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Subject: **[NOVACHorus] text of Songs of Sunset**
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Here is the text of *Songs of Sunset*. The words are as romantic as the music. Enjoy!
-DrW

Vitae Summa Brevis Spem Nos Vetat Incohare Longam

'The brief sum of life forbids us the hope of enduring long' (from a work by Horace)

by Ernest Dowson (1867-1900)

CHORUS

A song of the setting sun!
The sky in the west is red,
And the day is all but done:
While yonder up overhead,
All too soon,
There rises so cold the cynic moon.

A Song of a Winter day!
The wind of the north doth blow,
From a sky that's chill and gray,
On fields where no crops now grow,
Fields long shorn
Of bearded barley and golden corn.

A song of a faded flower!
'Twas plucked in the tender bud,
And fair and fresh for an hour,
In a Lady's hair it stood.
Now, ah! now,
Faded it lies in the dust and low.

BARITONE AND SOPRANO SOLOISTS

Cease smiling, Dear! a little while be sad,
Here in the silence, under the wan moon.
Sweet are thine eyes, but how can I be glad,
Knowing they change so soon?
O could this moment be perpetuate!
Must we grow old, and leaden eyed and gray
And taste no more the wild and passionate
Love sorrows of today?
O red pomegranate of thy perfect mouth
My lips' life fruitage might I taste and die,
Here to thy garden where the scented south
Wind chastens Agony;
Reap death from thy live lips in one long kiss,

And look my last into thine eyes and rest:
What sweets had life to me sweeter than this
Swift dying on thy breast?
Or, if that may not be, for Love's sake, Dear!
Keep silence still and dream that we shall lie.
Red mouth to mouth, entwined, and always hear
The south wind's melody,
Here in thy garden, through the sighing boughs,
Beyond the reach of time and chance and change
And bitter life and death and broken vows,
That sadden and estrange.

CHORUS

Pale amber sunlight falls across
The reddening October trees,
That hardly sway before a breeze
As soft as summer: summer's loss
Seems little, dear! on days like these!
Let misty Autumn be our part!
The twilight of the year is sweet.
Where shadow and the darkness meet.
Our love, a twilight of the heart
Eludes a little time's deceit.
Are we not better and at home
In dreamful Autumn we who deem
No harvest joy is worth a dream?
A little while and night shall come,
A little while then let us dream
[. . . dream . . . dream].

SOPRANO SOLOIST

Exceeding sorrow consumeth my sad heart!
Because tomorrow we must depart,
Now is exceeding sorrow all my part,
Give over playing, cast thy viol away,
Merely laying thine head my way:
Prithee give over playing, grave or gay.
Be no word spoken; weep nothing; let a pale
Silence, unbroken silence prevail!
Prithee, be no word spoken, lest I fail!
Forget tomorrow! weep nothing: only lay
In silent sorrow thine head my way!
Let us forget tomorrow this one day.

BARITONE SOLOIST

By the sad waters of separation
Where we have wandered by divers ways,
I have but the shadow and imitation
Of the old memorial days.
In music I have no consolation,
No roses are pale enough for me;
The sound of the waters of separation
Surpasseth roses and melody.

By the sad waters of separation
Dimly I hear from an hidden place
The sigh of mine ancient adoration:
Hardly can I remember your face.
If you be dead, no proclamation
Sprang to me over the waste, gray sea:
Living, the waters of separation
Sever for ever your soul from me.
No may knoweth our desolation;
Memory pales of the old delight;
While the sad waters of separation
Bear us on to the ultimate night.

CHORUS

See how the trees and the osiers lithe
Are green bedecked and the woods are blithe,
The meadows have donned their cape of flowers,
The air is soft with sweet May showers
And the birds make melody:

BARITONE SOLOIST

But the spring of the Soul, the spring of the Soul
Cometh no more for you or for me.

CHORUS

The lazy hum of the busy bees
Murmureth thro' the almond trees;
The jonquil flaunteth a gay, blondehead,
The primrose peeps from a mossy bed,
And the violets scent the lane,
The violets scent the lane.

SOPRANO SOLOIST

But the flowers of the Soul, the flowers of the Soul,
For you and for me bloom never again.

CHORUS

Bloom never again, bloom never again, bloom never again.

BARITONE SOLOIST

I was not sorrowful, I could not weep
And all my memories were put to sleep.
I watched the river grow more white and strange,
All day till evening, I watched it change.
All day till evening I watched the rain
Beat wearily upon the window pane.

I was not sorrowful but only tired
Of everything that ever I desired.
Her lips, her eyes, all day became to me
The shadow of a shadow utterly.
All day mine hunger for her heart became
Oblivion, until the evening came
And left me sorrowful inclined to weep
With all my memories that could not sleep.

SOLOISTS AND CHORUS

They are not long, the weeping and the laughter,
Love and desire and hate:
I think they have no portion in us after
We pass the gate. They are not long, the days of wine and roses:
Out of a misty dream our path emerges for a while,
Then closes within a dream, within a dream --

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