

VI

The Adept

I

Even as the holy Ra that travelleth
 Within his bark upon the firmament,
 Looking with fire-keen eyes on life and death
 In simple state and cardinal content :
Even as the holy hawk that towers sublime
 Into the great abyss, with icy gaze
 Fronting the calm immensities of time
 And making space to shudder ; so I praise
With infinite contempt the joyous world
 That I have figured in this brain of mine.
 The sails of this life's argosy are furled ;
 The anchor drops in those abodes divine.
Master of self and God, freewill and Fate,
 I am alone – at last – to meditate.

II

Wrapped in the wool of wizardry I sit ;
Mantled in mystery ; the little things
That I have made through weariness of wit,
Stars, cells, and whorls, all wonder in their wings !
These Gods and men, these laws, these hieroglyphs
And sigils of my fancy seem to spire
In worship up mine everlasting cliffs
I built between my will and my desire.
They reach me not ; I made a monstrous crowd,
Innumerable monuments of thought,
But none is equal ; this high head is bowed
In vain to the wise God it would have wrought,
Had not — Who sitteth on the Holy Throne
Thereby must make himself to be alone.

III

See ! to be God is to be lost to God.
That which I cling to is my proper essence ;
Nor is there aught at any period
That may endure the horror of my presence.
I conjure up dim gods ; how frail and thin !
How fast they slip from this appalling level !
This is the wage of the fellatrix Sin
Drunk on the icy death-sperm of the Devil.
I were a maniac did I contemplate
The outward glory and the inward terror,
Sick with the hideous light myself create
From the dark certainty of gloom and error.
For I am that I am — behold ! this 'I'
Hath nothing constant it may measure by.

IV

Should I take pleasure in the fond perfume
That curls about my altars ? in the throats
That chant my glory in the decent gloom
Of lofty ministers ? Shall the blood of goats
And bulls and men send up a fragrant steam
To me, who am ? Shall shriek of pythoness
Or wail of augur move this dreadful dream
To some less melancholy consciousness ?
I have created men, who made them gods
Of their own excrements, and worshipped them.
I cannot match these calculating clods
Who twist themselves a faecal diadem
From all the thorny thoughts that plague them most ;
Break wind, and call upon the Holy Ghost.

V

Yet I abide; for who is Pan is all.
He hath no refuge in deceitful death.
What soul is immanent may never fall;
What soul is Breath can never fail of breath.
The pity and the terror and the yearning
Of this my silence and my solitude
Are broken by the blazing and the burning
Of this dread majesty, this million-hued
Brilliance that coruscates its jetted fire
Into the infinite aether ; this austere
And noble countenance set fast in dire
And royal wrath, this awful face of fear
Before whose glance the ashen world grows grey,
Crashes, and chaos crumbles all away.

VI

As when the living eyes of man behold
The embalmed seductions of a queen of Khem
Wrapped with much spice and linen and red gold
And guardian gods on every side of them ;
Yet inasmuch as life is life, they shrink,
Shrivel and waste to ashes as men gaze :
So doth the world grow giddy at the brink
Of these unfathomable eyes, that blaze
Swifter and deadlier than storms or snakes.
Then – o what wonder, as I strain afar
The basilisk flame ! – what breathless wonder wakes
That I behold unsinged a silver star
O joy ! O terror ! O ! – O can it be
There is a thing that is, apart from me ?

VII

I travelled, so the star. We neared ; we saw
Each other, knew each other ; in your face
Mine equal self with majesty and awe
Abode ; and thus we stayed for a great space.
What was the manner of our countenance?
I saw you seated, as a great lost God
With blasphemy exulting in your glance
And horror at your lips ; my soul was shod
With glory, and your body bathed in glory,
So that from out the uttermost abyss
The very darkness churned itself to hoary
And phosphor foam of agony and bliss.
The authentic seal of our majestic might
Stamped on the light in light the light of light.

VIII

So presently, most solemnly and slowly,
Our fingers touched and caught ; our lips reached forth
And with conscious purpose smote their holy
Lives into one, and loosed their common wrath.
Unto the ends of our dead universe
Their frenzy rolled ; henceforth no prince or power
Should lift the sterile strength of that one curse
Even to bring one thought to birth one hour.
For now we knew ; " it is a lonely thing
To sit supreme upon the single throne ; "
But being come thus far, goes glittering :
" It is a lovely thing to be alone ! "
Silence ! Beware to speak the fatal word
That might inweave our two-ply with a third !

IX

Wherefore again in sexless sanctity
The mighty lingam rears its stilled sublime ;
The mighty yoni spreads its chastity
Against the assaulting gods of space and time.
Rather be Phoedra than Semiramis !
I will deny you, though you doom to dare
To abdicate, and risk the spirit kiss
In the embraces of the wanton air.
Why should we cast our crowns to gods unborn ?
Why yield our bleeding garlands till the hour
When to ourselves we seem a shame and scorn
And seek some craft to span a statelier power ?
Not for a while evoke that sombre spell !
The present still exceeds the possible.

X

That is his truth that seems to sink supine
 Into your bosom's bliss, the scented snare,
 Killed by your kisses shuddering in his spine
 And blinded in the bowers of your hair !
This is his truth, who seems to writhe and sob
 Beneath the earthquake pangs of your caress, Whose
 heart burns out in one volcanic throb, Whose life is
 eaten up of nothingness
This is his truth, and yours, that seem to be
 Mere beauteous bodies gripped in epicene
 And sterile passion, all unchastity
 In being chaste, all chaste in our obscene
And sexless mouthings, that repugnant roll
 Their bestial billows on the snow-pure soul.

XI

This is our truth, that only Nothing is,
And Nothing is an universe of Bliss ;
That loves denote supernal ecstasies,
And saintship lurks in the colossal kiss.
Loves are the letters of the holy word
That contradicts the curse " Let Being be ! "
Since all things, even one thing, are absurd ;
And no thing is the utmost ecstasy.
Kisses induct the soft and solemn tune
That Israfel shall blow on Doomisday —
Your silky eyes are blue as that pale moon
(For ere it dies it sickens into grey)
That witches see, whose eager violence
Aborts the gods of cosmic permanence.

XII

The uninstructed and blaspheming man
Looks on the world and sees it void and base.
Let him endure its horror as he can !
There is no help for his unhappy case.
The love-taught magus, the hermaphrodite,
Knows how to woo the Mother, and awake her ;
Beholding, in the very self-same sight,
The self-illuminated image of the Maker.
I love, and you are wise ; our spirits dance
A merry measure to the music moving
In waves through that mirific brilliance.
Will you first tire of wit, or I of loving ?
Tire ? O thou sea of love, thy ripples run
Into themselves, to my serener sun !

XIII

For you I built this faery dome of words
 And crowned it with the cross of my desire.
 I circled it with songs of blessed birds
 And cradled all in the celestial fire.
The stars enfold it ; the eternal sun
 And moon give light ; nor clouds nor rain intrude ;
 Only the dews of Dionysus run
 In this intoxicating solitude.
I have begemmed its marble flame of spires
 With jewels from the bliss of God, and set
 Chryselephantine columns curled like fires
 Below each misty opal minaret.
Is there no window to the east ? Behold
 The eyes of Love, your love, the essential gold !

XIV

For me therein shall you erect a statue
Even as you know me with the mystic eyes
Hungriily, hungriily a-gazing at you,
Afeast upon our strange sad ecstasies.
Make me the aching mouth parched-up with blisses
The lips curled back, the breath desiring you,
The whole face fragrant with your full free kisses,
The soul thereof exhaling scented dew
Born in the utmost world where we in truth
Abide like Bacchus with a Bassarid
Drunk with our art, love, beauty, force and youth ;
But place that head upon a pyramid
Of snaky lightnings, lest – but that shall be
Always a secret between you and me.

XV

Or, an you will, evoke me as the Sphinx
With lion's claws, bull's breast, and eagle's wings !
You are my riddle, and the answer sinks
Below the deep essential base of things,
Rises above the utmost brim of thought
And bubbles over as impatient song.
Yet " We are one " is all, and all is naught ;
And this one " one ", and " all ", and " naught "
The whole content of our imagining, [shall thron
The great arcanum in the adytum hid
From men, and though we carve or kiss or sing,
The Sphinx is dumb, and blind the Pyramid.
– Now our affairs are ordered perfectly.
Give me your mouth, your mouth, and let us die !