

## Martin Robertson

### [Housman was old beyond his years]

Housman was old beyond his years  
knowing at twenty  
the fleeting seasons in their beauty  
would not again appear  
often enough. At sixty  
that's something all of us can see.

For Housman, spring's whitening  
—fair enough.  
One can't do better for a love,  
but each of us to bless him  
has, in whatever season,  
a flower-love that seems his own.

I love white spring, love the colours  
of autumn, but  
my sweetheart-flower these have not:  
childheart (while the swallow  
settles down, the cuckoo's  
voice breaks) hedge-reborn, the rose.