

The Moon's Gift

by Charles Baudelaire
translated by Aleister Crowley

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The moon, who is caprice itself, looked in at the window while thou didst sleep in thy cradle, and said to herself, "This child pleases me."

Softly she descended her ladder of clouds and passed noiselessly through the window-panes. Then she stretched herself upon thee with the supple tenderness of a mother, and laid her colors on thy face. From that thine eyes are turned green, and thy cheeks are marvelous pale. It is through looking at this celestial visitant that thine eyes are grown so strangely large. She has so tenderly fastened on thy throat that thou hast therefore kept forever the desire to weep.

And yet in the overflowing of her joy the moon filled all the room with a phosphorescent light, like a luminous poison, and all this living light was thinking and saying: "Thou shalt know eternally the influence of my kiss; thou shalt be beautiful in my fashion. Thou shalt love me—the Water, the Clouds, Silence, Night; the vast green Sea, the shapeless water that hath many shapes; the place where thou art not, the lover that thou knowest not, monstrous flowers, and delirious perfumes.

"And thou shalt be loved of my lovers, courted by my courtiers. Thou shalt be the queen of those men whose eyes are green and whose throats I have clutched in my nocturnal caresses: of those who love the sea, the vast, tumultuous green sea, the shapeless water that hath many shapes, the place where they are not, the woman whom they know not; the sinister flowers that resemble the thuribles of an unknown religion;

the perfumes that trouble the will, and the savage and voluptuous beasts that are the symbols of their madness."

And it became of all that, spoilt child, accursèd and belovèd, that I am crouched this moment at thy feet, seeking, in all thy being, the reflection of that fearful Divinity, that god-mother prophetic, that poisonous nurse of all the madmen-of-the-moon.