

Beauty

By Louis Untermeyer

You shall not lead me, Beauty —
No, on no more passionate and never-ending quests.
I am tired of stumbling after you,
5 Through wild, familiar forests and strange bogs;
Tired of breaking my heart following a shifting light.

Beauty, you shall fly before me no longer;
Smiling and looking back over your shoulder,
10 Wanton, trickster, trifler with weak men;
Demanding all and giving nothing in return
But furious dreams and shattering visions.

Beauty, I shall have you —
15 Not in imagination only, but in the flesh.
You will pursue me with untiring breath,
You will press by my side wherever I go.

Even in the muddy squalor and the thick welter of ugliness
20 You shall run to me and put your arms about me and cling to me;
And, try as I will, you will never be shaken off.

Beauty, I know you now —
And knowing, I will thirst for you no longer.
25 For I shall run on recklessly
And you will follow after!