

## HYMN TO PRIAPUS

MY love lies underground  
With her face upturned to mine,  
And her mouth unclosed in a last long kiss  
That ended her life and mine.

I dance at the Christmas party  
Under the mistletoe  
Along with a ripe, slack country lass  
Jostling to and fro.

The big, soft country lass,  
Like a loose sheaf of wheat  
Slipped through my arms on the threshing floor  
At my feet.

The warm, soft country lass,  
Sweet as an armful of wheat  
At threshing-time broken, was broken  
For me, and ah, it was sweet!

Now I am going home  
Fulfilled and alone,  
I see the great Orion standing  
Looking down.

He's the star of my first beloved

Love-making.

The witness of all that bitter-sweet

Heart-aching.

Now he sees this as well,

This last commission.

Nor do I get any look

Of admonition.

He can add the reckoning up

I suppose, between now and then,

Having walked himself in the thorny, difficult

Ways of men.

He has done as I have done

No doubt:

Remembered and forgotten

Turn and about.

My love lies underground

With her face upturned to mine,

And her mouth unclosed in the last long kiss

That ended her life and mine.

She fares in the stark immortal  
Fields of death;  
I in these goodly, frozen  
Fields beneath.

Something in me remembers  
And will not forget.  
The stream of my life in the darkness  
Deathward set!

And something in me has forgotten,  
Has ceased to care.  
Desire comes up, and contentment  
Is debonair.

I, who am worn and careful,  
How much do I care?  
How is it I grin then, and chuckle  
Over despair?

Grief, grief, I suppose and sufficient  
Grief makes us free  
To be faithless and faithful together  
As we have to be.