



BERTHOLD CONVERS HUBER

Tujunga Songs

EXTREMES AND MODERATIONS:
EARLY SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA POETRY

A TEXT-TECH PAPERS PROJECT

Extremes and Moderations

Early Southern California Poetry

Extremes and Moderations is a Text-Tech Papers project devoted to recovering poetry written, published, and circulated in Los Angeles and Southern California. Each volume brings neglected books and poems back into view through carefully prepared texts, archival images, biographical context, and a clear record of the surviving sources.

Edited by Brian Kim Stefans

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Tujunga Songs

Berthold Convers Huber

A Critical Reading Edition

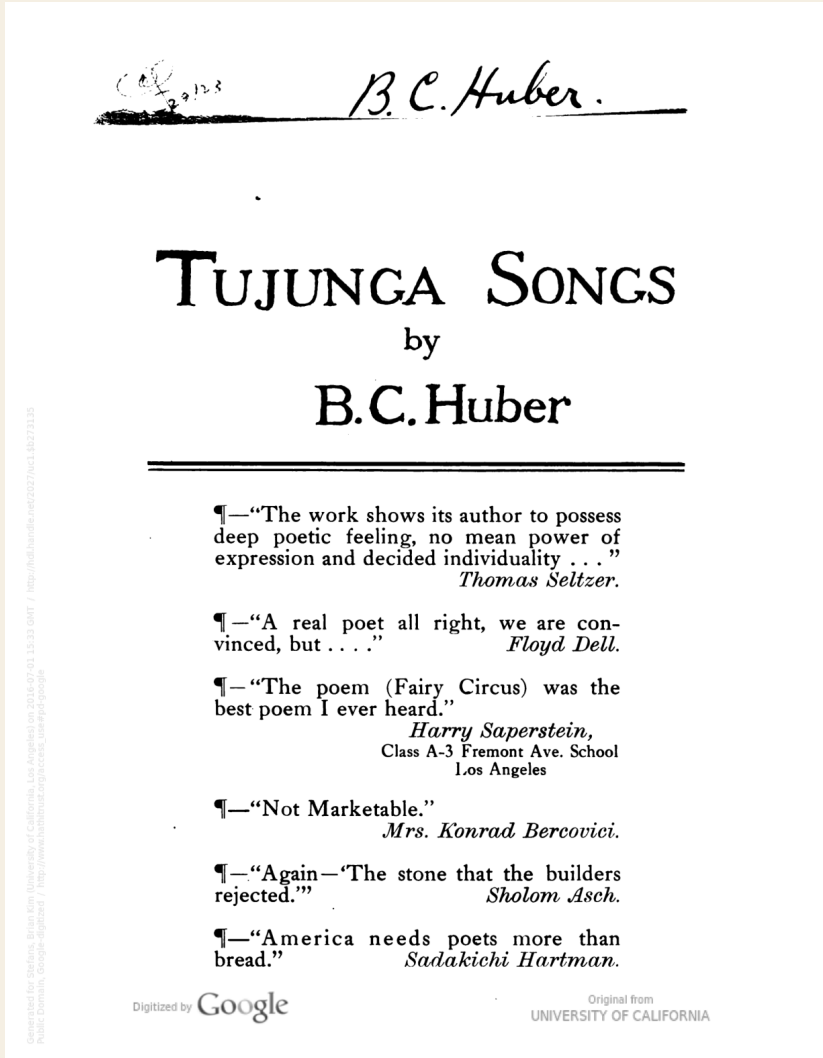
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Archival Images

A short selection from the source record



Title page of Tujunga Songs (1922).

Editorial Note

This is a reset reading edition, not a facsimile. The poems were transcribed from the original book and periodical scans in the local archive rather than from earlier reader PDFs. Narrow source-page wraps have been rejoined; stanza divisions, purposeful line indents, subtitles, epigraphs, and internal section headings have been retained. Unavoidable display wraps use a hanging indent. Obvious scanning debris was removed without silently modernizing diction or punctuation. Book and periodical titles are italicized in editorial matter, and every poem begins on a new page and ends with a source note.

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Introduction

Berthold Convers Huber is now almost invisible outside the single book he published at Balboa Beach in 1922, but *Tujunga Songs* is anything but a minor curiosity. It moves from comic fairy spectacle and philosophical fable to canyon weather, labor, spiritual declaration, shaped lines, and a closing group of sonnets. Huber invokes Thomas Troward, Shelley, Herman Kuehn, and the trickster Mercury; he also listens closely to rain, stone, linemen, camp talk, and the Big Tujunga itself. The book's exuberance can be odd, funny, earnest, and formally adventurous in the space of a page. This edition resets the complete collection while preserving its internal Tujunga and sonnet divisions and the visible indentation of its most experimental poems.

Biography

Berthold Convers Huber was born in 1888, but the surviving public record has not yet established his birthplace, family history, education, occupation, or death date. The secure biographical evidence begins with the book he issued under the shortened name B. C. Huber at Balboa Beach, California, in 1922.

Tujunga Songs places its author in Southern California with unusual specificity. Its central sequence names the Big Tujunga, observes canyon rain, roads, brush, rock, camps, and bottles, and turns a regional landscape into a laboratory for thought and form. Other poems refer to Fall River, Glace Bay, linemen, labor, and named friends, suggesting travel and contact with working communities beyond Los Angeles.

The book's opening pages print brief comments attributed to Thomas Seltzer, Floyd Dell, Konrad Bercovici, Sholom Asch, Sadakichi Hartmann, and a Los Angeles schoolchild. Whether these were conventional blurbs, private comments, or comic pieces of self-advertisement remains unclear, but the cluster locates Huber near radical, immigrant, bohemian, and publishing networks of the early 1920s.

Huber's dedication and several poems reveal an interest in New Thought and comparative spirituality. "To Thomas Troward" addresses the influential metaphysical writer as an elder brother, while poems throughout the book test ideas of mind, matter, desire, selfhood, labor, and divinity. Yet the writing is not merely doctrinal: comic narrative, children's verse, labor protest, sound

play, free verse, shaped indentation, and conventional sonnets coexist.

No second book by Huber has been verified. Library catalogues and the digitized 1922 witness preserve the name Berthold Convers Huber and a birth year of 1888, but fuller life records remain to be found. For now, *Tujunga Songs* is both his principal literary achievement and the most reliable surviving document of his life.

Tujunga Songs

The complete 1922 collection

The complete verse text of Huber's Balboa Beach collection, including its Tujunga sequence and sonnets.

Invoking Mercury

Hullo, swift prankish boy, blind Homer heard
And saw with eyes within his ear. What word
Hast thou today to fling confounding 'mong
The aged babies whom decay makes young?
Touch once again the strings of light for me
As when thine song's persuasion, swept thee free
From bright Apollo's vengeance. Then thou sang
For Homer, and again thru Shelley rang
Thy freshened hymn. If now the winds of pleasure
Blow thee to me, unlock again "the treasure
Of thy deep song," and spill the dust of earth
In shining chords within me, giving birth
Thru music drunk from love's clear crystal river,
To marriage with myself. A gen'rous giver
Be, sweet thief. Draw back on the wings of song
Myself, and knit my wandering halves of love in one.

The world's afloat within the mind of man—
The earth, a liquid stone, a speck of dust,
A moving point producing time, yet can
Unfold eternal. Not only can, but must.
Sing then, bright laughing drop. Shout thine high joy
From the canyon's pocket over the hills.
Scatter my dark camp's fiery stars, wild boy,
Upon the floor of night, until it fills
With the breathings, and meanings, of amorous love.
That's mischief, buttered thick with laughter, little dove.
Spill now, thy bag of treasure on this patch of ground,
Sweeping the sands of reason from the rock of sound.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 1.

The Fairy Circus

Come boy o' mine,—up on my knee.
It's story time. What shall it be?
The Fairy Circus? What? Again?
Just once? All right—Please sit still then.

To-night, when you are tucked in bed
The fairy workmen, come to spread
The lovely circus tent of mist,
Where all performers keep the tryst,
Down by the brook beneath the moon,
Where frogs and crickets creak and croon.
Then other fairies build the rings,
While spiders spin the nets and strings
For trapeze, tightrope; all such things,
As need a finely finished line
As strong as steel and soft as twine.
Before their tiny hammers cease,
The humming noise of wings increase;
The ticket taker takes his place,
That Jack-in-Pulpit yields with grace.
The crowds of fairies softly light.
They seem to grow from out the night.
They come on bats and riding rats.
Great crowds arrive on owls and cats.
They hitch their steeds outside the tent.
The children first within are sent
To pick whichever seats they wish
Or at the brook edge feed the fish.
When all the folks are seated there,
With each a firefly in his hair,
And glow worms set to light the place,
And show to friends each fairy's face,—

The Master Mummer takes his stand
The music starts—In comes the band.
The crickets crick, mosquitoes hum,
The night birds call, the bull frogs drum;
The show is on. The pace is fast.
From now till dawn the fun will last.

The clowning beetles tumble round.
The nimble fleas scarce touch the ground.
White mice, to chariots harnessed, race
The fairies driving with much grace.
Upon the brook things happen too;
Here many of the stunts are new.
The bugs with boats of air for feet,
With oarlike hands each other greet;
Then draw off quickly; leap and fight;
Fair fish swim round from light to light.
Toads hop a-turtle-back and skim
From distant shore, to brook's near brim.
The boys come round with drinks to sell,
All cupped in valley lily bell,
Distilled from nectar by the bees;
Who would refuse is hard to please.
Soap bubbles blown and burst to-day,
Are brought to life and help the play.
A push ball game is started then;
So, fancy serves, for fairy men.

From dark to dawn, thus runs their mirth,
For fairies joy in life from birth.
But when the eastern dawn draws near,
In bubbles fairies disappear.

You ask, "Where was the Fairy Queen?"
My dear; each fairy girl's the queen

Of her own life, and every boy's
A king. The fairy life is joy;
Each fairy does just what he will,
While doing so serves no one ill.
And no one ever says him nay,
If he prefer to laugh and play.
But when he asks, "Why? What? and How?"
No fairy says "Don't bother now!"
He answers always, if he can,
And when he can't, points out the man

That will know, just that thing he asks.
You see; the fairies have no tasks;
As naturally as flowers they grow,
To live, and love, and know, and know.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 2.

To Thomas Troward

You know.
Your words flow
Calm with the truth as they go
Swelling with mighty bliss, quietly to grow
Into an irresistible river of life-giving light.
You comfort me,
Soothing with strong knowledge,
Off'ring the Bread and Wine—
Your own delight—now mine.
Elder brother—
With the pride of a lover
I kiss your foot.
You taught me
Who
I am.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 5.

The Poet and the Queen

In olden days the human race
Contented lived with noseless face.

A poet sang delight in smell.

The people kicked him into hell.

Seduced by beauty in the rose
To dream of waiting joys unknown;
By God! He grew himself a nose
And all earth smells became his own.
His joyful song with lilting grace
From hell assailed the noseless race.
The queen with nothing else to do
Demanded that she might smell too.
The flat faced wise men moaning long
Declared her wish a deadly wrong
Bred by the hell tuned poet's song
That ravishes a wanton mind.

 "I wish to smell; the poet bring!"
Said the queen to her doleful court.
"The queen has surely lost her mind
She's ready to dance if the devil will sing."
Said the flattering folk as the poet was brought in;
—And they crowded close to watch her sin.
The crowd beheld the poet's nose;—
"Look at his face. Look how it grows;
The face is no place to have a toe sprout."
With boisterous laughter the people shout.
And the poet stands there humbly dumb.
"That's not a toe. It is a nose;
The thing he smells sweet smells with,"

Said the Queen intuitively.
"It's rather ugly I admit,
But it's interesting, isn't it?"
She said to her smirking court.
"Oh dear, how charming. Don't you know."
Declared the court with lusty crow,
And a moon-faced dainty lady

Kissed the blushing poet's nose.

Said the poet:

“What do you wish of me?”

Said the Queen:

“I wish to smell.”

Said the poet:

“First you must dream of smells and dream you have a smell.”

Said the Queen:

“You'll have to teach me.”

The singer paused and stroked his nose

Said he “Desire knows how it grows,

But I'll be hanged if I do.”

The vacant crowd heard him aghast;—

“He ridicules our Queen” they cry

“His smelling songs are all a lie;

Let's kick him back to hell.”

“Yes put him back, but treat him well;

Oh dear, I fear I shall not smell,”

Said the Queen—“Oh well, oh well;—

That incident is closed.”

The poet went back into his hell

And there he sang midst lovely smell

'Til many hearing were seduced.

They also wished his joy to taste.

Their wish at last became a knob.

'Twixt eyes and mouth, with itch and throb

It grew into a nose.

Their secret lust at last exposed

Some now proclaimed it virtue.

And virtue being rewarded well

The virtuous only thus could smell.

The mighty hosts of noseless good

Howled loud at this strange blasphemy.

A law was passed by counted vote

Of the allwise majority.

All noses grown from that day forth

Were declared to be illegal.

But the happy poet in hell sang true
Til all our secret wishes grew
And each one has a nose.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 6.

Revelations

Ho, in the thickets—come and pipe,
Come, woodsy pipers—Spring is ripe,
By clear high ringing, joyous singing,
To be set free from winter snow.
Come, pipe with me the song we know.

Seeds, sleeping, thrill and wake;—
Happy, then, their life thirst slake
And kiss the brown hills green.
Sun and new buds are here.
Love and dear eggs swing near.
Star children wait unseen.

Begin! 'tis Spring!
Sing down the tripping year!
Soar high sweet pipings clear!
Dread winter roaring dark,
Dies, when his dead dogs bark
Before Life's bubbling song.
Pipe from all thickets, clear and strong!
Unchain the Spring.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 9.

Foolish Song

My belly is an unwalled room
Where men and women I consume.
Each carves an image on the wall
And never sees the joke at all.

My belly moans with waning stars
That wail around the screaming cars
Abouncing rough on bubble wheels
That kiss the brakes with dusty squeals.

My belly leaps with laughing lights
In squadrons sailing fallow nights.
They plow the inky surface up
And furrow fire burns in my cup.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 10.

Conception

I come not from darkness,
For I am light.
From the outskirts of space,
From the interior of points,
I leaped and rushed,
Shouldering aside the many colored stars
In my eager desire.
And the stars joyed
And sang a sweeter song,
For they knew I was pulled by love.
I pressed myself
And all creation
To a point
Within a liquid pearl.
I swam
And grew deliriously
Into a baby.
Why do I cry?

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. II.

Here I Am

Warm, in the soft red dark I lay,
Safe sunk in love, in mother's garden.
She helped me build me,
She without and I within.
At my command,
Nine moons, enchanted,
Sheathed me in their weightless bands,
Fleshed me strongly in myself,
So that I may venture forth.

Hooray joy!—Oh I'm eager!
Mother darling!—Let me out!
I'm a woman!—Let me out!
Did I hurt you?—I love you mother.
Let your daughter Lisby out!

Such pain is glory.
Heavens crash on heavens on heavens on hells.
Come mother, through the calm firmaments.
Ah! Sweet!
Here I am, father! Here I am!

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 12.

Lisby's Goat

She came; the gate to the earth opened wide at her call
When the sweet flowering flesh turned the key to the Vast.
And many deep kisses she took to herself
As she built her a home from the red flood that passed
Thru the garden of love, where enchanted she slept.—
Till with kicks and a yell, as a babe out she leapt.

She smiles; The great soul smiles out thru her soft loving eyes
At this magic new life that is bursting to form
Like a plant from a seed in a hot moist spring
When the pulse of the earth throbs with growth quick and warm.

She laughs;—For fresh streams of living run bright with delight.

From the green wooded rocks in their sun freighted flood
The jewels are sifted and hung in a bag
Whence she draws the rich sparkles that flow in her blood.
The strength of the mountain slips smooth down her throat
In a sweet flow of pearl from dear Lucy her goat.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 13.

Lullaby

The calves say baa and lie down to rest.
The birds all dream in their woven nest.
The dark falls soft on the hillside bright,
Cov'ring all for the night,
 With sleep; sweet, deep, sleep.

Her manchild floats in his mother's arms,
Dear sleep drifts near with his drowsy charms.
Snuggle in close to your mother's breast
And swim down deep to rest
 In sleep, loved one; sleep.

The stars weave songs in my darling's sleep,
The fairies lull him with kisses deep.
They build new days full of happy joy
By night for mother's boy.
 In sleep; sweet, deep, sleep.

Dear soul, in thy soft pink bud of flesh,
At dawn thou shalt wake with petals fresh,
Washed bright by the dews that waft in sleep
From rivers hidden deep.
 He sleeps; my baby sleeps.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 14.

Enter Barnabas

Purple circles shimmer in colliding waves
Folding up the velvet mountains of the night
Stretching thin the filming dusk that bound the caves
To darkness, till bulging pockets burst in flowers of light.
Glowing pansies, smiling, flutter by in hordes
Leading the romping flowers to the fire rimmed sea
Rivers of candles of heaven wave their swords
Laughing as they flow flaming thru the heart of the lea.
Blisters on the curtain burst—the drops shine clear
Lit by the light on tender lips—A red yawn
Opens the womb of compassion—and drab fear
Slinks off with her soiled rags—leaving the lusty dawn.
 A thunderbolt, a quiv'ring kiss, a strong man
 Is here—meditating Love.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 15.

Dot

or the Stubborn Pup

I'm a brindle bull—my name is Dot.
Tho my ears are long—my tail is not,
For my breeder bit the last part off.
But the wag he left behind for me
When I still was a sucking puppy.

When one month old, I was lightly sold,
For ten round dollars, hard and cold
—Tho at first quite sad—I was soon right glad,
For my new boss was a fresh young kid
Who approved of everything I did.

'First he kept me swelled so tight with milk,
That my belly felt as fine as silk,
And I smiled and slept and ate and smiled.
Tho the experts said this should never be—
My belly and Bill both agreed with me.

Soon I'd run and wrastle all day long
And growl at the people that didn't belong
In the yard that belonged to me and Bill.—
—With my strong teeth sunk in young Bill's hat,
He could sling me around—a fine trick, that.

And the Reilly's dog would jump our fence,
To come and carouse—My! that dog had sense!—
He taught me to snap, to tackle and dodge—
With tail for a rudder, he'd turn with a flounce—
I sure had to hustle to keep up with Bounce.

With my nose to guide us—whatever Bill did—
We'd trail him and find him—no matter where hid—
And we'd bark and say—"Bill—Please do it again"—
So he'd pick up our ball and throw it away—
Or some such fine business would fill all our day.

Then in May, when we'd wilted, and quite lost our vim,
Bill went in the river and I learned to swim.
When later Bill sailed and canoed and had fun,

Overboard I could jump and take care of myself—
They couldn't put a smart pup like me on the shelf.

But I wouldn't learn any darn fool doggish tricks—
I wouldn't play dead—or jump over sticks.
If any old fogey said,—“Come with me, Dot”—
My right arm would pain me—I'd hold up my paw—
—'Twas the best little trick that ever you saw.

And when the old slow ones were gone from my sight,
I'd fetch on my ball and bark loud with delight.—
And Bill, that good feller, would play my own game—
For Bill understood more or less what I knew,—
That the thing that's most fun is the best thing to do.

Just once Bill attempted to break my strong will.—
The fight that I gave him, almost made him ill.—
He said, “Come along”—and I said, “I'll stay here,”—
He beat me and kicked me and banged me around,
Till I couldn't distinguish 'tween smell, sight and sound.

In spite of the roar and the dimness, 'twas grand,
And Bill found his old Dot was just chuck full of sand.
—When at last in despair, he had to give up—
Bill saw he might kill me—I couldn't stand—
We both understood—and I licked his dear hand.

And after that licking, Bill knew very well,
That all the raw devils that force men in hell,
Couldn't make me say “yes,” when I wished to say “no.”
So since that great day, tho we've had lots of fun,
Bill says with respect—“Dot's one son of a gun.”

A brown cocker spaniel named Jack lives next door,
Bounce tells me with candor that Jack is a boor.
It may be—I'm certain he don't know too much.
Jack doesn't like us, for Bill don't like Jack's Jim.
Pouf—I'm smart enough to bamboozle him.

Jack comes every morning quite soon after dawn,
To get rid of his droppings upon our front lawn.—
So, of course, I drop my drops in his front yard too.—
That dog don't know yet how to rob a swill pail—
So I tip over his—and the boob wags his tail.

Yes, one of my friends is Bagheera, our cat.—
Tho, poor chap, he's no dog, one can't blame him for that.
If another cat dare to set foot in our yard,
With a yelp I am off, and that cat's up a tree—
Or over the fence—no cat can face me.

Bagheera is diff'rent. He came when so small,
One nip would have killed him—that's no fun at all—
And besides he was Bill's and of course I love Bill,
So after I've eaten as much as I can,
I share with old Bag as I would with a man.
Old Bag's fur is downy—He's soft and smells sweet—
It's fine when he's snuggly 'nd curls up 'tween my feet.
Then I let him lick me with his neat little tongue—
—But what I've said is private—Let no other dog hear—
—“Twould only stir up talk and dogs would say—“Old
Dot is queer.”

But jumping barks and waggles—How I've talked away the time—
I am really very busy and I hear the supper chime.
I've got a bone to bury—and I want to smell our post.
A strange dog has left his card there—and here's the scent of three strange
men.—
So I know that you'll excuse me—and I hope we'll meet again.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 16.

Off Fall River

The long ebb has reached the glassy slack.
Flood tide will soon make in.
All day the hot calm has beat upon us and the bay,
Which lies, a gray mirror rimmed with distant hills
Awaiting in poignant balance
To drink of the renewing surge from the sea.
The gulls know.
The fish know.
And the fishermen are ready with baited hook to take the coming bounty.

Ah—there she comes—The breeze.
The dark streak spreading from the southwest over the water.
The stifling heat is gone with the first whiff.

The canvas slats.
The sheet blocks thrash madly.
The anchor is clear.
The boom swings as her head pays off.

With a good full
Our sweet boat heels to the fresh salt breath from the sea.
She leaps with life.
The deck goes under as she sways before a strong puff
And carries on.

Playful wisps of spray dash
Drenching with their cold lash
Whipped lightly over the bow.
With a wild joy the wind is screaming;
Even now the blue bay's creaming
With the rushing white caps
Of the dancers.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 20.

Tujunga Songs

What's It Good For?

Sprawled on a shelf of stone, shaded by a mountain.
Sheer walls of rock—rain-carved—whiskered by the bushy grasses
Sun baked—wrinkled—ochre tinted—crowned with grey-brown, green-grey
brush.
A lid of blue—illumined—a ceiling without arches.
Rustling leaves and combing swishes booming.
Many waters rush.
A cloud of bells swift rolling mistily below.
Amorous throated moon ripe women singing 'mid tinkling silver.
A baby's tiny cry upspilling.
Soft drowsy air—sleep laden—bringing kisses.
A lizard skitting 'long the edge.
Dream music drowning day upon the ledge.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 21.

Blowing Up Rain

Dry blows the wind from the desert
Washing the sky.
Dusk fills the bowl of the hills.
Jagged the ranks of the mountains
Shoulder the night.
Mistletoe breaks from the sycamore
Cold burns the glittering sky.
The surf of the waves of the wind roars
High o'er the river.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 22.

After the Rain

Hail to the white fleece drifting
Under the downturned bowl of the moon.
Sing Ho to the cold air sifting
Over the north-west shaggy crags.

The sand is hot today and sparkling
Are the jewels in the boulders by the river.
April quivers laughing with her kisses in the alders
And the willow leaves are dancing with their shivering silvery lights
In the clean, rough wind.

Life lies on the hot white sands
In the lee of the rocks' smooth pastel musings,
And from the coves of color
The rugged brown and wild green mountains
Shoulder the frozen pool of blue
That slides the boisterous sun down the tuned and poised west.

High over the peaks two eyes look down as we look up.
An eagle wheels beneath the snow cup of the moon.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 23.

All Alone Down the Road

All alone down the road trot along in a jog,
Cross the stream rolling by, belled with light, on a log.
Call the dogs, here they come, let them come, come along.
Every step as it hits strikes the time for a song.
Let the air wash the blood, thru the nose let it rush!
Let the sweat dress the skin as the dew decks the brush.
Sweet the kiss of the earth spreads her rootlets within.
Now the stars and the grass in my flesh are akin.

High the trail winds among dreaming trees in the sun.
Here I lie with my dogs as they pant from their run,
In the shade of the smooth skinned manzanita bush,
Where his leaves breaking green from his red, gently hush
His branches' anguish, to carved green fretwork on the burnished blue.

Now the dogs gnaw the bones of a dry shriveled fox
That the trapper in the winter cast below on the rocks
When the fur was skinned to deck the pretty lady sex.

Far the still hills heave their law abiding curves
Away away all around, and the sound
Of the wind in the trees across the valley
Is a sigh sweet with peace: or a cry of alarm.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 24.

A Rustle in the Brush

When the moon in golden slippers, walks
Over the eastern rim, a woman to her demon talks
And listens well to him. She sits upon a gravel gash
Beneath a buckhorn bush.
Then falls her jeweled dusky hair
Around her knees, like starlit night upon two sunset peaks
And silently her demon speaks.

Six foxes glide along the halls
Whose roof is perfumed lilac balls.
They come to her on light toed feet.
Their waving tails the woman greet.
Six quail before her throne they place
An off'ring to her hidden face
That she return them secret grace.

The woman touches with her toe
Each quail's head where the crest plumes grow.
And then the dance begins,—The prayer dance of the foxes.

“Out of the lilac, under the thorn.
Leap to the hogback, treading with scorn.
Prance. Let the pebbles go rolling below.
Keen read the air, laugh contempt at the foe.
There's nought the man does that the fox doesn't know.
‘Ware of the iron smell close to the trail.
The hound is a plodder, not so the Airdaile.
Sweet fleetness, Oh Wild Woman, give to our legs.
Let his nose lead the fox where the quail lays her eggs.
Give the boldness of cunning, Red Woman most fair—
—Hsst—the reek of a man and his dog taints the air.”

The gravel gash shines silver white—
A wound cut in the velvet sheen
That clothes the placid hills of night.
No sound is heard—nor movement seen.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 25.

Meditation

Number seven tennis shoes are on my feet
Which are over my head
Resting on the ends of my nice legs,
Which lean against the cool violet bark of a manzanita trunk
On the edge of a cliff,
Where I lie on my back in the clean dust—
In the hot wind and the speckled shade
Dozing,
And wondering,
Who is rolling rocks in the river below.
'Til I hear a horse whinny,
And then I wonder
Why I'm here with everything arranged around so conventionally promiscuous
'Til I catch a flying phrase on the wing—
I read it somewhere—
“Significance of form”—
But in my hand it yields plenty of feathers, but no bird,
Til I remember the breasts and the lips and the eyes of my love
And then I get up and go to her
To read her this I've written here,
And she will know it is a kiss.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 27.

The Whiskey Bottle of the Big Tujunga

Tujunga

Out of the dust of the earth, man formed me,
Blown by his breath, in the glowing sand.
Flat for his hip, and wide as his pocket,
He shaped, as he blew me, and gave me command
To carry hot kisses, his head and his hand,
Should ravish from rye babies, thrall'd by the sun,
In the long winter sleep ere they spring from the land.

Then full of the dark liquid amber fire imps,
Tight corked and labeled, "The Best of Scotch Rye,"
I joggle around in the dark in old boxes,
While my imps dance with anger and gleefully cry:—
"Give us a man as quick as you can.

Let us bewitch him, pinch him and twitch him.
Make him see lies, fumble his eyes,
Muffle his ears and pickle his fears,
Til he bawl like a calf,
At his wit that is fit,
For only the slave that is free.

Let's dance with his spark to a fuddling cark,
Lest he lift but a bit of the lid off o' hell.
Oh boy—sing cuckoo."

My imps have their wish, for a man comes and buys me.
Away on his hip, warm and soft, I now ride.
Up 'mong the hills and in canyons we wander,
The pack burros leading with dawdling stride.
My man follows, dreaming of riches to squander,
That grow like the mistletoe, hung from his pride.

Chuckling my imps make their gurgling escape,
And dance in the blood of the jazz wooing dreamer,—

Building a kingdom and making him king,—
Dooming their throned one, to beg for his throne,
'Til he lies down to sleep, and awakes with a moan,
To find the last imp is kissed limp in his blood,—
—And empty, I land on the sand with a thud.

Here, on the sands of the Big Tujunga,

While the seasons whirled, I've lain.
Blue and gold, kissed green and silver—
Sunbeams, dancing, lured the rain,
And the singing waters gurgled blithely,
On their rollick to the sea.

This was peace and beauty,
Til one day a man came,
Seized me by the neck, flung me 'gainst a rock,
And with a tinkling plop, I smashed to smithereens.

"One deed irrevocable!" said my murderer.

Some day my smashed body will rot.
But—
I'm no mortal bottle.
I'm a poem forever.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 28.

Flow Stones

Flow—stones and hills and trees.
Sing—men and birds. Croon frogs.
Bright bees—twang sweet the strings of sunlit air.
Mix all in me thy harmony.

Then from my thrilling lips
Take flight.
Fly thru the rolling earth on winged words.
In showers of glory fall on thirsty hearts.
Like crystal balls with music filled
Soft colored by the tears distilled
From yearning mother eyes,
Burst there in golden smiles
And silver laughter.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 30.

Cross Country

Come on. Got your sweaters? It is cold here outside.
Set the pace, Johnny Jones. Follow John, hit your stride.
We're away. What a day for a blood easing run—

For the first hundred yards, like a shot from a gun
Johnny leads and the bunch follows trailing behind.
Then he slows and we close to a steady running pack.
Look! It snows, but our toes, getting cold, soon will warm.
Pat O'Neil, full o' hell, has to slap Johnny's back;—
Then they break from our midst, racing gaily away.
Steady there—Save your wind—Let the frisky puppies
Play—

Take your time.—Seven miles is our stunt for today.

Here we turn from the road, 'cross a field to the woods,
With the pitter patter potter of our feet, muffled soft
By the snow, one or two inches deep on the ground.
Now our blood, flowing free, makes our cozy bodies warm,
As we trot supple legged thru the woods in the storm;
And the snow, as it falls, kisses pink steaming flesh,
And we stick out our tongues, catching flakes, falling fresh.

Oh, it's calm in the storm, to let your legs drift along
And be borne in the arms of the wind as you run,
While the snow sifting down, spreads enchantment around.

Come along. Follow close here behind Micky's back.

Watch his legs swell and lift, stretch and drop, as they fly.
See his feet kiss the ground; watch the play of his thigh
And the curve of his hips and the part of his lips.
Smell the sweat of sweet flesh, on the air damp and fresh,
See the smoke of his breath and the swing of his arms:—
And the poise of his head's not the least of his charms.
Thus we jog, 'til we're clear of the woods. Cross a field
Full of stubble speared nubbles, sticking brown out of white,
And we puff, and breathe deep with delight, as we greet
A springy dirt road, that lends wings to our feet.

Down the road now, we go, with a full swinging stride
Past a farm, where the chickens flap, cackle and hide,

And the children press noses to windows to see.

Then, sharp to the right, we turn, straight down the lane,
Past the pens where the feeding pigs squeal and protest,
And the air is rich laden with damp manure smells.
Jump the fence at the end. Then cross stubble again.
Climb the hill. It's so steep, that we gradually slow down to a walk,
And our tongues hang out, and we're blown at the top.

Come away. Say hooray. Stick your legs out and coast.
Let your feet drop ahead. Let your body be led
Thru the gate to the road—two miles now to the gym,
And down hill all the way. Let her go; this is play;
So, with pride, lengthen stride, for we're strong.

Bill and Pat, out ahead, race away in the lead,
And the close running pack, stringing out, follows fast.
Some at ease, drift along, while for some it's top speed;
But the fun of the run, in the gathering dusk,
'Long the tree shadowed street, on our fleet flying feet,

Is the joy in a body, that's tuned to the earth,
Thrilled by swift singing blood, chanting sweet, "Life is good."

So we race past the lake, weary glad to the gym,
To wash clean in the shower, and glow fresh from a swim,
And dress slowly, content, while the gang yell their jokes;
And then go, walking slow, thru the thick falling snow,
Along flicker lit streets, in the dark early night,
To the supper that waits for our bellies' delight,
In the warm cozy room, we call home.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 31.

Glance Bay

There's fascination in the pit no doubt—
The clinging blackness of the chambered night
Stirred dimly by the stunted pitboy's shout—
The shadows sliding numbly round his light.—
The jewels in the pillared walls of dusk
That welcome with their darts the lantern's gleam—
The rats that snatch the careless crumb or husk
Dropping beyond the miner's shadowed beam.
Somewhat the light does lend to thrill the dark
And by the blest comparison doth woo.
But oh—the pit mouth's singing golden spark
Whose finger beckons to the dome of blue.
Naught stirs within the night of ignorance
But shadows of the Word's invigorance.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 34.

The Linemen

Frontiersmen—pushing back time and space.
Creatures at ease above the earth
The linemen,
Boldly wary,
Stretch the talking threads from pole to pole,
Place the cables that guide and restrain
The invisible Geni,—
The dangerous servant,—
While their bodies and arms
Unsmothered by the distance,
Sing.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 35.

Progress

High on the roof a fat man dickers with a lady
For her leg in marriage.
Among a backward people
A man resigns the highest office,
Saying,
“No person wise enough to govern man.”
Across the sea an army of little bones
Press shrinking skins of children
Whose questioning eyes glow dull behind drab curtains,
Swaddling their futile whimpers.
The flag waves over the bank.
And down the bay
Some men hang by their wrists in chains
In dungeons under sea—Free?

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 36.

With Unkind Words I Cut a Boy

With unkind words I cut a boy—deep
Perhaps—
He cut me back with his wry wince of pain
Recalling the unkind words
That beat me back within my self's dark dreamings
And escapings,
When the boy I was,
Sucked at the world, like him.
Now I will take my fault and roll it over in the light
That throws no shadows.
Where is it?
Gone?

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 37.

Yes

Come. Shut your eyes and we'll both fly,
Out into the Vast, that is known to lie
Just inside the mansion, where dreams are born.
Come. Fall.
Don't hold on.—
Let everything go.

First we'll take an ocean,
And warm it with a sun,
Until great clouds of mist arise,
And when they have begun,
To sail off on the gentle breeze
Our laughter fans along,
We'll fling white light beams in and out
To thrill with a kiss each sober drop,—
And for love of the drops, the beams shall burst
Into colored song, in the magic arch,
That marries the sky and the earth and the air,
To the light that flames in Man.

Come on. Leap easy, to the tip o' the top of our Rainbow.
Now we'll slide down the colors to the bottom of Heaven.
Hold. Let's stop this falling.

Publication. First published in *Tujungua Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 38.

Ballad of the Sick Heart

Oh Man drives man across the earth
Driving Oh Fighting Oh
And laughter speeds at every birth
To Anger Oh and Woe Oh.

The happy dead dance round the hearse
Leaping Oh and laughing Oh
The corpse within is every curse
Melting Oh away Oh.

The winding sheet is dream begemmed
Sparkling Oh shining Oh
Enwrapping cringing babes condemned
To living Oh and weeping Oh.

The stink flies off to outer dark
Away Oh forever Oh
Thru smoking teeth the furies bark
The body Oh is burning Oh.

The cringing babes arise with cries
Of anger Oh and joy Oh
With swords of light they rip the skies
Bright flashes Oh Wild laughter Oh.

In crystal nets they mesh the suns
For wisdom Oh is walking Oh
And naked where the werewolf runs
His ravening is transcending Oh.

The numbered numbers raise their feet
Creation Oh moves onward Oh
And long still hearts again thrill sweet
The legions Oh are coming Oh.

Eight suns are rising side by side
The Evening Oh The Morning Oh
The Children guide the rising tide
Onswelling Oh Outrolling Oh

And soggy hearts lift liltily
Deep drinking Oh the Waters Oh
And blithesome toes skip trippingly
Or wander slow so peaceful Oh.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 39.

Herman Kuehn

You spoke without conceit to put again
Your thought in books.—If many scribes drew fire
From your warm light to heat an eager pen
Your kindling words did cherish their desire.
So many used—so few acknowledged thee
To be the pilot that thou wast to us
When from accustomed channels out to sea
We tore, to find the new lands calling us.
Beneath an oak thy shadow's ashes lie
But I have light from thee to dwell with me
That lends my weeping words a joyous cry
For thou didst glow with Immortality.
The blackening clouds embalm the tempest's doom,
But thou didst melt with light a time walled tomb.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 41.

Death of Labor

The ancient curse, wrath swollen as he dies
Sweeps wildly with his arms of cloud;—
Gropes blindly with his mirage shroud
To smother out the Godhead light that lies
Serenely waxing;—as the mystic curtain,
Fold after fold dissolving in the truth,
Reveals as law immutable—that ruth
Alone sustains what is.—That certain
As the birth of love in man;—with growth
Of love—the curse is doomed
To be consumed by playful laughter,
While the woman shall eat freely of the Tree
And whatever beauty man conceives shall be
As easily as ripened apple drops to earth
And he who lives shall lazily give birth
To Self yet more alive.—By Freedom's Law.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 42.

Spring to Thy Fullness

Oh waiting hour.
I hear thy walking thru the murmurous talking
Of the waters.
Thy restful power o'erleaps the tumbling oceans
Beaming from my lips in clean sweet cuts of Light
Thru the black-walled Night.
Thy purple fingers bud from out the stem of Evening.
Thy closebound cloaking darkness splits;
And now thy face,
Washed bright with dew of glory,
Floods forth the Morning, thru the dust strewn skies.
Unspeaking Remembrance.
Loosing my heart in ecstasy to smiling tears;—
I taste thy joy.
Come near! Come near! Oh Fateful Hour,
And yet more near.
I yearn! I swell! I burst to flower!

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 43.

To Thee

Place Thou Thy finger in my upreached hand
That when my young feet stumble I may not fall.
Let me chuckle as we run thru the forest with the wolf:
I with Thee, more tireless than his easy lope.
Bind Thou Thine single eye within my heart
And blaze and play thru out.

My feet are on the climbing trail.
The morning goes before me
And the purple peaks flush gold.
The dreadful valleys of the night
Spring out in beauty at my smile
And my wolf mounts guard over the deer upon the hills.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 44.

Shelley

His body burned, his heart lay unconsumed;
A fiery stone, whose magic flame devoured
The veil of dream—and by his word empowered,
Revealed the true within—where lay enwombed,
The bloom that seeded in all seed that flowered,
From never to the end of ever.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 45.

'Lone

I sang my song of a lonely soul
But no song sang.
I dropped my bell in an unwall'd hole
And no bell rang.

I flung my star at an empty sky
But no star shone.
I searched the world to find an eye
To see my own.

A formless night
Ate up the light,
And darkness moaned.

Then I wept and sucked at my mother's breast
In shadowed night.
She strangely smiled and more strangely pressed
Me with delight.

A gay little bird on a great grey rock
Chirped a song at me.
He turned the key in a time bound lock
And dropped the key.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 46.

Sandy and I

Back we come from the peak,
My silent dog and I,
Threading the tunnelled passageways
The patient cattle bored
When blindly shouldering thru the brush
They sought to lose their flies.

Here is our secret haven
Secure from the mad men of the towns.

Yes, Sandy.
Cold oatmeal in plenty
And hot red beans shall fill our bellies.
Don't growl you dear poop.
It's only that big bull ranging.
He wants a loving cow, not us.
Besides, men can pass up the creek bed any time
And never, never see us,
We're so safely hid behind the barbed bush.
And then, you know, old waggles,
No one has passed by in all the weeks we've lived here.
Go ahead and eat now, you bottomless pit.

Ah! It's good to lie here in the brush
With full bellies. Ain't it Sandy?
Ouch! You snuggling slobber,
Don't eat my face.
Come! Lie down on the blankets,
Fleas and all. I love you—Dog.
What if you are an idolater?
You'll grow.

Listen to the choir of heaven
Singing in the brook.
The fairies are waking.
The dusk is growing.
See the tree that towers above us,
Bearing his great green torch
Kissed to golden fire by the sinking sun.
Night slips in quickly in this canyon.

It's dark already.
Look how the trees stand out,
Black black against the blue black of the sky,
Why,— The stars are in the branches.
These trees hang head downward from the earth,
And yielding shining fruits
Drop them on the skyee ground.
How quiet it is.
The bells that tinkle in the brook
But spread the hush.
The living folk around sleep late tonight.
No! But feel!
The darkness waits for something.
The air itself expects.

Ah Look.

Up the canyon the sky is lighting.
Softly as love the golden tide comes
Creeping thru the trees
Flooding magic into every leafy crevice.
A new world has come
Borne on the flood of liquid moonlight.
The people of the wood are all astir.
The mice trip swiftly along
Their arching bridgework
Formed of interlacing saplings
Bent down by winter snows.
A deer comes slowly stepping thru the ferns,
To the brook.
Squeak and piping of the eager living
Fill the golden silver air.
Some day-birds snugly perched and sleeping
From their dreams salute the moon
With a few stray bars of twitters.
An owl barks up and down the valley
And borne far on the mysterious air
Sounds the mellow bellow of a distant bull.

Oh Sandy.
Life creeps in and soaks all thru me

As the light floods thru the trees,
The glory of our thicket
Is the magic that's in me.

You can't catch that rat, you frisky pup,
But of course you want to try.
Go to it Sandy.
I'm alive. I love. I'll find her.
She is here tonight.
They've driven us out
Into Heaven.
Hooray Sandy. We're alive.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 47.

River

There is a river that I know,
Where fleecy shapes sail down below
Across the under sky.
Where tender sun warmed kisses blow,
And blue the silent amber flow,
For folks like you and I.

Our river wanders thirty miles,
With scarce a frown mixed with his smiles
From pond to salty bay.
Thru woods and meadows, swamps and hills,
Past farms and towns, and high stacked mills,
Our stream flows calm or gay.

The dreamy air breathes thru the door,
Scatt'ring papers on the floor,
And beckons us to go.
We're more than men, we're only boys,
And not yet dead to earthy joys
We're coming—river that I know.

One morning when the world is grey,
And mist hangs low at break of day
Before the rising sun,
We lift our light, clean-lined canoe,
Across the grass, wet-laced with dew,
And in the water run her nose,
And softly slide her out, till she's afloat—
I'll take the stern—you clamber in,
—We're off—
Silent at first, we drink the air—
—Dip paddle strong,
—Grunt when you heave,
—Lift her along,
—Fresh muscles limbering up.—
As we cut on thru the wreathing mist,
The vapor blanket splits at last,
While breathing deep, we slip on past the little rocky island.
And then we see, rolling beyond

The distant trees that fringe the pond,
The grey blue wooded hills.
—Soft low New England lazy hills,
That roll like long calm ocean swells
At rest in grey enchantment.
Ahead, across the glassy grey,
The tree crowned bank of gravel breaks
To let the waters out.
—Supple and warm—swinging along,
—Rhythmic we dip, to the lilt of our song,
And slip into the narrow lane of water
A scant canoe length wide,
That winds and twists among the wild and tender marshes
And the brambled copses.
—Sliding swiftly 'round the turns
Our paddles churn, to outwit the current.
—A startled pickerel by, flashes
An arrow 'gainst the sandy sky below,
When caught up by the clear swift flow
Beneath the old stone bridge we go, and on and on.
—Up that gentle sloping grassy bank,
Under the close clump of pines—
The Gang—
Stale from beakers, books and calculations,
Gaily lazed and played thru spring vacations,
Singing droll and ribald lamentations
E're the Juggernaut crushed down.
—Now they've scattered thru the nations.
—There's the Old Lone Pine up on the rock,
That Hop with much meandering talk,
Named the eggnog for,
That time he mixed ten quarts of milk with eggs for eight
And we sat late
Around the fire and finished it.
—Now the swift flow slackens
As the river opens into a pond
Where a mill clanks.
Gently we ground upon the gravel—
Then across the road we travel lugging all,

And launch upon the shallow racing stream.
Down we slip quietly thru the back yards of a town,
Dodging the sunken rocks whose jagged crown
Is hooded by flowing water wimples,
Swirling their velvet and bubbles away
Thru night and day.
Past litter and debris—
—Tin cans in heaps and cotton waste that slicks the surface
With patches of oily skum
That spread their rainbows in the sun,
We sweep on, while time, and distance paint
And cleanse industries' slavish taint away.
—There beneath those oaks,
Asleep in plush lined jewel cases,
Under close cropped level lawns,
Lie rotting bodies of the dead;
Most cherished after life has fled.
—Here, having wandered north enough,
The river swings meandering west.
—Thru swampy forests, now we float,

—Our amber highway flowing smoothly,
Picks us up and keeps us going on our way,
Whether, on a straight and tree walled drafty reach
We buck the wind and short steep waves
The current helps to make—
—Or idly drift along the quiet places
Where sunning turtles, startled wake
At sound of voices, sight of faces,
Or splash and swish of paddles,
And slip and slither in and disappear.
—High on a dead branch,
Often, a crow caws at intrusion of men on his gang
And leaps aflutter into the racing air—
Then rights and flies off, while the robbers
Take care to keep well out of gunshot.
—Oh, birds and muskrats and cows in the meadows
And many other people—but no men for ten miles.
—At the old deserted broken dam
We all excited let her slam;—

It's only two feet drop—why stop and carry?
A little wet? what then?—A thrill—
We're thru and down the race already
And floating on again all steady as a stately minuet.
—Suddenly, around a turn,
We flow into another river and go on—
Bending south now—
Under bridges, past meadows and woodlots
And stone walled farms
And long narrow islands with trees full of charms
For the wise young feathered lovers
That wish seclusion in their homes.
Till the stacks we've seen from far, are near.
And at the big dam—stretching legs,
We carry down the stony hill,

While the children of the mill
Lug our paddles—yell and curse,
And point out the water ladder
Built to help the spawning herring and the shad
Climb the dam on their sad eager pilgrimage.
Five more miles of soft country down stream
Then across the road, along the bank are seen
Houses—growing closer and closer and close.
We're going to the city almost.
There's where the city lovers walk 'long the river road
And look down into the starry water
As they lean upon the fence that tops the wall
That holds the road from the hungry river.
—There's the boat club—boyhood palace of delight,
—That yellow building on the right,
With floats and open sliding doors,
And Cap, there, smoking at his chores.—
—“Hello Cap”—“No—No stop today.”
—We slip along upon our way.
Under trestles—more back yards—
Then past the mills, where spills
The waste that spoils the hole,
Us kids possessed before they built there.
There's the stump we dove from;

And there's the tree the rope was in
We used to swing and fly from, into the water,
Like merry brown skinned frogs at play
In and out all day.

—Around the turn we swing, and glide
Down thru a straight highway
Of water; lined with ranks of piles,
—Uniform, grey, unthinking soldiers
Bearing upon their sturdy shoulders
The drab romantic warehouses,

Looming high—to form a canyon,
From whose wooden faces, dusty windows—
Like stolid bleary eyes—unblinking—
Watch the watery street.

That schooner there's discharging wheat.
There's another loading brick,
While those barges brought up coal.
Fetch and carry, is the goal
Of all these clumsy hookers.

—At the bridge now—two onlookers,
—Dawdling boys—spit upon us as we pass,
—Then run across to spit again
And find we're out of reach.

—A half mile more, thru littered scum,
Some trees appear and here we come,
Upon the green hem of the town,
To the low squatting sheds, where Brown
With loving cunning in his hands,
Deftly marries wood and metals
Fair and smoothe as lily petals,
'Til they blossom into beauty
As the living hulls of yachts.

—And hard by, along the bank,
Like floating coffins in a rank,
Are square ended painted boxes,
Serving well as labor ferries
From village homes to whirring mills.

—Look! Here comes a sail!
—A patchwork quilt, set from a pole,

Stepped at one end of a scow,
—Discarded by men, for see how the boy
Amidships, is bailing with the handleless shovel,
While the helmsman steers with a broken oar,
Into the new world that opens from their own back door.

—As they slip on swiftly, before the soft breeze
That drops down to play with them out of the trees
We sweep on smoothly 'round John R.'s sharp turn,
Where the deep puffing tug,
Like a brawny young bug with a string of big worms,
Shortens hawse on the barges, and waits,
Till the nose of the leader the far bank has neared,
—Then yanks at right angles, puffing hard till they've cleared
The button hook corner—and straighten out for the docks.

—Now the gentle smooth slope
Of the salt water hill, sweeping in from the sea,
Pulled along on a tether by its mistress the moon
—Like a wedge, lifts the edge of the ebb, till it slacks,
And soon the fresh waters slide quietly back
Up the well worn track.

—We escape the flooding tide,
By paddling close along inside
The channel turns, and slide into friendly eddies
Playing back behind the bends.

—Over streaming water grasses, now we glide,

—Poling in the shallow places

—Paddling down the breezy reaches,

As we closely hug the turns.

In the meadows, 'long the banks,

Quiet cows with swelling flanks,

Lift their heads; and churning jaws,

Stare—till luscious grasses

Pull their thoughts from that which passes innocently by.

—That little dock of pasture rock

With the skiff moored near,

And the farm house snuggling south of the hill,

And the yard walled in by silent pines,

With scratching hens upon the lawn,

And ducks along the river fringe,

Is Dugan's place,
Where the tired business man,
Pressed hard by cankerous woes,
Often goes to hold committee meetings,
With Dugan's pretty sweetings.
That's one there, waving from the porch and calling.
—We toss our paddles and are gone
Around the turn and thru the Needles,
Where the racing current boils among the sharp rock pinnacles,
—Those slimy green-black timbers,
Like the bones of some slain monster,
Are the ribs of the American Eagle,
That years ago was run aground—in flames,
When heavy freighted with Hibernians on their picnic.
—Yes, all were saved but three too drunk to move
Who stayed asleep.
—Now the flood is brackish with the sea,
And every turn the river broadens out.
Wide, brown-green marshes spread back to the wooded hills
And the reaches are longer.—
—Our paddles grow heavy and we sweat in the sultry air.
—Great pillars of cloud rear halls in the west
Roofed over by thunder heads,
Where gather the hosts of the lightning blast.
—And phantasmal forces march thru the air
Filming the blue with burnished brass,
As they weave a curtain before the sun.
—The breeze drops still, as we slip along—
—Small birds hop fluttering, empty of song
To the caves of the dense twigged bush,

And the air is tense with the ominous hush
Of violence testing his chains.
—The giant growls—a fish jumps near,
And while the running circles spreading—disappear upon the flowing glass,
The darkness narrows in.
Our paddles leave boiling holes behind
As we lift along for the sheltering roof
Of the fish shed round the point.
As we ground upon the sandy beach,

From down the river—up the reach
Comes a rushing line of white.
Now the squall swoops on in its frenzied might,
While its fangs drip raging clouds of spume,
When,—canoe bottom up, in the lee of the shack,
To its rage we send our laughter back.
Then we go inside ‘mong the tubs of brine
And the pickling fish, and the line on line
Of herring, hung on sticks.
—Now the shed is lit by a lightning flash
And thru the door, we see the crash
Of a falling branch from a riven oak.
—New fury sweeps thru the screeching air
Shaking our refuge, till midst the creak of beams,
Some shingles fly, like storm driven birds,
Grey hurtling streaks, down the leaden sky.
—On our flesh—each hair’s atingle
With expectant imps electric,
That itch to dance and mingle
With the unvalled cauldron of destruction.—
Hgh—The shed rocks blank with light,
—A dead’ning blue and white that stabs with a ripping crash,
From sky to earth, cracking the air to splintered chasms.

Now comes the rain.
Smooth speeding, with a swelling roar, it comes.
—Thru a crack, we see the grey wall of drops
Marching over the water’s white and black,
Flatt’ning, with its countless hordes,
The river’s wave ribbed back into a flood of smoky
A pimple dimple, with the falling crystal spheres.
—And the wind dies as the rain grows.
—While the flashes run over the hills
And the thunder’s pursuit gradually stills—
We light our pipes and the fragrant blue smoke
Weaves sweet, thru the salt fishy smells.
—We sit among the finny dead.
—The run is over now—
But there’s the capstan in the rain,
The old horse walks and walks around,

When winding in the brown meshed net,
Where all his master's hopes are set,
That, as the line of corks close in,
The strong, high booted men, may bail
A flopping stream, of irredescent silver life,
Into many dripping baskets.
Both horse and men, inside their fence,
Drip sweat and grunt for master's pence.
—The rain slacks up.—The air is fresh.
The sun in a golden flood breaks thru.
While over the distant hills.
The grey drops dance with the pure white light,
And band the sky in their arched delight.
So we launch on the stream again.
—As we leave the shore, one sun shower more,
Falls sweetly as the quiet tears,
That calm poor sorrow's wracking sobs
After anger's havoc tread.

—The flooding tide—intent unswerved
Comes swelling on and in,
While our buttocks warm, dry the cold wet drops
On our slim canoe's cane seats, as we ply on down the river,
The hillsides smile with freshened green
And all our world's once more serene.
—A fish hawk soars high in the air
—Then quickly poised—with a pushing dive,
Like an arrow self shot from the sky—he plops,
To soon bob up, and slowly fly
On heavy wings, with a silver gleam
Held tight in taloned claws.
—Over the water wafts familiar sound,
—The same old tune from the merry-go-round
At the park—where some picnickers, undismayed,
Jostle ghosts of Sunday's highkeyed crowd,
With single shouts, that echo loud
'Mong the empty halls of work slaves' joy.
And we slip on past these pregnant tombs,
—These roofs where death—new life enwombs, that masters dare not touch,
Past the yacht club, standing out on stilts

In the river, mid the anchored fleet,
With whom, some suck from ocean's teat,
The milk of nature's law,
And grow to know, all seas and coasts are born to be explored.
While Harmony implored,
Engulfs the angry tooth and claw, in deeps of beauty,
Where bursting suns are glowing drops of spray blowing past.
—But here we are at Somerset.

—The old stone wharves—the scrap iron heaps beside the silent shops,
Whisper, that Ohio lured the town's industries to her ready ores—
And now, the village sleeps, while every year the living green
Creeps in upon the mouldering works.
—Beneath the high arched hallway of the elms,
That guide the stony lane straight down the hill,
A straggling column came one Sunday afternoon.
—Ahead, the preacher and the deacons led the way.
—Then came the ardent women and the sombre men,
—Then, seven or eight young girls and three young men, all singing.
—And like a tail of rags behind a kite, came several tumbling boys and dogs,
with intermittent mimicry.
—And three or four easy men with restful pipes.
—And two sleek girls in modish clothes.—
—Down to the sandy beach between two wharves, the singers come.
The preacher turns to face his flock, that huddles close.
—Without the fold, the stray sheep string along the wharf, and watch in quiet
derision,
While on the swelling flood, beneath the leaden sky, we hold our paddles still.
—The preacher lifts his voice in prayer, and prays—
—Till boys and dogs lose hope, and slip thru fidgets, into play,
And one man takes his pipe out of his mouth to say—
“Keep still there Bill—or else go home.”
And Bill slips off behind a cask and makes old Rover beg till Rover barks.
A sprinkle falls and Deacon Blood with grave solicitude,
Erects his great umbrella, above the Reverend Smythe—

At last the droning ends.
—Spectators crowd close to the edge, along the grey rock wharf.
—The Reverend Smythe throws off his cloak, and in a rubber suit,
Speaks solemnly to three good souls that wish to lose their sin.
He takes the hand of one—they walk down to the placid edge,

And thus they both wade in, while Deacon Blood protects the head of
Reverend Smythe from falling drops.
Out wade the seeking two, but Blood remains on shore—
The sinners in their Sunday clothes
Are ducked beneath the cold grey flood.—
The saved, heave sighs,
—The folks along the wharf, all laugh at the bedraggled seekers.
—“Give me a diving suit and I’ll baptize” one saucy vagrant cries.
—“Go fetch it, Rover, fetch it boy,” says Bill and slyly throws a stick,
And Rover, barking, splashes in, close to the Reverend
Smythe—
—The congregation marches off.
—The smoking men look on amused and sit while others straggle.
And—Yes—The young go west,
The old folks die—The works were famous once.
—Just two miles more and we’ll make camp
In the shack upon the bluff—
—The sun slips down behind the hills,
The promise of a new day, fills
The sky with dream mixed fire mosaics,
That shift their luminous veils of light,
Till day is wrapped within the night,
And points shine thru the dusky lakes of blue
Lapped ‘mong the smouldering clouds.
—While our paddles lift and dip on,
Thru the falling dusk we slip on,
In the rhythmic swing that now is in our blood.
—A duck calls from the grasses,
Feeding, splashing where the marshes
Are awash beneath the salty rising flood.
—And along the western shore, the shadows press,
To stretch a sombre belt of dark,
Between the tree pierced sky above,
And tree pierced sky below.
—Here, where the rivers meet,
High tide transforms the point, into an island,
Brooding in wierd mystery, as we glide,
Water borne, across the pebbly isthmus, that two hours since was dry,
And swing out into the friendly current sweeping up towards journey’s end.

Ah!—There's the good old shanty—on the bluff among the trees.
—We'll land above it in the little cove,
Where glacial ice strewn boulders—when its rough,
Tame the sharp waters into rippling gentleness,
And enclose a perfect landing for canoe or skiff.
The bow grates gently on the sand.
We rest a moment—ere we land.
Then stretch—and lift the dunnage out,
—Upturn her bottom—fair and sweet,
Where slim clean birches, poise on feet
Firm anchored in the gully sides,
And make a cradle safe from tides
And suns and prankish winds—no doubt—.

Then with stiff legs—lug stuff up hill,
To where the shanty,—dark and still,
Waits us, in dusky welcoming—
—One lights the stove;—the other goes
Along the path on active toes,
To fill the jugs, at the cool spring
Beneath the low branched knarly oak.
—And walking back, rests many times
To watch the after glow below
In the river's mirror, winding off
Into the distant hills all pricked with lights.
—Then after feeding,—good sweet smokes,
And pleasant talk,—and whimsy jokes,
When, lying on our blankets there,
Out near the bluff-edge, on the grass,
From where, deep in the river's glass,
We see the stars, beneath the pines
That hang down dark in ragged lines
From the black ridge of the sunken hill.
—Until—words melt unspoken into dreams
Rich in delight—thru the still night—on the river.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 50.

Sonnets

By Worms That Burrow

Of thought, emitted from the poet's womb,
Grey words are woven fondly to enmesh
The mounting wings of music in their doom.
But searching form for that that form doth make,
The eye but holds the mirror up to death,
As when a desert thirst beholds the lake
Miraged, floating on the sand's hot breath.
So let me Beauty, drift beyond with thee—
Locked in thine heart, mine own would happy rest,
Tasting thru smiling tears, Eternity,
Knowing our wanton children to be best.
 Oh give me love, that only Love can give—
 Thine law transcending Light—that I may live.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 65.

If Thou in Infancy

Out heralding the symbol bearing flowers—
So glow, effulgent, thru thine pearly doom
Of mortal slime—whence come thine wholesome powers?
Is it, that thou, by happy accident,
Illume the red ruled earth, to fade again,
A withered stalk, obeying precedent
Of ignorance, that craven god of men?
Or rather thou, the harbinger of day—
A tiny sun, enwrapped in mist of night—
Thy show'ring beams of love, in mirthfilled play,
Awakening the dark, to prime delight?
 Deep in the heavens of thine tender eyes
 Dear babe, shines that, that first declared the skies.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 66.

Where Are the Flying Beams

In swelling globes ten million years ago?
Do those unmet by wafting spheres, yet run
To kiss opaqueness to her painted glow?
And, on some rolling island in the vast
Ethereic sea, do lovers, walking far
Along a lonely beach, now, from the past
See gleaming o'er the waves—our sun—their star?
That past that shines so presently for them
Embedded in the dust of ancient stars—
What if those gazing eyes, pronounce a gem
Of love, the orb of fire that feeds our wars?
 For past and future are but varied views
 Of One Eternal Mind in constant muse.

Publication. First published in *Tujungsa Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 67.

Beauty's Perfection

And only love is service—He doth add
To what he hath by giving with a loose
And thriftless hand, an endless substance
Clad with increase—bounty of a boundless mind
Divorced from labour's gain. A quiet pleasure
Hath he, in giving what he soon doth find
Embellished by partition of his treasure.
His ease in action bears him sweetest rest,
The daughter men call Beauty—Tho she flees
When Adam sweats, afraid to linger, lest
He stay contented, delving, on his knees,
 She creeps to love stilled minds, and naked, with her hair
 She wipes their tear anointed feet—and she is fair.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 68.

It Is in Thee Love's Daughter

Is born—Thy kiss in me is virginal,
Since Time's adult'rous fast from thee, sufficed
To turn me back to mine original.
For Beauty's son has power of death o'er Death.
His smile of Light rolls back the pillared cloud
Black frozen by the cold destroyer's breath,
Inviting home my heart all humbly proud.
As waking from the dream, my smile returns
To thee—between death's wisping mist, the fields
Are carpeted with amour's bloom that yearns
In calm expectancy to drink my rain.
 And all is Thee—Eternal Virgin, pure,
 And I am drenched with Thee—and still—and sure.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 69.

Thy Beauty Is a Fecund Power

In me the sleeping seed of a great strength
Thine am'rous sun by quickening remakes
To flourish in my heart, until at length,
The grim hard chin of fear's offensive, rounds
In love's sweet feeling curves to meet my lips,
The former fortress of beleaguered sounds
Now mirth-drawn portals thru which music slips.
Mine eyes that kiss thee with each look, have changed
Their lights, and bless thee with the dew of ruth.
All pathways that my questing thoughts have ranged
But bring me back to find in thee, new truth.
 Only in love lives that that changes not
 Or from her perfect womb is beauty brought.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 70.

Not of the World That Seems To Be

Still music, love doth spell me in at night,
When on thine globing breasts my own more flat
Breast floats, and from thine mouth I sip delight.
For let me cast myself in that soft sea
Thine golden ripples spread beyond our verge,
And freighted rich with splendour, back to me,
More I, than ere our union, I emerge.
From whence, then, sounds the vital glowing chord
That stills the raving howlings of the earth?
Doth unsuspected good with love's sweet sword
Cut thru the laws of death to our rebirth?
 Knowing not much, I yet know surely this,
 All good or evil sleeps within a kiss.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 71.

I Call It Health

Of any sense of being less or more;
When like a word within an epigram
Composed by God, I join the instant shore
Of Time, to Harmony's Eternity,
And know His copula's rewarding bliss;
In place of blood's necessity; stars, sea
And mountains, flowing, bring me beauty's kiss.
And in those times of health, I sometimes feel,
Dawning command of other legs and arms
Than mine; smooth muscled as transparent steel,
They move a sun or city, by sweet charms,
 Not uttered and unthought, but still inhering.
 In marriage with his God, that Man is nearing.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 72.

I Hear Men Talk of Jesus

Re-images his own reformed conceit
As Him—The great Columbus from the Sun,
Who sailed o'er chaos to our sin's retreat.
But he whose words were cast upon the deeps,
Is heard, when deeps hark unto deeps, for then
The star of Morning, to the Christ that sleeps
In each, guides Wisdom to his home again.
And Wisdom home, repaves the heaving sea
With waves of fire thrown by his kindling eyes,
When, walking with his Father down the lea
Bright sown with lights, pain drowns in Love's surprise.
 My Jesus spills the seed of power in me
 Whose taproots seek my love's fertility.

Publication. First published in *Tujungua Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 73.

Look, from the Seed of Power

A Magi's Tree. The foliage is stars
Ablaze. The sap, forever green, remoulds
The leaves of song into a balm for wars.
The earth glows like a drop of fire lit pearl,
Enamoured of his crystal globe of mist,
The moon, and lures that chastely dancing girl,
Around the golden apple of their tryst.
The loves of all of ageless time are there.
Their music is the branches, while the roots
Twine fingers 'mong the perfumes of thine hair,
And all the forms of beauty are the fruits.
 It is the tree from seed of Christ in me.
 My body clothes upon my Christmas Tree.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 74.

If It Was Fated 'Ere the Mists Arose

In Eden, that we two should join in one
As now, I find fate kind or else suppose
Our life's desire designed, ere time did run.
O lovely doom is life with thee—one mind
One bone—one flesh. From all the spread out all
I choose thine arms and life is wisely blind

If our delight by accident befall.
Our homing love's desire and fate are wed.
The awful journey's end rests in our meeting.
The earth holds God in marriage on our bed
And music wings the laughter of her greeting.

Oh Love—my own wild Love. Shall we throw a kiss at death,
Or blow the old tree over with our mingled breath.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 75.

As When the Stars Prick Through the Resting Leaves

As, when the stars prick thru the resting leaves,
The silence is but heightened, if the air,
Along the river, thrills to patterned weaves,
Of sound, flung by the frog's exultant prayer;—
So the vast tapestry of liquid tone,
Forever flowing, from the poet's tongue,
Seems but a fleeting part, of the world's own
Slow crumbling wall of strife,—unheard tho sung.
Unheard by busy men, but surely saved,
From 'mong the melting echoes of the past;—
Immortal promptings; secret cities,—laved
In beauty's solace, for my love's repast.
 Only o'er waters of undoubting peace,
 May Love, His Silence move to Man's release.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 76.

I Rode a Stallion

I rode a stallion, wild after the mare
Who draws with her floating tail o'er the air
The tender Dawn. Her creamy flanks and legs,
In lissome swiftness, drifted o'er the eggs
Of motion, and her high head,
And her bright far glancing eye,
Rained, o'er the Light that rode her
And the star strewn fields she trod,
The wonder that is born, when darkness, comprehending,
Becomes.

The mare sailed on. The golden earth boomed loud,
And spinning, rolled, beneath my mount's black feet.
I rode the stallion through a crimson cloud.
His heaving frame between my knees, ran black,
A dark star, flying through the night;—His back,
Kept level in our swaying smooth career,
Rocked me to languor, as through banks of drear
Resounding brass and chilled steel, clanging loud,
We brushed, dim lighted but by phosphorescent eyes,
Rolling their green glow, lidless, at the skies,
Whose wide flung streaks, of thin drawn, fading gold,
Opened their points before us, to behind refold,
As forever the mare swept on ahead,
And ever we followed, pursued by the dead,
Grey, drab, fury in her rocking chair,
Unravelling laughter;—knitting despair;—
Hovering always in the crimson air,
With a grey flat smile, o'er the stallion's head,
Til his eye whites wild, rolled at me with dread,
In red veined, brown smoked yellow, of terror.

Publication. First published in *Tujunga Songs*. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922, p. 77.

Bibliography

Selected primary and secondary sources

Book and periodical titles are italicized throughout.

Works by the Author

Tujunga Songs. Balboa Beach, California: B. C. Huber, 1922.

Works About the Author

No substantial secondary study has yet been located.

Colophon

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This critical reading edition was edited by Brian Kim Stefans for The Text-Tech Papers, Los Angeles, in 2026, as part of *Extremes and Moderations: Early Southern California Poetry*. The poems were reset from the source pages identified in the publication notes and datasheet. The book was composed in EB Garamond on a cream field at 6 × 9 inches. The cover uses original abstract artwork prepared for this edition.