

THE RECLUSE

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. . . And like the slender bud 'neath rustic heel,
His fragile heart, by unrequited love
Chrushed down in tender years, does slowly heal
In hatred of all men and God above.

Its scarry tissue now no longer parts
In chaste embrace to welcome friendship true,
Nor heeds the fervent touch of Cupid's darts—
Love's charming dreams forever he will rue.

Apart from men—unsought—he walks alone.
Delusion nightly haunts his cheerless hearth;
Grey dawn and limpid moon do hear his moan.

Securely locked in Ego's inner tomb,
He raises incense to his stubborn self,
And seals for life his solitary doom.