

Mary Marguerite Beal

(1914-1941)

*Unsigned poems found in an old exercise book.*

**Spring**

(Page 1)

Spring is coming, beautiful Spring!  
Birds are trilling the news they bring;  
Flowers are blooming, trees are green,  
Gone is the wind so cold and keen.

Look at the daffodils, bright and gay,  
And the birds as on the lawn they play;  
A lark is singing up so high,  
Right up, right up, in the deep blue sky!



**The Four Sisters.**

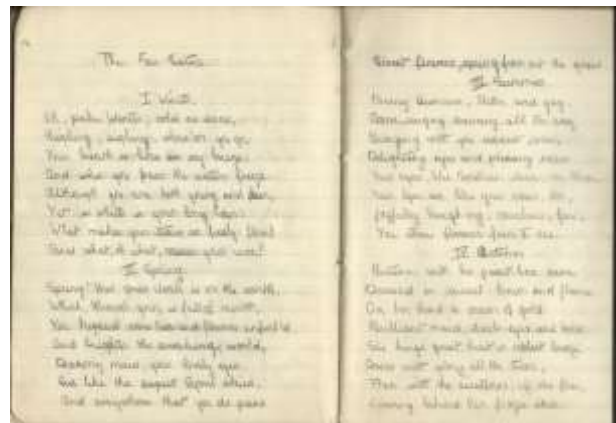
(Page 6 and 7)

1. Winter

Oh, pale Winter, cold as snow,  
Sighing, sighing, where'er you go,  
Your breath is like an icy breeze,  
And when you pass the waters freeze,  
Although you are both young and fair,  
Yet so white is your long hair!  
What makes your tears so freely flow?  
And what, oh what, causes your woe?

11. Spring

Spring, your green cloak is on the earth,  
Which, through you, is full of mirth,  
You kissed some buds and flowers unfurl'd,  
And brighten the awaking world,  
Dreamy maid, your lovely eyes  
Are like the deepest April skies;  
And everywhere that you do pass  
Sweet flowers spring out the grass.



### 111. Summer

Merry Summer, blithe and gay,  
Come, singing, dancing, all the way,  
Bringing with you reddest roses,  
Delighting eyes and pleasing noses,  
Your eyes, like Southern skies, are blue,  
Your lips are like your roses, too,  
Joyfully laughing, careless, free,  
You strew flowers fair to see.

### 1V. Autumn

Autumn, with her paint-box came  
Dressed in russet-brown and flame  
On her head a crown of gold  
Brilliant maid, dark-eyed and bold  
She brings great heat or coolest breeze,  
Covers with glory all the trees,  
Then, with the swallows, off she flies,  
Leaving behind her frozen skies.

### Sunset

(Page 8 and 9)

#### 1.

The sun has set the Thames on fire,  
Which brilliantly does glow,  
Reflecting many a church's spire  
As it does calmly flow.

#### 2.

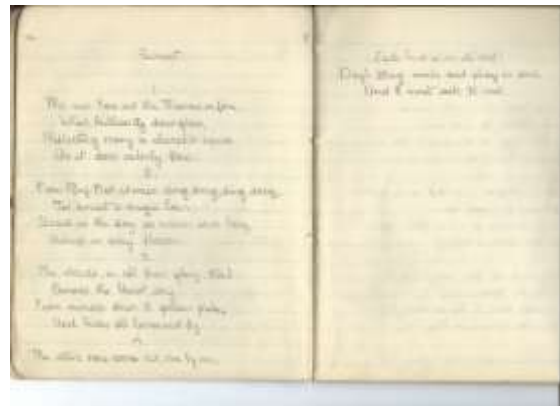
Now Big Ben chimes ding, dong, ding, dong,  
'Tis sunset's magic hour;  
Closed is the day so warm and long,  
Asleep is every flower.

#### 3.

The clouds, in all their glory, trail  
Across the bluest sky,  
From crimson down to golden pale,  
And birds all homewards fly.

#### 4.

The stars now come out, one by one,  
Each bird is in its nest;  
Day's tiring work and play is done  
And I must seek to rest.



## Sunrise

(Page 10 and 11)

1.  
Come out into the early dawn  
And watch the sun arise,  
From Beachy Head oh, see this morn  
It flush the eastern skies

2.  
And see just past the cold grey beach  
The sea so calm and mild,  
The sun's first rays its wavelets reach  
And then the sands do guild

3.  
The tiny clouds are edged with pink;  
The cliffs gleam white as snow;  
They stretch far to the water's brink  
Which simmers in the glow.

4.  
The sun has risen now quite high;  
The birds awake; and hark!  
Singing, soaring in the sky  
There is an early lark!



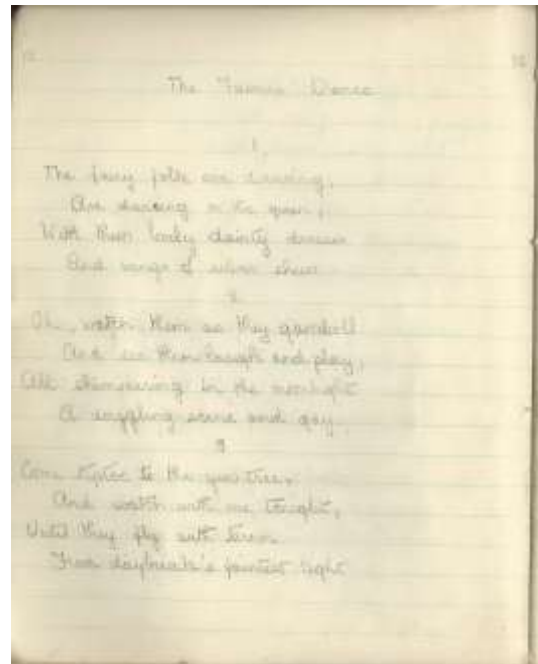
## The Fairies' Dance

(Page 12)

1  
The fairy folk are dancing,  
Are dancing on the green,  
With their lovely dainty dresses  
And wings of silver sheen.

2  
Oh, watch them as they gambol  
And see them laugh and play,  
All shimmering in the moonlight  
A dazzling scene and gay.

3  
Come tiptoe to the yew tree,  
And watch with me tonight,  
Until they fly with terror  
From daybreak's faintest light.



## Home With the Swallows

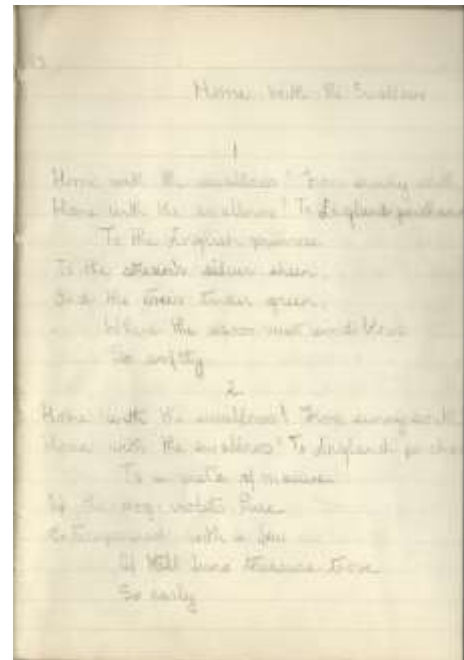
(Page 13)

1.

Home with the swallows! From sunny south France,  
Home with the swallows! To England perchance  
    To the English primrose  
To the stream's silver sheen,  
And the trees tender green,  
    Where the warm west wind blows  
    So softly.

2.

Home with the swallows! From sunny south France,  
Home with swallows! To England perchance  
    To a vista of mauve  
Of the dog-violets hue  
Interspersed with a few  
    Of tall ferns treasure trove  
    So early.



## Hope

(Page 14)

1.

Dark, dark, dark, is the cloud of today  
Dark as a thunder-cloud,  
But thought 'tis pierced by no pale ray  
Yet Hope's voice still sounds loud

2.

Black nights come ere the brightest days,  
Sable clouds have linings bright  
And Hope, sweet angel, always stays  
To cheer us when tears dim our sight.



### **A voice**

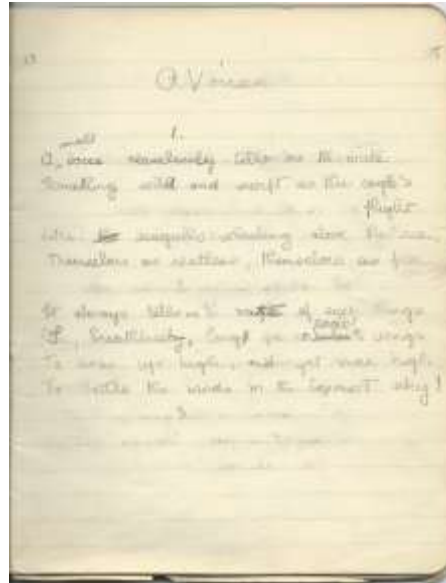
(Page 15)

1

A small voice ceaselessly tells me to write  
Something wild and swift as the eagle's flight  
Like seagulls wheeling above the sea,  
Themselves as restless, themselves as free.

2.

It always tells me to write of such things  
I, breathless, long for an eagle's wings  
To soar up high, and yet more high,  
To battle the winds in the topmost sky!



### **What Does the Lark Sing?**

(Page 16 and 17)

What does the lark sing when he's soaring up so high?  
He sings of the early rising sun and the flushed Eastern sky!

He sings :-

"Awake! The Eastern skies are bright  
Oh, see the sun's first rays  
The earth casts off its cloak of night,  
The birds now sing their lays!  
Oh! welcome, Sun so warm a bright!  
Oh! welcome Sun that gives us light!  
Before whose power flees the night,  
Welcome!"



What does the lark sing when he's soaring up so high?  
He sings of the grass and flowers and the deep blue of the sky!

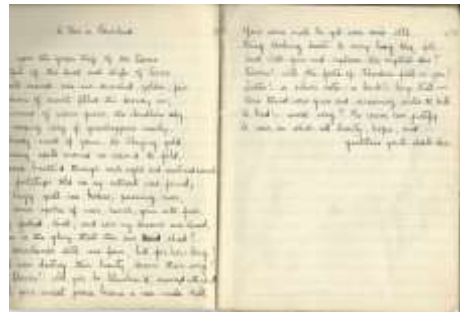
He sings :-

"Oh! The sky is the deepest blue  
And the grass is a vivid green,  
Butterflies of every hue,  
And lovely flowers are seen!  
Oh! Welcome, Sun so warm and bright!  
Oh! welcome, Sun that gives us light!  
Everything smiles in your light!  
Welcome!"

### A Fear in Downland

(Page 18 and 19)

I lay upon the green turf of the Downs  
Forgetful of the dust and strife of towns  
And all around was sun-drenched, golden, fair.  
The drone of insects filed the drowsy air;  
The incense of warm grass, the cloudless sky,  
The rasping song of grasshoppers nearby,  
The heady scent of gorse, its blazing gold,  
A dreamy spell around me seem'd to fold,  
For peace breath'd through each sight and scent and sound.  
But footsteps told me my retreat was found;  
The hazy spell was broken; passing near,  
Two voices spoke of war, harsh, grim with fear.  
They faded, died; and now my dreams are dead;  
Where is the glory that the sun had shed?  
The downlands still are fair, but for how long?  
Will man destroy their beauty, drown their song?  
Oh, Downs! Will you be blacken'd, scarred with shell,  
Will your sweet peace become a man-made Hell,  
Your eerie mists be yet more eerie still,  
Bring choking death to every lung they fill,  
And with grim red replace the crystal dew?  
Downs! Will the fate of Flanders fall on you?  
Listen! A silver note – a lark's long trill –  
Are thund'rous guns and screaming shells to kill  
A bird's sweet song? No cause can justify  
A war in which all beauty, hope, and guiltless youth shall die.



### Transmutation

(Page 20)

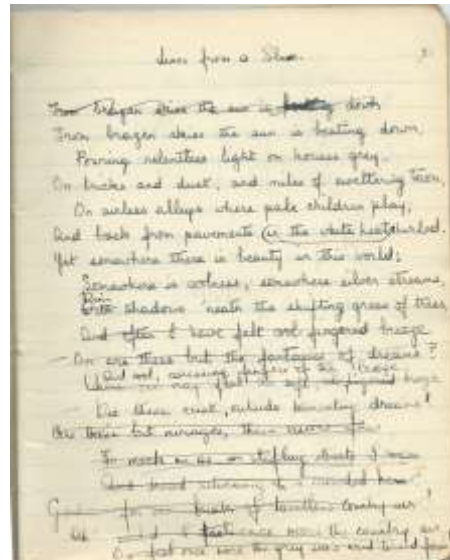
From this drab office in my mind I pass  
To where the wind is soughing through long grass  
Clatter of letter'd keys is in my ears,  
Transmuted by my thoughts to rush of weirs,  
And happy song of birds; for in my memory dwells  
A store of peaceful scenes, green, lonely, still,  
As cool to thirsting mind as water from deep wells,  
To be drawn upon at will.



### Lines from a slum

(Page 21)

From brazen skies the sun is beating down,  
Powering relentless light on houses grey,  
On bricks and dust, and miles of sweltering town,  
On airless alleys where pale children play;  
And back from pavements the white heat is hurled.  
Yet somewhere there is beauty in this world;  
Somewhere is coolness, somewhere silver streams,  
Dim shadows 'neath the shifting green of trees,  
And cool, caressing fingers of the breeze  
Do these exist, outside tormenting dreams?



### For a good and omnipotent God

(Page 22)

For a good and omnipotent God  
Your plans have gone sadly astray  
If all-powerful truly you are  
Then whence holds the devil such sway?

Or if good, then how come to be  
The fears and the sorrows of man?  
And does it not grieve you to see  
How fails your benevolent plan?

Oh God, much maligned you must be  
A strange inconsistency's here;  
Perhaps good, or almighty you are,  
You cannot be both, it is clear.

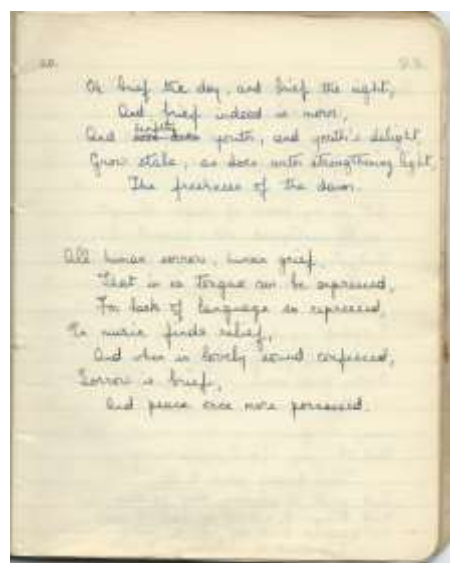


### Oh brief the day, and brief the night

(Page 23)

Oh brief the day, and brief the night,  
And brief indeed is morn,  
And swiftly youth, and youth's delight,  
Grow stale, as does with strengthening light,  
The freshness of the dawn.

All human sorrow, human grief,  
That in no tongue can be expressed,  
For lack of language so repressed,  
In music finds relief,  
And when in lovely sound confessed,  
Sorrow is brief,  
And peace once more possessed.



**Oh! office hours are dull and slow**

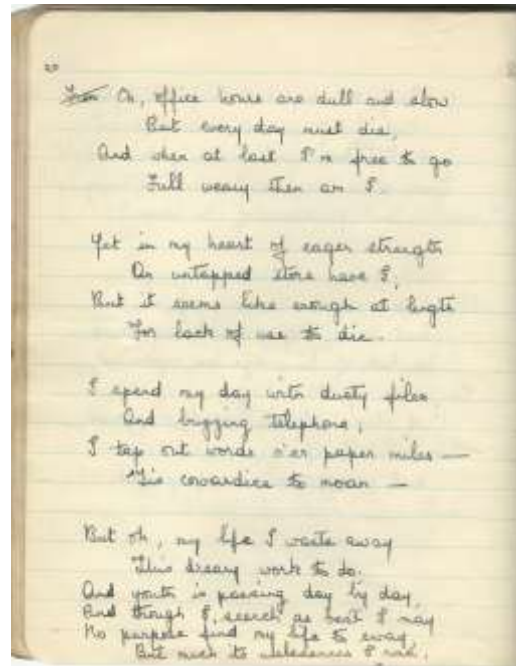
(Page 24)

Oh, office hours are dull and slow  
But every day must die,  
And when at last I'm free to go  
Full weary then am I.

Yet in my heart of eager strength  
An untapped store have I;  
But it seems enough at length  
For lack of use to die.

I spend my days with dusty files  
And buzzing telephone  
I tap out words o'er paper miles –  
'Tis cowardice to moan –

But oh, my life I waste away  
This dreary work to do,  
And youth is passing day by day,  
And though I search as best I may  
No purpose find my life to sway  
But much its uselessness I rue.



**We, who the pavements are thronging**

(Page 25)

We, who the pavements are thronging,  
We, to the cities belonging,  
In our hearts have a passionate longing  
For a beauty that never has been.

Thought the city has trapped us and bound us,  
And in sordid, grey streets you have found us,  
In our thoughts only green fields surround us,  
And a county that no man has seen.

Through the meadows of sweet-smelling clover  
Or by pools that the willows hang over,  
In his heart every man is a rover;  
For the land of his longing is green.





### High-and-Over

(Page 26)

It is not game, it is not gold  
But names that thrill the rover;  
No name can such enchantment hold,  
As that of High-and-Over.

Here clumps of golden gorse abound,  
And fresh the wind blows over,  
And Sussex Downs are ranged around  
The hill of High-and-Over.



### Gorse

(Page 28)

Along the green arms of the downlands lying,  
A golden splendour spilling down the slopes,  
A scented loveliness to set us sighing  
And fill us with dim longings and doomed hopes,  
The gorse now covers every downland fold  
With riches that are only for the eye;  
And lavishly displays deceitful gold,  
A spurious wealth that has no power to buy  
More than brief joy. Oh, gold, if you were gold,  
Not merely seeming,  
Dull eyes would shine and cowardly hearts grow bold  
For half our dreaming  
Gold is the key  
That would unlock the longed reality,  
Beauty alone is all unsatisfying  
And like that yellow flower will soon be dying



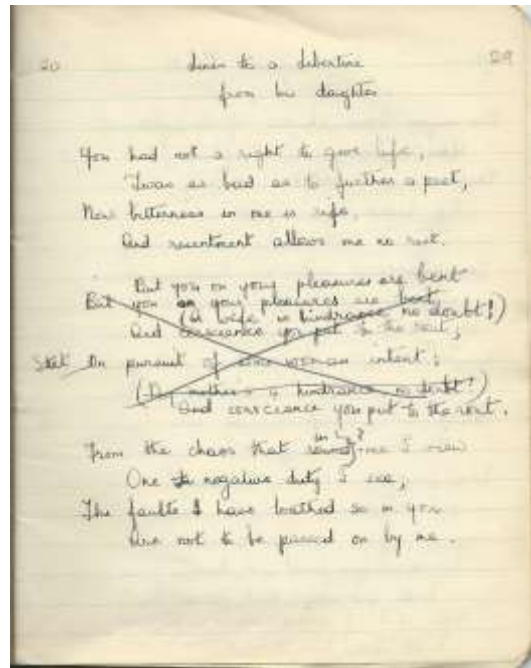
**Lines to a Libertine from his daughter.**

(Page 29)

You had not a right to give life;  
    'Twas as bad as to further a pest;  
Now bitterness in me is rife,  
    And resentment allows me no rest.

But you on your pleasures are bent  
(A wife is hindrance no doubt!)  
And conscience you put to the rout;  
On pursuit of some woman intent;  
(My mother's a hindrance no doubt!)  
And conscience you put to the rout.

From the chaos that in me I view  
    One negative duty I see,  
The faults I have loathed so in you  
    Are not to be passed on by me.



**Memories at Dusk**

(Page 30 and 31)

The vague blue shades of twilight  
    Are deep'ning on the plain,  
The warm air sets him thinking  
    Of India once again.

The pine-clad hills of Murree,  
    The Himalayan range,  
The marshes of Orissa,  
    Fierce heat and customs strange;

That red-stoned ruined city,  
    That near to Agra lies  
The juggernaut, the jungle,  
    He stirs and faintly sighs.

On these his mind is dwelling  
    With yearning that is pain,  
The spell of India binds him  
    Will draw him there again.

The random memories stir him  
    Of scenes that once he saw;  
Remembering well the beauty  
    He can recall no flaw.



All the day the English meadows  
Had lain in golden haze,  
And so the mists of longing  
Transform those distant days.

**Long Distance Call**

(Page 32 and 33)

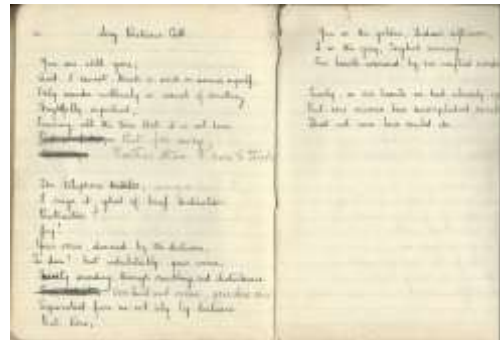
You are still gone,  
And I cannot think or work or amuse myself,  
Only wander restlessly in search of something  
Frightfully important;  
Knowing all the time that it is not here  
But far away;  
Farther than I care to think.

The telephone rings  
I seize it, glad of brief distraction.  
Distraction?

Joy!  
Your voice, dimmed by the distance,  
So dim! But indubitably your voice,  
Faintly sounding through crackling and disturbance  
Over land and ocean, your dear voice  
Separated from me not only by distance  
But time,

You in the golden, Indian afternoon,  
I in the grey, English morning,  
Our hearts warmed by our wafted words.

Surely, in our hearts we had already spoken;  
But now science has accomplished something  
That not even love could do.



## The Drum

(Page 34)

Once from the throng of dancers,  
We slipped out, you and I,  
Into the cool garden;  
Wandering away until the music faded  
And we could only hear the insistent drum  
That beat – that throbbed –  
Like the pulse of hot desire.

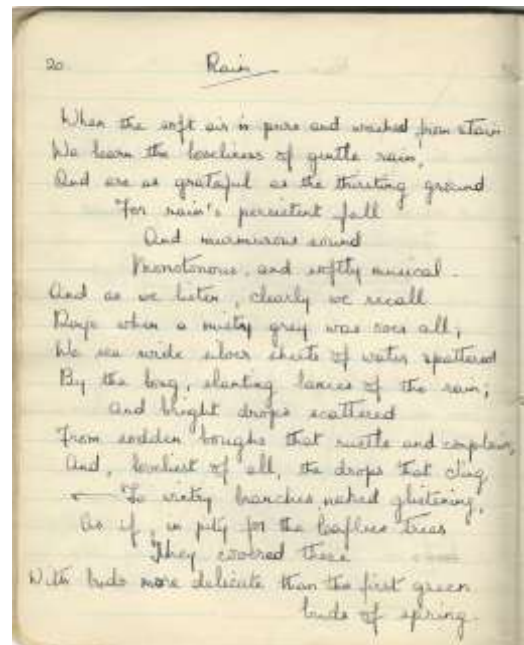
Now I, alone,  
Can hear the band play faintly and afar,  
Harsh-seeming, joyless music;  
And the drum beats still,  
Beats on the wincing air,  
Throbs through the wakeful night;  
Through the weary night  
Throbs like a wound.



## Rain

(Page 36)

When the soft air is pure and washed from stain  
We learn the loveliness of gentle rain,  
And we are grateful as the thirsting ground  
    For rain's persistent fall  
        And murmurous sound  
    Monotonous, and softly musical.  
And as we listen, clearly we recall  
Days when a misty grey was over all;  
We see wide silver sheets of water spattered  
By the long, slanting lances of the rain;  
    And bright drops scattered  
From sodden boughs that rustle and complain;  
And, loveliest of all, the drops that cling  
To wintry branches naked glistening,  
As if, in pity for the leafless trees  
    They covered these  
With buds more delicate than the first green buds of spring.

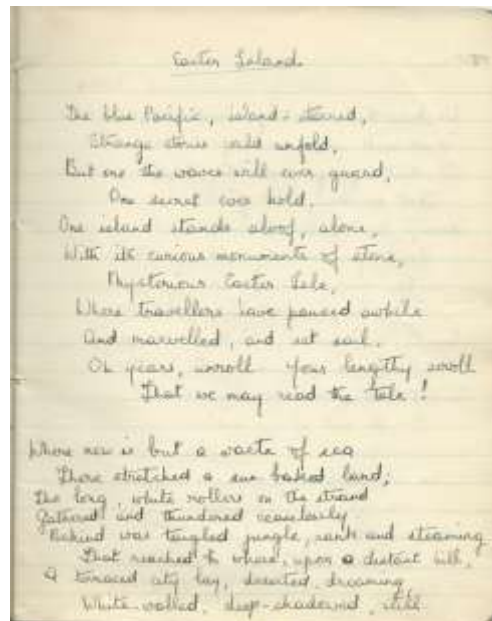


## Easter Island

(Page 37)

The blue Pacific, island – starred,  
Strange stories could unfold,  
But one the waves will ever guard,  
One secret ever hold,  
One island stands aloof, alone,  
With its curious monuments of stone,  
Mysterious Easter Isle,  
Where travellers have paused awhile  
And marvelled, and set sail.  
Oh years, unroll your lengthy scroll  
That we may read the tale!

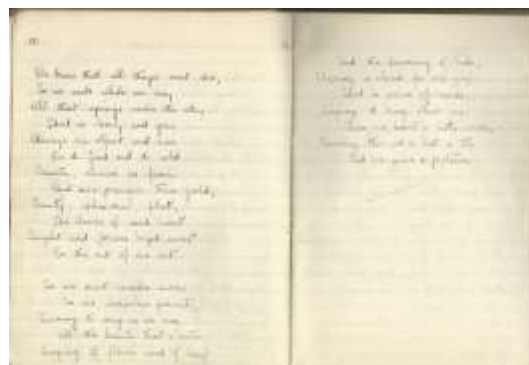
Where now is but a waste of sea  
There stretched a sun-baked land;  
The long, white rollers on the strand  
Gathered and thundered ceaselessly  
Behind was tangled jungle, rank and steaming  
That reached to where, upon a distant hill,  
A terraced city lay, deserted, dreaming  
White-walled, deep shadowed, still.



## We know that all things must die

(Page 38 and 39)

We know that all things must die,  
So we seek while we may  
All that springs under the sky  
That is lovely and gay  
Always our object and aim  
So to find and to hold  
Beauty, elusive as fame  
And more precious than gold;  
Beauty, ephemeral, fleet,  
The desire of each heart  
Caught and forever kept sweet  
In the net of our art



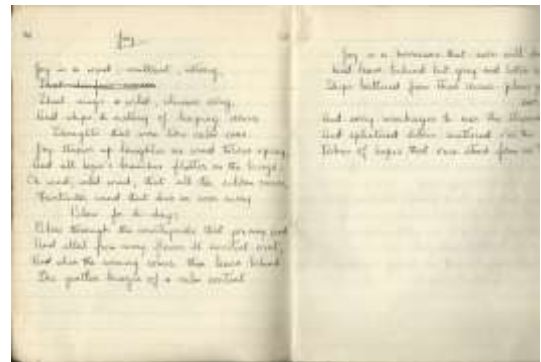
So we must wander away  
 On our ceaseless pursuit  
 Turning to song as we may  
 All the beauty that's mute;  
 Singing of flower and of leaf  
 And the dawn-song of birds;  
 Wearing a cloak for our grief  
 That is woven of words;  
 Singing to bring others joy  
 From our heart's bitter sense,  
 Knowing this art's but a toy  
 And our game a pretence.

### **Joy**

(Page 40 and 41)

Joy is a wind, exultant, strong,  
 That sings a wild, elusive song  
 And whips to ecstasy of leaping waves  
 Thoughts that were like calm seas.  
 Joy throws up laughter as wind tosses spray,  
 And all hope's branches flutter on the breeze.  
 Oh wind, wild wind, that all too seldom raves,  
 Fantastic wind that dies so soon away  
 Blow for to-day;  
 Blow through the countryside that you may find  
 And steal from every flower its sweetest scent,  
 And when the evening comes, then leave behind  
 The gentler breezes of a calm content

Joy is a hurricane that soon will die  
 And leave behind but grey and bitter seas,  
 Ships battered from their course – plans gone awry -  
 And sorry wreckages to mar the strand,  
 And splintered debris scattered o'er the land,  
 Debris of hope that once stood firm as trees.



### Could I despair

(Page 42)

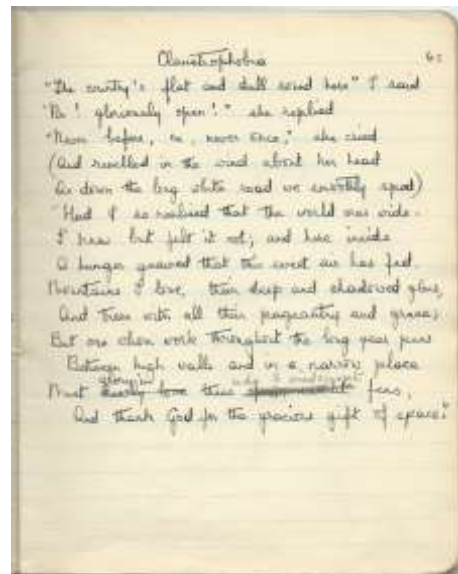
Could I despair  
And tell my heart that you will never love me –  
It cannot be.  
That thought would put an end to my distress,  
And happiness  
Would steal back gently, like returning spring.  
The sun would bring  
Sure comfort; spacious downlands, rain, and trees,  
Wild tossing seas,  
Music, and long-loved friends, all these would serve  
If hope, that nerve,  
Would set me free to joy in them again,  
Nor throb with pain.  
I might forget, and in spring's gladness share,  
Could I despair.



### Claustrophobia

(Page 43)

"The country's flat and dull round here" I said  
"No! gloriously open!" she replied  
"Never before, no, never once," she cried  
(And revelled in the wind about her head  
As down the long white road we smoothly sped)  
"Had I so realised that the world was wide.  
I knew but felt it not; and here inside  
A hunger gnawed that this sweet air has fed.  
Mountains I love, their deep and shadowed glens,  
And trees with all their pageantry and grace;  
But one whom work throughout the long year pens  
Between high walls and in a narrow place  
Must glory in these wide and windswept place fens,  
And thank God for the gracious gift of space".



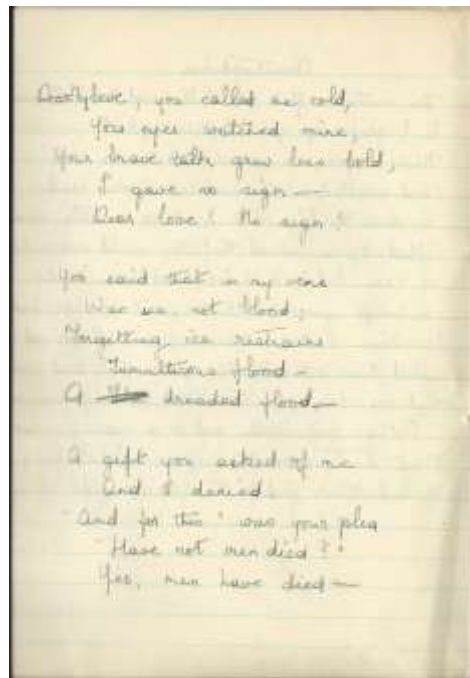
**My love, you called me cold**

(Page 44)

My love, you called me cold,  
Your eyes watched mine;  
Your brave talk grew less bold;  
I gave no sign –  
Dear love! No sign!

You said that in my veins  
Was ice, not blood;  
Forgetting ice restrains  
Tumultuous flood –  
A dreaded flood –

A gift you asked of me  
And I denied.  
“And for this” was your plea  
“Have not men died?”  
Yes, men have died.



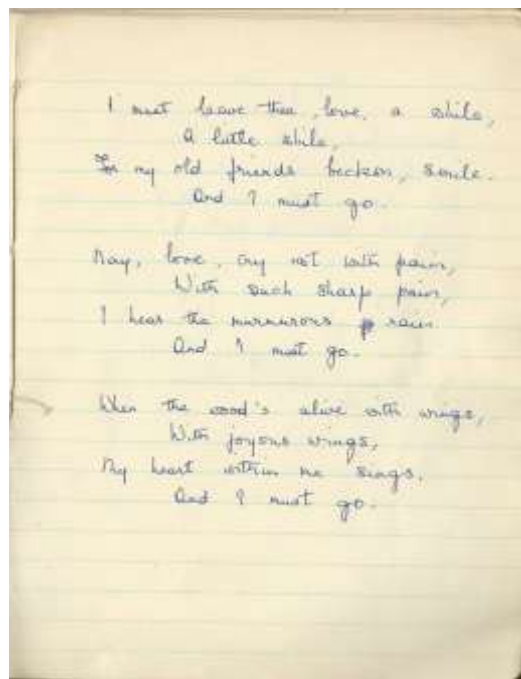
**I must leave thee,**

(Page 45)

I must leave thee, love, a while,  
A little while,  
For my old friends beckon, smile,  
And I must go.

Nay, love, cry not with pain,  
With such sharp pain,  
I hear the murmurous rain  
And I must go.

When the wood's alive with wings,  
With joyous wings,  
My heart within me sings,  
And I must go.



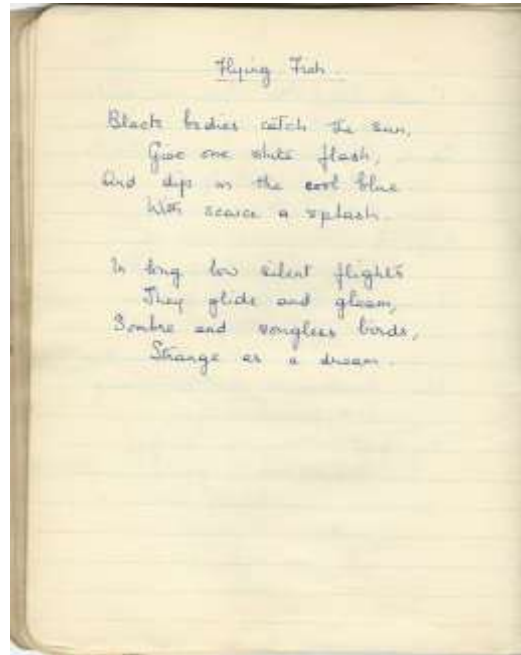


**Flying Fish**

(Page 46)

Black bodies catch the sun,  
Give one white flash,  
And dip in the cool blue  
With scarce a splash.

In long low silent flights  
They glide and gleam,  
Sombre and songless birds,  
Strange as a dream.



*Mary Marguerite Beal and Phyllis Evelyn Beal  
Eastbourne*

Winter



Summer

