

The Melancholy Pool

Marked by that priesthood of the Night's misrule,
The shadow-cowled, imprecatory trees—
Cypress that guarded woodland secrecies
And graves that waited the delaying ghoul,
Nathless I neared the melancholy pool,
Chief care of all, but closelier sentinelled
By those whose roots were deepest in dead Eld.
Where the thwart-woven boughs were wet and cool,
As with a mist of poison, I drew near,
To mark the tired stars peer dimly down
Through riven branches from the height of space,
And shudder in those waters with quick fear,
Where in black deeps the pale moon seemed to drown—
A haggard girl, with dead, despairing face.
—From "Ebony and Crystal," by Clark Ashton Smith.

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