

THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE

O CRIMSON cheeks of love's fierce fever!
O amber skin, electric to the kiss!
O eyes of sin! O bosom of my bliss!
Sorrow, the web, is spun of Love the weaver.

Twelve moons have circled in their seasons;
The earth has swept, exultant, round the sun;
Our love has slept, and, sleeping, made us one.
The thirteenth moon, be sure, the time of treasons!

Another spirit waves its pinions.
Love vanishes: we hate each other's sight.
In sullen seas sinks our sun-flaming light,
Darkness is master of the dream-dominions.

Lo! in thy womb a child! How rotten
Seems love to me who love it as my soul!
The love of thee hath broken its control,
The misconceived become the misbegotten.

In thee the love of me is broken.
Fear, hatred, pain, discomfort mock thy days;
Thou canst disdain; these solitary bays
Twine with decaying myrtles for a token.

Dislike, disgust (you say repulsers)
Link me to thee despite—because of—this
Skeleton key to charnel-house. My kiss
Is the dog's kiss to Lazarus his ulcers!

Mock me, ye clinging lovers, at your peril!
God turns to dust the blossom of your youth.
The fruit of lust is poisonous with—truth!
Its immortality is—to be sterile!

This lie of Love hath no abiding:
“Two loves are ended; one, the infant band,
Rises more splendid.” Spin the rope of sand!
Two loves are one; but O to their dividing!

Fertility—distaste’s adoption!
Her body’s growth—desire’s mortality!
I look and loathe. Behold how lovers die,
And immortality puts on corruption!