



The Sea-Child (1910)

By Katherine Mansfield

Into the world you sent her, mother,
Fashioned her body of coral and foam,
Combed a wave in her hair's warm smother,
And drove her away from home

In the dark of the night she crept to the town
And under a doorway she laid her down,
The little blue child in the foam-fringed gown.

And never a sister and never a brother
To hear her call, to answer her cry.
Her face shone out from her hair's warm smother
Like a moonkin up in the sky.

She sold her corals; she sold her foam;
Her rainbow heart like a singing shell
Broke in her body: she crept back home.

Peace, go back to the world, my daughter,
Daughter, go back to the darkling land;
There is nothing here but sad sea water,
And a handful of sifting sand.

