The Kiss

By Robert Graves

Are you shaken, are you stirred
   By a whisper of love,
Spellbound to a word
   Does Time cease to move,
Till her calm grey eye
   Expands to a sky
And the clouds of her hair
   Like storms go by?

Then the lips that you have kissed
   Turn to frost and fire,
And a white-steaming mist
   Obscures desire:
So back to their birth
   Fade water, air, earth,
And the First Power moves
   Over void and dearth.

Is that Love? no, but Death,
   A passion, a shout,
The deep in-breath,
   The breath roaring out,
And once that is flown,
   You must lie alone,
Without hope, without life,
   Poor flesh, sad bone.