

You weave, and I

1.

You weave, and I
weave in the same way—
learning the secret

2.

Warp and woof and tangle—

gray dreams like frozen mists
weave sinews in, like ropes

this lofty thought,
an utterance,

the threads we see

3.

Two birds work together—
one inside the nest,
the other, outside—
calmly
interlacing

The bird games are beautiful

4.

Deftness,
a delight
giving the restless fingers something to do

One hand starts the journey,
the other hand
crossing
interlacing

looping
twisting

until the home is completed

5.

We know not what the use, nor the aim,
But we know the work,
a most fascinating kind of work

ABOUT THE POEM & AUTHOR

“You weave, and I” was created from:

Embroidery and Tapestry Weaving by Grace Christie (1906)

“Weavers All” by William Arthur Dunkerley publishing as John Oxenham (1913)

“The Weaver” by Archibald Lampman (1888)

“The Weavers” by James Stephens (1918)

Hand-Loom Weaving: A Manual for School and Home by Mattie Phipps Todd (1914)

“Weave In, Weave In, My Hardy Life” by Walt Whitman (1855)

Theory of Silk Weaving by Arnold Wolfensberger (1921)

About the poem and the process of composing it, Colleen E. Kennedy writes:

Weaving begins with secured vertical warp-threads held in place upon the loom with the weft threads running over, behind, and through. For this poem, I interwove several (mostly female-authored) treatises about the craft of weaving with poems about weaving composed by men to create a new tapestry, thinking of the Classical figures associated with weaving—Athena, Arachne, Penelope, Philomela, the Fates—who use the loom to weave their stories, their narratives.

Colleen E. Kennedy teaches courses focused on the poetics of Shakespearean drama. Her work has appeared in *Shakespeare & Beyond*, *The Recipes Project: Food, Magic, Art, Science, and Medicine*, *Appositions: Studies in Renaissance/Early Modern Literature & Culture*, and elsewhere. She lives in Washington, D.C., and can be found online at colleen-kennedy.com.

