

“VAGRANTS”

BY

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

Across the hills and down the narrow ways,
And up the valley where the free winds sweep,
The earth is folded in an ermined sleep
That mocks the melting mirth of myriad Mays.

Departed her disheartening duns and grays,
And all her crusty black is covered deep.

Dark streams are locked in Winter’s donjon–keep,
And made to shine with keen, unwonted rays.

O icy mantle, and deceitful snow!

What world–old liars in your hearts ye are!

Are there not still the darkened seam and scar
Beneath the brightness that you fain would show?

Come from the cover with thy blot and blur,

O reeking Earth, thou whited sepulchre!