The Works of Stefan George

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ADDRESS

I never shall rejoice in cold esteem,
When you deny your flesh with regal pride
To common wenches and their brazen dream.
You held aloof from them and yet you sighed.

Your hands, indeed, must all in vain be wrung
For draught of solace from a higher sphere,
Oh, would that from a mother I were sprung
So I myself could bring it to you here!

Whether you begged or bade imperiously,
No double red would pour into my face.
I should surround you with a silken sea,
On sumptuous purple yield to your embrace.

But I can only soothe with phantom kiss,
A child of buoyant cloud and crystal air,
I cleave through chaos, sing your state of bliss,
And bear as I divine you also bear.

PICTURES

THE INFANTE

With shield and dagger under fallow frieze,
He stands in a dark oval rimmed with gold,
A pale and smiling child. His brother-twin
Was only briefly in this hall where then
No stranger gawked. The frosty mountain-breeze
Had proved a playmate who was more than bold.

But he himself will never grieve at all
That he was kept from growing old and grim
Like this or that one on the neighbouring wall,
For blessedness has been accorded him:
When glass pomegranates to the moon unclose
He is companioned by a shining elf,
And often follows, flying and in fall,
With her the fondly cherished silken ball
Which, coloured like the olive and the rose,
Is still agleam upon the oaken shelf.

FRA ANGELICO

Above the graceful headings of the story
— Eternal vigil over mortal plight,
The ruthless sire’s message full of glory —
He worked the wonder of unfailing light.

The gold from holy chalices he took,
For yellow hair the stalks of ripened wheat,
The blue from women washing at the brook,
The pink from children colouring with slate.

The Lord in majesty’s untarnished rays,
Beside him gentle singers of his praise
And victors over Gorgons, friends of Graces,

The bride with calm and childish bosom faces
Him meek, yet radiant as he reaches down
To set on her the first, the fairest crown.

THE GARDENS CLOSE

Early evening blurs the lawns, a cold
Drizzle dims the pond to greys,
And Dianas and Apollos fold
Radiant limbs in films of haze.

Faded leaves are whirling toward the tombs,
Dahlias, gillyflowers, roses,
Forced into a symphony of fumes
Yearn for sleep in downy mosses.