

From the pillar, Aldous Huxley

FROM THE PILLAR

SIMEON, the withered stylite,

Sat gloomily looking down

Upon each roof and skylight

In all the seething town.

And in every upper chamber,

On roofs, where the orange flowers

Make weary men remember

The perfume of long-dead hours,

He saw the wine-drenched riot

Of harlots and human beasts,

And how celestial quiet

Was shattered by their feasts.

The steam of fetid vices

From a thousand lupanars,

Like smoke of sacrifices,

Reeked up to the heedless stars.

And the saint from his high fastness

Of purity apart

Cursed them and their unchasteness,

And envied them in his heart.

The end