



**AMY
LEVY**

***A MINOR
POET, AND
OTHER
VERSE***

Amy Levy

A Minor Poet, and Other Verse

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To a Dead Poet.

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*I KNEW not if to laugh or weep;
They sat and talked of you—
“’Twas here he sat; ’twas this he said!
’Twas that he used to do.*

*“Here is the book wherein he read,
The room, wherein he dwelt;
And he” (they said) “was such a man,
Such things he thought and felt.”*

*I sat and sat, I did not stir;
They talked and talked away.
I was as mute as any stone,
I had no word to say.*

*They talked and talked; like to a stone
My heart grew in my breast—
I, who had never seen your face
Perhaps I knew you best.*



A Minor Poet.

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*“What should such fellows as I do,
Crawling between earth and heaven?”*



HERE is the phial; here I turn the key
Sharp in the lock. Click!—there's no doubt it turned.
This is the third time; there is luck in threes—
Queen Luck, that rules the world, befriend me now
And freely I'll forgive you many wrongs!
Just as the draught began to work, first time,
Tom Leigh, my friend (as friends go in the world),
Burst in, and drew the phial from my hand,
(Ah, Tom! ah, Tom! that was a sorry turn!)
And lectured me a lecture, all compact
Of neatest, newest phrases, freshly culled
From works of newest culture: "common good;"
"The world's great harmonies;" "must be content
With knowing God works all things for the best,
And Nature never stumbles." Then again,
"The common good," and still, "the common, good;"
And what a small thing was our joy or grief
When weigh'd with that of thousands. Gentle Tom,
But you might wag your philosophic tongue
From morn till eve, and still the thing's the same:
I am myself, as each man is himself—
Feels his own pain, joys his own joy, and loves
With his own love, no other's. Friend, the world
Is but one man; one man is but the world.
And I am I, and you are Tom, that bleeds
When needles prick your flesh (mark, yours, not mine).
I must confess it; I can feel the pulse
A-beating at my heart, yet never knew
The throb of cosmic pulses. I lament
The death of youth's ideal in my heart;