

IMPRESSIONS.

by Alice Moore Dunbar-Nelson



THOUGHT.

A swift, successive chain of things,
That flash, kaleidoscope-like, now in, now out,
Now straight, now eddying in wild rings,
No order, neither law, compels their moves,
But endless, constant, always swiftly roves.

HOPE.

Wild seas of tossing, writhing waves,
A wreck half-sinking in the tortuous gloom;
One man clings desperately, while Boreas raves,
And helps to blot the rays of moon and star,
Then comes a sudden flash of light, which gleams on shores afar.

LOVE.

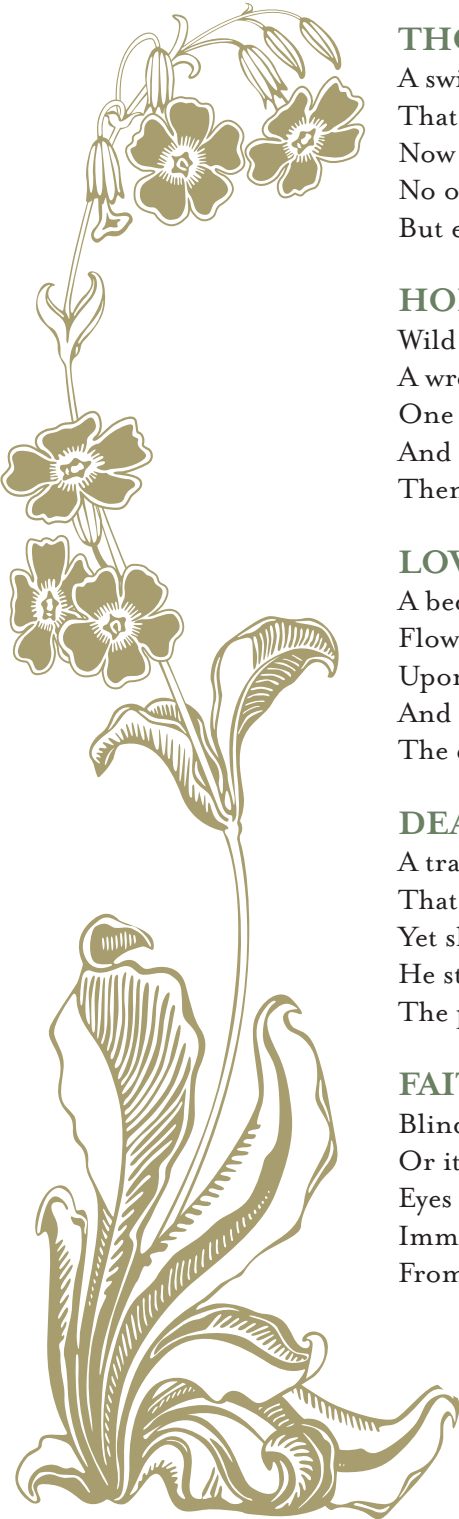
A bed of roses, pleasing to the eye,
Flowers of heaven, passionate and pure,
Upon this bed the youthful often lie,
And pressing hard upon its sweet delight,
The cruel thorns pierce soul and heart, and cause a woeful blight.

DEATH.

A traveller who has always heard
That on this journey he some day must go,
Yet shudders now, when at the fatal word
He starts upon the lonesome, dreary way.
The past, a page of joy and woe, — the future, none can say.

FAITH.

Blind clinging to a stern, stone cross,
Or it may be of frailer make;
Eyes shut, ears closed to earth's drear dross,
Immovable, serene, the world away
From thoughts — the mind uncaring for another day.



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Answer the following questions about “Impressions.”

1. What type of poem is “Impressions”?
 - a. narrative
 - b. free verse
 - c. limerick
 - d. sonnet

2. Describe the rhyme scheme in the poem, if any.

3. What primary literary device is used in every stanza?
 - a. simile
 - b. extended metaphor
 - c. anachronism
 - d. foreshadowing

4. How does Dunbar-Nelson’s use of punctuation in the first stanza contribute to its meaning?

5. Read the first two lines of the “Hope” stanza.

Wild seas of tossing, writhing waves,
A wreck half-sinking in the tortuous gloom;

What literary sound device does Dunbar-Nelson use in these lines?

 - a. rhyme
 - b. onomatopoeia
 - c. alliteration

6. In the second stanza, Dunbar-Nelson includes an allusion to Boreas, a god from Greek mythology:

One man clings desperately, while Boreas raves,
And helps to blot the rays of moon and star.

Based on the context in the poem, Boreas was most likely a god of what?

 - a. love
 - b. music
 - c. medicine
 - d. wind

7. How does the mood of “Hope” change in the last line of the stanza?

8. Compare and contrast the structure of the “Hope” and “Love” stanzas of the poem.

9. Name some words Dunbar-Nelson uses to help set the mood of the “Death” stanza.

10. Read these lines from the “Faith” stanza:

Blind clinging to a stern, stone cross,
Or it may be of frailer make.

What two kinds of faith does Dunbar-Nelson describe here?

11. Based on your analysis, what is the central idea of the last stanza?
