

Septimius and Acme

Septimius, holding his lover Acme,
in his arms, said, "My Acme,
if I do not love you with abandon and if I am not prepared,
to love you now constantly for all our years,
as much as he who can love the most,
then may I alone in Libya or in sweltering India,
come to meet a grey-eyed lion!"

As he said this, Love sneezed approval on
the left - or on the right.

But Acme, lightly bending back her head,
and having kissed the infatuated eyes
of the sweet boy with her wine-red mouth,
said, "Let it be thus, my life, my dear Septimius:
let us for ever serve this one master,
so that a passion far grander and keener
may burn deep in my bones."

As she said this, Love sneezed approval on
the left - or on the right.

Now, having started off with a good omen,
they love and are loved, like-minded:
poor lovesick Septimius prefers to have just Acme
to seeing Syria or Britain:
the faithful Acme finds pleasure
and desire in Septimius alone.

Who has seen any one happier,
who has seen a more blessed love?