Dawn

By Ella Higginson

The soft-toned clock upon the stair chimed three—
Too sweet for sleep, too early yet to rise.
In restful peace I lay with half-closed eyes,
Watching the tender hours go dreamily;
The tide was flowing in; I heard the sea
Shivering along the sands; while yet the skies
Were dim, uncertain, as the light that lies
Beneath the fretwork of some wild-rose tree
Within the thicket gray. The chanticleer
Sent drowsy calls across the slumbrous air;
In solemn silence sweet it was to hear
My own heart beat... Then broad and deep and fair—
Trembling in its new birth from heaven's womb—
One crimson shaft of dawn sank thro' my room.

Source: She Wields a Pen: American Women Poets of the Nineteenth Century (University of Iowa Press, 1997)