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A Sonnet For Salome

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Cover Page Footnote

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SALOME'S LAMENT

—a parapoem—

When often in this bristling youth of mine,
Wearying with my dry and tangless lot
I find all vapid, stale and sour the wine
Of life, and chafe me for the thrills I've not;
When I, in hurried draughts, would drain life dry,
Counting the time too slow from sun to sun,
Parched to devour all *what* and *who* and *why*,
Answers scarcely with age's wisdom won . . .
Then oft a deep depression whelms my soul
And lightless, sightless night conceals my hope
Deep in the murky liquor fades my goal
And painfully drunk I only crawl and grope;
Then would I, glad, with hemlock spike the cup,
With all life's darkness in it, drink it up!

—*Salome*

A SONNET FOR SALOME

—responsory—

Ah, child, you find the wine of life is tart?
The fruit therein nor fondly plucked nor sweet,
Nor gently pressed to set the rind apart?
The liquor unexpressed by angel feet?
And, child, do choking dregs becloud the draft,
And acrid acid prick your maiden lips,
And do you fear the cup, all quaffed,
Will yet more sourly savor of these sips?
Then hold! Forbear to drink in drafts profound,
Fair lass, so early bent on *life* . . . and death,
But give the cup the light, and turn it round,
Behold its glow, inhale its spicy breath . . .
Then know! Life's not a swift, impassioned filling up
But slow and timely draining of the cup.

—*Solomon*

—CLARENCE A. AMANN