

LE BEAU NAVIRE

I WILL recount to thee, enchantress smooth!
The varied beauties that adorn thy youth,
 And paint for thee thy loveliness
Where infancy and womanhood caress.

Sweeping the air with that broad skirt, to me
Is imaged some tall ship that puts to sea
 With canvas spread, that treads a measure
Of love-in-idleness and peace-with-pleasure!

On shining shoulder and soft rounded throat
Thy poised head sways—strange grace of melilote
 With a triumphant air and mild
Thou passest on thy way, majestic child!

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The varied beauties that adorn thy youth,
 And paint for thee thy loveliness
Where infancy and womanhood caress.

Thy bosom juts its jubilation of jet
Triumphant, like a noble cabinet
 Whose clear and polished panels fling
Back like bright shields the lightnings of the Spring.

Challenging shields, with rosy bosses starred!
Wardrobe of tender secrets, filled with nard,
 Wines, scents, liqueurs, a Comus train
Fit to intoxicate man's heart and brain.

Sweeping the air with that broad skirt, to me
Is imaged some tall ship that puts to sea
 With canvas spread, that treads a measure
Of love-in idleness and peace-with-pleasure!

Strong limbs that toss aside their tented veil
Brew acrid draughts of madness, darkly male,
 Like two black witch-women that turn
And stir some ghastly philtre in their urn.

Thine arms—could strangle a young Hercules!—
Rival and beat the python's strength-in-ease ;
 Made to crush—obstinately sure
To print him in thine heart, thy paramour!

On shining shoulder and soft rounded throat
Thy posed head sways—strange grace of melilote!
 With a triumphant air and mild
Thou passest on thy way, majestic child!