

Her Obedient Servant

(Robert Graves, 1895-1985)

He ferreted first things to their first cause:
The Alphabet, to trees in a Sacred Grove;
The one true theme of poetry, to love
Under the immitigable Muse's laws,

Her laws all else is lost for if obeyed,
Arдор inseparable from primal fright
As when bombardment raked his trench all night
And Reason gibbered in a world gone mad.

His gift was twinned, as he himself was twain—
His suppliant lover's, his strict captain's art
Found bliss and death clutched one to the other's heart,
For simple Truth with Paradox had lain.

His poems, spurning the chaos of our days,
On passion shed their coruscating blaze
As, at the instant of the year's ascension,
Stonehenge's heelstone pours the blinding sun.

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