on the twists of vine,
And what is left of living green, combine
To shape a weightless image of the fall.

O urges from the years of youth which sweep
Me on in quest of her beneath these boughs,
Before you I must bend denying brows,
In lands of light my love is chained in sleep.

But if you sent her back, who in the flame
Of summer and the whir of Cupids would
Have shyly borne me company, I should
Acknowledge her this time with glad acclaim.

In wooden vats the ripened grapes ferment,
But I shall heap before her lavishly
What precious shoots and seeds are left to me
Of all the lovely yield the season lent.

Oh, hail and thanks to you who eased my stress,
Who lulled the constant clamour in my veins
With the expectance, dear, of your caress,
In weeks the glow of dying summer stains.