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Two Words of Advice

Ann Stanford

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TWO WORDS OF ADVICE

One:

Burn less toward fury than reluctant stone;
 Return a gesture with a slighter one.
 Fiercely immobile, you will learn the part
 And stand as granite, proof against her art.

Two:

Be facile, fly, fear hammer-shock!
 She'll study sculpture, swift as you turn rock!

P R E C E P T

It is through precept that pursuits appear
 Trimming the lawn to make ideas agree
 Or leaving hedges high that none may stare
 Across clipped branches into privacy.

The principle that reckons with desire
 Outruns the blood, begrudging and unsought,
 Dividing night, it stretches like a fire
 Impassable between the act and thought.

S H A D O W

Across the window banked in night
 Deep in the deepening eyes of sleep
 The moon configures what we keep.

How shall I know my love when dark
 Lengthens in shadow and the eye
 Disdains to echo or reply?

Or how, confused and voiceless, meet,
 Beloved, where the shades replace
 No stolen vestige of a face?

ANN STANFORD