

The Bird from the Blue

I'm tired of clouds, grey sky and dismal,
Depressing days of cold and rain.
The dreariness has grown abysmal.
Oh will the sun not shine again?
Ah, westward look: the clouds seem lighter.
The sky's less grey; 'tis getting brighter
And now I see a tiny gap
Among the grey wherein a scrap
Of blue appears and seems to glimmer
As though with its own inner light;
I gaze with wonder at the sight
And see within the blue a shimmer,
As there emerges into view
A bird of brilliant cobalt blue.

I hear a voice beside me saying:
"Out of the blue you see there fly
"The blue bird which, all grief allaying,
"Brings happiness to those that sigh.
"Forget the clouds, the grey, the sadness;
"And you may find both joy and gladness."
I turn and see a maiden there.
"Oh tell me, maid, your name and where
You hail from, why this visitation."
"My name is Berylune, dear Sir;
"And Faëry, I do aver,
"My birthplace is and is my nation.
"The blue bird 'tis that calls me here
"To illumine what may be unclear."

The light is fading; day is ending.
The west'ring sun begins to sink
And tints the thinning cloud-wrack, blending
Their streaks of orange, rose and pink.
And after days of grey so dreary,
The sunset lifts my heart which weary,
Depressed and cheerless had become.
But hark! I hear a rising hum
Of wings as from the dark come flying
So many, many birds of blue.
"Oh Berylune, please tell me true:
"Will these bring happiness undying
"When they alight upon the ground?
"Will peace and joy at last abound?"

"I fear, dear Sir, you are mistaken;
 "You think these birds are real, it seems.
"When night falls what you see awaken
 "Are only entities of dreams.
"When dawn shall break the light will banish
"The things of dreams; the birds will vanish.
 "The bird of happiness that's true
 "Comes from the *light* out of the blue,"
Says Berylune; I say replying:
 "O'er Dover's famous cliffs of white
 "No blue bird's ever come in sight.
"I guess the longed for blue birds flying
 "Were war time dreams and nothing more –
 "Desire for peace to follow war."

"It may be so," she says, "yet Britain
 "Has Edward as its monarch still;
"The song, dear Sir, is not yet written;
 "It's more than thirty years until
"That war shall start; you've been transported
"From *your* timeline to be escorted
 "In mine all through this coming night.
 "And things of dread and of delight
"You'll meet along the path nocturnal.
 "For palaces you'll visit, go
 "To lands whose mysteries I'll show
"And see things heav'nly and infernal.
 "You'll learn what's false and what is true
 "About the bird from out the blue."

"But you," she adds, "I charge most truly
 "That you to no one do disclose
"The secrets you'll be learning duly.
 "This duty I on you impose:
"Though you may tell the route we're traveling,
"You must no myst'ries be unraveling.
 "Though you may give the broad outline,
 "The esoteric lore confine
"To your own self; for men are greedy
 "And will corrupt this secret lore;
 "And so the blue bird nevermore
"May gladness bring to those who're needy."
 To keep these terms I swear an oath
 And give to Berylune my troth.

And so, dear list'ner, 'tis but chiefly
The path I follow that I tell
And only sparingly and briefly
The scenes I see - but naught to spell
Out any detail of the myst'ries
Imparted to me with their hist'ries.
For Berylune is surely right:
The awesome secrets of this night
Could twisted be by those ambitious,
Corrupt and wanting wealth and gain,
Who'll stop at nothing to obtain
Their will's desire, however vicious
The ways in which this is achieved,
Or whether others are aggrieved.

Through Faëry this night I'm taken
By Berylune and soon arrive
Unto her palace where awaken
In me are yearnings to revive
Remembrance of those long departed,
Of boyhood things, of projects started
But never finished, hopes and dreams
Long since abandoned, cherished schemes
Of youth that one can scarce remember.
So to the Land where Mem'ries dwell
I'm led and things both fair and fell
Befall me, kindling now the ember
Of joys and sorrows once I knew,
Whose fire does pierce my heart all through.

Such joys do burn with pain exquisite
And dormant sorrows fiercely flare
And sear my heart; I leave this visit
And know the blue bird dwells not there.
So onward Berylune proceeds me
To palaces wherein she leads me
Through rooms most strange and secret cells.
We journey on through glades and dells,
Wherein I see things that delight me,
And things of which I'm very vexed,
And things that leave my mind perplexed
And things of malice which do fright me.
We enter last in Faëry
The Kingdom of Futurity.

But I forebear to tell the terrors
 I witness here – the monstrous brood,
The spawn of human greed and errors
 With malice and with spite imbued.
The blue bird will, I'm sure, bring healing
Among these woes so unappealing;
 And yet unease grows more intense;
 I beg my guide to take me hence.
As we leave Faëry a lightness
 Is growing in the eastern sky
 Where stars are fading. "Day is nigh,"
Says Berylune, "And surely brightness
 Upon this cloudless Christmas Eve
 Shall comfort bring to those who grieve."

And then I see a grieving mother
 Whose daughter is so very ill.
"Fear not, for Mytyl and her brother,"
 Says Berylune, "this evening will
Go searching for the bird of healing,
The bird you saw the sky revealing
 Last evening when from out the blue
 Among grey clouds the blue bird flew."
"And who is Mytyl, who her brother?"
 "Oh Berylune," I ask, "please tell.
 "And shall the daughter be made well?"
"Will Christmas comfort that sad mother?"
 "Have you learnt nothing?" she replies.
 "Now think, dear Sir, you're not unwise."

'Tis now I realize I've been traveling
 With Berylune of whom I've read;
I know the answers, for unraveling
 Is now the story in my head.
"But surely Maeterlinck's depiction,"
"Is not," say I, "of fact but fiction."
 "Oh dear," she says, "recall again
 Your night-time journey's joys and pain
"And all the things you have been learning
 Of myst'ries deep and secret lore
 To know what's true for evermore.
Now to your timeline be returning!"
 I'm home and I have learnt what's true
 Of Mytyl and her bird of blue.