

Manpower

Count Zero

You, with the ribbons in your hair:
Recall when there were flowers there?
Before the Men in Power saw red
And turned yours into a scapegoat's head?
They said your pursuit of liberty
Had thrown all their boys in poverty
And "made most you women disobey."
How could so much change from yesterday?

And they seated their chiefs, resplendent
And they gave them the words you wore;
And they helped make your Sex descendant
By closing your ev'ry door;
And if you still felt independent,
They'd demote you to working poor.
You were working, but guess who for?
For the Men in Power.
Manpower for the Men in Power.

(Who're the men enshrouded
Holding silent strings round my hands
That tug to make me blame you
And twist if I refuse to?)

You, with the powder on your cheek:
They've made the facts to keep you weak.
Their yellow research headlined the rags
While editors of the fashion mags
Said, "Your freedom's made you discontent"
Except when you'd choose their sponsor's scent.
And soon household goods would catch your eye
'Til "Surrender!" was your soul's sole reply.

And they deified hip reduction
And your roles early on were played;
They convinced you a liposuction
Was a sure way to make the grade;
And the press, with their trend construction,
Called you Over-The-Hill Old Maid
So you'd panic, and wed, afraid,
For the Men in Power.
Manpower for the Men in Power.

(Have we made no progress?
Has there been no lesson we've learned?
Are they so frail and fearful
They need to see you cower?
If they're disenfranchised
Boys are paid 'til tables are turned.
These men-in-white's advantage
Is that they own the tower.
And the fact I'm passive
Makes me all the more concerned!
Am I so tired and jaded
To fight the Men in Power?)