

Richard Rolle's *Melody of Love*

Translated by Andrew Albin

CHAPTER 16

Well then! In order to ardently adore the Eternal and ache for amorous attainment, the elect intimate ought to observe those enemies whom the Omnipotent abandons, exhort everyone to embrace the Author, and ignite in what ought to earn our affection, assumed aloft as the agents of jubilation's gentle-born genealogy. Let material magnificence diminish in their minds; let the Muse enamor modern men with music so their mourning over misfortune transmutes into melody, so that marvelous merit's mystery may maintain.

This is why, once approved prosperities proliferate in prayer-worthy peace, carnal cravings careen to collapse, quickly clobbered from the contemplative's constant core, whereas reprobates who've renounced their reason are unready for return to the reawakening Realm. The cunningly crack-toothed skull that's clamped to their criminal collarbone will be cleaved and cast down at the cornet's clarion, when the covert conqueror crushes the carnal contingent. Stupid, senseless sinners will stand in a cesspool and sniffle sulfur as their sobs stream out; at lengths from the lucid elect, they'll lament in shackles; those vanquished by vice convulse in their vileness for having vended their vitality for vainest venereal adventures; villains who vomit venom don't advance to the Way but fashion a galling grave for their final fate: in falsifying their faith, these fiends offend the faithful Framer. Sooner or later, the sweetness of a sinful sweetheart will swerve for the worse into staggering sorrow, glory made great will grind down gut-glutted grubbers, and seigneurs who swallowed superfluous suppers will suffer.

The sweet satisfaction that fascinates fleshly folk will progressively perish, yet the perpetrator presses on without pause for whom punishment is prepared – what Divinity destroys will doom its devotees. In fostering their felicity, these false-framed, sin-seduced smut-saluters forge forth into firebolts that fell phonies who'll fret their fangs in frost and fulminate, famished in fervid fetor. The reverer irrefutably refulgent in regards most righteous respire for the Ruler once retired from ruin; really repaired through reason's rudder, he remains resolute so he's ravished and returned to the Realm.

Most Provident, You pierced the breastplate primed for painting; purifying our profoundest parts, You press for the puny; You Who pardon perfidy, appraise Your prepared petitioner who crows with the cock *to conclude his course* [2 Tim 4:7] and convene in concord with cantillating choirs. Quite so, oh Creator: capture Your courier, for canorous kindness encourages Your consort whom cupid-ity-cleansed continence commends as it kicks out carnality. No one questions why the covetous careen into chaos, since it's congruous and clear that they carry calamity on their back; but because the All-Capable occasionally disquiets His creatures' corporeality, because canorous choring quickens in a carefully conserved, Christ-questing heart, the simple soul sighs for what's celestial and is swiftly made sound, supported by supreme solace, sensing sonority in most sacred savor. Supernal sapience separates saints from savages, sprinkling assistance so they

surpass swaggerers, while the envious egotist ambushes the innocent in anger, altogether eviscerating his own entrails for vultures – vying in venom, he violently veers to veritable vengeance.

Oh Parent of the pint-sized Who punishes the powerful, I've pledged a pact to peaceably press on to Paradise's provender. Prolong my pasturage so I don't perish as I proceed: let the doorpost be painted that'll permit me to proceed in purity, since the wall will persist, I predict, in piety; You fashioned a fair Flower and fetching, fortunate Fruit: the faithful follower's fortitude is founded in his future so he's afforded a fate full of feasting, when he'll fare like a famished fellow fed with honeycomb [cf. Song 5:1]. Suitor of souls, see the select suppliant conspicuously stirring himself to secure ears that can perceive the songs of smoldering love. Set off secret proceedings in Your superbly unassuming servant so he sees the postern swung wide to his sight, so he views and vaults virtue's avenues to very Vitality. I've bindingly bound myself to bear the Bailiff and lo, everlasting laudation is lodged within. Melody miraculously remains in my mind; my ears overhear angelic amenity and a canorous canticle is conceived in my core.

I gulp down gladness, growing great in grace; I crave no consolation but the kind I've conceived; I've continually combusted in questing for the Creator; compelled by calefaction, I canter in chant. I'm assumed into insight, eating amply up above; in my orisons I obtain entry into the abundant order with the sweet sound of celestial sagacity. Divine dulcitude destroys distress; I'm dulcetly directed in my desire to Divinity. Then, drunkard-inducing dulcetness delights me, and I'm deemed a devotee to the delivery of what's due; when I'm damaged by disasters, I don't desist from desiring the most dearworthy Director. My insides are ignited with an amorous inferno; ascending in my soul, I'm eclipsed with odors, electing the eternal Intimate's kiss. My amorous essence grows ardent in these affairs – it aches to be embraced in most ample affection. I'll indeed accomplish all this on account of my most avid adoration – I've never agreed to an endeavor more eagerly: the faith of a Framer-forged fellow is firmly founded, nor is it fooled by figures; offspring fixed in the Fountain *will bring forth fruit* [Jer 17:8] in the future.

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I nobly name what's noteworthy, no doubt, measuring music with mighty armaments, modest, by no means moved in a manner that would immerse me in malice: firmed up with physis, my more fervent face flows like a flume far afield from tear-filled fretting; captive to the canticle at my core, I'll thus fancy the Founder in felicity at my funeral. From now on, *my heart is become like melting wax* [Ps 21:15] in this way: I'll be disallowed all lapsing into liquid sludge; now laundered with lamentations, I willingly labor to delight in laud and liquefy in the light that elates the uplifted. I don't stand in solitude like a failure thenceforth; instead, the Savior sustains me, saving me from sudden sundering as I ceaselessly sigh to be delivered to Divinity: embracing the Beloved, I'll begin to abide with cherubic beings up above, and so, when the powerfully prepotent, depravity-purging Peacemaker pierces me for our primal parents' impairment on the day I die from this deciduous delay, I'll visibly advance to veraciously view vital Verity, jubilating without adjourning, dulcorously delighting in the most dulcet desire of divine distinction.

Oh special Spirit, respire and inspire: as acutely as I crave to kick at my cadaver and quit corruption-covered cupidity, let me also be honestly animated by the Author's amity, let me amble into altitudes in my amorous ardor. The female form won't force His firm friend to falter, nor will my pious pith's peaceful purity be prone to putrefaction; instead, all squalor scorned, I sigh to sight the spectacular Savior in His splendor and intently aim to inspect only inward affairs as I audaciously observe the Adored One's eyes. The saint is separated from secular sobbing, and,

singular soul that he is, he receives ceaseless solace – strictly of the celestial sort – while continually kicking down corporeal contagion. Cheerless distress will retrench from such true loves; the Trinity’s treasured chair is cherished in the bedchamber where it speechlessly triumphs over the Traitor’s torments.

Perhaps some pious person hesitates over how I’ve highlighted the heated heart’s homology with wax. You suspicious skeptics, sense in sanctity and you’ll suddenly see how. Simple beeswax stands sturdy in its substance; when its held up to heat for a lengthy spell, the force of the flame consistently sets it to softening, sometimes strikingly so, and it bends in the blaze and loosens, liquescing with lustrous languor. Just so, the contemplative who’s caught up to the Creator to combust with kindness and who contemplates the canorous canticle in his core is of course converted to the condition he now craves; captured in calefaction, he canters while choiring – the perfect proof – and so he’s savvy to the secret smug swaggerers are foresworn from seeing; he’s invited into a fire that’s indeed eternal; exiting all exterior enterprise, he enters the enigma of internal enflaming that enkindles his eager affection.

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May you also, alert to the above, understand that uncircumscribed light!

CHAPTER 17

The lover who lavishly, laughingly liquefies like wax will henceforth be held up on high, elevating his eyes entirely upwards in order to love, while dulcitude diets the divinely dowried darling and most limpid, lantern-illuminating light deluges the elating elect.

I make manifest a maxim my admirers might moor in their marrow: unmet with misery, the moderate militiaman manumits himself from malevolence until Typhon’s teeth are torn out, until magnificent Majesty emits the melody that mitigates mourning and remains with me. Mortal, be mindful your blemishes be emended; recall the ruin rebuffed recreants rend; renew your reason so you’re rightly ruled, and you’ll really reap that rest the Ruler renders. The meditator’s marvelous mind has remade its ministry and his mortal members have dismissed this material domain; mildness has armored the militia with modesty and mellifluous, molten melody has removed malignant malady. Terror’s tempest entirely retires with such intense tranquility attending the tenacious battalion, and inwardly induced infirmity arrives at its end.

I carefully comb through my conscience to secure it in clarity so it scintillates and softens outside spite’s recesses, so it’s sent up to sunlight in spirited celebration, its struggles slackening. Divine dulcitude’s dulcet delight dissolves deep-rooted defects and dislodges dire distress from deserving disciples; the soul spills over, swooning with love; levying her license to the loamy lands of her lofty station, she’s surely shadowed by her sugar-sweet, deathless Deity, the Director of His dwelling and Undoer of dooms, and so the coveted Crafter confirms her crime-clean, careworthy, canticle-captive core as it carries on caroling its most careworthy choiring, which constantly causes it to quit all companions and come to the castle that would crumble before cutting off its choiring courtiers. For our flesh only flimsily comprehends this canorous crooning, since carnal creatures concussed with the crow’s keen cravings cannot then capture the canticle that crowns concordant choristers.

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Most dulcet Director, I desire to be drawn in enflaming amity to the uppermost arcade where ardently adoring angels abide – and then I’ll decently dine on Divinity’s dulcitude and derive endowment from the Dignity I devoutly adore; I’ll be dulcetly dispatched in the Donor’s dowry to delight in my Darling’s dignified demeanor; I’ll rescind all ruin and rest in the Realm, rewarded with a reputation whose report will relent till reprobates are repelled into resinous rivers where no regimen of restraint will ever recover their righteous relief – they crave and quest after carnal clamor, clamped to the world’s lukewarm kiln, and they clang their quotidian clatter, incurring contagion conceived in their core. There’s no denying that they’re knit to a nasty name and know nothing of the knot that might nourish them at night so no noxious snow could snuff them, nor do they capture the comfort that journeys in jubilation and causes contemplatives to cascade in a constant canticle.

The suppliant resplendent in spirit is especially inspired: love-worthy, he’ll light up with love; lionhearted, he’ll relinquish illusion’s lance; he’ll lustily grasp a grace so great that, galloping to glory, his gait won’t aggrieve him until the traveler tirelessly trained toward the Triune proceeds to the provender of perennial Paradise, growing grandly to his glorious degree. This marvelous movement makes unmuddied men who maintain good measure mature enough to merit melody and mete out a mystery to middling, mundane mortals. I solicit all listeners to latch onto love and loose latent alleluias in their litanies as the celestial cithara sounds with such saintliness that savage sensuality sinks away and is safely soothed to sleep so it stops surging up and sundering supernal solace. Virtue’s rivets now prevail over their vital vassal; vanity volatile in venal vice veritably vanishes; vengeful vapor will be ravaged with venom – I sweetly sense salvific signs and ceaselessly sigh to sit above stars and celebrate my solemn seat there with saints.

The false faithful lay a futile foundation: financiers’ fidelity will fully fail and fumes from the inferno will flog all the fraudulent upstarts obscured under the umbrella of honors that attracted them all into avarice’s abbeys. The fetid will fall feverish in future fright; formidable foppish fellows are fooled with chaff and, imbued as they are with impious instinct, fortunate fervor will forego them; they fell confederate with falsifiers’ feats like flunkies fixed in a fury for foisting favors, and they’re fetched off with ruffraff to fret in firebrands’ flames; the foul furnace now fractures their pharynx, for they flee their faith and flout their fame to flight; these ferocious offspring are more firmly fated therefore to promptly pierce the paroxysmal pit and perceive perpetually perduring punishments.

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Alas, assailed by error and swindled with sweetness, they were briefly borne in blessings but soon stumbled and surrendered to silver; no subsidy is set aside for their soul’s security. See: our material domain’s malignity mottles modern men; misery’s maw mauls us mortals; maddened and mutated, malingering in malice, mundane minions are thus mortified, as is meet; met with menace, these never-nimbused knaves are nascent to night; shambling in shadows, they’ll shudder in shame and molder most miserably – they’ve merited it mightily, for the covetous craver quits Christ for his corpse, corrodes concord, and careens into chaos where infernal fire inflames his forged form, fooled by the flights of his wicked will. This captive is clearly caged in his carcass and cares not a crumb to collect his core and clasp the Creator, which causes the clobbered criminal to be cast to confusion at the All-Capable’s inquest. Carnal curs are cooked through with covetousness; confounded and crushed, they continually quit the courteous contest because they keep company with terrestrial tribes and don’t capture most careworthy kindness’s canticle.

Very well: vested with virtue, I've no aversion to vaunting Vitality so venom's violence can be voided from the devout; I'll advance to view the Living One not as the old man but as the new [cf. Eph 4:22–24] who announces all noteworthy news; let me nobly be newborn to a numinous nature that's laudworthy in light, that liberally delights those who laugh as they laud. I labor in lassitude, adopting the enigma of the Author's angels as far as I'm able. Captured, to be clear, in a canorous chorale, I constantly crave my Creator and Keeper; piquant with color, kindled to the quick, I continually canter to *complete a commendable course* [2 Tim 4:7] with His consorts. Framed for faith, freed from infernal, enfeebled fetters, I firmly and faithfully fly forth to the future feast where I'll fancy the Framers in final felicity and fully efface the fatal fretting that follows from febrile phantasms.

Borne above to abiding banquets, let me savor solely celestial sound and be similarly saved from sickness in skillful receipt of sweet assistance through the austerity of the Savior's sacrifice; subtly stolen skywards by sublime solace, let me sit with soulmates in the supreme secrets.

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CHAPTER 18

As I intently inspect affection's inward enactment in my interim on this earth, I'm incinerated most intimately and so I overhear angelic euphony from above and unabashedly embrace the Author's ardor in Olympian osculation. The invisible enkindling of elation lucidly liquefies licentious allure's lairs. Enormous amity lifts me to the lakeside with flowing lassitude and I leave off lowbrow levity; most lullingy leashed, now lifting lighthearted lauds to most lively light, I'm supernaturally set to smoldering with sweet savor and persistently resummoned to soar above supine sleepers; I sense the sound that suffuses saints and concordantly choir eternal adoration's cherished charms. So then, I sigh for a supernal station, ceaselessly sighting the celestial sovereign seat that sustains all simply saved and sublime souls. I've put off pointless, petty pursuits, nor am I partial to the pabulum that poisons the powerful – put plainly, I presume it's more perfect to press for the empyrean pole, to point out the playboy's parlor so it's apparent, and to pass up perils so that, pint-sized pup that I am, I prevent my imprisonment. I completely deplore peddling apocryphal portents and pledging pints to profligates who put away perversion by the pitcherfull: dulcetly endowed with distinguished doctrine, I draw down Deity – let Him decide if it's decent! – dwelling drenched as I do in divine dulcitude.

Thus do I desire the destruction that might duly dispel the Detractor and direct the most dulcorous, deserving disciple from dire distress to endowments. The most trusty Tender Who transfers torrid tyrants to their torturers attests that I'm a tenant in tranquility and touched with temperance, having tossed out all terrestrial twaddle – I've no belly for belting out ballads in my body. If I'm making myths here, if mundane malice is on my mind, may I not merit marvelous melody or immaculate mending. I haven't vied to veer into vice's venom or to draw up documents damning toward others; I've only asked that the desiring, developing devotee be edified through discipline. I disclose what dignifying Divinity divulges: the doting disciple will be endowed with most dazzling dulcitude; his damnable dismay undone, he'll divinely be dowried till he's drunk on honey. By manual commission, the magnificent Master has remitted malice's mottling from my mind and adorned His orison-utterer with truthful tracts under the penumbra of his abundant

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endeavor's odor – so does supernal sapience sweep up the sweet soul separated from sinful sweat. What's more, I'm also smothered with sounding solace, a signal that substantiates my celestial sanction; I thirstily seek the sense of salvation in serenity; longsuffering is linked to me like limestone to the cleft ledge, and I like to be illuminated with laud-flowing light that joyously draws me to the Judge in jubilation – the tottering Tempter is thus tongue-tied with tridents and transfixed with terror.

Oh engendered, judging Jesus, You've enjoined us to justice, You fathom what I feel and what route I've raced on: I abhor obscene affection's kisses and am unequalled in my odium toward udders uncovered to obscure embraces. Abandoning the uproarious inn, I've ensconced an outpost of affable amity inside avarice's alcove, and I ache for altitudes, transcending terror. Oh most hearty Herdsman Who harbors the faint-hearted, You hearken how I'm unharried by hellions' harassment; the Supplier of sweetness descends into His suitor to sweeten him and smash away all sorrow. Let me prevent precipitous depravities' profound pollution from this point on: I'd prefer promotion to the portals of Paradise, plump as a sheep replete with pasturage. Enlightened, let me be lit then with love, let me more capaciously conceive the canticle of kindness, let me more stringently seize celestial sonority so the solitary who's simple in secure and sacred solace may jubilate gigantically in sweetest Jesus. For he now commendably convinces all comers that pertinacious ploys will perish in perpetuity and peaceable purity will perdure in plenitude, once the powerful who trespassed promptly repent, who now pitch on the gallows-pole in permanent punishment. Oh mortal man mottled with maddening marks, remember: miserable, mendacious men meet a mean mortality and are mordantly mangled with maximum mourning.

See now: saints are also seasoned sunderers, since vicious revelry will devolve into venom and Verity's vigor will veritably thrive; I've viewed how the vilest vanity that veils men's visage veers toward inveterate vengeance, nor will the selfobsessed sovereign ceaselessly sustain his sway – his sublime seat of state will be suddenly sundered, and that reclining recreant will be routed from the Realm, rushing to ruin with other royals who refused to rule rightly.

CHAPTER 19

Never pausing from prayers, I persevere for this purpose and press on to the perfectly pleasing Pasture; I presume I'll proficiently proceed to the empyrean pole for persisting amid perils. The Inspiring One has also inwardly alerted me that intimate integrity imprints in us an image of the eternal Author; sustaining that similitude so as to settle in a seat as a saint among celestial citizens, His lover is lit with love and lets loose lineaments of lasting assistance.

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Though I've quit carnal commerce, it's clearly the case that I'm not completely deprived of pains: punishment's pinpricks puncture the progressing pilgrim [cf. 2 Cor 12:7] as he peaceably approaches the celestial city and ejects errant affection. After all, I'm overcome with an acquisitive ardor and, aching for altitudes, I'm unabjuringly overjoyed: I'll be drawn forth jubilating in Jesus at the Judgment. I contend that the careworthy cohort is crowned, of course; let me glory and give gratitude to the Author Who secures His couriers to keep them from carnal capture; He nobly takes note of those enemies who knock me down; the Creator of all creatures has conceded to my

quest and hauled horrible hell from my heart – and I receive a sweet sound, where once lay the liver of perverse desire.

At one point, I was practically impelled to trespass under pressure, but the Proficient One promptly purged my pith's most privy passages, and so, with the Plotter toppled, I procured a Protector. So I might remain meek, I've liked lauding the illuminating Light, loosed as I am from the leashes of livid Leviathan who laughs in the flattering lottery with loafers whose loins languish to launch into luxuries. Covered with the kisses of desired Divinity, I counter all contemptible carousers, relieved to delight in laughter-lapped laud – and then my linguistic labor is lightly relaxed.

Protected, I'm not timid about tackling my tempters; I've targeted tyrants in my tirade for the tempestuous tides that entangle them and for tearing to tatters tender testifiers intent on their interior; they'll totter, terrified in interminable torment. And so, taking all this in, I'm restored to reflection to be ruled by reason; I'm renewed when I return to rest, and I respire to recover the Realm by resuming my regimen. Removed from this region, I'm *returned to dust* [Gen 3:19]; then, people will perceive how apparent potentates appear petty and depraved in comparison with paupers; next, entrusted to the Trinity, I'll be rescued from rope-nets and restored to the Realm; since the Redeemer rightly resists reprobates, I'll resurrect with royalty, really reawakened to acclaim the canticle, collected into heaven to demonstrate the dulcet dowry I'm endowed with.

Jugulars jetting, judges will dirge for all ages, since these fools firmly affix their fates to their follies; when they disparage and dissever the Donor's dignity, they're demolished, dashed from dividends to distress. There they'll molder, made mindful of how they misspent their moment; marked by multitudes, they'll miserably marvel that they mauled their minions; menaced by the meek, they're murdered in their misery and mowed down with their mire for remitting the mystery's militant medicine for malice's malady.

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These impetuous idiots induce error as well, declaring that deserving disciples sometimes delay their departure from distinguished dwellings with a desire to deceive. But, eager to ambush the innocent, such envious antagonists abide in impiety's flophouse; fibbing over fiscal affairs, they're fit for a cell with Satan whom they serve. Because I commendably crush calumny and curses with kindness, I've constantly considered how caitiffs corrupted with carnal contagions crumble because of the corps they coupled their confidence to – by contrast, the Creator continually conserves those who crave to carry His crooning, consoling carol.

I'm laughingly lit, not in the layers of my mutable matter but in my soul entirely through everlasting love, trimming off temporal temptations' twilight, lifted from my lowly lot by lofty litanies most marked in my mind, far removed from villains who live in vice and void their virtue – enemies, that is, averse to the most exalted Author's honor. Rest really restores the robust reverencer and reason restrains me from the recreant throng, rescuing me from ruin: when the humble home of my heart is yet hampered and held hostage in its jailhouse, I'm ravished to the Realm by the most righteous Root, the continually coveted Christ.

For the saint separates his substance from sinners through sincere simplicity; sighing for the skies, unsaddled with sobs, he assumes the psaltery as he ceaselessly subdues scabrous swaggering. He plainly procures perpetual provender; for patiently sprouting in well-plowed prayer, he's provided passage to paradisaal apples to procure the prepared Pasture's prizes; supernally supported, he senses singularly sweet savor and incessantly accepts sonorous solace, constantly

cantering to *complete his course* [2 Tim 4:7] like the courier who strenuously speeds his step so as to succeed in seeing what he's dulcetly desired all his days. I dare to allege that love alights and fearlessly lands in the everlasting lodge to linger aloft and live with angels; neither earthly reward nor the rod can ever depose our Deity-dedicated devotion which endures indelibly, divorced from deception – and this is because carnal cupidity which appears all aflame ends up icy once it abates and implants affliction, such that all who own it are eternally exiled. Amid such offenders, I, unbound from the abyss, adhere to inward divine delights; canorous choiring captivates me as I canter: drawn in jubilation, I drink up joy, energetically journeying a majestic trajectory to my supernal seat.

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CHAPTER 20

The light is delightful and sweet to our eyes, the sun sempiternal, so to speak [Eccl 11:7] – I sigh to perceive it while strolling unswerving down saintly streets, and so persisting, I sweetly sit above stars to fancy the fortunate Flower forever. I'm elevated and enraptured indeed to the upper ether; erupting with effort to offer orisons in that abundant order, I assert I've obtained ardent affection. Better put, I simply surmise that I sense the sign of salvific savor; as you know, I'm not unknowledgeable of the naked-making knot far from noxious night, for human nature's now exalted above angels' high-born hierarchy through its halyard hold: the ever-savory, sweetness-stocked Supreme One stooped to equip a Man with His eternal essence through the vehicle of a vitalizing, viceless, virtuous Virgin and accepted this Elect One to ceaselessly sit at His side.

Energized by this insight, I ardently aspire to ascend up above. It's certain we're straightaway encompassed under the penumbra of more abundant assistance, each of us indeed; we adhere to our Admirer with more ardent affection as we abidingly ache to attain the Author more expansively in our soul and in the steadfast seat of the self, Who, as our faith firmly affirms, we know to have donned our flesh through Abraham's seed. That's why, with power poured into our profoundest parts, we expel plague from our pure pith: thus, upon our appearance in Paradise, we'll be empowered to perceive perennial peace, then to relish and revel in the uplifting light that Divinity's darlings find dulcorous and delectable, and to visibly view the celestial Sun: Christ, of course, Who crowns His consorts, together with God, the ongoing Goal of their grasp. Thanks to this truth, I thirst for one thing: that plainly plenary perfection persist with most delicious dulcitude – I say this as one sworn to espy the Author of all, the Man of all men, in most affable, ineffable sweetness. Reprobates will rightly be repelled for ousting all acuity from their exhausted eyes which ought to have inwardly examined the Omnipotent – thus do they ignore for all eternity the intimacy awarded to obliging admirers.

Rescued only recently from rope-nets, I rebloom, rooted in the Ruler; by revisiting rectitude, I'll remain in refreshment, and so I'll be presented at the perennial palace's portcullis for penning pronouncements to the powerful Prince while pacing the perilous plankway's span. For I'm secretly stolen skywards to the Realm's residents; I reject the rumblings of mortal melody and relinquish ruin, since it's certain that souls who show signs of swaggering and deadbeats dragged down with dark dealings will be reproved, rightly arrested, and remanded to briars.

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Lord, when You lower Yourself to lift Your lovers from the legions of the lost, the lowlives in whose leadership all lands now languish will be eliminated through Your loftiness. And still, secular sages' sophisms superstitiously stand – what insanity! – and so they spill from their smug seats into sempiternal sulfur, flaming there in hellfire, those fools who refused to forfeit their fervor for finance.

Therefore, *fathom, you fools* [Ps 93:8]; oh, you carnal captives, consider the collapse that quickens your career; the princely Power is upon us Who won't pause in punishing perverse polemicists who complain that poor men can't possibly pierce the empyrean pole; genteel Refulgence will now judge the generations' progeny – and should I shake with shame at this? No! I'll glory in Jesus with gladness's grace, since jubilation withdraws me from these idiots infected with ignorance, whose intellect has expired in apathy; they're engendered to gibber at the Judgment for rejecting Justice's charge; at that Hour, hardheaded halfwits will hear wholly horrible hollering and be held in horrors, since all hypocrites will positively perish with most pernicious profligates, and the people who putrefied in perfidies will be pitched precipitously down the pit packed full with pains; from that point on, they'll permanently be proscribed from progressing toward the penance we should press to procure, for they'll never revive from reproach or ever be really relieved from ruination; rejected from rest, they'll recognize their irremediable ruin and, desperate in indelible despair, they'll most certainly see that they swarm with sighs and suffering.

So then, since they sweated in sin and spoiled for bloodsport, those sinners strictly separated from celestial citizens won't be saved but, suddenly dispersed in cinders, they'll stomach unsuccored sobbing in sempiternal sulfur. They won't once sense solace with saints: they neglected what's needful and are denuded of that nobility; benighted in the naval nosedive, they'll be snarled in a nocturnal knot and nabbed by pernicious nixies. For refusing to be flogged with the fellowship that will feast in felicity, they'll be felled with most furious firebolts and tormented with tellurian titleholders who took up tyranny; forced to fret like frenzied fiends for their nefarious feats, they'll forever be feverish in flames. In that instant, they'll obtain no aid at all – enemies will oppose them everywhere, augmenting their agitation and in turn igniting more ample odium in all who adored illicitly against the August One. In a marvelous manner, these moribund miscreants will remain submerged in marine misery, never smothering; because they gloried in gluttony, they'll end up eternally impoverished. Since they made more of malingering amid measureless mortal malice than of meditating to the marrow with Christ's ministers on the memory of magnificent Majesty, those comforted by corpulent contagions will of course be committed to maximum misery, remitting the monies they marshaled to maintain their minions, the teeth with which they taunted their more tender attendants now torn out. In time, when tycoons' chateaus are entirely emptied, such traitors will be tablefood for Tartarean torturers; instruments engineered from infernal embers will ignite them – not an inch of their entity will abide uninflicted with inextinguishable ardor. And so, those exiled to this anguish will appear abhorrent in Acheronian obscurity, and all who couldn't care to crave the Creator will be continually cudgeled in common in cloud-thick incarceration because they were ejected from eternity at the inception of everything and are unable to earn inheritance among the elect.

Oh dire dalliance's devotee divorced from decent desires, heed me: the delightful, dulcet dainties your damsel deals in will be dug out in dolorous distresses; in devoting your desire to her for a dog's age, you deserted Divinity; deviating from divine dulcitude for deceptive delectation,

you've adopted a disfiguring floozy for your deity! And indeed, for electing her affection and ousting the image in which you ought to have exulted eternally, for extorting your essence from the Author by adoring her and so craving the creation instead of the Creator, you'll be positively pummeled with impossible pain and prohibited from possessing the palm with peaceable paramours because you crusaded to quit the crown of kindness. For this constant clambering in carnal cares, you'll collapse to captivity, incapable of correction.

Pay heed: it profits you to ponder what I preach about profligates, proclaimed in the personage of a penitent so I'm potently apparent to Paradise's populace; I've perfectly reported how chiefly cherished champions are charged to chant charity's canticle, how rightly to reject the rope-net that reaps wreck-resolved rioters refused the respite we Realm-restored royalty relish; and so, we revelers ravished to refreshment reverently reecho the Ruler with celestially received sound, since *grace is vain and beauty deceitful* [Prov 31:30] – beauty of the bodily sort, I say, which, instead of succoring, speedily separates the senseless sensualist from sanity. Yes, I'm unvexed to voice pronouncements displeasing to profligates if it vets their villainy – I reveal that what's viewed as virtue is very vice; with verity evicted, villagers wavering in vanity's vapors veer into venom.

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Plus, playboys who paw at what's prettiest presume that they prosper, but vendable vulgarity will verily vest villains made vassals to vice-ridden ventures; such gross gluttons' negation will be more grueling than gall, and they'll wallow in woe more withering than wormwood. Present prettiness promises ploys: it's the visible veil of persistent putrefaction. The familiar figure we fawn over therefore fools us, and when concupiscence corrupts our heart's constancy, it quickly compels the Creator's contempt; man adopts an ape's image when he abjures everlasting, immaterial elegance. Such gentlemen engender a generation of draft mules; like brutish beasts, they're blessed but briefly since, at temporality's terminus, they're turbulently taken in the tempestuous tournament and torn to tatters – their pleasures repealed, they're dispatched to decaying dust.

CHAPTER 21

My heart grew hot within me, and in my meditation a fire will flame out [Ps 38:4]. In my interim on this earth, I utter an enigma-exposing oracle, an insight not available to everyone: adorers who offer orisons in eminent ardor and excellent advantage intone inconceivable alleluias to the Exalted One and numinously emanate numberless noble notes in deep desire for their Darling, never neglecting the Name, both Newborn and Nurturer – I'll talk through the topic I've just touched on till it's tactfully told.

I've actually acquired a most adorable amoureuse to occupy my affections: the Trinity, Whom I, tender and trifling, entrench, to Whose trusty tranquility I'll transpire without trembling, unterrified by tyrants. With envious enemies thus exiled into error's indenture for their incessant inflammation in impure indignation, with the elect thus uprooted from offence in their outward observances, with their unadulterate intention thus inwardly inspired by the Omnipotent – all this being so, the covetous should quit craving captivity in corrupting carnality and eschew the energies they expend on amorous acquisition in our earthly environment where happiness will hastily be halted. Instead, let them avidly enter up above and transcend temporal twaddle;

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transported past terrains terrorized with tempests, let them turn their attention to eternity; vigilant against vices, let them live in virtue and desist then from dozing in devastating delight, since dulcitude devoid of Divinity directs self-devoted degenerates to indelible distress. That delight is indeed deemed damnable that doesn't conduct devotion to Deity: the Creator constructed His creation with a constitutional capacity for consoling kindness, so long as defects don't dash us down to demons' derision and concussions in continual, incorrigible chaos.

Such culprits can't possibly purge their depravities completely, for fire will forever flare in a creature corrupted with criminal contagion; unpardonable impiety thereupon forces this foul-smelling felon formed from feculent falsehood to feel an unflagging fever for fiercest fatality, and his fervor will forever flicker unfinished. Infernal ardor effectively indicates the exercise of the Omnipotent's ire, the Rapid One's retribution; it will rage on, securely soldered to recreants rooted in repugnant resolve; thus this inferno will eternally expand its activity in outcasts who abstained from adoring the Author, and all pardon from public, peaceless punishment will be proscribed among perverts who insidiously invented offenses against our Ally on this earth. And yet, virtuous valiants view Verity's Verb – vigilant in vivacious voice, they vow veracious vacuity to prevail in virtue's verdant vigor, devoid of life's vanities.

However much charitable chanters consider it commendable and correct that only the paltriest pack of petitioners will presently prevail in procuring perfection and sensing the sweetness of sempiternal sapience, more than this minority are meanwhile well warranted with the wedding band the Wooer awards to their souls; the core of those caught into continuous consideration of the Creator is candescent in kindness's kindled combustion; confirmed in choiring, they're constituted so they can't collapse; thus secured, they'll come to be consummate couriers in canorous consolation, constantly clear of corporeal craving and accorded the capacity to climb up to crowned camaraderie with most charring charity. These cantors are covered with most worthwhile warmth that awakens their welcome, kiss-winning work; because they constantly craved the Creator and were careful to condemn their carnal cloister, there's no question they'll clasp the chorus with most indulgent delectation.

If you pellucidly pore over the points I've just penned, you'll be completely empowered to persevere in patience to the peaceable Christ, unpanicked by punishment – these paragraphs perfectly preach our profound profession of the possibility of procuring plentiful profit while yet a pilgrim in progress, prior to the payoff. On this account, my arguments indict all outcasts and repudiate with most righteous reasons those recreants who rush from the Realm to their ruinous, revolting life; they'd dally more dulcetly if they devoutly downed the divinely distilled, dulcorous draught, discarded damnable delight, and duly adored Deity. But these rejects refuse to restore what their rapine has ravished: that's the reason they're never renewed to rest, since vigor vilely vanishes from villains envenomed with the virulent Enemy's intrigues; drained of justice, manacled for misconduct, they'll drone ageless dirges at the Judgment for their absolute ignorance of jubilation in Jesus, which is why those adamant in their errors are entirely enveloped in obscurity, uninterested as they are in endeavoring any adversity the Exalted One might approve of – they're convinced they can't cope with contrition, those babblers brought low by battle and thwarted with thrusts, who desperately defend their dictatorship and advance the idiocy of armed aggression in this exile until the hour they're expelled to extermination.

Once the elect enters into understanding all this, he'll *rejoice, viewing his revenge* on the vicious; willingly *washing his unwholesome hands in the blood* of the sinful [Ps 57:11], he'll swiftly sustain the Sentence that separates saints from sinners and secure his salvation; and so, he'll ceaselessly sigh: offering orisons with authentically ardent affection, he'll eject all abominations the Omnipotent abhors from his inner essence and kick down carnal conceits, constantly containing with kindness the whims that once in a while overwhelm even wisemen. Such temptations titillate tender tyros and tickle tired toilers so they're toppled from temperate tranquility to totter in torment. Be thus vigilant to be victors in Vitality, since this variety of vagary vomits venom like vipers.

Thus aroused to inspect most intimate affairs, *his heart is inflamed and his kidneys converted* [Ps 71:21] to crave most careworthy consolation, causing him to trip the triple tread with courtly, concordant caperers in the Creator's castle as he ascends its arcades to attend eternally among the angelic orders. But before he's brought to abide up above, he'll assassinate indolence and apply his efforts to everyone's advantage as an outstanding, honorable example; he'll passionately propel from his pith all immodest motions so his unmarred mind can be made marvelous with meed, so the ardor of his inwardly ebullient inferno can exhaust every acerbity and profoundly purge from that point on his profoundest parts to prevent their putrefaction in perfidy.

For nothing's so noxious to neophytes, nor is there anything that so speedily steals sitting saints from the celestial symphony or ousts our individual energies from eternal love and wrests us right away from rectitude's regimen than the gratifying gorgeousness of a beautiful woman: her splendor upsets a man's soul when he sees it with his eyesight, and it raunchily ravishes him to revive his vain vision: so often entangled is he in her fraudulent form, he flares feverish to fare in misfortune, for which fault the flavorless fool will find himself afflicted at his future funeral. Though she dazzles, this damsel isn't dignified; she doesn't deserve devotion after softening so many suitors for the slaughterhouse and dashing debilitated disciples from dignity; drowning dukes in demons' derision, she's demolished that most dearly adorned treasure Divinity desired. This harlot's led on every lad who lives on land; she's locked up yesterday's lips lest they're at liberty to love the Lord, and so she remands modern men to malefic mysteries, committing them to muck about in malice more than to master emancipation with mild admirers – and that's why they'll merit the unremitting, mangling maw of immortal Death.

Alas, so many people have perished, perpetually depleted by a precious girl's perishing, apparent prettiness, compounded with pollution that will pass to putrefaction, as past report makes plain! No question: they're all corpses, the crowd of them; our corruptible carcass unequivocally collapses and decomposes, winnowed by worthless worms. Alas! In a minute's moment they immerse their mitts in mundane molasses and mercurially mouth satisfaction's smack for the blink of an eye; captured and clobbered in their crimes with captives, the feasts they once financed now snuffed, dogged by demons, they descend to distress whose dimensions defy definition!