

My Love is a Tourist

By

George E. Merrick

PART I

MORNING

Summer Flames

The Bob White calls!
Hear him usher in the day.
“Bob White!... Day’s bright!
Hustle up and join his lay;
“All right!—Bob White;”
Follow down his dewy way:
“Bob White,—you’re right!—
It’s sure enough—a brand new day!”

A day when dreams may come to be:
A day the floods that surge in me
May swell the banks of Always-So
And in to fields of Strived-For flow.

The Mocker trills!

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Hear him fill the air with glee.
Why not mock! — Just as he!
Puncture woe with melody!
— Say...scat — like — that"

— (See that moody cat-bird flee!) —
The Mocker trills.
An echo thrills: —
"There's joy for birds — why not for me!"

There's joys have always wondered why
I've never looked as I passed by.
Sing ho! for joys long-patient, kind: —
But what of the ones I've left behind?

Hibiscus glow!
Poinciana sets the day a-flare.
See the coral creeper's show!
Catch the Myrtle's crimson dare!
In flow'rs alone must red love flow?
Should plant and tree, unaided, bear
A-flaunt the banner love would blow!
O, Heart asleep' — Awake! And glow!

With the red of the Corals, Love beckons to me;
In flashing hibiscus her fires I see;

Through flaming acacia I know it is so
—My Love, She will come! Her flame I shall know!

Part II
MID-DAY
The Secret Shrine

And still the sun swoons down the cotton,
Hushed, Expectant, quails the corn.
Old hopes fail: Yet, unforgotten,
In faintness dream of dewy morn.

Now, the gushing, red-crape myrtle:
Fateful, still,—the buzzard lone:
Is there naught within can hurtle
Far,—a crushing weight of stone?

Fools still see our clouds fair mountains;
Dreaming, deem our skies gem-blue:
Know they not life’s colour fountains
Found their spring in heart of you?

What are pines bemoaning ever?
Why the bamboos’ ceaseless sigh?

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Will the palm leaves call forever: —
Endless; yearning aigrettes cry?

The call, that North-birds autumn-hearing
Brings winging back to southern sea,
Is stronger far my heart’s a-fearing
Than the call my soul yields to thee.

And so; though swoons the drooping cotton:
—Low, old Nature’s woes intone;—
Remains a shrine by all forgotten:
There I sit and brood alone.

PART III
EVENING
Inviolable

At evening I wander alone to the sea.
The breakers that come bring solace to me;
And scarcely the gulls take trouble to flee
Away from my goal.
Yet, Evening turns somewhere within me a key:
And opens a room;
A secret deep room,
Far-hid in the house of my soul.

And nothing of land its answer can hold;
There's nothing of Nature so flaming and bold:
And strange though it be, there's nothing so old
 In sea or in sky
As the questions and dreamings that endless unfold
 From out of that room;—
That sweet-keeping room,
 That seems older than I.

But sometimes my sea beneath the night blue
 'Comes a mirror for souls to see through.
...And once did I dream that my love was quite new!
 ...But now do I know
 'Tis older than life; 'Tis the key and clew
 That opens my room;
 And keeps the deep room
 A sweet place where none other may go.