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ROBERT GRAVES

HONEY AND FLOWERS

A leaf from the diary of a Carthusian in the Golden Age.

6.45 a.m.

Awaked from my couch of rose-leaves by the trill of a lark and the bite of a mosquito. Shook off the flies and laved myself in a crystal fount. Water exceedingly cold. Think I prefer my weekly bath in the sulphur-spring. Donned my tunic of fair linen, and my sheepskin cloak. Placed on my crown a garland of crimson roses, flowers that cannot be worn save by those who have sojourned here two years and more, -- so that I am the envy of the fags. Seized my crook and descended.

7.15 a.m.

Assisted the School-band in delivering a series of hymns to our local Gods. I am a performer, a poor one, 'tis true, upon the Pan-pipes.

7.30 a.m.

He lectures on beekeeping.

8.15 a.m.

Breakfast off strawberries culled from the Wilderness, with honey, draughts of goat-milk and incidentally a brace of earwigs.

9.15 a.m.

Slept.

12.15 p.m.

Aroused from slumber by a cow who mistook me for a buttercup and began to chew my hair. Told her I was a daisy and she departed.

1.30 p.m.

Lunched off Honey and Flowers. Honey ran out, so caught some in a jam-pot as it dripped from the oaks on Green. More fell on my head than in the jam-pot. One

consolation is that I shall not have to anoint my locks for many a long day.

2.45 p.m.

When to 'Crown'. Devoured an apple of the Hesperides and quaffed a crimson drink.

3.0 p.m.

Wended my way to Lessington. Game of 'Hunt the Sandal' terminated by theft of sandal by peripatetic Centaur. Played Hide and Seek with wasp. Wasp won.

4.15 p.m.

Goat races. My goat made for May-pole. I got entangled in the chains of roses.

5.30 p.m.

Went hunting the multi-coloured beasts on Under Green. Succeeded by strategy in capturing a little Green Bice lamb with vieux rose legs, one gambooge and puce ear, and an ultramarine tail. It was so shy that I could not approach it save by planting my rose-garland firmly on my head, plucking a couple of branches from a melodiferous flowery arbute, and simulating a rose-bush. Received a shower of soapy water and a generous dose of weed-killer from a preceptor who professed gardening as a hobby, but I captured the lamb. Was carrying it back to the house when I met the School-bard muttering darkly to himself. He was clad in a long purple garb with a garland of rhubarb and tea-leaves. He addressed an ode to my lamb, who died in convulsions.

6.30 p.m.

More honey and flowers.

7.30 p.m.

Assumed a wreath of vine-leaves, grasped by thyrsus and joined the Bacchic revels in Founder's Court, where the fountain e'er runs with wine.

9.0 p.m.

Retired for the night to my couch of rose-leaves.