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Shirley Weinland Hentzell, 1931-1999.

C F
Once my friends and I read science fiction
C
tales

Am
We dreamed of space, and rockets to the
G
moon.

C Csus F
Some day we'd live to walk upon the planets;
G C G C
The future, oh it couldn't come too soon.

F* C* C
Now it's long past the time we called the
F
future

C* C G
And still we carry on from day to day
C Csus F
The wonders of tomorrow still elude us;
G C
Reality keeps getting in the way.

C F
And the starlit crystal spires along the
C
Grand Canal,

C Am G
The cloudlight on the warm Venusian sea,
C Am Asus
Have vanished, like the stuff that dreams

C F
are made of;
G C G C
The future isn't like it used to be.

We watched as gallant men rode thunder to
the sky
Our probes brought distant planets into view:
The dry and cratered plains of Mars and
Venus—
Some dreams were dead before they could
come true.

The Saturn Five once carried spacemen
moonward
We've lost the plans to build her kind again

Bureaucracy and budgets dragged her under
Her launching pad stands rusting in the rain.
refrain

The century's last year was safely far away
We'd have machines that talked with us, and
more.

We never knew the challenge we'd be facing
Was code we keypunched forty years before.

Atomic powered rockets were a pipe-dream;
Most cities still burn coal to chase the dark.
The monorail that once ran to the spaceport
Takes children to an outing in the park.

refrain
But the future that we lost is still someplace
out there

Orion still rides hellfire toward the blue,
And rockets proudly land upon their tailfins,
As God and Robert Heinlein meant them to.

Yes, someplace there are old fans who remem-
ber

The way the future was when we were young,
And when the chains of space and time slip
from me

I'll be part of the song that once was sung.

C
And I'll share a song with Rhysling,
F C
beside the Grand Canal,

C* G G7
Ride lightsails on the endless starry sea

F* C
When I've become the stuff that dreams
C F
are made of

G C G C
In the future of my childrens' memory.

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