

Zeitschrift: Der Kreis : eine Monatsschrift = Le Cercle : revue mensuelle
Band: 34 (1966)
Heft: 4

Artikel: Mine is desire [...]
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-568491>

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MINE IS DESIRE no casual glance may gauge.
Mine is a thirst no draught can satisfy.
Mine is a hunger crusts cannot assuage.
No kindliness can still this urgent cry!
The sophistry of swift tongues may deceive
Only uncertain lovers . . . never me.
I give myself completely to receive
The gift of passion unreservedly.

Moth to the flame, lark to the amber dawn:
My eyes besiege the candle of your face.
Steel to the magnet . . . so my hands are drawn
To touch and contemplate and softly trace
The poem of your limbs, in beauty grown,
Laid in the sleep of love along my own.

The fire and the flood of Love must spill
Over the brimming heart without regret,
And when the thunder of the pulse is still,
The tongue must taste ecstatic passion yet.
Close in the arms of love then let me drift
Into the seas of sleep and know my breath
Touches the cheek of my beloved, whose gift
Will crown with splendor even the day of death.

These are the perfect hours which men recall—
Fallen on desert years and sere with age—
How the warm flesh may melt and merge and all
The blood become an elemental rage!
So were you fashioned for my sure delight . . .
your body bound to mine by tender night.

by JAMES RAMP