

To earn thy curse? Is love like ours too strong
To dwell before thee, and do thy throne no wrong?
Art thou grown jealous of the fiery band?
Lo! thou hast spoken, and thy strong command
Bade earth and air divide, and on the sea
Thy spirit moved—and thou must envy me!

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Our love must lie beneath thy bitter ban!
Thou petty, envious God! My King, be sure
His brute force shall not to the end endure;
Some stronger soul than thine shall wrest his crown
And thrust him from his own high heaven down
To some obscure forgetful hell. For me
Forsake thy hopes in him. We worship, we,
Rather the dear delights we know and hold;
The first cool kiss, within the water cold
That draws its music from some bubbling well,
Looks long, looks deadly, looks desirable,
The touch that fires, the next kiss, and the whole
Body embracing, symbol of the soul,
And all the perfect passion of an hour.
Turn to me, pluck that amaranthine flower,
And leave the doubtful blossoms of the sky!
You dare not kiss me! dare not draw you nigh
Lest I should lure you to remain! nor speak
Lest you should catch the blood within your cheek
Mantling. You dared enough—so long ago!—
When to my blossom body clean as snow
You pressed your bosom till desire was pain,
And—then—that midnight! you did dare remain
Though all my limbs were bloody with your mouth
That tore their flesh to satiate its drouth,
That was not thereby satisfied! And now
A pallid coward, with sly, skulking brow,
You must leave Sodom for your spouse's sake.
Coward and coward and coward; who would take
The best flower of my life and leave me so,
Still loving you—Ah! weak—and turn to go
For fear of such a God! O blind! O fool!
To heed these strangers and to be the tool
Of their smooth lies and monstrous miracles.
O break this bondage and cast off their spells!
Five righteous! Thou a righteous man! A jest!
A righteous man—you always loved me best,
And even when lured by lips of wanton girls
Would turn away and sigh and touch my curls,