

“BALLADE”

BY

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

By Mystic's banks I held my dream.
 (I held my fishing rod as well,
The vision was of dace and bream,
 A fruitless vision, sooth to tell.
But round about the sylvan dell
Were other sweet Arcadian shrines,
Gone now, is all the rural spell,
 Arcadia has trolley lines.

Oh, once loved, sluggish, darkling stream,
 For me no more, thy waters swell,
Thy music now the engines' scream,
Thy fragrance now the factory's smell;
 Too near for me the clanging bell;
 A false light in the water shines
While Solitude lists to her knell,—
 Arcadia has trolley lines.

Thy wooded lanes with shade and gleam
Where bloomed the fragrant asphodel,
Now bleak commercially teem
With signs “To Let,” “To Buy,” “To Sell.”
And Commerce holds them fierce and fell;
With vulgar sport she now combines
Sweet Nature’s piping voice to quell.
Arcadia has trolley lines.

L’ENVOI

Oh, awful Power whose works repel
The marvel of the earth’s designs,—
I ‘ll hie me elsewhere to dwell,
Arcadia has trolley lines.