

A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM

Take this kiss upon thy brow!
And, in parting from you now,
Thus much let me avow—
You are not wrong, to deem
That my days have been a dream;
Yet if hope has flown away
In a night, or in a day,
In a vision, or in none,
Is it therefore the less *gone*?
All that we see or seem
Is but a dream within a dream.

I stand amid the roar
Of a surf-tormented shore,
And I hold within my hand
Grains of the golden sand—
How few! yet how they creep
Through my fingers to the deep,
While I weep—while I weep!
Oh God! can I not grasp
Them with a tighter clasp?
Oh God! can I not save
One from the pitiless wave?
Is *all* that we see or seem
But a dream within a dream?

[March 31, 1849]