

## A CIRCLE OF PRE-RAPHAELITES

Karen Kitagawa

“But the Moderns – surely one must paint in the manner of one’s day?”

“I don’t admit any such necessity. If life is a dream, as some philosophers insist, surely the great picture is that which most potently symbolizes the unseizable reality that lies behind the dream. If I – or you – can best express that in terms of mythology or religion, why should we not do so?” (Robertson Davies, *What’s Bred in the Bone*)

### Villanelle

Sad sunlight falls upon this grassy bed  
In tawny shadows autumn grieves away  
Where I’ve lain with the living and the dead.

I followed wherever my dear love led,  
Through wending dreams that made our night and day.  
Sad sunlight falls upon this grassy bed

And paints the ground a landscape forested  
With phantoms, all eager to have their say.  
Where I’ve lain with the living and the dead

I felt the weight of simple words unsaid,  
Of silences the heart seeks to obey.  
Sad sunlight falls upon this grassy bed.

But his is not the only name now read  
Upon grey stone. I hear the others pray  
Where I’ve lain with the living and the dead.

The restless winds still mourns us overhead;  
Green hope, green leaves, green grass all fade to grey.  
Sad sunlight falls upon this grassy bed  
Where I’ve lain with the living and the dead.