

## **The Gift.**

I will lend you for a little while,  
a child of mine" God said,  
for you to love the while he lives,  
and mourn for when he is dead.

It may be two or three short years,  
or twenty-three or four,  
but will you, till I call him back,  
take care of him for me?

He will bring his charms to gladden you,  
and should his stay be brief,  
you will have his lovely memories  
as solace for your grief.

I cannot promise he will stay,  
since all from earth return,  
but there are lessons taught down there  
I want this child to learn.

I have looked the wide world over  
in my search for teacher's true,  
and from the throngs that crowd life's lanes,  
I have selected you.

Now will you give him all your love?  
Nor think the labour vain?  
Nor hate me when I come to call,  
to take him back again?"

God fancied he heard the parent's say,  
"Dear Lord, thy will be done.  
For all the joy the child shall bring,  
the risk of grief I'll run.

I will shelter him with tenderness,  
I will love him while I may,  
and for the happiness I have known  
forever grateful I'll stay.

But should the angels call for him,  
much sooner than I planned,  
I will brave the bitter grief that comes,  
and try to understand."