

SWEET HOURS

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Sweet Hours by Carmen Sylva

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CARMEN SYLVA

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Elisabeth
SWEET HOURS

BY
CARMEN SYLVA

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TO THE MEMORY OF QUEEN
VICTORIA



THESE ever wakeful eyes are closed. They saw
Such grief, that they could see no more. The
heart—

That quick'ning pulse of nations—could not bear
Another throb of pain, and could not hear
Another cry of tortur'd motherhood.
Those uncomplaining lips, they sob no more
The soundless sobs of dark and burning tears,
That none have seen ; they smile no more, to breathe
A mother's comfort into aching hearts.

Sweet Hours

The patriarchal Queen, the monument
Of touching widowhood, of endless love,
And childlike purity—she sleeps. This night
Is watchful not. The restless hand, that slave
To duty, to a mastermind, to wisdom
That fathom'd history and saw beyond
The times, lies still in marble whiteness. Love
So great, so faithful, unforgetting and
Unselfish—must it sleep? Or will that veil,
That widow's veil unfold, and spread into
The dovelike wings, that long were wont to hover
In anxious care about her world-wide nest,
And now will soar and sing, as harpchords sing,
Whilst in their upward flight they breast the wind
Of Destiny. No rest for her, no tomb,
Nor ashes! Light eternal! Hymns of joy!
No silence now for her, who, ever silent,

Short Hours

Above misfortunes' storms and thund'ring billows,
Would stand with clear and fearless brow, so calm,
That men drew strength from out those dauntless
eyes,

And quiet from that hotly beating heart,
Kept still by stern command and unbent will
Beneath those tight shut lips. Not ashes, where
A beacon e'er will burn, a fire, like
The Altar's ~~Soma~~, for the strong, the weak,
The true, the brave, and for the quailing. No,
Not ashes, but a light, that o'er the times
Will shed a gentle ray, and show the haven,
When all the world, stormshaken, rudderless, will
pray:

If but her century would shine again!
Oh, Lord! Why hast thou ta'en thy peaceful Queen?