

More ripe and bounteous than ever yet
 Filled up with nectar any mortal heart: 130
 But thou didst scorn my humble messenger,
 And sent'st him back to me with bruised wings.
 We spirits only show to gentle eyes,
 We ever ask an undivided love,
 And he who scorns the least of Nature's works 135
 Is thenceforth exiled and shut out from all.
 Farewell! for thou canst never see me more."

Then Rhœcus beat his breast and groaned aloud,
 And cried, "Be pitiful! forgive me yet
 This once, and I shall never need it more!" 140
 "Alas!" the voice returned, "'tis thou art blind,
 Not I unmerciful; I can forgive,
 But have no skill to heal thy spirit's eyes;
 Only the soul hath power o'er itself."
 With that again there murmured "'Nevermore!" 145
 And Rhœcus after heard no other sound,
 Except the rattling of the oak's crisp leaves,
 Like the long surf upon a distant shore,
 Raking the sea-worn pebbles up and down.
 The night had gathered round him: o'er the plain 150
 The city sparkled with its thousand lights,
 And sounds of revel fell upon his ear
 Harshly and like a curse; above, the sky,
 With all its bright sublimity of stars,
 Deepened, and on his forehead smote the breeze: 155
 Beauty was all around him and delight,
 But from that eve he was alone on earth.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.