

NAAMAN

I will not in the hateful House of Rimmon
Bow any more the head or bend the knee.
Here are but idols. Tombs are these tapered shrines—
Tombs of dead lies that long deceived the people.
I will go forth to God beneath the sky,
Meet Him upon the mountains where the dawn
Wears saffron for an ephod—is the priest
Whose turban still the morning star adorns.

Have done with drone of penitential psalms,
With altars wet and slippery from blood!
Have done with fearful and uplifted eyes,
With hands of supplication clasped in prayer!
Snuff out these wicks that intercede for souls
Released by death and singing in the sun!
Does God care for the blood of bulls and goats,
Who feeds the cattle on a thousand hills?
Come! get the benediction of the day
Whose hands are dropping honey with the dew,
And let the loud hosanna of the wind
Make me forget the hateful House of Rimmon.
I have been too long beggared by half truths.
Cramped in brocaded garb of compromise,
I, Naaman, Commander of the host,
Benhadad's friend, Damascus' greatest son,
Am but a beggar!—Nay, hear all my word:
Count not my ropes of pearl, my jacinth jars,
My topaz, diamonds and chrysoprase;