

The Water Lily

Words written by Henry Lawson in November 1890. Many consider that Lawson's early poems were his best. With this one, at a time when death in childhood was not uncommon, Lawson poignantly captures a mother's anguish at her loss. The setting is by Chris Kempster

1 **C** **F** **C**
 A lone - - ly young wife in her dream - - ing dis - - cerns

2 **C** **G**
 A lily - - y - - decked pool with a bor - - der of ferns.

4 **C** **F** **C**
 And a beau - - ti - - ful child, with but - - ter - - fly wings,

6 **C** **G** **Em** **G**
 Trips down to the edge of the wat - - er and sings:

9 **C** **Em**
 'Come, mam - - ma! Come! Quick! Fol - - low me,

10 **F** **C** **G** **Em** **G**
 Step out on the leaves of the wa - - ter - - - lily!

13 **C** **Em**
 'Come mam - - ma! Come! Quick! Fol - - low me,

14 **F** **C** **G** **Am**
 Step out on the leaves of the wa - - ter lily!

And the lonely young wife, her heart beating wild,
 Cries, 'Wait till I come, till I reach you, my child!'
 But the beautiful child with butterfly wings
 Steps out on the leaves of the lily and sings:

And the wife in her dreaming steps out on the stream,
 But the lily leaves sink and she wakes from her dream.
 Ah, the waking is sad, for the tears that it brings,
 And she knows 'tis her dear baby's spirit that sings: