

### III.

#### THE KISS

I BEHOLD in a mist of hair involving  
Subtle shadows and shapes of ivory beauty.  
Gray blue eyes from the sphered opal eyelids  
Look me through and make me a deep contentment  
Slow dissolving desire. We sit so silent  
Death might sweep over sleep with flowers of cypress  
(Gathered myriad blossoms, Proserpina's),  
Stir us not, nor a whisper steal through love-trance.  
Still we sit; and your head lies calm and splendid  
Shadowed, curve of an arm about it whispering.  
Still your bosom respire its sighs of silver;  
Still one hand o' me quivers close, caresses.  
Touches not. O a breath of sudden sadness  
Hides your face as a mist grows up a mountain!  
Mist is over my eyes, and darkness gathers  
Deep on violet inset deep of eyepits.  
Neither holds in the sight the lovely vision.  
Slow the mist is dissolved in the wintry sunlight  
On the fells, and the heather wakes to laughter: —  
So sight glimmers across the gulf of sorrow.  
You the lily and I the rose redouble,  
Bend, soft swayed by a slow spontaneous music,  
Bend to kiss, are alight, one lamp of moon-rays  
Caught, held hard in a crystal second. Swiftly  
Touch, just touch, the appealing floral sisters,  
Brush no bloom off the blossom, lift no lip-gleam  
Off the purple and rose, caressing cressets,  
Flames of flickering love. They draw asunder.  
Thus, and motionless thus, for ages. Hither!