At the Home

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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 case,

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 case.
Old songs beat like nickels on the keys.