

One into Two

*Free love in this differs from gold and clay
That to divide is not to take away
- Percy Bysshe Shelley*

One into two easy enough — just cut the string,
split the difference — but two into one? That
said Sokrates and a myriad since is *the* problem. . . .
which Nature solves by tying loveknots in our bloodlines
by filial not to say incestuous means
while our lovesick self seeks identity in selfsame others —
bone of my bone flesh of my flesh. . . .
the marriage of true minds as Shakespeare put it

and three centuries later the brother-lover-spouse
pouring out fervent couplets to a teenage girl in convent
he later disclaimed as a history of his life and feelings:
O wherefore two? one spirit within two frames
one passion in twin-hearts one hope
within two wills one life one death one heaven one hell
one immortality one annihilation. . . .
one being with the world we see the same as ourselves

and she, sister-daughter-wife out of their maelstrom
twenties — suicides, disownings, babies
dead at birth or soon after, *ménages à quatre*
ou cinq, jealousy (philosophy notwithstanding) —
conception execution publication of her *Frankenstein*
(a modern Prometheus confused with Galatea)
gothic family romances grotesqueries —
remorse dejection despair disillusion depression:

I invited him to walk with me and led him
to a neighbouring wood. After walking for some time in silence
I seated myself with him on a mossy hillock. . . . He
loved her with passion, her tenderness had a charm for him
that would not permit him to think of aught but her. . . .
I am in love with death she said which renders me
one with my mother, this shroud, my marriage-dress, alone
will unite me with my father, we shall never part.