

She was adept at nursing, animals or trees;  
But let disease creep like a terror on a human one  
She was undone!

If flesh sat sweetly on the proud clean bone  
The tone of her voice, strong as a staunch sea buoy  
Easy, she was, and quick with her word and warmth  
This was her "climate" ... this her wind of joy.

Dumb ... in the presence of decay and pain  
Walked she a hell, private, despised of all  
Tiptoeing fearfully past the cobwebbed ill  
Feeling her way down an airless hall.

This was a flaw, a deep and hurtful flaw  
Bred in her heart when she was child in womb:  
Anything ailing made her marrow freeze  
Shutting her spirit in a dusty tomb.

Born out of hate ... and in a wintry month  
She was conceived ... surely against her mother's will.  
Thorned like a curse within her mother's flesh  
Bitterly nursed, she felt this loveless chill.

Small ... she could burrow in a Collie's hide  
Seeking ... blind as a beggar for some sign:  
Tenderness ... somewhere this was surely hers  
Somewhere she fitted into this bleak design.

Still, when the years went over and her mother aged  
White as a Sybil in her wintry land  
Still was she helpless to traverse this gap  
Tho' she stood longing ... with an outstretched hand.

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