

“DISAPPOINTED”

BY

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

An old man planted and dug and tended,
Toiling in joy from dew to dew;
The sun was kind, and the rain befriended;
Fine grew his orchard and fair to view.
Then he said: “I will quiet my thrifty fears,
For here is fruit for my failing years.”

But even then the storm—clouds gathered,
Swallowing up the azure sky;
The sweeping winds into white foam lathered
The placid breast of the bay, hard by;
Then the spirits that raged in the darkened air
Swept o’er his orchard and left it bare.

The old man stood in the rain, uncaring,
Viewing the place the storm had swept;
And then with a cry from his soul despairing,
He bowed him down to the earth and wept.
But a voice cried aloud from the driving rain;
“Arise, old man, and plant again!”