

**TWENTY LOVE POEMS
AND A
SONG OF DESPAIR**

V

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A SONG OF
DESPAIR**

pablo neruda

I

Body of a Woman

Body of a woman, white hills, white thighs,
you look like a world, lying in surrender.
My rough peasant's body digs into you
and makes the sun leap from the depth of the earth.

I was alone like a tunnel. The birds fled from me,
and night swamped me with its crushing invasion.
To survive myself I forged you like a weapon,
like an arrow in my bow, a stone in my sling.

But the hour of vengeance falls, and a love you.
Body of skin, of moss, of eager and firm milk.
Oh the goblets of the breast! Oh the eyes of absence!
Oh the pink roses of the pubis! Oh your voice, slow and
sad!

Body of my woman, I will persist in your grace.
My thirst, my boundless desire, my shifting road!
Dark River-beds where the eternal thirst flows
and weariness follows, and the infinite ache.

II

The Light Wraps You

The light wraps you in its mortal flame.
Abstracted pale mourner, standing that way
against the old propellers of twilight
that revolves around you.

Speechless, my friend,
alone in the loneliness of this hour of the dead
and filled with lives of fire,
and pure heir of the ruined day.

A bough of fruit falls from the sun on your dark garment.
The great roots of night
grow suddenly from your soul,
and the things that hide in you come out again
so that a blue and pallid people,
your newly born, takes nourishment.

Oh magnificent and fecund and magnetic slave
of the circle that moves in turn through black and gold:
rise, lead and possess a creation
so rich in life that its flowers perish
and it is full of sadness.