

The Hand That Strikes

But influence is not command of heart.

If love or manhood's taunt would make thee act,
Let not the charge of cowardice decide;
For pressure bends the will, but leaves intact
The hand that strikes must answer, not the tide.

Macbeth beheld blood turning to its source,
And knew ambition lacked a lawful spur;
Yet borrowed courage turned remorse to force,
While vows and shame made judgment less secure.

A partner may disguise the truth with art,
And frame thy choice as proof that thou art brave;
But influence is not command of heart,
Nor makes her tongue the master of thy grave.

Own what was done; reject the self-made lie;
Be man enough to choose-and answer why.