A God’s Labour

I have gathered my dreams in a silver air
   Between the gold and the blue
And wrapped them softly and left them there,
   My jewelled dreams of you.

I had hoped to build a rainbow bridge
   Marrying the soil to the sky
And sow in this dancing planet midge
   The moods of infinity.

But too bright were our heavens, too far away,
   Too frail their ethereal stuff;
Too splendid and sudden our light could not stay;
   The roots were not deep enough.

He who would bring the heavens here
   Must descend himself into clay
And the burden of earthly nature bear
   And tread the dolorous way.

Coercing my godhead I have come down
   Here on the sordid earth,
Ignorant, labouring, human grown
   Twixt the gates of death and birth.

I have been digging deep and long
   Mid a horror of filth and mire
A bed for the golden river’s song,
   A home for the deathless fire.

I have laboured and suffered in Matter’s night
   To bring the fire to man;
But the hate of hell and human spite
   Are my meed since the world began.
For man’s mind is the dupe of his animal self;
   Hoping its lusts to win,
He harbours within him a grisly Elf
   Enamoured of sorrow and sin.

The grey Elf shudders from heaven’s flame
   And from all things glad and pure;
Only by pleasure and passion and pain
   His drama can endure.

All around is darkness and strife;
   For the lamps that men call suns
Are but halfway gleams on this stumbling life
   Cast by the Undying Ones.

Man lights his little torches of hope
   That lead to a failing edge;
A fragment of Truth is his widest scope,
   An inn his pilgrimage.

The Truth of truths men fear and deny,
   The Light of lights they refuse;
To ignorant gods they lift their cry
   Or a demon altar choose.

All that was found must again be sought,
   Each enemy slain revives,
Each battle for ever is fought and refought
   Through vistas of fruitless lives.

My gaping wounds are a thousand and one
   And the Titan kings assail,
But I dare not rest till my task is done
   And wrought the eternal will.
How they mock and sneer, both devils and men!
   “Thy hope is Chimera’s head
Painting the sky with its fiery stain;
   Thou shalt fall and thy work lie dead.

“Who art thou that babblest of heavenly ease
   And joy and golden room
To us who are waifs on inconscient seas
   And bound to life’s iron doom?

“This earth is ours, a field of Night
   For our petty flickering fires.
How shall it brook the sacred Light
   Or suffer a god’s desires?

“Come, let us slay him and end his course!
   Then shall our hearts have release
From the burden and call of his glory and force
   And the curb of his wide white peace.”

But the god is there in my mortal breast
   Who wrestles with error and fate
And tramples a road through mire and waste
   For the nameless Immaculate.

A voice cried, “Go where none have gone!
   Dig deeper, deeper yet
Till thou reach the grim foundation stone
   And knock at the keyless gate.”

I saw that a falsehood was planted deep
   At the very root of things
Where the grey Sphinx guards God’s riddle sleep
   On the Dragon’s outspread wings.
I left the surface gauds of mind
And life’s unsatisfied seas
And plunged through the body’s alleys blind
To the nether mysteries.

I have delved through the dumb Earth’s dreadful heart
And heard her black mass’ bell.
I have seen the source whence her agonies part
And the inner reason of hell.

Above me the dragon murmurs moan
And the goblin voices flit;
I have pierced the Void where Thought was born,
I have walked in the bottomless pit.

On a desperate stair my feet have trod
Armoured with boundless peace,
Bringing the fires of the splendour of God
Into the human abyss.

He who I am was with me still;
All veils are breaking now.
I have heard His voice and borne His will
On my vast untroubled brow.

The gulf twixt the depths and the heights is bridged
And the golden waters pour
Down the sapphire mountain rainbow-ridged
And glimmer from shore to shore.

Heaven’s fire is lit in the breast of the earth
And the undying suns here burn;
Through a wonder cleft in the bounds of birth
The incarnate spirits yearn
Like flames to the kingdoms of Truth and Bliss:
   Down a gold-red stairway wend
The radiant children of Paradise
   Clarioning darkness’ end.

A little more and the new life’s doors
   Shall be carved in silver light
With its aureate roof and mosaic floors
   In a great world bare and bright.

I shall leave my dreams in their argent air,
   For in a raiment of gold and blue
There shall move on the earth embodied and fair
   The living truth of you.

Hell and Heaven

In the silence of the night-time,
   In the grey and formless eve,
When the thought is plagued with loveless
   Memories that it cannot leave,

When the dawn makes sudden beauty
   Of a peevish clouded sky,
And the rain is sobbing slowly
   And the wind makes weird reply,

Always comes her face before me
   And her voice is in my ear,
Beautiful and sad and cruel
   With the azure eyes austere.

Cloudy figure once so luminous
   With the light and life within
When the soul came rippling outwards
   And the red lips laughed at sin!