The Works of Stefan George

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Perfumes unbound,
Aura of rest,
Wine-god has passed,
All shall die
At the banquet’s close.

Roses caress you,
Fiery and full,
Heaped and wanted?
Milky and dull,

For your wonder?
Red as mallow,
Wilted yellow:
MANES hover,
Kiss and bless you.

Open the sluices,
Floodgate looses
Roses, flaunted,
Rain and river
Drowning under.

When envious sleep turns to leave me
Flung out on my silken sheet,
No teller of tales shall reprieve me,
No song that is lulling and sweet,
Of maidens from Attica’s flower,
Who moons ago chanced to beguile,
Now draw me into your power,
Players of flutes from the Nile!

I lay in pavilions celestial
I ate of heavenly bread,
You sang of the flight from terrestrial
Abodes and the fame of the dead.