

POEMS

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649673612

Poems by John Albee

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NEW YORK
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
1883

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THE PERFECT GIFT.

It was not much, I know, the single flower
Which Spring, slow-footed, unconfirmed, dared
trust

Within her little garden, all her own,
A periwinkle's blue in emerald set.
But like all first things than their worth more dear
It far outshone the wealthy summer rose.
Well had that sunny girl her nursling watched,
Still tending, hovering near, with soft, warm breath,
More gentle far and constant than the Spring's,
Until by her pure azure eyes transfused,
It took their hue and flourished by their light.
As once she led me down her well-worn walk,
The while sweet vernal airs so filled my sense,
And all my morning dreams so fresh, I thought

An angel led me back to Paradise,
She plucked the flower still gemmed with drops of
 dew,
And held it up to me with eager hands
As I must take the giver with the gift.
It was not much in worth, yet though so small,
By so much more I knew her heart was great ;
For who that loves not dare give little gifts ?
This added to that common, lowly plant
A fragrance and a color not its own ;
And bloomed within the flower a flower unſeen
Except by those who bear it on their hearts.
Sweet Rose ! fairest of girls ! whom I more love
Than aught on earth, save her, my first, best love,
Whose dearest arms, when night turns home my
 feet,
Hold up her child and mine for my embrace,
And child and mother, I enfold them both,
And with one soul we three taste perfect bliss !