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| Archibald Higbie  BY [EDGAR LEE MASTERS](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/edgar-lee-masters)  I loathed you, Spoon River. I tried to rise above you,  I was ashamed of you. I despised you  As the place of my nativity.  And there in Rome, among the artists,  Speaking Italian, speaking French,  I seemed to myself at times to be free  Of every trace of my origin.  I seemed to be reaching the heights of art  And to breathe the air that the masters breathed,  And to see the world with their eyes.  But still they’d pass my work and say:  "What are you driving at, my friend?  Sometimes the face looks like Apollo’s,  At others it has a trace of Lincoln’s."  There was no culture, you know, in Spoon River,  And I burned with shame and held my peace.  And what could I do, all covered over  And weighted down with western soil,  Except aspire, and pray for another  Birth in the world, with all of Spoon River  Rooted out of my soul? | Archibald Higbie  BY [EDGAR LEE MASTERS](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/edgar-lee-masters)  I loathed you, Spoon River. I tried to rise above you,  I was ashamed of you. I despised you  As the place of my nativity.  And there in Rome, among the artists,  Speaking Italian, speaking French,  I seemed to myself at times to be free  Of every trace of my origin.  I seemed to be reaching the heights of art  And to breathe the air that the masters breathed,  And to see the world with their eyes.  But still they’d pass my work and say:  "What are you driving at, my friend?  Sometimes the face looks like Apollo’s,  At others it has a trace of Lincoln’s."  There was no culture, you know, in Spoon River,  And I burned with shame and held my peace.  And what could I do, all covered over  And weighted down with western soil,  Except aspire, and pray for another  Birth in the world, with all of Spoon River  Rooted out of my soul? |