

## LOVE AND SCANDALS

*S. E. Sprott*

The finger of scandal works its thickening thimble.  
One who felt his eye put out by another  
Told him it chin to chin, and if he smirked,  
Charged him tears in the bosom of a brother,  
And were he dry of grace, got his dear kirked.  
That was young love and cooled mere brass and a cymbal  
Into a tuner of hard society.

These vote by new styles to stitch a man up limber.  
They feed peace to a spider, snap their eyes  
And yield up friends, then tear his trailing shirt  
Handed through private rooms as a scorned prize;  
The loud mouth on his corner adds his dirt.  
For the agreement of silence in the house timber  
Forgive in others your own warps, full-faced.

Yet worse — these come worse than the screen-fingered cougher.  
Holy men pass by on the other side —  
Light-hearted Christ imagined it was so;  
But I see academics in their pride  
Pass on the same side by the sin they know:  
That woman with hands on hips, palms up, with offer  
Of brazen gifts in return for silver.