

A Memory.

The fire upon the hearth is low,
And there is stillness everywhere;
Like troubled spirits here and there
The firelight shadows fluttering go.
And as the shadows round me creep
A childish treble breaks the gloom,
And softly from a farther room
Comes, "Now I lay me down to sleep."

And somehow with that little prayer
And that little treble in my ears,
My thought goes back to distant years,
And lingers with a dear one there;
Again I hear the child's Amen.
My mother's face comes back to me;
Crouched at her side I seem to be,
And mother holds my hand again.

O, for an hour in that dear place!
O, for the peace of that dear time!
O, for the childish trust sublime!
O, for a glimpse of mother's face!
Yet the shadows round me creep,
I do not seem to be alone—
Sweet magic of that treble tone—
And "Now I lay me down to sleep."

Eugene Field.