The Works of Stefan George

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A golden mullein nodding in the grass,
The silver tufts along the meadow's hem
Remember us and wonder if a less
Ungracious star has sent us back to them.

The branches touch our heads, may they eclipse
The fear which clings between us even now,
And let no idle query cool the lips
Which to a mated mouth have made their vow.

And let us guard against the dooms that brew
When flaming life of one the other laves,
And gaze together into summer blue
Which blithely beckons from the shining waves.

Have you his lovely image still in mind,
Who boldly snatched a rose from the ravine,
Forgot the passing day in such a find,
And thieved the nectar from a columbine?

Who when a flash of wings had driven him
Too far afield, turned back into the park,
Who mused and rested at the water's rim
And listened to the deep and secret dark?

The swan forsook the waterfall to sail
Around the island, built of moss and stone,
And laid a slender neck into the frail
And childish hand which smoothed his down.

When we are haunted by a past dismay,
And fear is rampant in our golden land,
"Feel no alarm at what recurs," you say
With confidence, "while we are hand in hand."
If only from my care you do not rove
Before the sharp effulgence dies away,
And placable and grave, the evening grove
Again affords you refuge in its grey.”

It seemed as if another sky unfurled
When we had broken off the dream of old,
And smiling life permitted us to hold
The only thing we wanted in this world.

And all at once the meaning of our days
Was: tensely to entreat the crowning hour
That knits us close together and devours
Phantasmal shapes and forces with its blaze.

Learn how to lavish even priceless gains!
Like plants consumed with long and searing drought,
So you, who live in regions of delight,
Shall cool your thirsty limbs in slender rains.

Know, while you take the loveliest that grows,
While sweet and sultry stars begin to burn,
While blaze and darkness ravish you in turn,
That you have had what fulness fate allows.

And nurse no foolish qualms because you woo
An image still a figment of your heart,
And always are impelled to keep apart
The kiss a dream accords you and the true.

When cool and early morning blows the wet
Down from the leaves of oak against our cheeks,
Beneath our feet the pointed gravel creaks
And pricks remembrance, ready to abate.