

## A SECRET (THE SONNET OF ARVERS)

*Félix Arvers (1806-1850)*

My soul has its secret, my life its mystery:  
An everlasting love in a single moment born;  
And she who caused this pain that has no remedy  
Knows nothing of it still: to silence I am sworn.  
Many a time will I approach her unremarked,  
Always close by her side, and yet always alone;  
And when from earthly life at last I disembark,  
I will have sought no favor, nor been granted one.  
But she will go her heedless way, nor stop to listen—  
Though God has made her tenderhearted and benign—  
To the murmur of my love that near her steps has risen;  
And if she reads this verse, of which she fills each line,

She will say, obedient to her life's austere command,  
"Who could this woman be?" and will not understand.

*—Translated by Robert John Sklenar*

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