

Moon-Wane

By Michael Fairfax (Aleister Crowley)

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Hush! the moon dazzles. In her virgin light
The carnival of day
Is shrouded, the nun's sharp-cut black and white
For the dancer's tinsel and feathers, glowing gay
In the spot-light. Hush! No sound
Perfume the enchanted ground,
But this hymn's ebb, this incantation's wane,
For I must lull the fairies, and strike dumb
Satyr and Ægipan, restrain
Even the nymphs, till earth became
A shrine of silence—then
Let my voice cease to offend the ears of God and men!

Hush! the moon dazzles! As I pace nine times
The circle in her praise,
My steps uncertain as my soul sublimes
Its instrument; voice trembles as I raise
The spell. Mist gathers, clouds
Mine eyes with gossamer shrouds.
I am drunken on her purity, distraught
By her divinity, made blind
By the intense light of her thought
—It is not lawful for mankind
To drink of the hidden springs
With unchaste lips, with hands impure to touch true things.

She hath made me mad. She hath kindled a cold fire
 Upon the altar-stone
Of my dead heart, no incense of desire
 To burn, but with my life to feed it, thrown
For fuel to its sterile splendour,
No swordsman to defend her,
No priest to worship her, no pythoness,
 No prophet, will she, but a mirror-soul
By light received to express
 Her virtue, to shine sole
True witness to her cult
That looks not back to cause, nor forward to result.

My soul is sundered by her sickle. Each nerve
 Each cell exactly chosen
Feeds, but not surfeits, the one need, to serve
 That sublime altar, that flame fixed and frozen.
Flowers in my soul that bloomed
Ye are utterly consumed
Even as the weeds and herbs of pestilence,
 Her soul esteeming hate
And love alike offence
 To silence, the pure state
Of virtue that would live
Perfect with all, unsoiled by self's initiative.

Hush! the moon dazzles. But a meteor streaks
 The midnight. Sudden I see
The sky her glamour hid. The Pole Star speaks
 Firmness, the Great Bear signals Loyalty.
Sirius blazes: "None
Of us but whirls a sun,
Shepherd of systems! none but plays his part
 Minute in some august
Galaxy, brain and heart
 Aflame, yet with no lust
One state to gain, to shirk
Another, but—huge joy for the work's sake, to work."

Io Paian! The moon dazzles not. Dead globe,
Cast clout of Mother Earth,
Her lackey, flaunting our great Father's robe
Of light, an insolent wench vaunting her girth,
The pettiest satellite
In heaven! The slut of night!
To work! Sweep well our doorsteps with the tides!
Rule sailors, hunters, witches,
Lovers and other lunatics, wide's
The scope! be bayed by bitches,
But ask no hymns from one
Who knows Mother Earth's breast shades his sleep from
Father Sun.

I am a star! I whirl and blaze! I set
Planets above me, play
My part in the great game of life, though yet
I hardly know the rules, and day by day
Pain purges ignorance!
The captain? Fate or Chance?
The end? The plan? If end or plan there be!
I know not, nor can know;
Why worry? I cannot see
Whence came I, whither I go.
I know not who I am,
Nor what, but Will's my lance, and Love's my oriflamme.

A star, adrift in space! A soul, afloat
In the æther! Absolute,
Unique, eternal, God and man, a mote,
May be, but free my will to execute.
Love is my charioteer:
With the whip of Pride and Fear,
Wisdom and understanding for his reins,
He masters the wild horses
Bred of my heart and brain,
The incalculable forces
Of a man—drive on! we'll race
The Sun from Here to Now to the end of Time and Space!