

MR. SANDMAN

The Sandman walks abroad tonight,
With his canvas sack o' dreams filled tight.
Over the roofs of the little town,
The golden face of the moon looks down.
Each Mary and Willy and Cora and Ned,
Is sound asleep in some cozy bed,
When the Sandman opens his magic sack
To select the dreams from his wonder pack.
"Ah," says the Sandman, "To this little girl,
I'll send a dream like a precious pearl."
So to Mary Jane, who's been good all day,
A fairy comes in her sleep to play;
But to Corinne Anne, who teased the cat,
There's a horrid dream of a horrid rat,
And the greedy boy, with his stomach too full,
Has a bad, bad dream of a raging bull;
While for tiny babes, a few days old,
Come misty dreams, all rose and gold.
And for every girl and every boy
The Sandman has dreams that can please or annoy.
When at pink-white dawn, with his night's work done,
He takes the road toward the rising sun,
He goes straight on without a pause
To his house in the land of Santa Claus.
But at purple night-fall, he's back again,
To distribute his dreams be it moon light or rain;
And good little children get lovely sleep-toys,
But woe to the bad little girls and boys!
For those who'd have dreams that are charming and sweet,
Must be good in the day and not stuff when they eat,
'Cause old Mister Sandman, abroad each night,
Has a dream in his sack to fit each child just right.

BIRTH

Oh, fields of wonder
Out of which
Stars are born,
And moon and sun
And me as well,
Like stroke
Of lightning.
In the night
Some mark
To make
Some word
To tell.

BOUND NO'TH BLUES

Goin' down the road, Lawd,
Goin' down the road.
Down the road, Lawd,
Way, way down the road.
Got to find somebody
To help me carry this load.
Road's in front o' me,
Nothin' to do but walk.
Road's in front of me,
Walk...an' walk...an' walk.
I'd like to meet a good friend
To come along an' talk.
Hates to be lonely,
Lawd, I hates to be sad.
Says I hates to be lonely,
Hates to be lonely an' sad,
But every friend you finds seems
Like they try to do you bad.
Road, road, road, O!
Road, road...road...road, road!
Road, road, road, O!
On the no'thern road.
These Mississippi towns ain't
Fit fer a hoppin' toad.

SONG TO THE DARK VIRGIN

I.
Would
That I were a jewel,
A shattered jewel,
That all my shining brilliants
Might fall at thy feet,
Thou dark one.
II.
Would
That I were a garment,
A shimmering, silken garment,
That all my folds
Might wrap about thy body,
Absorb thy body,
Hold and hide thy body,
Thou dark one.
III.
Would
That I were a flame,
But one sharp, leaping flame
To annihilate thy body,
Thou dark one.

DREAMS

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.

GENIUS CHILD

This is a song for the genius child.
Sing it softly, for the song is wild.
Sing it softly as ever you can—
Lest the song get out of hand.

Nobody loves a genius child.

Can you love an eagle,
Tame or wild?

Wild or tame,
Can you love a monster
Of frightening name?

Nobody loves a genius child.

Kill him—and let his soul run wild!

TO ARTINA

I will take your heart.
I will take your soul out of your body
As though I were God.
I will not be satisfied
With the little words you say to me.
I will not be satisfied
With the touch of your hand
Nor the sweet of your lips alone.
I will take your heart for mine.
I will take your soul.
I will be God when it comes to you.

DOWN WHERE I AM

Too many years
Beatin' at the door—
I done beat my
Both fists sore
Too many years
Tryin' to get up there—
Done broke my ankles down,
Got nowhere.

Too many years
Climbin' that hill,
'Bout out of breath.
I got my fill.

I'm gonna plant my feet
On solid ground.
If you want to see me,
Come down.

MARCH MOON

The moon is naked.
The wind has undressed the moon.
The wind has blown all the
cloud-garments
Off the body of the moon
And now she's naked,
Stark naked.
But why don't you blush,
O shameless moon?
Don't you know
It isn't nice to be naked?

TROUBLED WOMAN

She stands
In the quiet darkness,
This troubled woman
Bowed by
Weariness and pain
Like an
Autumn flower
In the frozen rain.
Like a
Wind-blown autumn flower
That never lifts its head
Again.

TO A LITTLE LOVER-LASS, DEAD

She
Who searched for lovers
In the night
Has gone the quiet way
Into the still,
Dark land of death
Beyond the rim of day.
Now like a little lonely waif
She walks
An endless street
And gives her kiss to nothingness.
Would God his lips were sweet!

SONG

Lovely, dark, and lonely one,
Bare your bosom to the sun.
Do not be afraid of light,
You who are a child of night.
Open wide your arms to life,
Whirl in the wind of pain and strife,
Face the wall with the dark closed gate,
Beat with bare, brown fists—
And wait.

I DREAM A WORLD

I dream a world where man
No other man will scorn,
Where love will bless the earth
And peace its paths adorn.
I dream a world where all
Will know sweet freedom's way,
Where greed no longer saps the soul
Nor avarice blights our day.
A world I dream where black or white,
Whatever race you be,
Will share the bounties of the earth
And every man is free,
Where wretchedness will hang its head
And joy, like a pearl,
Attends the needs of all mankind—
Of such I dream, my world!

HEART

Pierrot
Took his heart
And hung it
On a wayside wall.

He said,
"Look, Passers-by,
Here is my heart!"

But no one was curious.
No one cared at all
That there hung
Pierrot's heart
On the public wall.

So Pierrot
Took his heart
And hid it
Far away.

Now people wonder
Where his heart is
Today.

HAVANA DREAMS

The dream is a cocktail at Sloppy Joe's—
(Maybe—nobody knows.)
The dream is the road to Batabano.
(But nobody knows if that is so.)
Perhaps the dream is only her face—
Perhaps it's a fan of silver lace—
Or maybe the dream's a Vedado rose—
(*Quien sabe?* Who really knows?)

GIRL

She lived in sinful happiness
And died in pain.
She danced in sunshine
And laughed in rain.

She went one summer morning
When flowers spread the plain,
But she told everybody
She was coming back again.

Folks made a coffin
And hid her deep in earth.
Seems like she said:
*My body
Brings new birth.*

For sure there grew flowers
And tall young trees
And sturdy weeds and grasses
To sway in the breeze.

And sure she lived
In growing things
With no pain
To laugh in sunshine
And dance in rain.

FOR DEAD MIMES

O white-faced mimes,
May rose leaves
Cover you
Like crimson
Snow.

And may Pierrette,
The faithful,
Rest forever
With Pierrot.

THE DREAM KEEPER

Bring me all of your dreams,
You dreamers.
Bring me all of your
Heart melodies
That I may wrap them
In a blue cloud-cloth
Away from the too rough fingers
Of the world.

AS I GREW OLDER

It was a long time ago.
I have almost forgotten my dream.
But it was there then,
In front of me,
Bright like a sun,—
My dream.

And then the wall rose,
Rose slowly,
Slowly,
Between me and my dream.
Rose slowly, slowly,
Dimming,
Hiding,
The light of my dream.
Rose until it touched the sky,—
The wall.

Shadow.
I am black.

I lie down in the shadow.
No longer the light of my dream
before me,
Above me.
Only the thick wall.
Only the shadow.

My hands!
My dark hands!
Break through the wall!
Find my dream!
Help me to shatter this darkness,
To smash this night,
To break this shadow
Into a thousand lights of sun,
Into a thousand whirling dreams
Of sun!

JUDGEMENT DAY

They put ma body in the ground,
Ma soul went flyin' o' the town,
Went flyin' to the stars an' moon
A-shoutin', God, I's comin' soon.
O Jesus!
Lord in heaven,
Crown on His head,
Says don't be 'fraid
Cause you ain't dead.
Kind Jesus!
An' now I'm settin' clean an' bright
In the sweet o' ma Lord's sight—
Clean an' bright,
Clean an' bright.

REFUGEE IN AMERICA

There are words like *Freedom*
Sweet and wonderful to say.
On my heartstrings freedom sings
All day everyday.

There are words like *Liberty*
That almost make me cry.
If you had known what I know
You would know why.

WISDOM

I stand most humbly
Before man's wisdom,
Knowing we are not
Really wise:

If we were
We'd open up the kingdom
And make earth happy
As the dreamed of skies.

DUSK

Wandering in the dusk,
Sometimes
You get lost in the dusk—
And sometimes not.

Beating your fists
Against the wall,
You break your bones
Against the wall—
But sometimes not.
Walls have been known
To fall,
Dusk turn to dawn,
And chains be gone!

OPPRESSION

Now dreams
Are not available
To the dreamers,
Nor songs
To the singers.

In some lands
Dark night
And cold steel
Prevail—
But the dream
Will come back,
And the song
Break
Its jail.

SPIRITUALS

Rocks and the firm roots of trees.
The rising shafts of mountains.
Something strong to put my hands on.

Sing, O Lord Jesus!
Song is a strong thing.
I heard my mother singing
When life hurt her:

Gonna ride in my chariot some day!

The branches rise
From the firm roots of trees.
The mountains rise
From the solid lap of earth.
The waves rise
From the dead weight of sea.

Sing, O black mother!
Song is a strong thing.

REPRISE (HEAVEN)

Heaven is
The place where
Happiness is
Everywhere.

Animals
And birds sing—
As does
Everything.

To each stone,
“How-do-you-do?”
Stone answers back,
“Well! And you?”

THE DREAM KEEPER

Bring me all of your dreams,
You dreamers,
Bring me all of your
Heart melodies
That I may wrap them
In a blue cloud-cloth
Away from the too-rough fingers
Of the world.

BOUQUET

Gather quickly
Out of darkness
All the songs you know
And throw them at the sun
Before they melt
Like snow.