

DIONYSUS

Thomas Burnett Swann

I am the leaves green-tender on the vine,
 The grapelets swelling into purple bait
 To tempt the bee, that harvester of air.
 I am the honied freight
 Cradled in baskets by sun-coppered hands;
 The wine press cornucopia-heaped with fruit,
 The dancing feet that liberate the juice,
 The piper with his flute.

Why do they call me drunkard and buffoon,
 Fat-bellied Dionysus, libertine
 Carousing with the Maenad and the faun;
 Shrill as a tambourine?
 Dullards they are, and blinder than a stone,
 Who cannot apprehend me in the vine,
 The vintager, the silver-throated flute;
 Myself the ultimate wine.

CUBA, 1959

Edward C. Baugh

To the cold north the press described your triumph.
 The reporter, as he himself would say, excelled himself.
 We caught the frenzy of his keys.
 And after us ?

The volleys of the ticker-tape are stilled.
 The words have been gathered for the garbage.
 The bodies have been gathered for the graves.
 It need not be repeated

That even jubilation can exceed itself,
 That though there were saviours before you
 It was found meet that you should save.

So ride, messiah, to your glory—
 A hand shall be withheld from hosannas
 To finger the beads.
 We could not endure the irony
 That your warpaint by Revlon
 Betokens the traitor's kiss.

O QUAM TE MEMOREM VIRGO

R. J. Schoeck

I.

On the winding stair of the wind
 raised steeply from the beach
 she stood with sungold in her brown-dark hair,
 in the crystal cold of winter air
 reaching close to the wing-borne cry
 of gulls frozen over the light-deep sea,
 all waiting stands in her eyes,
 all love lives warm in her waiting.

II.

She stood alone on the stair
 and lifted one half-open hand to wave.
 There were no tears—
 only the broken cry in her face.