

THE SNOW MAIDEN

TO MARGARET CALLAGHAN

My love is like the lucent globes
That drip from lips of cool crevasses,
To clothe them with the virgin robes
Of mosses, flowers, and grasses.

O spheres compact of fire and dew,
Lamps of the hollows of the mountain,
What dream angelic fathered you
On what celestial fountain?

Nay! but I lay on lower earth
Stagnant in sunless meres! The prison
Of monstrous spawn, detested birth—
Behold me rearisen!

It was yon fierce diurnal star
That licked me up with his huge kisses,
And dropped me in his rain afar
Upon these frore abysses!

Yea! as I press to the cool moss
My mouth, and drink at its delirious
Delight—acclaim the Sun across
The menaces of Sirius!

Doth not the World's great Alchemist
Rule earth's alembic with the sun?
Is not the mind a foolish mist,
And is not water one?

The slim white body that you gave,
Wild Jaja', with exotic nautches
Wanton and wonderful, a wave
Of debonair debauches,

Is worth the virgin limbs and lips
Of her the virtuous, the viceless,
With life who never came to grips,
Who gave me nothing priceless.

Give me the purity distilled
From dervish sweat and satyr bruises.
The Holy Graal with wine is filled
From no unbroken cruses.

Doth not the World's great Alchemist
Corrupt His oysters to make pearls?
Shall not these lips praise Him?
They kissed No cold reluctant girl's.

Jaja' hath woven the web of God
From threads of lust and laughter spun.
In heaven the rose is worth the rod;
And love as water, One.