



The Wounded Bird (1922)

By Katherine Mansfield

In the wide bed
Under the green embroidered quilt
With flowers and leaves always in soft motion
She is like a wounded bird resting on a pool.

The hunter threw his dart
And hit her breast,
Hit her but did not kill.
O my wings, lift me--lift me
I am not dreadfully hurt!
Down she dropped and was still.

Kind people come to the edge of the pool with baskets
"Of course what the poor bird wants is plenty of food!"
Their bags and pockets are crammed almost to bursting
With dinner scrapings and scraps from the servants' lunch.
Oh! how pleased they are to be really *giving!*
"In the past, you know you know, you were always so fly-away.
So seldom came to the windowsill, so rarely
Shared the delicious crumbs thrown into the yard.
Here is a delicate fragment and here a tit-bit
As good as new. And here's a morsel of relish
And cake and bread and bread and bread and bread."

At night – in the wide bed
With the leaves and flowers
Gently weaving in the darkness
She is like a wounded bird at rest on a pool.
Timidly, timidly she lifts her head from her wing.
In the sky there are two stars
Floating – shining –
Oh, waters – do not cover me!
I would look long and long at those beautiful stars!
O my wings – lift me – lift me
I am not so dreadfully hurt. . .

