

# “ONE LIFE”

BY

**PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR**

Oh, I am hurt to death, my Love;  
The shafts of Fate have pierced my striving heart,  
And I am sick and weary of  
The endless pain and smart.  
My soul is weary of the strife,  
And chafes at life, and chafes at life.

Time mocks me with fair promises;  
A blooming future grows a barren past,  
Like rain my fair full-blossomed trees  
Unburden in the blast.  
The harvest fails on grain and tree,  
Nor comes to me, nor comes to me.

The stream that bears my hopes abreast  
Turns ever from my way its pregnant tide.  
My laden boat, torn from its rest,  
Drifts to the other side.  
So all my hopes are set astray,  
And drift away, and drift away.

The lark sings to me at the morn,  
And near me wings her skyward–soaring flight;  
But pleasure dies as soon as born,  
The owl takes up the night,  
And night seems long and doubly dark;  
I miss the lark, I miss the lark.

Let others labor as they may,  
I'll sing and sigh alone, and write my line.  
Their fate is theirs, or grave or gay,  
And mine shall still be mine.  
I know the world holds joy and glee,  
But not for me,— 't is not for me.