

October 27, 1939

Alone, with silver mist of dusk about me
I stood before the chilly rippling pond
And gazed into its dark and murky waters
And strove to see the lilies white beyond.

My heart was heavy as a stone of sorrow,
And all around me autumn winds had blown
The dry leaves from sagging drooping elm trees
Where once before fresh flowered one had grown.

The moonless sky with clouds hung heavy o'er me
And silence even denser filled the air,
A silence sad and gloomy, filled with nothing
But misery and darkness and despair.

And quivering, jagged grass, now dim at nightfall
Swayed low before the sighing of the breeze
And faded in the dark and dreary shadows
Created by the lifeless drooping trees.

When suddenly the stillness dark was broken,
And sweetly through the trees so dim and pale
Came sounds of glorious and ethereal music,
The music of the lonely nightingale.

They filled the silvery stillness with fresh beauty,
A beauty sweet enough for tears of pain,
They sounded like melodious bells a-ringing
Amidst the gentle tinkling of the rain.

They fell upon my soul as cool as dewdrops
Fall on a flower's petals open wide,
And thirsting for their taste, I drank the dewdrops
Of music filled with majesty and pride.

My heart was full, but now with something dearer,
An understanding deeper and more true,
The fear and pain and misery had vanished
And given way to something sweet and new.

For music is the essence of a brightness
That transforms gloom to happiness again,
And through the ages, glorious in its beauty
It fills the lives and destinies of men.