

The Sea-Gods

Beneath the sunset and the sea
Their coral-built cities be;
They keep an old forgotten reign,
A purple, far supremacy.

The azure-girdled suns that roam,
And moons that tread the silvering foam,
Are vague above their ocean-vales;
And shaken dawns their evenings dome.

Their eyes like changing emeralds gleam
Through gulfs where winy twilights stream;
And with blue weeds their tresses flow,
As in a dark, confused dream.

But often, when long afterglows
In cold and spectral evening close,
On lonely seas they rise, and cry
From foam left grey by sunset's rose.

Or in the mystic waves and wan,
Hushed by the moon's marmoreal dawn,
They moan as moans the muted surf
On shores of windless isles withdrawn.

Known to their dim supremacy
The deep's forgotten secrets be;
Their old, eternal vestures are
The purples of the flowing sea.

—Clark Ashton Smith