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## At the Hidden Root

James Franklin Lewis

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## SONNET FOR THESE TIMES

Reaper of Wars! O World! —were here not sown  
 Solutions far more fruitful by the Past  
 For your complex necessities? —but strown  
 By the preying-bird a seed that rooted fast?  
 Here where un pityingly the sapping waste  
 Self-spreads, what leaf greens for the white-winged  
 bird?

What peoples rinding your globe, gaunt-starved for  
 taste  
 Of freedom's flavor, chew but a bitter word?

Reaper of fertile blood and sterile tears!—  
 How shall we, living, prove the harrowed mind  
 Where children are broken across your iron years,—  
 How stake our scarecrow hearts for the Future's blind—  
 Frighten the Future from crops that here arise,  
 Lest it have stomach for like enterprise?

HELEN FERGUSON CAUKIN

## THREE POEMS

## AT THE HIDDEN ROOT

The flowering tree beset with highlit stars  
 Meridial high, breaks her fragile vial  
 To tinkling petals, shattering sprays of light  
 Into the marble cistern limpid and quick with silver;  
 And there behind your veiled tapestries  
 You lie, to read the writing marquetried  
 In windowways and rods of lighted doors;  
 And the whole city cast in mouldy walls  
 Comes over you, like a dark lava-mood,  
 But cooler now than ever day or lava;  
 And the scented flower-white daughters of desire  
 Stand in the saltlight at the clinging cave-doors  
 Of their rock-crystal, under the heavy chandeliers  
 Of time, steeple, and star.

Who knows them?  
 And to lift the veil a little more  
 Who knows? But the arid insect fed dully  
 On the heavy presence of the shovelsful  
 And hidden dead, hears in his ruined barn  
 The starlight and the swing of lofty bells  
 Upended on the tops of thought clang into marbled  
 Echoes, through his dusty cabinet;  
 And the whole city, like a cool lava, pours  
 Over him, breeze of the flowering tree;  
 And the narrow visit of his paper wings  
 Shudders in its dry propensity.

## CHATEAU EN ESPAGNE

He sat and insisted with his mouth  
 The moon was a hard dry cloud.  
 It wasn't. It was nothing. But the drouth  
 Had made it difficult to speak aloud.

A fancy notion, though, that hard  
 Materiabiles could float the sky,  
 That rocky ships, and with Orion sparred,  
 Divide all height in half, and measure by.

In August and the moon is hot,  
 He spoke of Spanish castles reared,  
 And sighted past his thumb *La Libertad*  
 Erect on ether and its pennants cleared.

He said, from a hard dry mouth,  
 He saw it measure distance by;  
 He saw it blow up heavy from the south  
 And mark the mensuration of the sky.

I'd like to see this dream-thing, too.  
 I'd like, in some small measure, measure;  
 But the moon I see above my head is true,  
 And in this drouthy chock of hill, dead treasure.