



Love Songs

Sara Teasdale

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1928. Teasdale's work has always been characterized by its simplicity and clarity, her use of classical forms, and her passionate and romantic subject matter. In 1918, she won the Columbia University Poetry Society Prize (which became the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry) and the Poetry Society of America Prize for Love Songs. She later committed suicide. In addition to new poems, this book contains lyrics taken from Rivers to the Sea, Helen of Troy and Other Poems, and one or two from an earlier volume. See other titles by this author available from Kessinger Publishing.

Love Songs Details

Date : Published 2009 by BookSurge Classics (first published 1917)

ISBN : 9781594568916

Author : Sara Teasdale

Format : Paperback 83 pages

Genre : Poetry, Classics

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Putri says

I've never knew who Sara Teasdale was until I found this book and started to read it.

Teasdale was an american poet and born in 1884.

This book was published in 1918, and this is a collection of her poems. This book won 3 awards.

Teasdale committed suicide on 1933.

One of my favorite poem:

New Love and Old

*In my heart the old love
Struggled with the new;
It was ghostly waking
All night through.*

*Dear things, kind things,
That my old love said,
Ranged themselves reproachfully
Round my bed.*

*But I could not heed them,
For I seemed to see
The eyes of my new love
Fixed on me.*

*Old love, old love,
How can I be true?
Shall I be faithless to myself
Or to you?*

Becky says

Sarah Teasdale was a woman who found unimaginable beauty in love, in sorrow, in nature, and in the city, while conversely understood how you could be trapped by all four at the same time. Her poetry drips with passionate imagery- cries in the night at being bound and lost are intermingled with brilliant expressions of first loves, old loves, and current loves. It's incredibly moving to feel so understood by someone who lived over a century ago. I can tell that this little book of poems is going to contain some of my favorites for a long time to come.

Barter
Life has loveliness to sell,
All beautiful and splendid things,

Blue waves whitened on a cliff,
Soaring fire that sways and sings,
And children's faces looking up
Holding wonder like a cup.
Life has loveliness to sell,
Music like a curve of gold,
Scent of pine trees in the rain,
Eyes that love you, arms that hold,
And for your spirit's still delight,
Holy thoughts that star the night.
Spend all you have for loveliness,
Buy it and never count the cost;
For one white singing hour of peace
Count many a year of strife well lost,
And for a breath of ecstasy
Give all you have been, or could be.

Jade says

Simplistic language and clever subtleties. Easy to read aloud. There's an interesting existential interlude, but my favorite sections included the romantic love poems, 1st and 3rd. Highly recommended to those who love spring, stars, lightly melancholic lyrics, and gentle surprises.

Dewi says

“I said, “I have shut my heart
As one shuts an open door,
That Love may starve therein
And trouble me no more.”

“And Love cried out in me,
“I am strong, I will break your heart
Unless you set me free.”

-May Wind-

“Oh, love that lives its life with laughter
Or love that lives its life with tears
Can die—but love that is never spoken
Goes like a ghost through the winding years. . . .”

-Ghost-

“When I talk with other men
I always think of you—
Your words are keener than their words,
And they are gentler, too.
When I look at other men,
I wish your face were there,
With its gray eyes and dark skin
And tossed black hair.
When I think of other men,
Dreaming alone by day,
The thought of you like a strong wind
Blows the dreams away.”

- Other Men-

Abrar Alnaseri says

This collection of poems made me fall in love with poetry all over again !
So lovely that i felt like i was dancing on my toes.
Some of the poems talked about heartbreak and they were like talking to each break my heart had!
Some of the poems talked about wisdom in love yet how insane a lover can be!
I loved the mix.. The words.. The fantastic images that were carried by sara's poetry.

Just perfect.

Dave says

Sara Teasdale's poetry is full of passion and emotion, and it speaks to the reader even today, so long after it was first published. It is sad that the very same passion undoubtedly led to her suicide in early 1933. She wrote mainly of love, nature, and death, but of course "Love Songs" which was published in 1917 focused on love, though the other major themes are sometimes also there. It was her third major work (4th overall as "Sonnets to Duse and Other Poems" from 1907 is difficult to find, unfortunately, and was not a major publication).

"Love Songs" is an unusual collection, as many of the poems are from "Helen of Troy and other Poems" and "Rivers to the Sea". Section one is mostly republished poems from these earlier works (although some of the poems have slight changes), and section three is half republished works and half new works. Sections two and four of the book are entirely new poems. This doesn't subtract from the overall impact of the work though, and this is certainly a collection worth seeking out for those who love early 20th century poetry.

This work was recognized in 1918 by the Columbia University Poetry Society (an award which was to become the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry just two years later) which was sponsored by The Poetry Society of

America. Love played a major role in several of the Pulitzer works that year, as it is a significant factor in Ernest Poole's "His Family" which won the first Pulitzer for Novel (later changed to Fiction), and Jesse Lynch Williams' comedy "Why Marry?" (a.k.a. "And So They Got Married") which won the first Pulitzer for Drama. Pulitzer had not made a provision for awarding works of Poetry, so the first couple of awards were given by grants from the Poetry Society of America.

Though probably not her best work, "Love Songs" is still well worth seeking out. From the introduction, which is in and of itself a poem, to "A November Night", it is full of passion, whether it be the passion of new love, on-going love, or the loss of love, Sara Teasdale paints incredible pictures with her words. It would not be a proper review without a couple of examples:

The Look (first published in "Rivers to the Sea")

Strephon kissed me in the spring,
Robin in the fall,
But Colin only looked at me
And never kissed at all.

Strephon's kiss was lost in jest,
Robin's lost in play,
But the kiss in Colin's eyes
Haunts me night and day.

To-night (first published in "Love Songs")

The moon is a curving flower of gold,
The sky is still and blue;
The moon was made for the sky to hold,
And I for you.

The moon is a flower without a stem,
The sky is luminous;
Eternity was made for them,
To-night for us.

I highly recommend "Love Songs", though I give this book only four-stars because her later works are even better.

Bonnie says

Sara Teasdale wrote Love Songs in 1917 and received 3 awards for it: the Columbia University Poetry Society prize, the 1918 Pulitzer Prize for poetry and the annual prize of the Poetry Society of America. It's a beautiful collection of poetry that I'm so thankful to have stumbled upon.

My absolute favorite:

"I Am Not Yours"

I am not yours, not lost in you, Not lost, although I long to be Lost as a candle lit at noon, Lost as a snowflake in the sea.

You love me, and I find you still A spirit beautiful and bright, Yet I am I, who long to be Lost as a light is lost in light.

Oh plunge me deep in love--put out My senses, leave me deaf and blind, Swept by the tempest of your love, A taper in a rushing wind.

Louise says

2½ - I think I'm a little too old for her somewhat adolescent pathos

Amanda says

Not really fond of any of these poems, they're none I wish to even quote. As a result I'm not a particular fan of this part of Sara Teasdale's life - there's a quality about this work that seems very superficial - as if she was trying to convince herself of love (*with what sounds like numerous individuals? most likely through-out her lifetime*) that didn't really exist?

Lynette Caulkins says

Well. . . Seeing as this was awarded the Pulitzer, I expected something more. I was quite disappointed in all but the final 3 or 4 poems, which are really quite nice, but this collection seemed like I was reading the poetry of a love-angst-filled teenager who had a particularly mature command of language.

Teasdale was not a teen when this set was published, but was something like 35. As it was not her first collection, I doubt she sat on the poems from her youth before presenting them. I feel for the woman, because looking her up and reading about her seriously melodramatic relationships reveals that she actually must have lived her life stuck in adolescent-type angst before she killed herself after a soap-opera worthy leaving of her husband to pursue mistresshood with a married-with-kids former love interest. All before soaps ever came to be, even. That's a sad life, and it's clear where the pathos in her poetry came from.

Savannah Beadle says

What an absolutely gorgeous yet simple collection of poetry and love! I bookmarked like every page. Definitely need to own this. I'm so in love with Sara Teasdale right now. The way she weaves such intense emotions into beautiful simplicity is memorizing!

Janet Carter says

The beginning was sweet and whimsical, then she had a few that really caught my breath.

Spirit's House

FROM naked stones of agony
I will build a house for me;
As a mason all alone
I will raise it, stone by stone,
And every stone where I have bled 5
Will show a sign of dusky red.
I have not gone the way in vain,
For I have the good of all my pain;
My spirit's quiet house will be
Built of naked stones I trod 10
On roads where I lost sight of God.

Kathy Dou says

Born into a staunch Baptist family with a Puritan heritage, Sara Teasdale has long been deemed as the “sentimental poetess” whose poetry was regarded as demure, gentle, timid and quite different from her contemporary modernists. Naturally introspective, Sara Teasdale’s works explores the moods and thoughts of a woman who studies her own reactions and, like Edna Vincent Millay, she speaks to directly to a female audience about the failures and frustrations of conventional femininity. Her writing explores the dilemma of a traditional woman in a transitional time, a time when formerly conventional notions about women and love have not died but are being found inadequate.

Arriving at the height of WWI, Teasdale’s intimate, affective poetry in *Love Songs* was hailed as a refuge from the myriad uncertainties of the modernism experienced in *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* (1915) by T. S. Eliot. *Love Songs* allowed them to recapture the “lightness,” “joy,” and “beauty” which had been so sorely missing. “To chance upon a book by Sara Teasdale,” they explained, “is to feel the thrill of one who, pushing through the heavy branches in a wood, stops suddenly to hear the song of a bird”. A 1917 winner of the Columbia University prize for poetry, which was to become the Pulitzer Prize in 1922, Teasdale’s *Love Songs* was a typical representation of her fresh, simple, musical style which dominated the nineteenth century.

Yet a close reading of this collection suggests that though most poems in it are conventional in terms of both form and content, there is, as can be seen in *I Am Not Yours*, a wish to break through into bolder experiment in both ways. Such experimental works, however, were not only withdrawn by herself, but also by some male critics of her time. Nevertheless, even though in a minority in terms of number, a study of these poems which hinted her wish to break through convention, as well as the ones she excluded as “too revealing”, suggested that even though stifled, Sara Teasdale did try to break through the shackles of tradition.

Pablo says

'This is the spot where I will lie
When life has had enough of me,
These are the grasses that will blow
Above me like a living sea.

These gay old lilies will not shrink
To draw their life from death of mine,
And I will give my body's fire
To make blue flowers on this vine.

"O Soul," I said, "have you no tears?
Was not the body dear to you?"
I heard my soul say carelessly,
"The myrtle flowers will grow more blue."

Krista Baetiong Tungol says

Fluent, straightforward, constant, reflective. Sara Teasdale's poems croon and radiate passion.

“Spring Rain” and “The Flight” are my favorite poems in this book.
