

Preface

Alice In Wonderland

Child of the pure unclouded brow
And dreaming eyes of wonder!
Though time be fleet, and I and thou
Are half a life asunder,
Thy loving smile will surely hail
The lovegift of a fairy-tale.

I have not seen thy sunny face,
Nor heard thy silver laughter;
No thought of me shall find a place
In thy young life's hereafter-
Enough that now thou wilt not fail
To listen to my fairy-tale.

A tale begun in other days,
When summer suns were glowing-
A simple chime, that served to time
The rhythm of our rowing-
Whose echoes live in memory yet,
Though envious years would say 'forget'.

Come, hearken then, ere voice of dread,
With bitter tidings laden,
Shall summon to unwelcome bed
A melancholy maiden!

We are but older children, dear,
Who fret to find our bedtime near.

Without, the frost, the blinding snow,
The stormwind's moody madness-
Within, the firelight's ruddy glow
And childhoods nest of gladness.

The magic words shall hold thee fast:
Thou shalt not heed the raving blast.

And though the shadow of a sigh
May tremble through the story,
For 'happy summer days' gone by,
And vanish'd summer glory-
It shall not touch with breath of bale
The pleasance of our fairy-tale.