

DÆDALUS.

THE scorpion kisses and the stings of sin
 Cling hard within
The heart whose fibres, like a slender vine.
 Earth's hopes entwine,
And all the furies of the air caress
 The sorceress
Whose bosom beats in unison with shame,
 A flower of flame
Whose root most secretly made fast in hell
Is watered by the seraphim that fell.

The heart wherein is lit the sacred fire
 Of high desire,
Burnt clean from all untruth and sacrilege,
 Her wings may fledge,
And fly a little in the broad sweet air,
 Till unaware
The Spirit of Jehovah, like a dove
 On wings of love,
Breathe the sweet kiss, a sacrament untold,
And clothe the heart's desire with flames of gold.

No rash Icarian wing this passion plies,
 But sanctifies,

As if a censer (that a cherub swings)
 Blossomed with wings
And floated up, an incense-breathing bird,
 With songs half heard
Before the throne of God. Even so this life
 Of sordid strife
Is made most holy, beautiful, and pure,
By this desire, if this desire endure.

So to the altar of the Highest aspire
 Those souls whose fire
Has on it cast one grain of pure incense,
 (Who guesses—whence?)
Those souls that cast their trammels off, and spring
 On eager wing,
Immaculate, new-born, toward the sky,
 And shall not die
Until they cleave at last the lampless dome,
And lose their tent because they find their home.