

# Discussion Post #1 - Hagen's *To see the Sky* - due Tuesday 17 March 12:30 p.m.

**Assignment:** read the text of this piece, listen to the recording, read the commentary below, read the questions posed, and contribute at least **FIVE substantive and error-free sentences** to the discussion of this piece. (More than three errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation may result in no grade given.) You may discuss any aspect of this piece you like.

## **The text:**

### **Leaves**

One by one, like leaves from a tree  
All my faiths have forsaken me;  
But the stars above my head  
Burn in white and delicate red,  
And beneath my feet the earth  
Brings the sturdy grass to birth.  
I who was content to be  
But a silken-singing tree,  
But a rustle of delight  
In the wistful heart of night--  
I have lost the leaves that knew  
Touch of rain and weight of dew.  
Blinded by a leafy crown  
I looked neither up nor down--  
But the little leaves that die  
Have left me room to see the sky;  
Now for the first time I know  
Stars above and earth below.

- Sara Teasdale

## **A Youtube recording:**

[To See The Sky, by Jocelyn Hagen \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

## **Some program notes:**

Sara Teasdale [1884-1933] was an American lyric poet. Some of her work anticipated modern feminist verse and the intimate, autobiographical style known as confessional poetry. A large number of Teasdale's poems deal with love and death. Many of the

speakers in her lyrics are women who face the death or desertion of a loved one. They also face the fact of their own mortality with disillusionment, but not as cynics. Teasdale associated moral and spiritual beauty with the harmonies of the natural world.

- *Allpoetry.com*

**Some questions you might ponder and/or discuss:**

1. Who is the speaker of the poem?
2. What does the speaker of the poem want? What does s/he learn? How does s/he change from the beginning of the poem to the end?
3. Can you recall instances in your life when you have felt similarly? If so, can you tell us about them?
4. Are there musical motives that return in the piece? Are there textual reasons why they do so?
5. What is the climax of the piece? Is it a textual climax, a musical one, or both?
6. Which passages of the MUSIC best complement or match these words to YOU? Why?
7. Are there instances where the music seems NOT to complement the words very well?

**HIT "REPLY" TO START YOUR CONTRIBUTION!**

(or, if you prefer a private contribution, email it to [irloeppky@una.edu](mailto:irloeppky@una.edu))