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A Contemplative Gentleman

Howard Ramsden

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TWO POEMS

A CONTEMPLATIVE GENTLEMAN

The person with despotic eyes
 Is not arisen from the dead;
 But spiritous beyond assay,
 He wears a jewel in his head.

Contemplative, the gentleman,
 Bemazing simples in a ring,
 Will improvise on how he came
 To wear so elegant a thing.

How grappled from the pearly moon,
 And polished on a naiad's thighs,
 The gem was given him by elves—
 Benign it beams above his eyes.

He never tells, or seldom tells,
 How once in thickets of the night
 He slashed and sought and bled and toiled,
 And brought his jewel to the light.

LOVE RECALLS A HOMELAND

When winter marched on Eden
 With softly whirring drums,
 The redbirds and the snowbirds
 Were happy for our crumbs.
 A deer stole in by moonlight,
 A crowned but timid stranger;
 The creatures of perfection
 Ate from our poor manger.

Those refugees from summer,
 The fleeing and the flying,
 Were stainless of our knowledge,
 If not of pain, in dying.