

The Morning of Disillusionment

By Aleister Crowley

The Eve of Love has faded
To this unhallowed morn;
Of which these laughters shaded
With bitterness are born,
With tears and cruel sighing
The day springs up undying
Toward the crucifying
Of Love with nails of scorn.

Nailed to a cross of iron
My bleeding bosom hangs;
Love's serpents all environ
My heart with tameless fangs.
Unshaken, tortured, stricken
By agonies that thicken
I hang, and sweat, and sicken,
With miserable pangs.

I found out Love new-risen
From seas I thought had slain
His passion in their prison,
And girt their icy chain.
But on their foam did revel
The likeness of a devil
To work me bitter evil,
This unredeeming pain.

Here cruel winds and biting
Descend upon the wold;
Here frost and snow are smiting
The sons of earth with cold.
The raw air steams and shivers
Above the sluggish rivers,
And birds are dumb, the givers
Of melodies untold.

Here death has quite forgotten
An eager lover waits
To pass in yonder rotten
Black boat his icy gates.

He will not free his lover
Till Proserpine discover
How near he hangs above her,
And yearns towards the Fates.

Nor life nor death will hear him,
Nor God nor Satan aid;
Though Love no more endear him,
Nor Passion make afraid.
Too cold, too calm, too holy
He stands, consuming slowly
In the strong flame that wholly
Absorbs his vital shade.

Now Heaven and Hell reject him,
And Earth refuses home;
He knows not to direct him
To Lesbos or to Rome.
His life he sees unhidden,
A sea of waves unchidden,
Devouring things forbidden
In sacramental foam.

Here come “the loves that wither,”
And here their heaviest wings
Droop, and “dead years draw hither
And all disastrous things.”
Pure loves that flowered never,
True loves that none might sever,
The flame that burns for ever,
Love’s ruined water-springs.

Oh, Death! draw nigh, deliver
My passion from its band;
Draw nigh, until I shiver
At thy most holy hand.
For Earth’s desires have fled me,
And Earth’s distrusts have fed me,
And Love has come, and shed me
As water upon sand.

Postscript. The Twilight of Eternal Hope.

And yet—perhaps to-morrow
Response and joy and tears;
A respite unto sorrow,
A putting-by of fears.

A hope and a beginning
Of sweet long days of sinning,
While graying hairs and thinning
Mark the unnoticed years.

A time for song and laughter,
And tender tears that fall;
A time to think of after,
One long sweet festival;
A time for love and gladness,
For life and hope and madness,
And scarce a tinge of sadness
To sanctify it all.

Then we may yet, together,
Indwell the land of bliss;
In blue unclouded weather
By some new Salmacis.
A land where Love engages
Life sweeter than the sage's,
Where cling we through the ages
In one immortal kiss.