

The Anarchist Library (Mirror)

Anti-Copyright



Renzo Novatore
Above the Arch
2015

<https://archive.org/details/above-the-arch-by-renzo-novatore>

Renzo Novatore was an Italian autodidact, individualist anarchist, and anti-fascist nihilist who deserted the army, glorified crime, penned a transsexual narrative against childbirth, and went down shooting in a *carabinieri* ambush in 1922. Recently unearthed from the Italian anarchist archives and translated by Wolfi Landstreicher, this pocket collection of vigorous poetics and Nietzschean fable are an essential companion to his “Toward the Creative Nothing” and the writings collected in *Novatore*. Includes the original illustrations from the series’ Italian publication.

Contagion Press

usa.anarchistlibraries.net

Above the Arch

Renzo Novatore

Above the Arch



by
Renzo Novatore

2015

She was from the east and was a virgin.

“Reality was not in her realm,” these strange brothers told me. “After her death, we embalmed her so that she can live in all of our dreams, so that she can be our ideal, supreme, immortal creature!”

V

The “Monster of the Night” approached a huge black granite tomb on whose cover the following epigraph shone: “Here rests — waiting — the Wind of all Winds — the Storm of all Storms — the Hurricane of all Hurricanes — the Fire of all Fires — the Herald of all Heralds — here — Zarathustra — rests — awaiting his Hour.

Contents

Prelude	6
The Poem of Evil	9
I	9
II	10
III	11
IV	11
V	12
VI	12
VII	13
VIII	13
IX	14
X	14
XI	15
Tragic Embrace	17
Blonde Vampire	35
The Demon’s Lover	45
The Night Monster	52
I	52
II	52
III	53
IV	55
V	58

*

We entered. A large garden stretched out in front of us shining in the sun.

Vast hedgerows of roses and hawthorns swam wildly in the sea of their perfume, amid the green smile of herbs and the music of the most varied colors.

From the branches of every plant fragrant, ripe fruit hung, and along the paths superb gold, silver and marble monuments rose in honor and glory of great people now deceased.

*

When we reached the middle of the garden, I saw many people of my kind lying in the shade of pomegranate trees.

They were thieves, gypsies, vagabonds, unruly ones, bohemians, riders of the clouds, conquerors of the stars, bards of the Nothing, heroes of the impossible, knights of illusion, madmen, incomparables, nihilists...

They were my brothers.

The "Monster of the Night" pointed them out to me with a gesture of the hand, saying in a Nordic tongue:

"Behold your brothers."

I ran to meet them, and shook their hands.

I ran to meet them, and kissed their foreheads.

I ran to meet them, and called them brothers.

In their midst, stretched out on a bed of roses, lay the corpse of a young woman all dressed in red.

The red dress was studded with tiny black stars and her black beret was studded with tiny gold stars.

*

They had embalmed the young woman who I knew so well...

She had two golden hands and two tiny silver feet...

He took me by the hand, and silently we would enter the “Forest of Phantoms” in order to pass beyond it.

The forest was vast and endless. The clash of winds in it was terrible.

The phantoms howled, wailed, hooted, moaned, bayed.

Monsters sprang out from all sides trying to attack us.

Every monster resembled an animal that I recognized: wolves, tigers, panthers, owls, monstrous frogs, clammy toads, green snakes, poisonous beasts.

Some even presented themselves in the form of angels, but under their blue and scarlet coat, great vials of green and black poisons flashed.

*

I was afraid, I trembled!

But he, the “Monster of the Night” laughed and laughed...

He held in his hand the cane of the “New Wisdom” with which he touched every phantom monster that was ready to attack us, forcing them to move away and then to die.

*

We would reach a point in the forest where we no longer heard the sinister wails, and the silence was as deep as the shadow.

Before us a black wall rose, whose peak pressed into the vault of the sky without letting any transparency of light pass.

Then the “Monster of the Night” sent out a sharp and terrible hoot.

A few moments later a huge mass big as the peak of one of the mountains of our Alps turned on itself leaving free a vein through which a pleasant scent of wild flowers and a great gleam of sunlight reached us.

“Let’s go in through here,” he said to me, “this is the secret gate that leads beyond Good and Evil, this is the mysterious gate of my prodigious realm.



*

Prelude

Creatures of light who dance in the superb realm of the sun. Shivers of fear that dart quickly in the black Night. Mysterious sounds that quiver and throb in the unexplored Unknown, far away; and close, close, close. tears, smiles, joys, sorrows, hopes...

*

Life is a totality made of Everything and Nothing.

Truth and Illusion have the same value in its realm. Happiness is a perpetual larva, a shadow that flees, and men give chase and go toward Death.

*

I also walk softly, softly behind a shadow that flees. But I am aware and certain that I will never reach it.

You who don't understand the tragic heroism of my great and sublime despair, learn to open your eyes amidst the burning arrows of the sun.

*

I have seen many Loners walking the roads of Silence. Among men, these are the ones that I have admired most. I know their refined, superior and distinct palate, and I know that the fruits with which they nourish themselves are the sweetest and most delicate.

*

When I woke up, I saw that the little virgin from the east wept bitter tears as she kissed me.

My eyes burst open in the sun of reality, and I could see the last vision of my winged dream quickly and rapidly fleeing over the frightening, red waves of a vast sea of blood, to then hide itself behind high mountains of human corpses at the feet of which a terrible fire burned.

A few days later, the virgin from the east died in my arms, and as she passed away, a huge, frightening, black shadow appeared before me and I howled dismally.

That day was a day of my first summer.

IV

Desperately seeking the Sun and the light, I flung myself into the fearful and twisted eddies of a deep abyss of darkness.

But in this abyss of darkness I met with the "Monster of the night."

Because the "Monster of the night is the diver of every depth, the sounder of every abyss.

For a brain he has a very vast sun like a gold disc.

For eyes he has two luminous beacons like two radiant stars...

He approached me, smiled at me and said:

"I am the one who, a few thousand years ago passed through the realm of superficial humans to say to them: 'Whoever among you is searching for means, closes his eyes in the darkness and flings himself down to the bottom of the abyss. Only in this way will he be able to bounce onto the highest peaks and open his great pupils wide in an ever new sun!'

"You are one of those who, willingly or not, responded to my cry, therefore I say: Come!"

the dawn made of gold and flame, to run toward the divine miracle of Beauty, from which the free and atheist "I" is able to create, through the secret of the arts, what is joined and penetrated by the mystical religion of life, nature and love.

I dreamed...

And in the dream I saw a man writhing in the flames of a pang of occult and secret genius, all of the deep and voluptuous creative torment, to whom Life, smiling, handed a crown woven with the flowers of joy and the laurels of happiness.

*

I dreamed...

And in the dream I saw Beauty spread her vast wings over the world, and all the Earth fill with strange sounds, supreme light, eternal truths, immortal songs.

*

I dreamed...

I dreamed the sunrise of a miraculous morning in which all animated beings awoke with the mystery of the Dawn, without rancor in their souls, and without hatred in their hearts, in which every man had his laws and his dream and walked in the Sun with his large, focused eyes!

I dreamed the sunrise of a morning in which men and women rose in the Dawn with a sacred bonfire of love burning in their hearts, with the pure fire of childhood innocence burning in their eyes...

I dreamed...

I dreamed the reconciliation of the human being with the flowers, with the land, with nature.

I dreamed the pealing, merry laughter of Dionysus, accompanied by the vibrant and tremulous sound of Orpheus' lyre...

Someone affirms that these will be the men of tomorrow; but I instead believe that they are the eternal exception in the eternal rule.

For thousands of centuries the magnificent rays of the sun have blazed upon this noble Earth, but the reptiles, marshes and mud still live their stupid life.



She came because I expected her.
She came because I had called her.
She came to bring me the summer, the summer of the east!

III

She was dressed all in red. In a beautiful red of blood and fire.
The beret she wore on her head was black.
Black as the blackest ebony.
Black as the blackest death.
Her red costume was studded with black stars.
Her black beret was studded with gold stars.
She came to me.
She came to bring me the summer, the summer of my youth.
She had two golden hands and two tiny silver feet.
She had two deep eyes within which two stars and one destiny
danced.
She handed me a cup of honey and a cluster of blond dates.
Then she kissed me. She kissed me and opened her arms to me
I laid my head on her virgin breast and dreamed...

*

I dreamed the mysterious sunrise of a splendid morning in
which the wounded man and grieving humanity rise bloody from
the fearful darkness of the tragic night, to climb together on the
peaks of the dawn to celebrate their free nuptials communicating
with each other in the pure dew in which I saw full and vibrant
chalices quivery with flowers.

*

I dreamed the mysterious sunrise of a splendid morning in
which the women rose free and naked from the passionate bed of

The Night Monster

“The wayfarer now finds himself in the clear, fresh air and can contemplate the sun, while below him, everything is still lost in the darkness of the night.” — Arthur Schopenhauer

I

Green fields of crops not yet ripe.
Flower-studded gardens.
Fragrant vapors wandering on paths of light.
Songs of black cap warblers amidst the green — so very green
— leaves of the forests.
Feasts of sun and dreams...
I remember...
I remember as if it were a brief tale of yesterday...
Indeed: I remember!

II

It was my first springtime.
It was one day in the spring that She came to me.
Who?
The eastern virgin!
She came one evening when the horizon was broken with silver,
when the wind was mild...
She came to me...

The Poem of Evil

“In truth I tell you that there is even a future for evil; but the most blazing noon has not yet been discovered.”

— Friedrich Nietzsche

I

I remember!
The news reached me after the triumphal dance of a festive noon.
It was almost sunset.
The sun began to plunge amidst the eddies of a bloody sea, rippling among the whirling peaks of immense fiery mountains.
It was a tragic, epic, disturbing sunset!
The news came to me cold, cynical, relentless...
“Condemned to death!”
But how?! Condemned to death?
But if all day in the sky there was a frenzied dance of sun and light...
But if all day on the earth there was a magic feast of aromas and flowers, of music and poetry...
“Condemned to death!”
But for what?
By whose orders?
Who has the right to kill me?
The State? Society? Humanity?

I looked down into the souls of men. I wanted to see their inner truth.

Many applauded, others were indifferent. Few, very few, wept.

But those who wept didn't weep from solidarity, from friendship, from humanity. No, they wept from something else...

I was alone. Alone with death!

And yet life was beautiful. Beautiful, beautiful!

Everything around me was smiling...

"Condemned to death!"

And yet I still hadn't killed what I loved, and only the one who's repudiated life should die... But I? I loved Life!

Who has the right to kill one who doesn't want to die?

I cast my gaze around. Soon the night would fall and the stars would return...

Never before had the entire universe come into my eyes.

I opened my mouth and greedily drank the air as if it contained some unknown virtue. Then I drank the last rays of the blonde sun as if they were goblets of red wine.

The deep eyes of a dark-haired girl who passed by my side in the hour of twilight melancholy wholly gave me the strangest secret of deep, unknown loves.

Condemned to death!?

I heard dull thud in my subterranean depths, then a fierce, mocking, satanic sneer!

Who? Who will ever understand that fierce and satanic sneer?

Ah! friends, friends!

II

The prophet Zarathustra told me, "There are still free and virgin lands, for free and great souls!"

I abandoned the city of the superfluous, of cowardly men, of my swinish brothers, and I flew — with my hair in the sun and the

*

I see a doddering old man passing before me. A child follows him quickly, head down, with a knife in his hand.....

I see other old men desperately running away, all followed by armed children.

My son even follows me...

It is the terrible rebellion of the innocents that for hundreds of thousands of years the underground spirit of the Antichrist was preparing in the endless regions of the subsoil

*

And as the "Demon's Lover" laughs, lying on its ashes in the company of the thoughtful young man...

I have never seen the laughter of a woman more beautiful and merry.

Through the crystal of the closed window he could catch a glimpse of the young foreign woman who stood naked before the mirror admiring herself.

“Oh, my deep and dark melancholy, here is your morning and your light.

“Laugh merrily, o my melancholy!” the young man said to himself as he looked between the branches, as the phosphorescent rays of a new light stood out in his eyes.

*

No one ever knew how many days, years, centuries, the two remained shut up in the pagan prince’s old castle.

I know that one night they escaped from the castle, setting it on fire after killing the two sentries.

They then went into the city of pygmies, and started fires everywhere.

No mystical hell could be more terrible and tragic. From the last hovel to the king’s castle, everything was transformed in burning flames.

Rich and poor burned in the flames of the same fire.

When, in the morning, the dawn opened in bloody golden flanks on the horizon, the ash of the city serves as the nuptial bed for a hellish fury and an adolescent Demon.

*

It was then that the Antichrist rose from the depths of the abyss to cry to the human beings who still populated the other parts of the world:

“Come and see! No God of love was ever so beautiful and powerful, no embrace ever so sublimated...”

To a curious child who had come earlier, the Antichrist said:

“O child of Man, a new Era is starting. Go and kill your father!”

wind — toward the distant, virgin forest rich in endless silence and arcane solitude.

I arrived!

The great and generous Forest welcomed me amidst the green glory of its festive foliage. Here and there the Shadow reigned, sister to the sovereign Silence.

Only the musical murmuring of a small stream filled the forest with thousands of lyrical voices composing the harmonic mystery of a strange song sacred only to the souls of lovers of the barbaric force of true Love.

I lay on my back on the green moss carpets embroidered with herbs and flower.

All my limbs expanded and immersed themselves into the bowels of the moist, soft earth. My flesh trembled, my heart wept and laughed while, with feet of light, my soul danced on white flowers kissed by the silver lips of the last dying rays.

III

I thought: I have finally found my realm again. These trees and these flowers are truly my sole, unique, true brothers. This forest is my mother. And moved, I kissed my bed of Moss, as one kisses the fertile womb of a mother; I kissed those flowers as one kisses the face of a brother; and I kissed the hanging leafy branches of those trees as one kisses the small, lily-white hands of the most sweet and tender lover.

IV

The Sun had already wholly vanished within the twilight chasms of the evening. Above the Star’s grave, the Darkness was already singing its night-owl victory hymns. Aeolus had risen from the house of Mystery and wandered invisible through the

great forest playing strange, moving symphonies on his immense lute. At the sound of Aeolus, the dance of the flowers began. They danced, wild and divine, mad and passionate.

The first multitudes of stars wandering in the blue heights of the sky blessed the legend of their most sweet, innocent loves.

V

I thought: the clear, silvery dew that will fall on me in the night with the melancholy of a flow of tears will be the strange and moving baptism of my passage into the new life: it will be the fateful mass of my supreme redemption

I will finally be freed from those last remnants of stupid and brutal humanity that still remain in me. Tomorrow when the Dawn will come to lay her pure and immaculate kiss on my young, misunderstood forehead, for the first time, without blushing, I will be able to call her friend and sister.

Yes: I will call her — Friend and Sister!

And she will smile at me with a new and blissful smile and I will greedily drink from that smile all the sweet, great, penetrating, infinite music!

And my Life, my true Life, will start only tomorrow when I will awaken, a flower among flowers amidst the lyrical feasts of our virgin scent strangely condensed into the palpitating wonder of a great smile of light.

VI

The night was high and deep. The moon plunged its pale hands, woven from silvery white rays, into the clear waters of the silent river flowing in the Forest over its hard, rocky bed.

I dreamed!...

For three days and three nights the spiritual pygmies shouted: “Long live Idiot, the great King!”

And the King shouted: “Long live the spiritual pygmies, long live my people!”

But for three days and three nights the young man wept...

The rich offered wine, focaccia and honey to the poor, and raped their most beautiful virgin daughters.

Touched and admiring, the poor wept with sincere joy before so much goodness.

*

When the people noticed that the young man had not participated in the celebration, they cursed him, and the King had him imprisoned for three months...

But during the three long months of hard prison, the young man did not for a moment stop thinking of his beautiful and mysterious foreign woman who had been exiled down at the end of the city, in the castle of the pagan prince...

*

He was released one evening in September, but no longer went into the city...

He went into the countryside, made a meal of white peaches and golden honey, and afterwards fell asleep under a tree dreaming of the blonde foreign woman.

In the morning when the dawn came to awaken him, he rose smiling and walked in the first rays of the sun.

He passed through a fragrant forest of linden trees and pines that brought him near to the castle where the “Demon’s Lover” was exiled.

He entered a wild forest that held the castle and climbed up on oak tree whose branches almost rested on a window...

“I will not throw you underground or into the depths of the seas where wise men and prophets say they have know you, nor will I throw you into the arms of the Demon from which it seems you have come.

“I will exile you in the old castle of the ‘murderer prince,’ so that you can live in the company of the spirits of evil, and hear in the night the voices of the murdered divine lovers who seek each other in vain amidst the waters of the ‘Cursed River.’”

*

The young foreign woman was exiled to the castle that very evening, and the King’s speech was immediately printed and posted on the city’s walls.

*

In the modern city of spiritual pygmies, there still lived a young man with long, black hair, who passed a solitary life, sad and thoughtful

*

When the jubilant people went to the palace window to cheer for the King, for the treatment used against the mysterious young foreign woman, the pale and thoughtful young man remained alone, aloof, to meditate. What he was told and what he told himself about that so-called Demon’s lover, had fascinated him...

*

For three days and three nights the city celebrated.
For three days and three nights the bells sounded and the fires were lit.

And in the dream it appeared to me that a naked nymph had risen from a nearby cavern to lie idly by my side while an ethereal Muse holding a scepter had come down from a luminous and distant peak to hand us an emerald cup filled with sweet Nectar and a purple veil painted with golden stars.

VII

I thought: tomorrow the blind and stupid rage of men will still search for me but in vain... I will still live, I will still love, but with a life, a love, a song that most will not understand...

How could they understand me since I no longer belong to their species?

VIII

When I awoke the day was high because the noonday sun was singing a fiery song.

The all too fragile Beauty of my lyrical dream vanished! The fierce rage that I felt at still being a man drove me mad.

And with madness came darkness.

And within the darkness of madness I saw a satanic mass of spectral ghosts...

I seemed to be lying on my back on a rough and spiny bed made of dry thorns.

Beside me there was a black cup filled with a bitter green liquid that I had to swallow in silence.

A foul and hideous corpse of a leprous and ruined woman lay at my side, and I was condemned to possess that foul carrion...

No more snow-white flowers, no more festive leaves around, but a bleak and frightening desert devastated by the winds, burned by the sun.

Who? who then broke my strange and lyrical poet’s dream?

IX

I still seemed to wander for a long time through the saddest paths of the sinister city that hosted the ugly and deformed creatures of Jesus the redeemer.

I — as King Oedipus — was blind and cursed, since like him I had solved the riddle of the Sphinx...

X

A heroic cynic who lived inside me then said to me: "It is the end!"

I answered: "It is!"

I walked toward the solemn temple of Death.

The gloomy gate of black bronze was closed. I knocked; the blow thundered frighteningly, answering me with an gloomy, sepulchral echo.

It was then that, in the deep darkness of my soul, a sinister dark laugh broke out as loud as the downpour of the water, as the thundering roar of the winds.

The "Prince of Darkness" had awoken younger and more beautiful within the deep labyrinths of my being, and he laughed and laughed...

He told me: There's the two of us, only you and I. Look?! And saying this, he showed me a beautiful and terrible book.

The "Poem of Evil."

On the cover made from a black serpent's skin, there stood out in red fire the superb image of Mephistopheles.

He opened the book to the first page, made a gesture with his black hand toward the sky and the whole earth lit up with a rosy vermillion hue.

Christianity rose on the human horizon, the castle was inhabited by a pagan prince and his young consort.

One day, upon returning from a hunting party, the prince found his young wife in the arms of an even younger priest of God, a ritual of love, that was not a divine ritual

The pagan prince bent the sacrilegious bow against the loving couple and threw their naked corpses into the torrent.

The prince was burnt in flames at the stake; his castle was excommunicated, and the torrent changed from "Happiness" into "Cursed River."

Centuries passed, but the legend about the pagan prince's castle was still passed on from generation to generation, so that the millennia-old story seemed like yesterday's story.

*

Idiot, the great King of the city of spiritual pygmies, had the young, foreign woman arrested and dragged before him...

When she was brought, the king sat on his throne and slowly spoke:

"I, Idiot, King of the city, represent the spirit and the will of my people. A modern people that can, with the utmost modesty, talk of having reached the peak of supreme perfection."

The woman grimaced ironically, and the King continued:

"I don't want to know where you come from or where you're going; my superiority prohibits this to me, I don't even want to know your origin, as your claimed necessities cannot interest me. I am sufficiently modern and hostile to baleful spiritual anarchy, to be able to concern myself with all this. I know that you have disturbed the peace of my people and taken all happiness away from it!"

The woman again grimaced bitterly and ironically, but the King continued maliciously:

He was a deep-sea diver with sweet, profound eyes who throughout his life had explored all the depths of the sea.

He was shown the woman and was asked if he had known her.

The old diver answered in the affirmative and added that he had known her in his youth in a white, symmetrical city of marble sunk in the cavernous depths of a little-known gulf, that no ship had ever been able reach due to the raging storms that perpetually agitate the place.

He also added that the inhabitants of that white marble city were all dead, and that She alone — impure and perverse — lived and reigned over all those beings so pure and perfect...

Some thought: How could these old men affirm that they have known her since their youth, when even now she still seems to be a young girl?

A wild-eyed girl, called “the Saint” and loved and feared as such, swore on the sacred wounds of Jesus the Redeemer, that this strange creature was an ancient lover of the demon, and therefore would never die nor grow old.

And this is why she was cursed!

*

They had a lot to say about her, but since She had come mysteriously, in the heart of the night, no one ever knew with certainty who She really was.

*

On the right side of the “City of the spiritual pygmies” a great torrent flowed. It was called the “Cursed River.” On its right bank an abandoned forest spread out, and in the midst of this forest there was an old castle in which no one had lived for centuries and centuries.

The people called that castle: “The old cavern of the murderer prince.” But the true story was this: At the time when the dawn of

All the questioningly dark places that filled my poor, diseased head with sinister noise were transformed into so many cheerful, admiring, clear and laughing places.

XI

Since that day, I nourish myself on the fruits that germinate festive and triumphant in the sublime garden of Perversity and Sin. I warm myself in the magnificent sun of Freedom from which Crime shines, while I study and learn — in the Poem of Evil that Satan has written — the innermost power of the young “God of Life.” Life woven of Joy and Laughter. Power woven of Contempt and Scorn.

The scrawny old men of ancient and modern wisdom still cry out: Get thee behind me Satan!

Youth, my youth, goes forward!



The Demon's Lover

“Do you rise from the black abyss, or descend from the stars?”

The enchanted Demon follows your skirts like a dog”
— Charles Baudelaire

As soon as she arrived in the city of spiritual pygmies, the strangest, most fantastic tales began to be told about her...

Some said she was a dark daughter of hell sent among God's creatures to tempt them to sin; some instead claimed that she was only a luminous daughter of heaven sent among perverse creatures to prompt them toward the purest virtues through divine rites.

*

On a day of great feasting an old foreigner passed into the city. He was a venerable man with a long silver beard who the citizens called Sage for having spent his life as a miner extracting the most precious treasures from the bowels of the earth. He was shown the woman and asked if he had ever known her. The venerable old man responded in the affirmative, adding that he had known her in his youth who knows how many miles below the earth's surface...

*

On another feast, when great fires of glory were lit in honor of a dwarf who had united in marriage with the daughter of the king, a second foreigner passed into the city.



Tragic Embrace

“And so powerful was the Demon’s love, that the Goddess was incinerated by his kiss”

— Oscar Wilde

There was a time in my life when I walked with the sky in my eyes and God in my heart...

Then I saw a brother in every man, and every rustling of the leaves said to me: love!

Walking in the forest of old Arhan, the benefactor and philanthropist, one evening I met a hermit who went barefoot and wore a scarlet tunic. He had a long silver beard and his white hair was soft like wet wool. From his mystical, ascetic eyes of a prophet a very strange light burst forth, and his broad face of pale ivory face inspired trust and not fear in anyone who looked on him.

The first time that I passed by him I saw him absorbed in a silent inner contemplation, so deep that he didn’t even notice me...

I’d heard about him already for a long time, but I had never once seen him. I approached the green and flowery banks of the river that flowed down in the bottom of the right end of the forest, but the fiery bite of curiosity immediately turned me back on my steps...

I again met the old Hermit who held a green myrtle branch in his hand and ate its black, harsh and bitter fruits...

He said to me: Already the sunset approaches, my child, why aren’t you praying?

But — I said stammering — why should I pray?

How — the prophet started to say — do you perhaps ignore God's existence?

And while he spoke to me this way I saw a sincere ray of heart-felt pity come into his eyes, which seemed to me so sweet and deep.

I attempted to speak, to say something, nothing, I don't know; but he folded his hands and continued to speak like this: How can one ignore the creator of the heavens and the earth, of the sun and the stars, of humans and animals of flowers and forests? How can one ignore the creator of all this magnificence? And saying this the old Hermit put a pale, gaunt hand over my shoulder and with his luminous eyes fixed passionately on mine, he talked to me still longer to initiate me into the mysteries of God and of divine loves.

And it was form that evening that I started to walk with heaven in my eyes and God in my heart.

*

The old prophet had conquered my adolescence with his faith. Skillfully hiding the baleful story of Cain and Abel from me, he taught me to see in all men my perfect image, so many brothers of mine...

Every evening, toward sunset, I went back into the forest of the philanthropist Arhan, where I always met with the old Hermit who spoke to me of God...

Watch nature — he often told me — it is God's sacred book containing all divine mysteries.

And I listened touched and ecstatic, every time he said this to me.

One evening when the silence was deep in the forest and the sun died slowly on the horizon, projecting its pale and melancholy golden rays on the plants' green foliage, he took my two shoulders with both hands and staring into my eyes with a newer and stranger sweetness, all pale and trembling as he spoke to me: Oh my child, my child, my mission is complete. Here is the miracle,

And only when the nihilist spirit of this new rebel has permeated the mobs, and is made the ruler of the people, through the conquest of all human minds, will humanity finally find the way that can lead it toward the white peaks of its best and most glorious end.

Nihil, nihil!

O white, snowy flowers, o Death!

O death, o Eternity!...

And I affirm all this...

I created it in one of the many bestial moments when the human being, instead of being the lord of nature, is its most abject, humble and vulgar servant.

*

“Her feet are two red roses, her hands are two white lilies, her eyes are two ocean gems: they are two gold stars, two sacred and holy lamps lit in the sacrilegious garden of life to sense sin.”

*

God is dead, his throne has been cast down, the shattered heaven now lets the eagles pass beyond the biblical signs the divided the kingdom of humanity from the kingdom of god.

But who will shatter the kingdom of humanity?

When will the one be born who, beyond God and beyond Humanity, will shatter your vulgar traps, o Holy Mother Nature?

*

They have told me that a pale and sickly child walks through the world: sad and wretched!

I have never seen him, but I am sure that this child is a puppet of nature: a second me myself.

*

Grow and multiply.

The points of contact that the rebel mystic and saint of Nazareth has had with you — o ancient Mother Nature — are your most abject points...

But now the one who rises up against you is not the rebel mystic and saint, but that atheist and iconoclast who rises up against his laws.

here is the wonder... O pale adolescent, I now see the divine light glowing in your inspired eyes. My mission is complete. You possess the perfect knowledge of God. I see glowing in your great inspired eyes the sacred and mystical flame of eternity.

You will soon possess perfect love, and for you there will be no more vermilion sunrises, nor golden sunsets, but eternal light, eternal noontimes in the sun.

*

That evening, I didn't go back home. I wandered all night until dawn under the vault of the sky, amidst the scent of flowers and the countryside in love.

When I returned to my small bedroom to rest I was staggering, drunk on dreams and stars.

I lay down invoking good sleep, but sleep didn't come...

A mysterious chorus of unknown voices resounded in my soul like a divine refrain. God, God, God! said those voices.

The sleep came!...

But in the sleep I dreamed...

I dreamed of vast silver and gold heavens, with enormous coral thrones, great sapphire and emerald altars, above; and above these thrones and altars I saw God, always God.

*

People called me “the madman”; my mother called me “lunatic,” my father didn't bother with me, and my friends spoke of me with sarcasm and irony, scornfully calling me: “poet.” Only an old, demented aunt of mine called me: “the saint.” And I, of the good, after God, wanted just a bit more of that old and demented aunt.

*

One day, while walking on the sunny bank of a solitary river, I found – behind a hedge of wild roses, in the shadow of which someone had certainly rested, since the grass still held their impression – a big leather-bound book, written in a foreign language, on the cover of which, in golden and fiery characters, this motto was en- scribed in Latin:

“Whoever does not at least once violate the sacred laws of his God is not worthy of loving him; but whoever violates them either kills himself the first time or kills his God forever.”

I don’t really know why, but I remember that long Latin motto, inscribed in golden and fiery characters on the black spine of that big book written in a foreign language, it gave me the impression of an almost categorical imperative, of a great and immortal truth!

I seemed to hear roaring in my soul the cry of a thousand ship- wrecked people, and to feel crackling in my heart the flames of a hundred bonfires.

I ran to the house of my old, demented aunt and showed her that terrible book written in a foreign language, which had the long Latin motto enscribed on its black spine.

My aunt looked at it, but could think of nothing to say to me... I only remember that she wept!

I felt that the foundations of my faith were getting shaky. Some new event was about to happen to me

I ran into the forest of the philanthropist Arhan, in search of the old Hermit.

I found him hidden under a great laurel bush with the white daughter of Arhan, naked, in his arms.

O blonde daughter of Arhan – the old Hermit said to her – you have defeated my sanctity and have led me to sin. I wanted to inspire you and initiate you into the sacred mysteries of the great divine love, but you have conquered me with human love.

And as he spoke to her in this way, I saw his old, pale, bony, trembling hands pass over the soft velvet of that young body satu- rated with voluptuousness and scent.

The wound bled, and the blood was red!
Red and hot!
Who had opened that wound?
What malicious and bestial lips had sucked every divine spark from my brain?
The wound bled, and the blood was red!
Red and hot!

*

“Her feet are two red roses, her hands are two white lilies, her eyes are two ocean gems, her mouth is a fragrant, sweet, ripe _____
»
pomegranate.”

*

Under the pillow I found a pair of black silk panties, with two white skulls, speckled with red, embroidered on the sides.

Between the skulls there was a folded note written with fine calligraphy and strangely scented.

“I am the one who keeps the commandments of God through the witness of Christ his son,” the note said, and it was signed: “The Blonde Vampire.” After the signature came another phrase under- lined twice: “Remember me!”

*

Pause of death. Music of silence...

They have told me that a child walks through the world, pale, sick, sad, wretched!

I have never seen it, but I am sure that this child is a puppet of nature: a second me myself.

I am also sure that this child, born from my love with the “Blonde Vampire” is not the son of my ideas or of my will.

Now I was also naked and the woman no longer cried.
She laughed...
She laughed, and laughed, and laughed!
My naked body was entwined with Her naked body, and the
young God dressed in herbs and flowers, played and played...
He played strange and mysterious music on his magical lyre!
Music of love? Music of death?
I don't know, I don't know.
I don't recall...
He played and played...

*

Pause of death. Music of silence...
Horrendous waves of darkness...
What was happening around me? inside me?
In the darkness I saw an immense golden star shining.
When I opened my eyes again, the sun was setting, and I was
stretched out motionless and tired on my bed. Alone!
I closed my eyes again and saw a monstrous beast. My mind
went back to the verse from the "Apocalypse": "And the beast that
I saw was like unto a leopard, and its feet were like the feet of a
bear, and its mouth like the mouth of a lion."
The dying sun pressed its last melancholy rays against the book-
shop containing the secrets of the mind, and the flights of the spirit
of the deceased great men.
In the distant country side a flute played and played...

*

Pause of death. Music of silence...
What was happening around me?
I got up staggering and approached the mirror.
I saw that a wound had opened in the middle of my forehead.

I seemed to see the heavens shattering and dissolving in an enormous fire and the earth sinking into a great sulphurous abyss. The whole universe seems to me to be a terrible polygon of blood and fire.

It's worth it to feel the flesh of the soul burn for all eternity, after having been able to enjoy the pale and aromatic nakedness of your beautiful, divine body for a single fleeting instant — the old prophet said to the blonde daughter of Arhan, while she, with perverse eyes half closed, caressed his long silver beard.

I fell to the ground in a faint, and I don't recall how many hours passed!

*

When I came to, the sun had set, and the black book lay by me in a fragrant sea of fragile deep blue violets.

I seemed to be without present, without past and without future, alone, with a sorrow in my soul, without smiles and without hope.

I got up and looked around under the green laurel bush. Arhan's blonde daughter was no longer there, and the prophet slept!

I picked up my book, went to Him and woke him up...

What book do you hold hidden under your arm? — he asked me as he woke...

In silence, I handed him that strange book, written in a foreign language, that had the long Latin motto inscribed on the spine...

A long shudder of sadness and sorrow twisted the muscles of his pale, ivory face, and his luminous eyes almost were almost extinguished...

This — he told me — is the Devil's book. It is a damned book. It contains the Gospel of a clandestine religion, practiced by a dark and perverse group of gypsies wandering in the East. It is necessary to burn this book immediately and throw its ashes into a cavern...

Then he looked me in the eyes and gestured with unspeakable fear and terror; he screamed and said to me: My time has come, I

see in your eyes the grim and bloody spirit of Cain. As a disciple you loved me, but as a brother you will kill me; and yet it is written: thou shalt not kill!...

I responded: Whoever focusses the pupils of his brother cannot see his own images. And I added: A great poet of life drank the chalice of pleasure and that of pain to the last drop, and declared: All of us in life have killed and kill; there are those who kill with a kiss, there are those who kill with a truth, there are those who kill with a lie. Only the brave and generous man kills with a sword...

— You, o old man, were Cain before me. Cain of my soul. You taught me divine love, and I have seen you contorted in the senile voluptuousness of human love. You robbed me of Arhan's blonde daughter, whom I secretly adored with a pure and mystical divine love. It is therefore solely your fault if now all the great, luminous truths of the world have been transformed for me into a single great lie. O senile and wicked old man, I despise you!

Saying this, I took a heavy rock and crushed the prophet's white head.

Then I took my book and once again read the long Latin motto: "Whoever does not at least once violate the sacred laws of his God does is not worthy of loving him; but whoever violates them either kills himself the first time or kills his God forever."

The pale moon had risen on the horizon like a golden sickle and sought with its silvery rays the Holy Prophet sinner's red blood, as if it wanted to bless him...

*

Easter had come and the son of God was to rise again after a long week of passion. Yes, Easter had come, but no one, except for my conscience, ever knew about my crime.

My aunt — that demented old woman who called me the "Saint" and who I, for the love that I had for deformed things, still loved — had told me in those days of passion, the dismal and terrible passion of an ancient soldier.

"Why torture me so? She is a woman!" she answered.

On my lips a bitter smile curled, and the muscles of my face distorted in a pang of acute sorrow.

The woman took from her breast a soporific herb that grows only in a baleful garden in a distant land, and with it she gently touched my eyelids.

A few moments passed and a sweet and profound malaise took possession of my entire being.

My eyes closed.

Pause of death. Music of silence!

*

Pause of death. Music of silence. Horrendous waves of darkness. What was happening around me?

In the darkness I saw a question mark gleaming with a phosphoric glimmer

A ray of white light.

It was the naked, white body of a beautiful, pale woman who I had perhaps dreamed, but never seen.

She wept!

I seemed to catch sight of the perfect image of Human Beauty and Sorrow in her.

Shortly her tears flooded my room, transforming it into a little basin enclosed in a rock.

I no longer saw any of my furniture or books. All around was a green and flowery oasis, through which a young god, with a lyre in his hand, walked dressed in herbs and flowers.

Pause of death. Music of silence...

*

Pause of death. Music of silence...

What was happening around me?

“Sad and mad are you who still follow the nefarious commandments of the old God, perpetuating in your womb human evil and suffering. Without the earth without your offense, the human being would be immortal and happy, or would not be.

“Yours, your offense, has made the human being a mortal, unhappy, contemptible slave.”

To these hard, and perhaps cruel, words of mine, the woman retreated into herself and wept bitterly. Then she answered:

“Come, come with me, you are still sick for pure beauty and immortality!

“I will lead you into that solitary oasis and make you know and admire that young, eternally adolescent God.

“He is dressed in herbs and flowers in the day time and at night is wrapped in a beautiful golden veil.

“He plays strange love songs on his lyre and has the smile of the Angels.

“In him you can love pure beauty and admire eternal youth!

“Come, come see him!

“I am sent by him.”

*

When she had finished speaking my heart — against my every wish — beat enormously.

Something unusual, that I’d never felt before, was stirred up within me.

What? I don’t know!

My flesh trembled...

“Tell me about Her,” I said, “about the wild, virgin daughter of the forests.”

“Shut up, shut up!” she answered me, “don’t make me talk about her any more, don’t make me cry still more!”

“Then keep for her,” I retorted with poorly repressed irony, “the sorts of commandments in witness of which there is Jesus Christ.”

This soldier, having approached the altar on Easter day to receive the body and blood of the Redeemer in the form of bread and wine, when the young, pale priest brought the Holy Sacrament to the penitent’s lips, the host was transformed into the living and real figure of the Crucified Christ and every drop of blood rose into the red heaven of church burning with lamps and rich scarlet fabrics, crying: “Get back, get back, o unworthy one. You are not worthy of me, because he who has murdered his brothers is not worthy of me.”

Because — that demented old aunt of mine added — in the divine legal code, immutable for Eternity, it is written: “Thou shalt not kill.”

*

I don’t know by what secret and magnetic force I headed to the church and approached the altar. A mystical music emanated from the long, silvery pipes of the white organ and combined as a divine shiver with the chorus of the faithful who, kneeling on the engraved balustrades of red marble, sang in Latin.

I knelt on the altar as in my heart there was the perverse anxiety to achieve my wicked tragedy through the horrible and divine miracle; and in this that the terrible story of that ancient soldier should be renewed as a tremendous example to others, I didn’t even want to go through the christian rite of confession and repentance.

*

The priest was dressed in purple and gold — like the one of ancient times. I saw him pass again and again over the altar, bowing again and again before the silver tabernacle, with eyes focused in a lens of pure crystal that he held between his slender pink hands, covered with a small white silk cloth streaked with gold and gems.

I don’t know how to speak of what passed through my soul in that moment...

I know that the anxious waiting seemed very long and excruciating to me.

Finally the mysterious rite of the consecration of the bread and wine was finished, and the young priest began the redemptive distribution.

An huge shudder shook me.

The terrible moment of my tragedy was about to fatefully strike. The spirit of cowardice came to tempt me time and again. "Escape!" it told me, while the powerful voice of the will howled to me to stay.

I stayed.

The sacrifice of my soul that was to be carried out under the black cross of damnation and shame, had to serve to reinforce the rest in their faith in the Gospel that was failing in me, and to make me worthy of Christ through the supreme sacrifice of the supreme revolt.

I thought: no one is as great as Christ, except the Antichrist. Brutus was great because Caesar was great. And greatness is greatness, in good as in evil, in sin as in virtue. And then, no one has ever been able to say precisely what is or is not good and evil, sin and virtue. I still believed, but my soul had been shaken.

Now it was perverted. The ethical problem was transformed into an aesthetic passion...

*

The young priest passed whispering an incomprehensible prayer between his white teeth. He made a religiously majestic gesture and placed softly on my dry lips first the body and then the blood of the son of God, Jesus the Redeemer. I understood that the host ended up as white paste melted in the heat of my mouth, between two drops of wine, but no miracle occurred.

I stayed there, motionless, with my mouth and eyes wide open, my soul, my heart, empty, like a true lunatic.

"Thou shalt not kill!"

grains of incense so that the scent spreads all around the oasis, like in the christian church where they celebrate the rites of divine love.

"Ah, come, come!"

"The untamed daughter of the forest has very small feet and white hands.

"Ah, come, come!"

"Her feet are two red roses, her hands are two white lilies, her eyes are two ocean gems, her mouth is a fragrant, sweet, ripe pomegranate!"

"Ah, come, come see her!"

"Her white ivory arms are adorned with bracelets and her fingers sparkle with turquoise.

"This must be the woman of your dreams, the medicine for your disease..."

"Ah, you have to follow me!"

"I will lead you into that fresh and smiling oasis.

"I will lead you to the ancient rock that surrounds the small pool which the virgin daughter of the forests enters naked at every sunrise and every sunset..."

I took the "Apocalypse" back up in my hand and to respond to my strange visitor faithfully read:

"But the Dragon grew angry with the woman and left to make war with what was left of her progeny, which keeps the commandments of God and bears witness to Jesus Christ."

"Alas! Alas!" my visitor sorrowfully sighed, her face turning very pale, "crazy and sad was that dragon who wanted to prevent that woman from procreating, perhaps in the name of an absurd conception of pure beauty, thus placing her in a state of revolt against the immutable laws of the Eternal, to eradicate the species.

"That Dragon can be none other than the terrible Demon of destruction!"

"Nihil, nihil, must be written in secret in his dangerous thoughts."

"No, o woman," I responded, "you are sad.

“See? My feet are bleeding, and more than my feet, my heart also bleeds!

“O, man, listen to me!

“Reality has made you nauseous.

“Truth has tortured you.

“Humanity has saddened you!

“I know, I know! All these sad and wicked things have made you ill of dreams and solitude.

“Of ideals and distance!”

I listened in silence to my strange visitor, and focusing on the secret hidden beyond her eyes full of the sky, I smiled with a certain bitter irony.

“No, no,” she said to me, “ don’t laugh like this, you will do me harm!

“Rather, keep listening to me.

“I know an oasis very far away, a laughing and blissful oasis, in the midst of which there is a virgin spring of the clearest water.

“Near the spring there is a huge, very ancient rock, inside which there is a small pool.

“Every sunrise and every sunset a wild daughter of the forest descends naked into the small pool to bathe.

“Come, come see her.

“The oasis is deserted and is not inhabited by anyone.

“Only an adolescent God, eternally young and beautiful – who by day dresses in herbs and flower, and at night is wrapped in golden veils -passes through distilling violent scents from the petals of unknown flowers, and playing tremulous, mysterious love songs on the lyre.”

She paused, looked at me, smiled at me and continued:

“So then, do you want to come with me?

“I will lead you into that blissful and laughing oasis.

“When the untamed daughter of the forest – the lady of the oasis – comes out from the rock, she anoints her whole body with the red oil of roses, and in the night the young God burns many

But I had killed.

I had killed just like that ancient soldier! But the miracle had not occurred, and there was no terrible example at all.

It was fated that Christ should die even in the soul of his most humble and loyal believers.

At the right side of the church – opposite to my prie-dieu¹ – the altar of the Madonna was raised all gleaming with gold amidst the fire of the candles. The organ continued to pour out great shudders of heavenly music. The believers all had their heads bowed as if they had been dominated by bliss and terror.

I stared at the altar opposite me, the sorrowing Madonna with a baby in her arms and seven daggers in her heart.

Some of the women had strewn flowers of the field and greenhouse on the altar.

I don’t know why, but it seemed to me that the scent of these flowers mixed with the odor of the incense and the candle wax that melted in the flame, and sent to me a strange odor of flesh and sensuality.

I stared more intently at the Madonna and it seemed to me that this was alive and looking at me...

Then my mind clouded over, and I didn’t see a thing. Cavernous shadows, rocky fogs, meaningless specters... Nothing!

All of a sudden I saw the church in a dense white vapor, and in its midst I saw the sacrilegious figure of that ancient soldier passing, who like a thief of divine things walked with a light and circum-spect step toward the altar.

Then the smoke cleared, and the church appeared deserted to me.

Only the soldier was standing upright on the altar, and one by one he took the daggers out of the Madonna’s heart. When he pulled the seventh blade out, the Madonna looked at me and smiled...

¹ A piece of furniture designed for kneeling during prayer.

The baby, it also living, came down from Her arms and began to gather the fresh flowers of the field and greenhouse that the young women of the village had strew on the altar; meanwhile the sacrilegious soldier stripped the very beautiful, blonde Madonna.

Then I saw the church transform itself into a forest and the altar into a laurel shrub.

The soldier in his turn transformed himself into the old hermit with the soft beard of fine wool and the long silvery beard, while the naked Madonna was nothing other than Arhan's blonde daughter.

— O Arhan's blonde daughter, you have conquered my sanctity and have moved me to sin: I wanted to inspire you and initiate you into the sacred mysteries of the great divine love, but you have conquered me with human love. It is well worth it to feel the flesh of the soul burning through all eternity, after having been able to enjoy the pale nakedness of your divine body for a single, fleeting moment.

*

The sweet child who had become a pale adolescent, advanced through the shaded paths of the forest with a black book under his arm.

Suddenly I saw him raise a large rock and smash the head of the Prophet with it.

Strange incident... That child who had become an adolescent, amidst the flowers from the altar, had my face...

*

— If you look in the eyes of a brother of yours you will see no one but yourself.

*

Blonde Vampire

“At his approach, two emotions immediately arose in me: desire and fear.” — Leonardo Da Vinci¹

I don't know how long I was ill, and all the doctors had given me up for lost.

My disease wasn't physical, and doctors could never do anything against true spiritual diseases!...

But was I truly ill?

One day — an afternoon in August — there were three very light taps at the door of my room.

I was sitting in a wicker deck chair and killed the time by reading the “Apocalypse.”

“But the woman was given two great eagle's wings, so that she might fly before the serpent in the wilderness.”

I set the book on a worm-eaten writing desk and opened the door.

A great surge of light and sun came in, and along with the sun and light, there entered a young woman with eyes full of the sky, on whose naked shoulders fell the long ringlets of her artistically undone, golden hair.

On first seeing her, two emotions arose in me: desire and fear.

“I come from very far away,” she told me, “and to reach you I have walked a long way.”

¹ This appears to be a paraphrase of Da Vinci's statement adapted to this story, as the only versions of this statement I can find have to do with Da Vinci entering a cave, not with the approach of anyone or anything. — translator.



Was it a dream, a regret, a vision, a specter, a reality, a truth?
I don't know, I don't know.
I don't want to know!

Down from the silvery pipes of the white organ, the last melancholy notes fell with the desperation of hopeless tears, while the simple and good believers marched slowly, with heads bowed, as if in the temple they had celebrated Jesus' funeral rites instead of the mass of resurrection...

Outside, on the square that extended majestically in front of the church, the white daisies and the deep blue violets danced cheerfully in a warm glory of light and sun, while the bells rang out a great feast spreading down through the valley the great proclamation of redemption...

*

The night was sweet and silent.

The beautiful blue sky was studded with golden stars and the pale moon faintly lit up the earth.

I — alone in the company of my red thoughts and my black shadow — walked again in old Arhan's forest.

When I reached the place where I smashed the old hermit's head, I heard a strange noise that made me tremble...

I turned and saw behind me an enormous winged Dragon.

The Dragon had seven heads and on each head wore a crown. The three on the left were: one of a serpent, the next of an eagle, and the third of a lion. The first wore the crown of wisdom, the second that of prudence, the third that of strength. The three heads on the right were: one of a lamb, the next of an ox, and the other of an ass and wore three equal crowns of thorns. The head in the middle was: half tiger and half panther, and had no crown...

My shadow fled and the Dragon grasped me for life with all its multiform tentacles and, its five black wings spread wide, transported me more quickly than the wind over a high gold crowned

mountain on the peak of which the tree of the greatest magnificence rose triumphant and majestic.

Under the tree I saw three men that were not men since they were only larvae, specters, parodies of men.

They studied bent like reeds that twisted in the furious passing stream. One was a leper, the next a blind man, the third a beggar.

They prayed and wept...

The Dragon turned his head half toward me and said to me in a satanic voice: "This is where God has come to take refuge."

And so saying he mentioned to me the leper, the blind man and the beggar. "If you kill them," the Dragon continued with the same mouth, "God will be truly utterly dead and the spirit will be freed for ever."

What wouldn't I have done for the liberation of the spirit?

I took up a hard and knotty oak branch and struck the three praying men with unprecedented violence.

From their mouths, noses and ears, an abundant gush of blood flowed out. The moments still passed, and I saw them stiffen in the cold stillness of death.

The Dragon's three heads on the left laughed merrily while the three on the right wept bitter tears; that in the middle remained imperiously inflexible as if it were made of bronze.

*

A healthy gust of wind passed through the green leaves of the magnificent tree singing, and the last breath of God — tyrant of the spirit — was dispersed far away into the eternal nothing of time.

The sun danced cheerfully laughing with his shiny golden feet on the corpses of those three dead wretches, while from deep and distant seas there rose a mysterious song of pale, silvery mermaids, ladies and queens of the seas...

*

With the shadow my memories returned...

My mermaid is dead!

She is dead!

She is dead!

She is dead!

The winged Demon of the deep has killed her, in the fire of his mad loving kisses. Tragic embrace.

O Arhan's blonde daughter, my Mermaid is dead.

It was me, it was Him, it was you who killed her.

*

My Mermaid was beautiful:

But she had no feet!

My Mermaid was beautiful:

But she had no Sun!

O Arhan's blonde daughter, corrupted by the old Prophet, it is you that I seek!

Where are you?

Come naked, with bare feet and dance! Dance naked in the world, o great flower of evil, o temptress...

Dance and give me the Sun.

I am the poet of evil and sing perversity.

O Arhan's blonde daughter!

O Arhan's blonde daughter!

Give me the Sun!

Give me the Sun and dance!

Dance naked in the world, o Arhan's blonde daughter!

O Arhan's blonde daughter!
O Arhan's blonde daughter!

*

My mermaid is dead!
Dead from love and melancholy...
A winged Demon has killed her, in the fire of his mad loving
kisses; from love and from fire. I am alone! I am alone!
With the shadow my memories returned...
O Arhan's blonde daughter, where are you?
I want you, I search for you, I yearn for you!
Wasn't it for you that I killed God?
Wasn't it for you that I smashed the Prophet's head?
Aren't you the dream of my liberated spirit?
Aren't you voluptuousness and pleasure?
Aren't you Art and Beauty?
Aren't you Youth and Love?
Aren't you the great flower of Sin?
Oh Eve!
Oh Mary Magdalene
Oh Sappho!
Oh Cleopatra!
Oh Messalina!
Oh Beatrice!
Oh Laura!
Oh Lucrezia Borgia!
Oh great flowers of evil!
Oh Arhan's blonde daughter!
I am a perverse poet!
I am your poet!

*

The Dragon lifted me from the earth and even faster than the
wind transported me to a distant and deserted beach of a sea that
had never been explored.

A silvery mermaid with long golden hair, who had two great
starry mother-of pearl eyes, leapt singing from the clear blue
waves, and abducted me from the sandy, sunny beach, sweeping
me away with her into the deep and luminous chasms of the sea.

*

We passed through white marble cities and red coral cities...
All the roads of those cities were paved with rubies, with emer-
alds, with gems...

Enormous sapphires covered the roofs of all the houses and ev-
erywhere songs of love, music of beauty, hymns to life echoed...

But one day, I noticed that the sun, the beautiful sun, never en-
tered into these oceanic chasms.

I woke up my mermaid who slept stretched in a clear pearl bed
studded with small stars that don't yet have a name, and I said to
her:

"Give me the Sun!"

"I have given you love, pleasure, happiness," she answered me
as she woke up. "What does the Sun matter to you?"

"Give me the Sun! Give me the Sun!" I repeated.

"Alas!" the mermaid sighed, "I cannot give you the Sun." And
so saying, she went back to sleep.

*

In the depths everything was silence...
All the daughters of the sea were asleep.
I alone was awake watching a thread of white light came from
high up on the ocean surface down into the depths.
I thought of the Sun.

I quietly bent over my sleeping mermaid and with a light kiss I grazed her eyelids which she left half-open in her sleep.

Her sigh was sweet and light like a divine caress, and her red heart beat watchful and awake under her round, ivory-white breasts.

I set myself on the white strip that came from the heights, and climbed to the sea's surface where the waves pounded.

*

I landed on an Island that was unknown to me, lit only by cold, pale moonlight.

The inhabitants of that Island were small as dwarves and black as the night.

But they were all youths and there were neither old people nor children among them.

They didn't eat, they didn't work, they didn't sleep, they didn't procreate, they didn't die.

They were a race of sterile and immortal pygmies.

I questioned them, asking them what season and what year it was.

They didn't understand and didn't answer.

One day a pale castaway landed on that island. I asked him what parts he came from and he answered: "From the land of the Sun!"

"O pale castaway, pale castaway," I cried out, "you are a brother of mine, you are of my kind... Bring me back to our old land, I want the sun."

And so saying I embraced him, moved, and kissed his pale forehead with a new kiss.

"Alas... Alas!..." the pale castaway sighed, "I am banished from that land. My brothers have banished me, since the day that I dared to become an apostle of a strange man called 'the great liberator of the spirit or the assassin of God,' preaching against the apes that have climbed on the tree of magnificence declaring themselves, the

animals, to be the new lords of the human soul; they, my brothers, have cursed me and banished me, calling me 'the Shadow' of that strange man which no one ever knew."

I gazed into the eyes of the pale castaway; he also looked at me...

We looked at each other for a long time in silence, pale, panting, mute.

It seemed that each of us was looking for something strange in his own secret, in distant memories.

Suddenly a sinister flash passed through my being...

"Tell me," said the pale castaway, "are you the body of my soul, or are you the soul of my body?"

"Who the soul? Who the body?"

The castaway didn't answer, but I saw that his body slowly dwindled and a little later was only a shadow that started from my feet...

*

I plunged into the waves and with my thought fixed on Arhan's blonde daughter, I returned to the depths.

With the shadow I had found my memories again...

O Arhan's blonde daughter!

O Arhan's blonde daughter!

When I reached the clear pearl bed, studded with stars, where I had left my mermaid, I found her dead, dead from love.

My mermaid was dead, dead from love and melancholy. She was dead...

O Arhan's blonde daughter!

O Arhan's blonde daughter!

*

With the shadow my memories have returned...