

The Fountain Of Salmacis

Genesis

Hermaphrodite: a flower containing both male and female organs;
a person or animal of both sexes.

The child Hermaphroditus was the son of Hermes and Aphrodite,
the result of a secret love affair. For this reason he was
entrusted to the nymphs of the isolated Mount Ida,
who allowed him to grow up as a wild creature of the woods. After his
encounter with the water-nymph Salmacis, he laid a
curse upon the water. According to fable, all persons who bathed in the
water became hermaphrodites.

From a dense forest of tall dark pinewood,
Mount Ida rises like an island.
Within a hidden cave, nymphs had kept a child;
Hermaphroditus, son of gods, so afraid of their love.

As the dawn creeps up the sky
The hunter caught sight of a doe.
In desire for conquest,
He found himself within a glade he'd not beheld before.

Hermaphroditus:
"Where are you, my father?
Give wisdom to your son"

Narrator:
"Then he could go no farther
Now lost, the boy was guided by the sun"

And as his strength began to fail
He saw a shimmering lake.
A shadow in the dark green depths
Disturbed the strange tranquility.

Salmacis:
"The waters are disturbed
Some creature has been stirred"

Narrator:
"The waters are disturbed
Naiad queen Salmacis has been stirred"

As he rushed to quench his thirst,
A fountain spring appeared before him
And as his heated breath brushed through the cool mist,
A liquid voice called, "Son of gods, drink from my spring".

The water tasted strangely sweet.
Behind him the voice called again.
He turned and saw her, in a cloak of mist alone
And as he gazed, her eyes were filled with the darkness of the lake.

Salmacis:
"We shall be one
We shall be joined as one"

Narrator:

"She wanted them as one
Yet he had no desire to be one"

Hermaphroditus: "Away from me cold-blooded woman
Your thirst is not mine"
Salmacis: "Nothing will cause us to part
Hear me, O Gods"

Unearthly calm descended from the sky
And then their flesh and bones were strangely merged
Forever to be joined as one.

The creature crawled into the lake.
A fading voice was heard:
"And I beg, yes I beg that all who touch this spring
May share my fate"

Salmacis:
"We are the one
We are the one"

Narrator:
"The two are now made one,
Demi-god and nymph are now made one"

Both had given everything they had.
A lover's dream had been fulfilled at last,
Forever still beneath the lake.