

Yvonne Reddick

Thirteen Lines

A song in word-music.

Love sent you to the desert's hush-parched silence.
You held fast, though those rattling serpent-words
You heard hissed 'Arrogance. Omnipotence,'
Augmenting the fourth line with discordant violence.

The angel-song, the music of the spheres
You left, for stinging slash and singing pain
Of lashes; a thorn halo hallows your head,
Vice-like; your pierced side holds your sceptre-spear.

What passion. High and clear and far, the song
Called you; in triune harmony you ascended.
Amended death. I wish I could be faithful.
Lover, brother, I have done you wrong.

Only an infidel writes thirteen lines.