Eros Turannos

By

She fears him, and will always ask

What fated her to choose him;
She meets in his engaging mask

All reasons to refuse him;
But what she meets and what she fears
Are less than are the downward years,
Drawn slowly to the foamless weirs

Of age, were she to lose him.

Between a blurred sagacity

That once had power to sound him,
And Love, that will not let him be

The Judas that she found him,
Her pride assuages her almost,
As if it were alone the cost.—

He sees that he will not be lost,

And waits and looks around him.

A sense of ocean and old trees

Envelops and allures him;
Tradition, touching all he sees

Beguiles and reassures him;
And all her doubts of what he says
Are dimmed with what she knows of days—

Till even prejudice delays

And fades, and she secures him.

The falling leaf inaugurates

The reign of her confusion;
The pounding wave reverberates

The dirge of her illusion;
And home, where passion lived and died,
Becomes a place where she can hide,

While all the town and harbor side

Vibrate with her seclusion.

We tell you, tapping on our brows,

The story as it should be,—
As if the story of a house

Were told, or ever could be;
We’ll have no kindly veil between

Her visions and those we have seen,—
As if we guessed what hers have been,

Or what they are or would be.

Meanwhile we do no harm; for they

That with a god have striven,
Not hearing much of what we say,

Take what the god has given;
Though like waves breaking it may be,

Or like a changed familiar tree,
Or like a stairway to the sea
    Where down the blind are driven.


Source: Poetry (Poetry Foundation, 1914)