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poem

To L.H.B. (1894–1915)

Katherine Mansfield

Last night for the first time since you were dead
 I walked with you, my brother, in a dream.
 We were at home again beside the stream
 Fringed with tall berry bushes, white and red.
 'Don't touch them: they are poisonous,' I said.
 But your hand hovered, and I saw a beam
 Of strange, bright laughter flying round your head
 And as you stopped I saw the berries gleam.
 'Don't you remember? We called them Dead Man's Bread!
 I woke and heard the wind moan and the roar
 Of the dark water tumbling on the shore.
 Where – where is the path of my dream for my eager feet?
 By the remembered stream my brother stands
 Waiting for me with berries in his hands
 'These are my body. Sister, take and eat.'

Selected by Femi Oyeboode.

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