

Age Meets Beauty

by Thomas Ország-Land (November 2017)

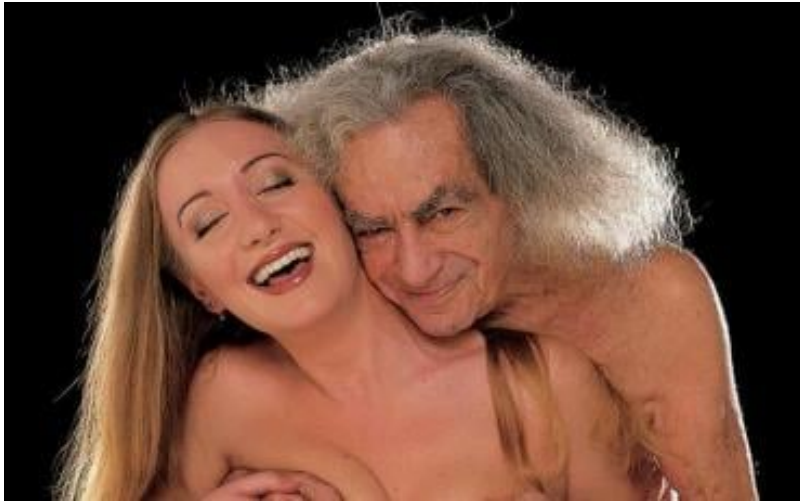


Robert Graves

The Jewish-Hungarian poet György Faludy (1910-2006) married Fanny Kovács, a fellow Jewish-Hungarian poet, in 2002. Faludy, an outstanding literary figure and a relentless opponent of both Fascism and Communism, is at last winning his rightful place in Western literature.

Like Faludy, the English poet Robert Graves (1895-1985) attracted great popularity as well as fierce criticism. He was a writer and scholar of Irish descent, the author of some 140 works including such enduring literary successes as *I Claudius*, *The White Goddess*, *Lawrence of Arabia* and *Goodbye to All That*; but his enormous literary reputation still rests upon his approachable, stunningly original and often profound poetry. He was a recipient of many honours, including the Chair of Poetry at Oxford (1961-66). Many people found him unbearably eccentric and sometimes even scandalous. He spent the last years of his life in Mallorca where his house still

serves as a museum and a popular place of pilgrimage to lovers of literature. During the final years, his poetry and fame drew an unending stream of aspiring poets, especially young women, to visit his island.



György Faludy and Fanny Kovács

Age Meets Beauty

And what did that old goat Faludy do with Fanny
six decades his junior? We lowered our gaze. We knew
this hour was a rare enchanted flower of fulfillment.
She glowed like a pear tree at dawn in the dew.

And what about Robert Graves with his lady students
once drawn in droves by the old man's poetry and fame?
Some say he swam with them in a cove of his island,
and the women came and came . . . and came.

And what shall I do with you, my cheeky darling,

when slowly the days must fade and the shadows grow?

May your passion ignite in the blaze of the sunset.

May my love be the source of your glow.

Thomas Ország-Land, a Holocaust-survivor, is an award-winning poet and foreign correspondent who writes for New English Review from Europe and the Middle East. He participated in the October 1956 anti-Soviet Budapest revolution and later read philosophy at Acadia University, Canada. His last book was [Survivors: Hungarian Jewish Poets of the Holocaust](#) (Smokestack, 2014).

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