

Thirst

Claude McKay

My spirit wails for water, water now!
My tongue is aching dry, my throat is hot
For water, fresh rain shaken from a bough,
Or dawn dews heavy in some leafy spot.
5 My hungry body's burning for a swim
In sunlit water where the air is cool,
As in Trout Valley where upon a limb
The golden finch sings sweetly to the pool.
Oh water, water, when the night is done,
10 When day steals gray-white through the window-pane,
Clear silver water when I wake, alone,
All impotent of parts, of fevered brain;
Pure water from a forest fountain first,
To wash me, cleanse me, and to quench my thirst!

Textual Note

This poem also appeared in *The Liberator* (December, 1921).

3 ,] ; *Lib.*
3 rain] rains *Lib.*
10 gray] grey *Lib.*

12 of parts, of fevered] and stupefied of *Lib.*
13 a] some *Lib.*