

TO A POET A THOUSAND YEARS HENCE

James Elroy Flecker

I who am dead a thousand years,
And wrote this sweet archaic song,
Send you my words for messengers,
The way I shall not pass along.

I care not if you bridge the seas
Or ride secure the cruel sky,
Or build consummate palaces
Of metal or of masonry.

But have you wine and music still
And statues and a bright-eyed love,
And foolish thoughts of good and ill,
And prayers to them who sit above.

How shall we Conquer? Like a wind
That falls at eve our fancies blow,
And old Maeonides the blind
Said it three thousand years ago.

O friend unseen, unborn, unknown,
Student of our sweet English tongue,
Read out my words at night, alone:
I was a poet. I was young.

Since I can never see your face,
And never shake you by the hand,
I send my soul through time and space
To greet you. You will understand.