

The Tired Worker

Claude McKay

O whisper, O my soul! The afternoon
 Is waning into evening, whisper soft!
 Peace, O my rebel heart! for soon the moon
 From out its misty veil will swing aloft!
 5 Be patient, weary body, soon the night
 Will wrap thee gently in her sable sheet,
 And with a leaden sigh thou wilt invite
 To rest thy tired hands and aching feet.
 The wretched day was theirs, the night is mine;
 10 Come tender sleep, and fold me to thy breast.
 But what steals out the gray clouds red like wine?
 O dawn! O dreaded dawn! O let me rest
 Weary my veins, my brain, my life! Have pity!
 No! Once again the harsh, the ugly city.

Textual Note

This poem also appeared in *The Liberator* (August, 1919), in which version even numbered lines are indented (except the final line).

1 The] —the *Lib.*
 2 ,] — *Lib.*
 8 feet.] . . . *add. Lib.*
 10 Come] , *add. Lib.*

10 breast.] . . . *add. Lib.*
 12 rest] ! *add. Lib.*
 13 ! Have] —,have *Lib.*
 14 harsh] hard *Lib.*