

Three feathers now are fallen from the wing
Of that eternal, soaring seraph, Time;
Three years in which our city grew a place
Of palaces. The barge that brought us down
From Thebes has rested at the pier one hour.
Is it not well that we should be alone
And far from any pretence of loud pipes,
Who know that music is the soul of form?
What forms are these! Mark well yon granite boles—
A grove of palms is there—shaped by the skill
Of Bek and Auta who transfigure rock
To ordered aisles of tapered monoliths.
Bek is a mighty builder. He has made
This palace of the pillared porticoes,
Fronting the disk of Aton where it blooms
Like one great scarlet poppy of the east,
Or folds its petals slowly to the night.
I dreamed this lovely garden that he grew—
Obedient and eager on my word—
This garden into which we now descend
To wander mid the fountains and the flowers.
Shall we disturb the bulbul on the bough
And bid him sing? or are these thin cascades
That pour from pool to pool past marble brims
A sweeter song? Pause here and let me pluck
This lotus, like a moon within the fountain;
Upon each flattened petal there are pearls—
I shake them on Queen Nefertiti's hair!
The poppies are empurpled by the night;