

Out of the depths

by [Charles Hughes](#) in the [February 10, 2021](#) issue

Agere contra. —Ignatius of Loyola

God isn't love or isn't God. This is,
For doubt, its royal flush: God can't be both.
I'm caught up in the logic and the mood,
Hemmed in by facts, one fact, the world's abyss
Of suffering and injustice, how it's loath
To love: no God or else one far from good.

Pray, then, to learn love's work from Christ, to trust
The rumored beauty of this world renewed,
Which—like some long-lost heirloom tablecloth,
Once wedding gift, lace linen, still discussed—
Doesn't show up but should.

Agere contra is a Latin phrase meaning act against. It is an important concept of Ignatian spirituality, encouraging acting against one's natural inclinations in some times of spiritual desolation.