

1943

Ballad of Coulson's Wood

Byron Herbert Reece

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq>

Recommended Citation

Reece, Byron Herbert. "Ballad of Coulson's Wood." *New Mexico Quarterly* 13, 1 (1943). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq/vol13/iss1/15>

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by the University of New Mexico Press at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in New Mexico Quarterly by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact disc@unm.edu.

BALLAD OF COULSON'S WOOD

Amelia stood
In the quiet grass
Of Coulson's Wood
Where slow winds pass,

And Helmer paced
By her side as though
His hot blood raced
Where the slow winds blow.

Between the two
The grass would bend
As if there blew
A little wind.

Amelia said:
"Though years be fleet
As runners sped
On frightened feet,

"All seeming few
And spoiled and brief,
Each comes anew,
As last year's leaf.

"Our love has made
This moment seem
As aeons stayed
Within a dream."

And Helmer said:
"The grass will die
As days are sped,
And know not why.

"And we no less,
Though we be brave
And good, still press
Unto the grave.

"All things make haste
As if they yearned
That rest to taste
Their toil has earned.

"As birds that sing
At fall of night,
When not a-wing,
Are poised for flight,

"So we confess
Our feet are shod
To foot the wilderness
Of God.

"Though men reprove,
Pay them no heed:
Two who will love
Must love indeed!"

Between the two
The grass would bend
As if unto
A rising wind.

Amelia said:
"The slow years bless
Two who are wed
With quietness.

"Love's arch of gold
That girds the heart
Is strong to hold
The years apart.

"Love's fruit will hang,
Though frost be nigh
And cold clouds billowing
In the sky,

"Until its taste
Be made complete,
Then why make haste
To pluck and eat?"

And Helmer said:
"The day beats on;
Morning is quieted
And gone.

"The sun of noon
Is hot and high,
And it will soon
Desert the sky.

"Evening will paint
The shore and sea,
And then grow faint,
And night will be

"Drawn close about,
And we shall fear
To wake or shout
Lest death be near.

"The kiss of age
No lip will heed;
Youth's heritage
Is love, indeed!"

Between the two
The grass would bend
As if unto
A wailing wind.

Amelia said:
"Our love must be
Not brought abed
To poverty.

"Although hot blood
Beat at the brain,
Love leaves her hood
Where two have lain;

"Where blind with bliss,
To their precipice,
Two lean to kiss
Love leaves her dress;

"Where limbs are sealed
With carnal flame,
Love stands revealed
In naked shame!

"Imperious haste
Pleads not your suit;
Let us not taste
Forbidden fruit."

But Helmer said:
"Take heed of me
Ere I have fled
You utterly:

"My ways are lost,
My footsteps reach,
Beyond the uttermost
Of speech.

"For if one stand
By the water's side
And drown his hand,
Though the banks abide,

"The water goes;
The liquid will
Pulls, and it flows
By plain and hill:

"What things appear
To keep their place
Of far or near
As spaced in space

"Stay not at all,
For hill and town
Spin with this ball
Of earth around;

"And each to each
We look from the eye,
And speak with the speech
Of a passer-by.

"Thoughts from the mind,
Love from the heart,
We wake to find
That all things part.

"To you, my Love,
Even now have I

But time enough
To say good-bye!"

The sky shone blood,
And night came on;
Amelia stood
In the grass alone.

And ere the dew
Was dry again,
A wide wind blew
Between the twain.

BYRON HERBERT REECE

NOMENCLATURE

What are these dreams of convex consciousness
But flames to drown with sleep in depth of night,
While day drills high in bond, ray-found in flight
Through heart of sun, soon sipped—though effortless
When mind's suave seeking tunes to finiteness—
And thoughts, in brass, re-strike the sober right!
For this, the heart plays coil with other Might
To liven love and feed a breath's caress.
O bleed life's time and fill town's sense-tone-need
With gold of mold, withdrawn from less than pure;
Re-fruit the throbs with postings from love's pain
And know height's weight, thought tanned for ultra-reed.
In this close-comic code of trimmed urn's lure
One beat suffices for the call of rain.

SYLVIA WITTMER

THE BUSINESS MAN TIPS HIS FAVORITE WAITRESS

Bestowing the silver coin like a discreet caress
the successful lover, passionate but wary,
doting on her will-less, the spirit so deliciously unfree,
his white dove, his doe, his innocent stupid fairy.

EVE MERRIAM