

# “PASSION AND LOVE”

BY

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

A maiden wept and, as a comforter,  
Came one who cried, “I love thee,” and he seized  
Her in his arms and kissed her with hot breath,  
That dried the tears upon her flaming cheeks.  
While evermore his boldly blazing eye  
Burned into hers; but she uncomforted  
Shrank from his arms and only wept the more.

Then one came and gazed mutely in her face  
With wide and wistful eyes; but still aloof  
He held himself; as with a reverent fear,  
As one who knows some sacred presence nigh.  
And as she wept he mingled tear with tear,  
That cheered her soul like dew a dusty flower,—  
Until she smiled, approached, and touched his hand!