

THE ENGLISH REVIEW

Her slave agasp for a kiss,
Hers whose horror is his
That knows that viper womb,
Speckled and barred with black
On its rusty amber scales,
Is his tomb—
The straining, groaning, rack
On which he wails—he wails!

Her cranial dome is vaulted,
Her mad Mongolian eyes
Aslant with the ecstasies
Of things immune, exalted
Far beyond stars and skies,
Slits of amber and jet—
Her snout for the quarry set
Fleshy and heavy and gross,
Bestial, broken across,
And below it her mouth that drips
Blood from the lips
That hide the fangs of a snake,
Drips on venomous udders
Mountainous flanks that fret,
And the spirit sickens and shudders
At the hint of a worse thing yet.

Olya! the golden bait
Barbed with infinite pain,
Fatal, fanatical mate
Of a poisoned body and brain!
Olya, the name that leers
Its lecherous longing and knavery,
Whispers in crazing ears
The secret spell of her slavery.

Horror indeed intense,
Seduction ever intenser,
Swinging the smoke of sense
From the bowl of a smouldering censer!
Behind me, behind and above,
She stands, that mirror of love.
Her fingers are supple-jointed;