

Poem on Time-Binding

To a Poet a Thousand Years Hence

*I who am dead a thousand years,
And wrote this sweet archaic song,
Send you my words for messengers
The way I shall not pass along.*

*I care not if you bridge the seas,
Or ride secure the cruel sky,
Or build consummate palaces
Of metal or of masonry.*

*But have you wine and music still,
And statues and bright-eyed love,
And foolish thoughts of good and ill,
And prayers to them who sit above?*

*How shall we conquer? Like a wind
That falls at eve our fancies blow,
And old Maeonides the blind
Said it three thousand years ago.*

*O friend unseen, unborn, unknown,
Student of our sweet English tongue,
Read out my words at night, alone:
I was a poet, I was young.*

*Since I can never see your face,
And never shake your by the hand,
I send my soul through time and space
To greet you. You will understand.*

James Elroy Flecker (1884-1915)