

Miss Theodora Wimpercill

In her sad house upon the hill
Where breezes bring a lonely chill
Where memories sweet and bitter loom
Of a laughing-echoed silent room
Of jewelled stars in jasmine hair
And hand-stitched shawls on shoulders bare
Lives Theodora Wimpercill
Bedecked with tarnished gems and shawl
Her silk-embroidered dancing shoes
Now thread less, now just faded blues.

Majestically she walks her halls
And dreams of long forgotten balls
When she would dance the nights away
But now her hair's an ashen grey
And now her hands and feet are old
And crippled from the damp and cold.

She takes down from the cobwebbed shelf
A rotting chest where she herself
Lay sleeping with those last remains
Of stained gowns and stately trains
She dons the faded Paris dress
And looks quite dreamlike with her tress
She steps as lightly as a queen
And passes through a simple screen
She hears the strains of haunting tunes
While gliding on soft silver moons.

She hobbles down the weedy path
And hears the city children laugh
They call her crazy Wimpercalls
While ripping at her ancient shawl
But still she holds her head up high
And passes staring faces by
The leaning tower clock cries late
So on she hurries through the gate
To greet her friends so dear and old
Who under stones have turned to mould
She drops a flower by each place
And waters them with misty face.

She listens to the distant sky
And hears their laughter rushing by
With all the sounds of livened steps
From promenades and minuets.

She calls up in her shallow voice

To tell them of her Paris dress

But all those tunes that haunt and tease
Have danced upon her mournful plea
And sent them crashing homeward bound
Beside her flowers on the ground.

But still among her tears she stands
Watching heaven from the lands
And painfully she waits her call
For an invitation to the ball.