

LE BALCON.

BY CHARLES BAUDELAIRE.

MOTHER of memories, and queen of queens
Thou, all my happiness ! Thou, all my duty !
Remember the dear hearth, the twilight screens,
Thy beauty, and our passion, and thy beauty !
Mother of memories, and queen of queens.

Those evenings in the firelight velvet-lined
Or on the balcony, veiled by rosy wings
Of mist. Thy breast was soft, thy kiss was kind.

We often said imperishable things
Those evenings in the firelight velvet-lined.

On summer evenings how the sun is fine !
How space seems deep ! How roars the heart's red flood !
I lean toward thee, adoring, queen of mine,
And thought I breathed the perfume of thy blood—
On summer evenings how the sun is fine !

The night fell thick and thick, a screen of sable ;
Mine eyes within the blackness guessed at thine,
I drank thy sighs—oh poison comfortable !

Thy feet slept in these brother hands of mine :
The night fell thick and thick, a screen of sable.

I have the art to evoke delicious hours
And live my past again between thy knees ;
Why should I seek thy beauty's langorous dowers
Save in thy body's passion, thine heart's ease ?
I have the art to evoke delicious hours.

These vows, these scents, these kisses infinite
Shall be reborn from gulfs we may not sound,
So scale the sky, young suns, in choral flight,
Winged from their lustral lapse in seas profound !
O vows ! O scents ! O kisses infinite !

Translated by ALEISTER CROWLEY.