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### Manuscript of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "Human Life's Mysteries"

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

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# Life.

<sup>sense</sup>  
~~the world~~  
Our life is folded thick & dark  
About the stifled soul within.  
We have a sense of things beyond,  
A yearning outwards which is fond;  
We strike out blindly to a mark  
Believed in but not seen.

<sup>repairs to</sup>  
We rise ~~up~~ to the point of death;  
Whereark Serenity has coiled  
In <sup>turning about</sup> ~~respent~~ fold more near & near  
While <sup>preparing</sup> ~~preparing~~ upward, <sup>in</sup> ~~in~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>light</sup> ~~light~~ <sup>of</sup> ~~of~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>world</sup> ~~world~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>end</sup> ~~end~~ <sup>shall</sup> ~~shall <sup>we</sup> ~~we <sup>rise</sup> ~~rise  
In gradual growth His full-leaved will  
Expand <sup>from</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>world</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>world</sup> ~~world~~.~~~~~~

And in the tumult and excess  
Of fact & passion under sun,  
We sometimes hear... oh, soft & far,  
As when the ear did touch with ear  
The lips of Peace & Rapture  
Through all things that are done!

We feel God  
God keeps his holy mysteries  
Just on the outside of our dream -  
In diaphanous slow we think  
He has their pinions rise & sink,  
When white they float beneath his eyes  
He swims adown a stream.

Abstractions are they from the forms  
Of his great thought? ... exaltations  
From his great glory? ... strong provisions  
Of what we shall be? ... intuitions  
Of what we are, in calms & storms,  
Beyond our peace & passions?

Ye nameless <sup>deeps in whirling</sup> - ye great low ... speak low ...

Ye stroke us with a subtle grace -  
Ye say, 'Oho passers?' - ye are dumb -  
Ye cannot see you so or come -

Your touches fall soft ... cold ... as snow

Upon a blind man's face, a little joy or <sup>utterance</sup>  
A little look or sound or phrase or tone  
Grouped for <sup>meanings</sup> <sup>with the own</sup> <sup>in your</sup> <sup>rapture</sup>, moistened be

Our daily deeds of common kind

~~Our daily deeds of common kind~~

And that we joy, that we grieve  
Strikes life up higher than we can live -

Our mortal love looks awfully  
With that great light behind.

And sometimes hound kills our blood  
Is he so near <sup>you</sup> such night things -  
Then, what we would us for defence  
Our people manners, moods of sense...

As angels from the face of God  
Fold up their <sup>own</sup> <sup>own</sup> wings.

O nameless! through life's dashed sword,  
Ye gaze for gaze: with pinched breath -  
Ye stretch our hands abroad & try  
And strive for you in agony -  
And widen so the broad life - wound, --

Soon large enough for death.

Ye touching us  
In the world, ye draw above  
The world, all stuff, all overture - <sup>the known in your</sup>  
Ye are little <sup>in your</sup> <sup>unknown</sup>  
All common joy & pain advance

So a divine significance  
Our little love - the mortal love

Our light is not our own  
Ye draw above  
Our daily thoughts ... unknown & known

What we give, what we give  
Wider life up higher than we can live  
What we love ... Our mortal love  
That light is not our own.

When to be raised again

we run the race  
we see the globe <sup>we run the race</sup> creep to come ..

we build the house where we may rest -

And then at moments suddenly

we look up to the great wide sky

inquiring

with questions <sup>what may</sup> ~~is of it~~ why we were born

In earnest or in jest -

of children in a mother's face

to see if it be <sup>what may</sup> jest -

to see what's <sup>what may</sup> grace or jest