The Works of Stefan George

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Marx, Olga and Ernst Morwitz.
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You praised the grandeur of the silent earth
In silver leaves and frosty rays, unsown
With infelicities and strident mirth.
We christened her the pale, the chaste, the lone,

And to her strength and majesty averred:
The sounds which floated through the stainless air,
The shapes which filled the skies, were lordlier
Than any night in May had yet conferred.

We took the usual path with joy and fear
Time and again in late and moonlit hours,
As though we wandered, wet with dripping flowers,
Into enchanted woods of yester-year.

You led me to the valley spells enchain
With languid perfumes and a naked light,
And showed me from afar where tombs incite
A dreary love to grow in frosts of pain.

I may not kneel and thank you who were lent
The spirit of the fields which nurtured us,
And when I try to ease your wistfulness,
You draw away in token of dissent.

And is it still your cruel plan to keep
Your sorrow — kin to mine — in secrecy,
And only walk abroad with it and me
Along the river glazed with shining sleep?

That evening, when the candles had been lit
For you, I said a benediction and
Gave you a diamond, the most exquisite
Of all my gifts, placed on a velvet band.