

TAD RICHARDS

Memorabilia

Apologies to Robert Browning

Ah, did you once see Auden plain,
And did he stop and speak to you,
And did you stay and pick his brain,
And were his answers true?

Why did time pardon Paul Claudel,
And why was its excuse so strange?
And could he tell you what befell
Those lines he chose to change?

If one another we must love,
What's next? To die? Will love forestall
Our certain end, or rise above?
Why did he cut it all?

Fondling my thigh, he half-explained—
Religion, Toryism—to contest
For that Nobel he never gained—
Well, I forget the rest.