

## 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!