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.