

HOPES OF DREAMS

Sunfire caught in a windy mesh,
Feet that fail on a barren plain,
The slow worms gnaw through gristle and flesh,
And my brain goes back to dust again.

Vultures roost on my reeking ribs,
Gorging their fill of heart and thigh;
My pelvis, spider and scorpion cribs;
Dust of my fingers the breezes strew.

And the drifting years wane on and on,
And centuries die in the desert sand
Till a great king comes in the lure of dawn
And stirs my bones with idle hand.

Morning's goblet is brimming full.
He taps on the bone with his long jade nails,
And the adder coiled inside my skull
Wakens and burns and rustles its scales.

And the great king utters one deathly cry
And crumples down like a shattered staff
To writhe in the sighing sand and die,
And my jaws gape in a silent laugh.

Robert E. Howard

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