

THE RENEGADE

Philip Higson

I wake, and find soft-breathing at my side
A beauty so intense it hurts my eyes,
Perfection's power commanding me to rise
And slough off lesser life with godlike pride.

I know my mission now. It is to praise
With passion that no alien rule subdues
This idol, who is model, who is Muse,
Till stanzas and designs adorn her days.

But then the morning's rituals, devised
By plodding robots, infiltrate my mind;
High hopes collapse, I know myself confined
In witless toil where great hearts are despised.

And from art, poetry, love, hope's radiant peak,
I plunge abruptly, too ashamed to speak.

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