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G.NA "In The White Giant's Thigh"

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Through throats where many rivers meet, the curlews cry

Under the conceiving moon, on the high chalk hill, And there this night I walk in the white giant's thigh Where barren as boulders women lie longing still

To labour and love though they lay down long ago.

Through throats where many rivers meet, the women pray,

Pleading in the waded bay for the seed to flow Though the names on their weed grown stones are rained Away

And alone in the night's eternal, curving act They yearn with tongues of curlews for the unconceived

And immemorial sons of the cudgelling, hacked

Hill. Who once in gooseskin winter loved all ice leaved In the courters' lanes, or twined in the ox roasting Sun

In the wains tonned so high that the wisps of the hay Clung to the pitching clouds, or gay with any one Young as they in the after milking moonlight lay

Under the lighted shapes of faith and their moonshade Petticoats galed high, or shy with the rough riding Boys,

Now clasp me to their grains in the gigantic glade,

Who once, green countries since, were a hedgerow of Joys.

Time by, their dust was flesh the swineherd rooted sly, Flared in the reek of the wiving sty with the rush Light of his thighs, spreadeagle to the dunghill sky, Or with their orchard man in the core of the sun's bush Rough as cows' tongues and trashed with brambles their

Buttermilk

Manes, under his quenchless summer barbed gold to the Bone.

Or rippling soft in the spinney moon as the silk And ducked and draked white lake that harps to a hail Stone.

Who once were a bloom of wayside brides in the hawed House

And heard the lewd, wooed field flow to the coming Frost,

The scurrying, furred small friars squeal, in the dowse Of day, in the thistle aisles, till the white owl Crossed

Their breast, the vaulting does roister, the horned Bucks climb

Quick in the wood at love, where a torch of foxes Foams,

All birds and beasts of the linked night uproar and Chime

And the mole snout blunt under his pilgrimage of domes,

Or, butter fat goosegirls, bounced in a gambo bed, Their breasts full of honey, under their gander king Trounced by his wings in the hissing shippen, long dead

And gone that barley dark where their clogs danced in The spring,

And their firefly hairpins flew, and the ricks ran Round ?

(But nothing bore, no mouthing babe to the veined hives

Hugged, and barren and bare on Mother Goose's ground

They with the simple Jacks were a boulder of wives)?

Now curlew cry me down to kiss the mouths of their Dust.

The dust of their kettles and clocks swings to and fro Where the hay rides now or the bracken kitchens rust As the arc of the billhooks that flashed the hedges low And cut the birds' boughs that the minstrel sap ran Red.

They from houses where the harvest bows, hold me hard,

Who heard the tall bell sail down the Sundays of the

Dead

And the rain wring out it's tongues on the faded yard, Teach me the love that is evergreen after the fall Leaved

Grave, after Beloved on the grass gulfed cross is Scrubbed

Off by the sun and Daughters no longer grieved Save by their long desirers in the fox cubbed Streets or hungering in the crumbled wood: to these Hale dead and deathless do the women of the hill Love for ever meridian through the courters' trees

And the daughters of darkness flame like Fawkes fires Still.

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