

Alister Crowley
33 Avenue Studios

S. K. Armstrong

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The flame dances

I am alone in an abyss of sand

Giant mountains jay the sky on every hand

To westward ~~above me~~ is the Sun in whose heart

Years herself takes an immortal part

And eastward, gleaming from that textless dome

Comes the presentiment of the full moon

There is no wind abroad in this clear air

Frost keys the spirit to exulting prayer

Vreft in my bosom, patient as a star,

I wait my lover by the lonely hear.

Each moment worthy of a choral name

Each like a spark impatient to be flame

Yet each in ~~its own~~ to a period

Of which the name can be but Love-of-God.

The flame dances.

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A single sentinel, a lone stern man,
Guarding the gateways of the ceramon
An angel, bearing in his crystal hand
The lance of lordship, seraph-white to stand
Upon the pavement of chalcedony
And hail the dawn of that interred eye
Which opens when the earth and heaven are rolled
Back into blindness like a tale ill-told.
When God and all His universe are gone
Like a false dream into oblivion

So much I saw, though narrowed eyelids thrust,
At that first-leaping of its sword of lust
When from the sacred fence wherein it slept
A moment, the white flame phantastic leapt.

The flame down so.

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Was there a breath? What him of the South
I shook him and provoked? What hungry heart and mouth
Of what fierce singe, saying unto song,
Awoke the wind? So brief and so long
The white flame sound that I had never guessed
Any but aspiring and on in its breast.

But here it shook, so languorous and lethargic
As I have seen a leaping leopard with the
As I have seen a serpent sabbly ~~about~~ suit
To rhythm to the black enchanter's lute
As I have seen an Arab girl dance
New veils for the eternal mysteries

Her ^{cisroid} ~~lightness~~ belly proving Allah good
as all His ways attest His fatherhood

It shook, too tremulous and transient
For man to mark its snakey sacrament
And fell, a tragic best cut cruelly short
Ere I had whispered my immortal thought
The flame dances

Published in the Equinox

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adulth. A. Thomas critical decanum.
To show ~~that~~ ^{that} ~~much~~ ^{much} better deans may be done
To the Revd. Mr. St. John Parry MA DD
Dean of Trinity College Cambridge

The Anglicans (whose annals still
Still entertains "Quicunque vult")

Boasted a grave and from Dean
Ecclesiastically lean,

Grey-haired and spectacled, sharp-nosed,
Whose tract on 'Truth', it was supposed,

Had in its day done much to stem
The tide of Error among them

Who, though well-meaning, nearly ripped your
Church up by whetting hooks on Scripture.

Some men arrive at ruin's brink
By ~~dice and drugs and dogs~~ ^{dice and drugs and dogs} and drink;

Some drab, some dissipate, some drench
Life through a weakness for a wench!

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~~colath. Agaveus cortica decanum.~~

without being
a lion &
slenderer

To show ~~that~~ ^{that} much better deans may be done

To the Revd R. St. John Parry MA D D

Dean of Trinity College Cambridge

The Anglicans (whose curious cult

Still entertains "Quicunque vult")

Boasted a grave and pious Dean

Ecclesiastically lean,

Grey-haired and spectacled, sharp-nosed,

Whose tract on 'Truth', it was supposed,

Had in its day done much to stem

The tide of Error among them

Who, though well-meaning, nearly ripped your

Church up by whetting tusks on Scripture.

Some men arrive at ruin's brink

By ~~dice and drugs and dogs~~ ^{dice and drugs and dogs} and drink;

1 Carbone

abolish Aggravation contra decanum.

without being
a lion &
slenderer

To show ~~them~~ that much better deans may be done
To the Revd R. St John Parry MA DD

Dean of Trinity College Cambridge

The Anglicans (whose customs and
still entertains "Quicunque vult")

Boasted a grave and pious Dean
Ecclesiastically lean,

Grey-haired and spectacled, sharp-nosed,
Whose tract on 'Truth', it was supposed,

Had in its day done much to stem

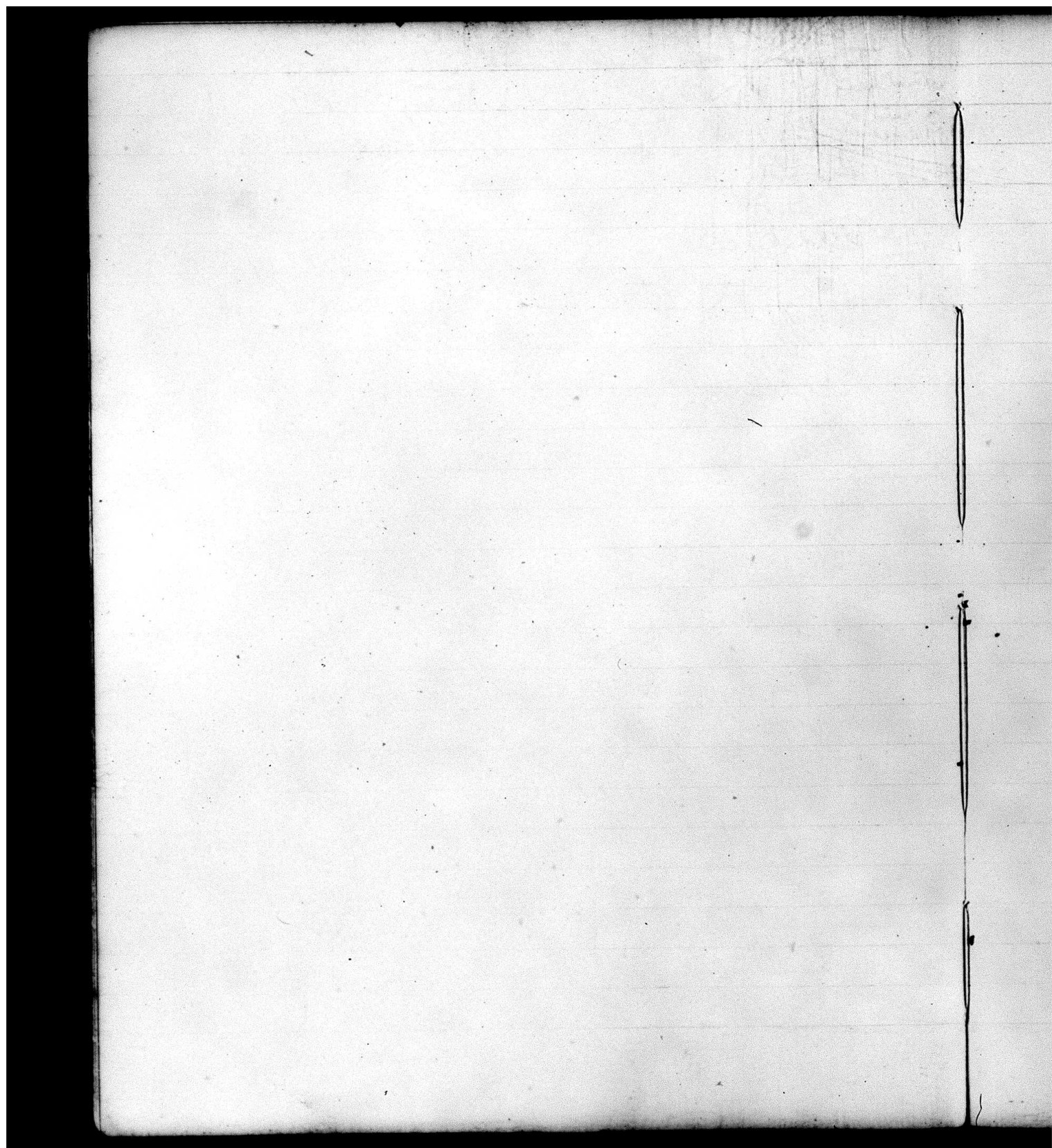
The tide of Error among them

Who, though well-meaning, nearly ripped your
Church up by whetting tusks on Scripture.

Some men arrive at ruin's brink

By ~~dice and drugs and dogs~~ and drink;
~~dice and drugs and dogs~~ and drink;

1 Carbone



Our dear, immune from all of these,
Reached three score years in honored age,
When controversies ^{being over,} ~~having died~~
He found no nest ^{in his closet}.
~~A little devil who~~ ^{who sleeps too soft is slow to wake}
~~inside~~ ^{And binds himself with lutes that ache}
Disfranchised, who said: Respected Dean,
You're not as young as you have been.
The time is not far distant when
Six other worthy clergymen
Will put your body in a hole -
and what will happen to your soul?

The blameless Dean ^{conceived a doubt.} ~~was~~
as humble as he was devout,
All he would ^{utter} ~~unwieldy~~ was a trust
That God was good as He was just.
Though he had doubtless been the means
Of saving others, even Deans
(Since St Paul said it) well may say:
^{'If} ~~But~~ I myself were cast away!

No notices were printed, and his fall
He noticed he was getting old
Because the simplicity of the earth
Conceived by Satan, being the world

He found no ~~distress~~ in his clover.
A little ~~dear~~ ~~in the~~ ~~in the~~

Who sleeps too soft is slow to wake
And finds himself with but a flutter when

Shipwright, who said: Respected Dean,

Yours not as young as you have been.

The time is not far distant when

Like other worthy clergymen

Will put your body in a hole -

and what will happen to your soul?

The blameless Dean ~~as~~ ~~convinced~~ a doubt.

As humble as he was devout,

All he would ^{utter} ~~remind~~ was a hint -

That God was good as he was just.

Though he had doubtless been the means

Of saving others, even Deans

(Since St Paul said it) well may say:

~~God~~ ^{God} & myself were cast away!

No wolves were prowling round his fold
He noticed he was getting old

Deism, the vampire of the earth,
Conceived by Satan, brought to birth

When controversies ^{being over,} ~~having died~~
He found no rustles in his clover.
~~A little devil who was inside~~
^{Who sleeps too soft is slow to wake}
^{And binds himself with knots that ache}
Disfranchised, who said: Respected Dean,
You're not as young as you have been.
The time is not far distant when

Six other worthy clergymen
Will put your body in a hole -
and what will happen to your soul?

The blameless Dean ^{convinced a doubt.} ~~as blameless~~
As humble as he was devout,
All he would ^{utter} ~~remind~~ was a trust
That God was good as he was just.

Though he had doubtless been the means
Of saving others, even Deans
(Since St Paul said it) well may say:

He noticed he was getting old
Less in the company of
Convinced by Satan, though

Our dear, immune from all of these,
Reached three score years in honored age,
When, controversies ^{being over,} ~~having died~~
He found no ~~rustles~~ in his clover.
~~A little devil in the inside~~
^{who sleeps too soft is slow to wake}
^{And finds himself with tints that ache}
~~Disfranchisement~~, who said: Respected Dean,
You're not as young as you have been.
The time is not far distant when

Six other worthy clergymen
Will put your body in a hole -
and what will happen to your soul?

The blameless Dean ^{conceived a doubt.} ~~as humble~~
as humble as he was devout,
All he would ^{utter} ~~unwieldy~~ was a trust
That God was good as He was just.

Though he had doubtless been the means
Of saving others, even Deans
(Since St Paul said it) well may say:
¹⁴
~~But~~ ^{that} I myself were cast away! ¹⁵

No robes were hiding round his fold
He noticed he was getting old
Because the simplicity of the earth
Covered by Satan, being the truth

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Alh! said the demon, simple trust
Becomes the ignorant, who must.
But you, have means whereby to test
Your faith. I shall not let you rest,
Till by strict cross-examination
You prove ~~your~~ ^{your} title to salvation.
Let us begin - who runs may read -
With Athanasius his creed.

He got through 'neque confundentes'
Gay as a boy is in his twenties.
With sang-froid mingled with affatus,
He gladly uttered 'Increator'.
'Immensus' and 'omnipotens'
Were meat to his 'divinior mens'.
'Tamen non tres dii' he smiled,
'Sed unus ~~est~~ Deus', suave and mild;

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Reciting thus the Creed verbatim
To 'quia sicut singillatim'

He Slapped his venerable femur:
"Religione prohibemur"

"A haughty sprite" said Solomon
'Goeth before destruction!'

'Pride goes before a 'tumble!' we
Learned early, at our mother's knee.

This was to crush the cleric's crest

'Filios a Patre Solo Est'

(Incomprehensible to us!)

He boggled at 'sed gerintus'.

The good dean knitted noble brows
That had been wont at ease to rouse
Solomon from the deepest slumber

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Of whatsoever thoughts were there.

Yet, here he struck. If he were walking,

"A pate solo" stopped him. Talking?

"A pate solo" ~~turned the stream~~ ~~drained the flood~~ drained the flood
Of discourse, ~~as~~ it made it mud.

"A pate solo" spoiled his sleep;

"A pate solo" sowed his sheep;

"A pate solo" made him ill;

His thought-chafes burned on conscience' grill.

The grave assailed enlightened mind

~~Left~~ ~~his~~ ~~poraries~~ left behind,

Yet was an abscess crammed with pus

Round that sand-grain "sed gentius".

Non possum (~~inguit~~) ~~tanquam~~ volo

Aut credere & "a pate solo".

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He corresponded for a year
With doctors there, and doctors here;
He wrote to brethren near and far,
To Elber and to Cantuar;
He even risked (half fear half hope)
A private letter to the Pope.

~~These~~ These cretines of a dotted church
Left an inquirer in the lurch;
There was not one could reconcile
By ancient thought or modern style,
Two knights each fit to lay his lance low
"Gentius" and "a patre solo."

"A matre sola" were enough
To make anatomists grow gruff
Yet he could postulate a post —
"Columba" scilicet "The Ghost".
A thousand ways of thought he'd trod,
Where God seemed bread and bread seemed God.

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It did not suffice up his plumes
To think that one should open tombs.
He thought it simple work to see
That Three in One was One in Three.

But he thought lost where's affairs
A contradiction in terms:

"Without a mother (was his reading)
" 'Begotten' merely means 'proceeding'

" 'Begotten' to my mind implies

" Some anatomic realities.

" Seed cannot sprout without a soil

" Oil fills the cune, the cune holds oil.

" A Word begotten of I AM

" Is nothing but to milk the ram.

" We know of things whose modest mission
" Is to give life by simple fission.

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- " The Hydra too where pools are flooding
- " Gemmates i.e. gives birth by budding.
- " The rarest forms of sex are seen
- " Nor male nor female, but between.
- " Do these 'beget', may one affirm,
- " In the strict meaning of ~~the~~ term?
- " Even so, did we admit this right,
- " God would appear hermaphrodite!"

This thought so shocked the worthy dean
 Black bile corrupted his machine,
 Limbs of many a libelous lead,
 The dean went melancholy mad.
 It ~~was~~ with sorrow like a sword
 Cutting my heart that I record
 In this account I dare not 'cook'
 The fatal form his madness took.

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By Athanasius still obsessed,
He ~~was~~ ~~the~~ ~~Father~~, and his quest
To solve the problem that had ruined
His spirit's sword-edge, that had burned
His mental fingers, ~~But they~~
~~He had~~ ~~by a means~~
Fitter for schoolboys than for deans.
Theology has never lent
Her sanction to Experiment!

At death his sanity's last glimpse
Scattered the cohorts of the unps.
Yet on all hope the door was slammed;
He knew that he was surely damned.
Despite his garters and his hat,
He failed ^{with} 'Ita' on the mat
'De Trinitate sancta'

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It said as plain as words can say
"Here set Fides Catholica"
Adding a warning of the note we
all of us see: "Quam non quique"

Fideliter crediderit,
Non saluus esse poterit."

Horribly frightened and alone,
Before the awful judgment-throne
The poor dear stood, the myriad eyes
Of Wheels and of Activities,
Glitterers, Frey Serpents, Things,
Gods, Sons of ~~the~~ Gods (and other things)
Faced on him. "Waste no time!" he cried
"I own me guilty. I denied -
Or could at least not acquiesce
In Athanasius. Confess

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Why should man fear to follow
Where all his sins have gone
Within the dismal hollow
Of **King Apollyon**?

Our fathers faced the foe and
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Three years - it seems so short

It seems but yesterday I took you
a silver salmon newly caught

Gashing your life out on the thwart -

It was a master cast to hook you!

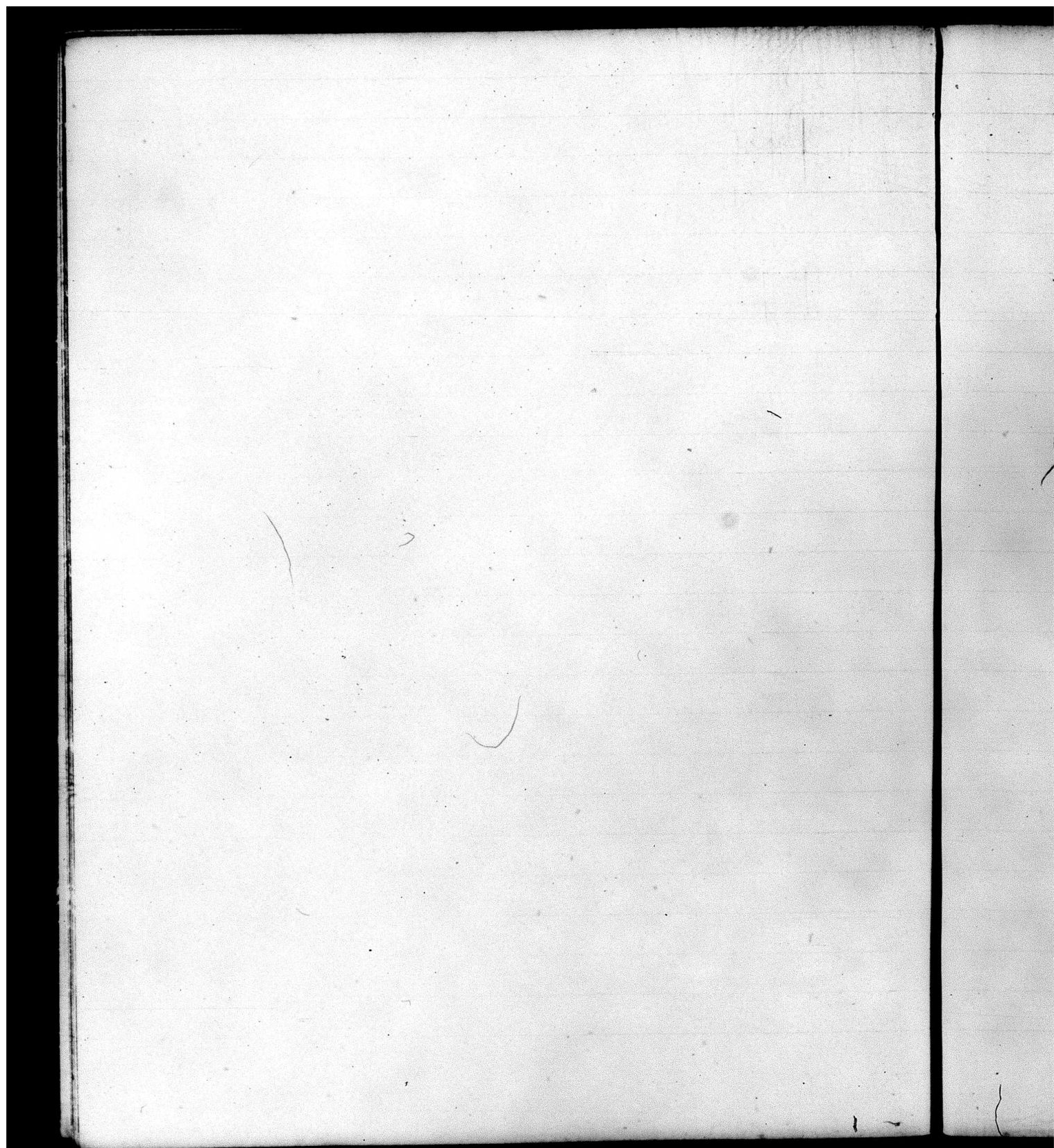
Three years - it seems so long

It seems as if my life lay finished,

Forgotten, when it broke in song

The chorus that still stays as strong

Not to be darkened or dimmed!



Three years - Three centuries -

Three days - Old Time is cruel clever
~~But~~ Wreck him with mild simplicities

Infinite, infinitely wise

Of love ~~the~~ God's

~~But~~ is the end for ever

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