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!

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;
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).

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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.