

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 chanticler
 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)