

# Genesis, The Fountain Of Salmacis

(Banks/Collins/Gabriel/Hackett/Rutherford)

Hermaphrodite: a flower containing both male and female organs; a person or animal of both sexes.

The child Hermaphroditus was the son of Hermes and Aphrodite, the result of a secret love affair. For this reason he was entrusted to the nymphs of the isolated Mount Ida, who allowed him to grow up as a wild creature of the woods. After his encounter with the water-nymph Salmacis, he laid a curse upon the water. According to fable, all persons who bathed in the water became hermaphrodites.

From a dense forest of tall dark pinewood,  
Mount Ida rises like an island.  
Within a hidden cave, nymphs had kept a child;  
Hermaphroditus, son of gods, so afraid of their love.

As the dawn creeps up the sky  
The hunter caught sight of a doe.  
In desire for conquest,  
He found himself within a glade he'd not beheld before.

Hermaphroditus:  
"Where are you, my father?  
Give wisdom to your son";

Narrator:  
"Then he could go no farther  
Now lost, the boy was guided by the sun";

And as his strength began to fail  
He saw a shimmering lake.  
A shadow in the dark green depths  
Disturbed the strange tranquility.

Salmacis:  
"The waters are disturbed  
Some creature has been stirred";

Narrator:  
"The waters are disturbed  
Naiad queen Salmacis has been stirred";

As he rushed to quench his thirst,  
A fountain spring appeared before him  
And as his heated breath brushed through the cool mist,  
A liquid voice called, "Son of gods, drink from my spring";.

The water tasted strangely sweet.  
Behind him the voice called again.  
He turned and saw her, in a cloak of mist alone  
And as he gazed, her eyes were filled with the darkness of the lake.

Salmacis:  
"We shall be one  
We shall be joined as one";

Narrator:  
"She wanted them as one  
Yet he had no desire to be one";

Hermaphroditus: "Away from me cold-blooded woman

Your thirst is not mine&quot;  
Salmacis: &quot;Nothing will cause us to part  
Hear me, O Gods&quot;

Unearthly calm descended from the sky  
And then their flesh and bones were strangely merged  
Forever to be joined as one.

The creature crawled into the lake.  
A fading voice was heard:  
&quot;And I beg, yes I beg that all who touch this spring  
May share my fate&quot;

Salmacis:  
&quot;We are the one  
We are the one&quot;

Narrator:  
&quot;The two are now made one,  
Demi-god and nymph are now made one&quot;

Both had given everything they had.  
A lover's dream had been fulfilled at last,  
Forever still beneath the lake.