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Shirley Weinland Hentzell, 1931-1999.

C F C
 Once my friends and I read science fiction tales
 Am G
 We dreamed of space, and rockets to the 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 F
 Now it's long past the time we called the 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 C
 And the starlit crystal spires along the Grand Canal,
 C Am G
 The cloudlight on the warm Venusian sea,
 C Am Asus C F
 Have vanished, like the stuff that dreams 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.

chorus

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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.

chorus

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 remember
 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 beside the Grand Canal, ^C
^{C*} Ride lightsails on the endless starry sea ^{G G7}
^{F*} When I've become the stuff that dreams are made of ^C ^C ^F
^G In the future of my childrens' memory. ^C ^{G C}