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The Bloom of the Christmas-Tree

Mary Mapes Dodge

At night we planted the Christmas-tree
In the pretty home, all secretly;
All secretly, though merry of heart,
With many a whisper, many a start.
(For children who'd scorn to make believe
May not sleep soundly on Christmas eve.)



And then the tree began to bloom,
Filling with beauty the conscious room.
The branches curved in a perfect poise,
Laden with wonders that men call "toys,"
Blooming and ripening (and still no noise),
Until we merry folk stole away
To rest and dream till dawn of day.

In the morning the world was a girl and a boy,
The universe only their shouts of joy,
Till every branch and bough had bent
To yield the treasure the Christ-child sent.
And then — and then — the children flew
Into our arms, as children do,
And whispered, over and over again,
That oldest, newest, sweetest refrain,

"I love you! I love you! Yes, I love *you!*"
And hugged and scrambled, as children do.
And we said in our hearts, all secretly:
"*This* is the bloom of the Christmas-tree!"

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