

## THE LESBIAN HELL

THE unutterable void of Hell is stirred  
By gusts of sad wind moaning; the inane  
Quivers with melancholy sounds unheard,  
Unpastured woes, and unimagined pain,  
And kisses flung in vain.

Pale women fleet around, whose infinite  
Long sorrow and desire have torn their wombs,  
Whose empty fruitlessness assails the night  
With hollow repercussion, like dim tombs  
Wherein some vampire glooms.

Pale women sickening for some sister breast;  
Lone sisterhood of voiceless melancholy  
That wanders in this Hell, desiring rest  
From that desire that dwells for ever free,  
Monstrous, a storm, a sea.

In that desire their hands are strained and wrung;  
In that most infinite passion beats the blood,  
And bursting chants of amorous agony flung  
To the void Hell, are lost, not understood,  
Unheard by evil or good.

Their sighs attract the unsubstantial shapes  
Of other women, and their kisses burn  
Cold on the lips whose purple blood escapes,  
A thin chill stream; they feel not nor discern,  
Nor love's low laugh return.

They kiss the spiritual dead, they pass  
Like mists uprisen from the frosty moon,  
Like shadows fleeting in a seer's glass,  
Beckoning, yearning, amorous of the noon  
When earth dreams on in swoon.

They are so sick for sorrow, that my eyes  
Are moist because their passion was so fair,  
So pure and comely that no sacrifice  
Seems to waft up a sweeter savour there,  
Where God's grave ear takes prayer.

O desecrated lovers! O divine  
Passionate martyrs, virgin unto death!  
O kissing daughters of the unfed brine!  
O sisters of the west wind's pitiful breath,  
There is One that pitieth!

One far above the heavens crowned alone,  
Immitigable, intangible, a maid,  
Incomprehensible, divine, unknown,  
Who loves your love, and to high God hath  
said:  
"To me these songs are made!"

So in a little from the silent Hell  
Rises a spectre, disanointed now,  
Who bears a cup of poison terrible,  
The seal of God upon his blasted brow,  
To whom His angels bow.

Rise, Phantom disanointed, and proclaim  
Thine own destruction, and the sleepy death  
Of those material essences that flame  
A little moment for a little breath,  
The love that perisheth !

Rise, sisters, who have ignorantly striven  
On pale pure limbs to pasture your desire,  
Who should have fixed your souls on highest Heaven,  
And satiated your longings in that fire,  
And struck that mightier lyre !

Let the ripe kisses of your thirsty throats  
And beating blossoms of your breath, and flowers  
Of swart illimitable hair that floats  
Vague and caressing, and the amorous powers  
Of your unceasing hours,

The rich hot fragrance of your dewy skins,  
The eyes that yearn, the breasts that bleed, the  
thighs  
That cling and cluster to these infinite sins,  
Forget the earthlier pleasures of the prize,  
And raise diviner sighs ;

Cling to the white and bloody feet that hang,  
And drink the purple of a God's pure side ;  
With your wild hair assuage His deadliest pang,  
And on His broken bosom still abide  
His virginal white bride.

So, in the dawn of skies unseen above,  
Your passion's fiercest flakes shall catch new gold,  
The sun of an immeasurable love  
More beautiful shall touch the chaos cold  
Of earth that is grown old.

Then, shameful sisterhood of earth's disdain,  
Your lips shall speak your hearts, and understand ;  
Your lovers shall assuage the amorous pain  
With spiritual lips more keen and bland,  
And ye shall take God's hand.