

SHORT STORY

“Read me what tea-leaves spell.”

“Beauty, Mademoiselle.”

Arsenic she stirred in
The cup she drank for him
Stained the teacup's rim,
But spared her pretty skin,
Her beauty and her youth,
And kept from him the truth.
Knowing her youth was up,
She fixed time in her cup.
But one day time cupped her,
And clocks began to tick.
That day she didn't stir
They said, “It's arsenic.
It was that wicked sinner
Put the poison in her.”
Sinners, drink it up:
Poison's in the cup.

R. W. Stallman