

# On Artistic Integrity

## Emilie Autumn

I toe the line of self-indulgence  
Every time I place my pen  
Upon the page and form the words  
I felt but couldn't show 'til then  
And to myself I beg the question  
Why do I thus masquerade  
As one to one and to another  
Someone else? If I, afraid  
Of what the consequence of stating  
Openly my cause might be,  
When I rant and rhyme and reason  
Do I write for them or me?  
I believe there is some merit  
In creating for one's self  
But why place before the public  
What is best left on the shelf?  
Though while I write I do not feel that  
What I pen is mine alone,  
Even this could be misguided  
As are many I have known  
Who swore, poor souls, that they possessed  
The key to man's mysterious fate,  
Succeeded in convincing some,  
But most could tell they did but prate  
On subjects touching something vague  
Which cannot be unproven, or,  
In place of content, speak in tongues  
Yet know not whom they're speaking for.  
No, I am not deluded so;  
I do not feel I represent  
Some force divine, but still I know  
That I shall never be content  
To hold my tongue when I would speak  
Or change my words to suit the hour  
Or pinch a blush upon my cheek  
To feign my joy at love gone sour.  
I do not wish to disappoint  
The faith that others place in me  
To lead the way to brighter days,

But sometimes dark is all I see.  
I work for good, I toil for hope,  
No one can question my intent  
But even those who listen close  
Can often mistake what I meant.  
My fear, I've come to realize,  
Is mainly this: that I am wrong,  
That my perception is askew,  
That I write shyte and call it song.  
Perhaps I'll always question thus,  
Discount my merits, thoughts, and deeds  
'Tis well, long as I still go forth  
And see where this, my vision, leads.  
Strong is she who knows her mind  
And speaks it though she may not please.  
Fortunate the audience  
That hears such honest thoughts as these.

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