

1989

Additional Words to Persephone

Katherine Clark

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarship.richmond.edu/messenger>



Part of the [Poetry Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Clark, Katherine (1989) "Additional Words to Persephone," *The Messenger*: Vol. 1989: Iss. 1989, Article 6.
Available at: <http://scholarship.richmond.edu/messenger/vol1989/iss1989/6>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by UR Scholarship Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Messenger by an authorized administrator of UR Scholarship Repository. For more information, please contact scholarshiprepository@richmond.edu.

ADDITIONAL WORDS TO PERSEPHONE

Be to her, Persephone

All the things I might not be . . .

Say to her, my dear, my dear,

It is not so dreadful here.

—from "Prayer to Persephone" by
Edna St. Vincent Millay

Well, Persephone, it's true

In Hades she won't feel the dew

Of morning fresh upon the grass

Nor gaze into the looking glass

of the still, clear, pond at dawn;

Nor wake to see her lover's face,

Secure and warm in his embrace,

Nor shiver as her lover's lips

Brush gently 'cross her fingertips,

drinking in his long, long soulful glance.

Dreadful? Yes, Persephone,

But she is better off than me,

For there in Hell, as well as Earth,

Although she'll find but little mirth,

She'll feel, at least, a little pain—

Hell's beauty is not in frost, but flame.

But I, between the gates of Hell

And Earth, feel nothing—which is well

For those who would avoid the pain,

Considering it a wondrous gain,

Except that they, who think they're wise,

Forbidding sorrow from their eyes

don't see that they've renounced their joy.

So, say to her, my dear, my dear,

It's really not so dreadful here;

Better she be there in Hell,

Than I, outside Hell's gates alone

and senseless in an empty shell.

Katherine Clark