The Works of Stefan George

Marx, Olga, Morwitz, Ernst

Published by The University of North Carolina Press

Marx, Olga and Ernst Morwitz.
The Works of Stefan George.

For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/75740
Hush your tale
Of the leaves
Wind unweaves,
Quince that lies
Ripe and bled,
And the tread
Of the vandals,
Fall of year,
Of the brightning
Dragonflies
In the lightning,
Of the candles
That in frail
Glimmers veer.

Blithe in arbours dim with dusk we moved,
Lit pavilions, garden-bed, and lane,
She with smiles and I with whispers roved,
Now she leaves and will not come again.
Broken are the slender blooms and drab,
Drab and broken is the water's glass,
And I stumble in the withered grass,
Palmy fronds with pointed fingers stab.
Brittle foliage sibilant and massed,
Loosed by unseen hands to flight and fall,
Drives against our Eden's ghostly wall.
The night is close and overcast.

The shallow appetite for fame is reined,
Since now there is a treasure I must cherish
Which, after losing many things, I gained.
It makes the greed for other glories perish.

The hands which summoned subjects to their duty,
Forget to use the force in their employ,
Because to you, surrendered to your beauty,
I raise them in a reel of pagan joy.
The mouth which spoke prophetic words, resigns
Its office charged with sanctity
And bends to kiss a foot that far outshines
The carpet white as milk and ivory.

While in my dreams I rode to victories
And savoured sequences of words,
My country was beset with enemies,
They conquered half my kingdom with their swords.

And yet my craving for revenge is lost!
My last imperial act of all
Was when they caught the traitors from the coast
And led them to my scarlet judgment hall.

Then I could fix my eyes unflinchingly
Upon the prostrate who had dared withhold
Their tribute, and at every nod from me
A head from smooth and slender body rolled.

Now I am bowed and mourn my fair domain.
Only this shall ease my fate:
The bird that unconcerned for fields of ravaged grain
Sings in the myrtles, dark and wet,
Unremittingly his sweet regret.

I flung my circlet which no longer shone,
Aside. It clanged, and surfeited I turned to flee
The hall to which the treasure of the Orient flows,
The courts where fountains fall in silken strands,
The pillared walls of bronze and lazuli,
My very throne,
And travelled far to serve a pasha who commands
A realm like Shiraz, slumbering in mists of rose.