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The House of Ghosts

Margaret Widdemer

The House of Ghosts was bright within,
Aglow and warm and gay,
A place my own once loved me in,
That is not there by day:

My hound lay drowsing on the floor:
From sunken graves returned
My folk that I was lonely for
Sat where the hearth-fire burned.

There was no lightest echo lost
When I undid the door,
There was no shadow where I crossed
The well-remembered floor.

I bent to whisper to my hound
(So long he had been dead!)
He slept no lighter nor more sound,
He did not lift his head.

I brushed my father as I came;
He did not move or see—
I cried upon my mother's name;
She did not look at me.

Their faces in the firelight bent,
They smiled in speaking slow
Of some old gracious merriment
Forgotten years ago.

I was so changed since they had died!
How could they know or guess
A voice that plead for love, and cried
Of grief and loneliness?

Out from the House of Ghosts I fled
Lest I should turn and see
The child I had been lift her head

And stare aghast at me!



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