Hex

From the root of wormwood comes
absinthe; from the poppy, opium

I arrange poppies against your coming,
brilliant poppies with midnight centers,
poppies of wrinkled silk like the gowns I laid aside
when you went away.

When you come
delicate wormwood sprays will greet you,
feathering the air with their bitter
absinthe-fragrance and the nightmare scent of
poppies.

When you come
the poppies will warm you,
red as gouts of blood in the frost of wormwood.

When you come,
I shall be frost and silk, shall wear
disbelief at the back of my eyes.

When you go,
you will remember nothing, yet be haunted
on certain moon-hung midnights by
the blood-red scent of poppies on my hands.

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