

At The Home · *Charlotte Mandel*

Dora dances with tottering ease  
Beside the spinet my father plays.  
Old songs beat like nickels on the keys.

She spins, he pedals, his fingers seize  
Self-taught octaves, skim on moonlit bays.  
Dora dances with tottering ease,

Hands on her hips. A remembered breeze  
Rocks in time the woody trunk she sways.  
Old songs beat like nickels on the keys—

Raisins-almonds, a Jolson reprise—  
From damask wing-chairs, white heads nod each phrase.  
Dora dances with tottering ease,

At twilight, held in parentheses  
Of drapes half-drawn on the window bays.  
Old songs beat like nickels on the keys—

A gauze man floats the flying trapeze.  
Kitchen-help quietly stack the trays.  
Dora dances with tottering ease.  
Old songs beat like nickels on the keys.