

I

The Augur

I

Look ! Look ! upon the tripod through the smoke
Of slain things kindled, and fine frankincense.
Look – deep beyond the phantoms these
evoke
Are sightless halls where spirit stifles sense.
There do I open the old book of Fate
Wherein They pictured my delight and me
Flushed with the dawn of rapture laureate
And leaping with the laughter of ecstasy.
Mine eyes grow aged with that hieroglyph
Of doom that I have sought : the fatal end.
That which is written is written, even if
Great Zeus himself – great Zeus ! – were to
befriend.
Even in the spring of the first floral kiss :
"No happy end the gods have given for this ".

II

Save death alone ! I see no happy end,
 No happy end for this divine beginning.
 Child ! let us front a fate too ill to mend,
 Take joy in suffering for the sake of sinning.
Ay ! from your lips I pluck the purple seed
 Of that pomegranate sleek Persephone
 Tasted in hell ; the irrevocable deed
 I do, and it is done. Naught else could be
For us, the chosen of so severe a god
 To act so high a tragedy, the elect
 To suffer so, and so rejoice, the rod
 And scourge of our own shame, the guilt and
 decked
Oxen that go to our own sacrifice
 At our own consecrated shrine of vice.

III

Over the desert ocean of distress
 We reach pale eager hands that quiver and
 bleed
 With life of these our hearts that surge and
 stress
 In agony of the meditated deed.
For in the little coppice by the gate
 Wherein I drew you shy and sly, and kissed
 Your lips, your hushed "I love you" smooth and
 straight
 Sweeping to wrap us in the glittering mist
Of hell that holds us – even there I heard
 The lacerating laugh of fate ring out,
 The dog-faced god pronounce the mantic
 word,
 And saw the avengers gather round about
Our love. The Moirae neither break nor bend ;
 The Erinyes hunt us to – no happy end.

IV

Our love is like a glittering sabre bloodied
 With lives of men ; upsoared the sudden sun ;
 The choral heaven woke ; the aethyr flooded
 All space with joy that you and I were one.
But in the dark and splendid dens of death
 Arose an echo of that jewelled song :
 here swept a savour of polluted breath
 From the lost souls, the unsubstantial throng
That tasted once a shadow of our glory
 And turn them in the evil house to adore
 The godhead of our sin, the tragic story
 We have set ourselves to write, the sombre
 score
Our daggers carve with poesy sublime
 Upon the roof tree of despair and crime !

V

As we read Love and Death in either's eyes,
 We see the cool mild splendour of the dawn
 Damned by some tragic throw of murderous
 dice
 To slash like lightning over lea and lawn
Jagged and horrible across the curtain
 Of heaven, writing ruin, ruin – we see
 Our certain joy marred with a doubly certain
 Soul-shattering anguish. – Bah ! To you and
 me
Such loathing, such despair are little things.
 We are afloat on the flood-tide of lust –
 A lust more spiritual than life, that stings
 Till death and hell dissolve i' the aftergust.
So ? But the Gods avert their faces, bend
 Their holy brows, and see – no happy end.

VI

Thus shall men write upon our cenotaphs :
" Traitor and lecher ! murderous and whore ! "
The rat-faced god that lurks in heaven laughs;
There is rejoicing on the immortal shore.
The angels deem us hurled from the above,
Burnt out of bliss, blasted from sense and
thought,
Barred from the beauties of celestial love
And branded with the annihilating Naught.
O ! pallid triumph ! empty victory !
When we sit smiling on the infernal thrones
Starred with our utmost gems of infamy,
Builted with tears, and cushioned with the
groans
Of these the victims of our joys immense —
Child ! I aspire to that bad eminence !

VII

Hell hath no queen ! But, o thou red mouth
curving

In kisses that bring blood, shall I be alone?

What of the accomplice of these deeds
unswerving?

Will not your dead hot kisses match mine
own?

As here your ardours brand me bone and marrow

Biting like fire and poison in my veins,

Shall you not there still ply your nameless
harrow.

Mingle a cup from those our common pains

To intoxicate us with an extreme pleasure

Keener than life's, more dolorous than death's

Till these infernal blisses pass the measure

Of heaven's imagined by the tremulous breaths

Or silly saints and silly sinners, swaying

From scraps of blasphemy to scraps of praying?

VIII

You love me ? trite and idle word to darken
 (With all its glow) the splendour of our sun !
 No soul of heaven or hell may hearken
 The unbearable device that we have done.
Nor may Justine nor Borgia understand
 Nor Messalina nor Maria guess
 The infernal chorus swelling darkly grand
 That echoed us our everlasting ' Yes ! '
Nor shall the Gods perceive to damn or praise
 The deed that shakes their essence into dust,
 Disrupts their dreams, divides their dreary
 days.
 Supreme, abominable, rides our lust
Armed in the panoply of brazen youth
 And strength, since, if we are Hell's, Hell's worm is
Truth.

IX

We are still young enough to take delight
 In wickedness for wickedness' sole sake.
 Eve did not fall because she knew aright
 The fruit an apple, but the snake a snake.
Nor shall we sink among the foolish throng
 That seek an end, but rise among the few
 Who do the strong thing because they are
 strong
 And care not why they do, so that they do.
Therefore we wear our dread iniquity
 Even as an aureole therefore we attain
 Measureless heights of nameless ecstasy,
 Measureless depths of unimagined pain
Mingled in one initiating kiss
 That those dissolve in the athanor of this.

X

We tread on earth in our divine disdain
And crush its blood out into purple wine,
Staining our feet with hot and amorous stain,
The foam involving all the sensual shrine
Of love whose godhead dwells upon your mouth
Wherein the kisses clustering overflow
With brimming ardour of the new sin's growth
Till round us all the poisonous blossoms blow,
And all the cruel things and hideous forms
Of night awake and revel in our revel,
While in us rage the devastating storms
Whose dam is Luxury and their sire the devil...
It is well seen, however things intend,
The Gods have given for this – no happy end.

XI

Crown me with poppy and hibiscus ! Crown
These brows with nightshade, monkshood and
vervain !

Let us anoint us with the unguents brown
That waft our wizard bodies to the plain
Where in the circle of unholy stones

The unconsecrated Sabbath is at height ;
Where the grim goat rattling his skulls and
bones

Makes music that dissolves the dusk of night
Into a ruddy fervour from the abyss

Such as I see (when cunning can surprise
Our Argus foe and give us leave to kiss)
Within your deep, your damned, your darling
eyes.

Ay ! to the Sabbath where the crowned worm
Exults, with twisted yard and slime-cold
sperm.

XII

There gods descend ; there devils rise. We dance,
Dance to the madness of the waning moon,
Write centuries of murder in a glance,
Chiliads of rape in one unearthly tune.

There is the sacrament of sin unveiled
And there the abortion of Demeter eaten,
The potion of black Dione distilled,
The measure of Pan by whirling women
beaten.

These are but symbols, and our souls the truth ;
These sacraments, and we the gods of them ;
The sabbath incense curls to us to soothe
Our spleen, engarlands us, a diadem
For that unutterable deed that hurled
Us, flaming thunderbolts ! against the world.

XIII

There needs not ask the obscure oracle
 Whereto these dire imaginations tend.
 We read this sigil in the dust of Hell :
 " The Gods have given for this no happy end.
What end should we desire, who grasp the gain
 We have despoiled from everlasting time,
 Who gather sunshine from the iciest rain
 And turn the dullest prose to rhythm and
 rime?
Think you we cannot warm our hands and laugh
 Even at the fire that scatheth adamant?
 Think you we shall not knead the utmost chaff
 Into a bread worth Heaven's high sacrament
And from the bitter dregs of Hell's own wine
 Distil a liquor utterly divine ?

XIV

Behold ! I have said. The destiny obscure
Of this our deed obscure we shall not skry.
We know " no happy end ! " – but we endure,
Abiding as the Pole Star in the sky.
You mix your life in mine – then soul in soul
We shoot forth, meteors, travelling on and on
Far beyond Space to some dark-glimmering
goal
Where never sun or star hath risen or shone ;
Where we shall be the evil light beyond time,
Beyond space, beyond thought, supreme in deathless
pang ;
Nor shall a sound invade that hall of crime,
Only the champing of the insatiate fang
Of the undying worm our love, fast wed
Unto – no happy end. Behold ! I have said.