

1961

D. H. L.

Margaret Cobb Shipley

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## D. H. L.

"I do not worship hands nailed  
On a cross," he said and plunged  
Singing into dark and light, into scenes  
Dark and light green, moon-white, black,  
Himself without a skin and throbbing  
At the touch of air. A glacier river runs  
Among his lines, a fine wind blows

Through him, his sky is either split  
With forked fire or lies pale green  
Behind Orion. There is no thread fine  
Enough nor strong enough to tie  
Him to a woman or even to himself  
But he must hear the seethe and song  
Of his own final sleeping in the pale  
Light of green, dark of rose.

—*Margaret Cobb Shipley*

## A Single Creature

Knowing that we two flesh a single creature,  
Legged as two, but lipped and eyed as one:  
Two pair of lips to memorize each feature  
Of one face, two tongues to speak one tongue—  
Remembering dim singleness at birth  
And hearing that single skeletons are found  
Recoiled upon themselves below the ground,  
I must halve our self against surprise;  
I must go lame awhile for exercise.

You shall not hear my going; you discern  
Only that one cheek chills against the sun,  
That in the swamp the maples turn too soon,  
And that the firebrush smokes when it should burn;  
Nor guess until the empty pod is rent  
And squirrels drop acorns hollowed by disease,  
That there is absence in the tenement  
And flowering without the aid of bees.

—*Mrs. A. T. Turner*