The Works of Stefan George

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Published by The University of North Carolina Press

Marx, Olga and Ernst Morwitz.
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The palaces reared of crystallic and nigricant stone,
The billowy tents where the bounties of heaven unfold
Are lit from above, and a wedge of the wavering flume
Enhances the flesh like marble with dim blue veins,
The bodies like berries that ripen to succulent gold,
And those as deep-red as blood and as pale-red as bloom.

Since I have determined to leave them behind me and fling
My soul to the glory of triumph, elated and pure,
Can I banish the grief which once more has imperilled my days,
By summoning wines with their heady aroma and sting?
The beat of my armoured battalions at dawn — will it lure
My limbs from the bed where I drowse under basil sprays?

When first the noble city owned defeat,
The walls no longer checked the cavalry,
The river swept the corpses out to sea,
The last of the defenders strewed the street,

And vengeful conquerors were dulled with plunder,
An ample light from dark horizons sped,
It dwelt consolingly upon the dead
And touched the sad and ruined town to wonder.

It clung with double splendours where the crowd
Scattered before the victor, as he rode
Into a temple, unappalled and proud,
And swung his dripping blade against the god.

A CHILD'S KINGDOM

You were already chosen when you sifted
Your father's soil in search of precious stones
To grace the crown through which you felt uplifted
In majesty, and to enhance your throne.