To the Fringed Gentian

William Cullen Bryant

Thou blossom bright with autumn dew, And colored with the heaven's own blue, That openest when the quiet light Succeeds the keen and frosty night –

Thou comest not when violets lean O'er wandering brooks and springs unseen, Or columbines, in purple dressed, Nod o'er the ground-bird's hidden nest. Thou waitest late and com'st alone, When woods are bare and birds are flown, And frost and shortening days portend The aged year is near his end.

Then doth thy sweet and quiet eye Look through its fringes to the sky Blue – blue – as if that sky let fall A flower from its cerulean wall.

I would that thus, when I shall see The hour of death draw near to me, Hope, blossoming within my heart, May look to heaven as I depart.



