

The unnamed

come to me by the riverside
and I will cradle your head in the shining sands
tearless, I will wipe clean
the slender flow of blood from your hands

your cracked and stained feet I will adore
with incense and costly myrrh
as other painted women have before

And I shall never speak a word that is unquiet
that brushes against your gasping mouth
like the pale washes of light
oppressive in the brilliant south

I know that this is the last land
to ever see your bright face
that your hateful, all powerful father comes
to take you from my poor humbled hands

But it is I who should hold you now, proud and unbowed
I whom you have possessed in a darkness warm
that flows and surges as a thunderstorm
massing and pushing to one great cloud

I alone know the tender unawake face
you show to no living man or beast
For that I have had you more at least
than any angel blessed with grace

And I would soothe the black blood that slips
now down your wrists and chin
I would smooth your lovely hair and brow
close your eyes and kiss you now
then turn my face away, crying at last
slowly collapsing within
as the cursed resurrection begins

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