

Rosebud and the Ledger

Let Rosebud teach what power cannot own.

Build high, but heed the shadow of your height,
For power makes a ledger of the trade;
And gold can gild the walls, yet starve the light,
When every gift commands the thanks it made.
He hoarded ten museums, and grew cold;
He made his love perform beneath his name;
And called control the shelter he could hold,
Till praise was staged, and love became a shame.
You may command the world, not one free hand,
Nor purchase trust by headlines, wealth, or lies;
Let those you lead still choose where they will stand,
For forced applause cannot make truth arise.
Let Rosebud teach what power cannot own,
Or all your halls will echo back: alone.