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## Persephone in Hell

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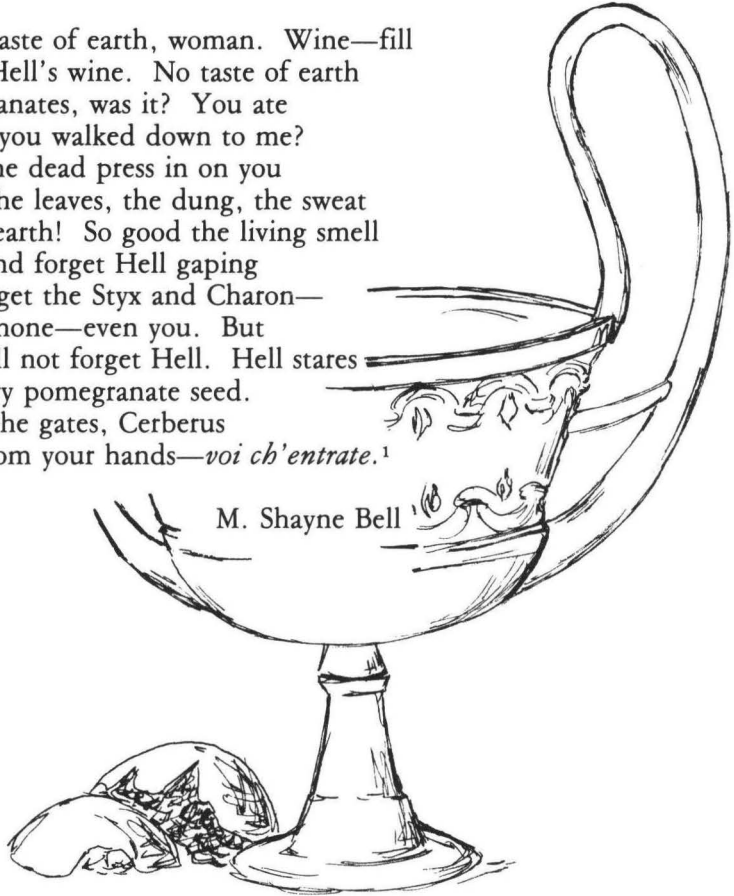
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# Persephone In Hell

Bah! Your lips taste of earth, woman. Wine—fill  
My cup. Good Hell's wine. No taste of earth  
In that. Pomegranates, was it? You ate  
Pomegranates as you walked down to me?  
Yes, and I saw the dead press in on you  
Trying to smell the leaves, the dung, the sweat  
Of men. Good earth! So good the living smell  
Its stinking rot and forget Hell gaping  
At their feet, forget the Styx and Charon—  
And you, Persephone—even you. But  
You, at least, will not forget Hell. Hell stares  
At you from every pomegranate seed.  
Before you pass the gates, Cerberus  
Licks the juice from your hands—*voi ch'entrate*.<sup>1</sup>

M. Shayne Bell



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<sup>1</sup>Italian for "ye who enter here."