

## AVE MORS.

O VIRGIN! O my sister! Hear me, death!  
The tainted kisses of the harlot life  
Sicken me; hers is foul and fevered breath,  
This noisome woman I have made my wife.  
She lies asweat, aslime. O hear me, thou!  
Wash with thy tears this desecrated brow!  
With cool chaste kisses cleanse me! Lay me out,  
Wrapped in a spotless winding-sheet, and soothe  
These nerves ill nuzzled by the black swine's snout  
With thine eternal anodyne of truth!

The foul beast grunts and snorts; but hear me,  
death!  
Thy wings are wind-white as her hoofs are  
dunged.  
Thy songs are faint and pale with honey breath,  
Honey and poppy! as her mouth hot-tongued  
Spews out its hideous lust. O loathed life!  
Thou nameless horror of the bestial strife  
Of love and hate. I straitly charge thee quit  
This bed of nastiness, this putrid sea;  
For not by any amorous tricks of wit  
Shalt thou regain thine empire over me.

O virgin, O my sister! Hear me, death!

Thou hast a sleep compelling soul and mind.

Thine is the sweet insufferable breath

That comes like Bessarabia's twilight wind

To bring a quiet coolth from day's long heat,

Peace to the belly gorged with blood and meat;

Stars for the sun that smote, for fire slow streams,

For the simoom the zephyr's cooing kiss,

Deep sleep at last from all the evil dreams,

And rest, the possibility of bliss.