

JOHN GOODBY

A Life in Films: *Love Story*

The Grove 7 (2000)

1. If you are a female, blonde and pretty, it is possible to be a world authority on nuclear fusion by the age of twenty-one.
2. All beds have special L-shaped cover sheets that reach armpit level on a woman but only to waist level on the man beside her.
3. When you turn out the light and go to bed, everything in your bedroom will still be clearly visible, but slightly bluish.
4. The Eiffel Tower can be seen from any window in Paris.
5. You're likely to survive any battle in any war unless you make the mistake of showing someone a picture of your sweetheart just before it begins.
6. If you decide to start dancing in the street, everyone you meet will know the steps.
7. Should you decide to defuse a bomb, don't worry about which wire to cut; you will always choose the right one.

8. A man will show no pain while taking the most ferocious beating, but will wince in agony when a woman tries to clean his wounds.
9. Even when driving down a perfectly straight road, it is necessary to turn the steering wheel vigorously from left to right every few moments.
10. If a large pane of glass is visible, someone will be thrown through before long.
11. Should you wish to pass yourself off as a German or Russian officer, it will not be necessary to speak the language. A German or Russian accent will do.
12. A detective can only solve a case once he has been suspended from duty.
13. At least one of a pair of identical twins is born evil.
14. Nothing you can ever say to her afterwards won't make the situation worse.

Bowdler's Sister

'No man every did better service to Shakespeare.'
Algernon Charles Swinburn

One day in four he could see the Quantocks
 sit up, eerily clear, across the Channel
 as the glass nudged FAIR. Mud-dazzle
 stretched, blindingly out from Brynmill; over
 which cockle-pickers worked —skirts hised up—
 at a bare-legged business. Gulls yelped and swore
 the tide, daily, wiped their palimpsest.

He bent too, lending his gender to unwork
 that couldn't be Henrietta's (for how,
 being pure, couls she know the smutch of dirt?)
 One hand washes the other. Brother and sister
 took in Doll Tearsheet's dirty washing,
 helped to geld and spay Vienna's youth;
 she missed nothing between a maid's legs

though he did not. His fame would grow
 on reduction, although disarming Gibbon,
 he faltered (was *language* dirt, its very words
 tumescent?) Dawned, anyway, the age
 of piano legs in purdah, poultry with *chests*, 'hay-
 cock' hidden like a needle in 'haystack'.
 Blanky, Browning paired 'cows and twats'.

Today in Mumbles (fr. O. Fr. 'mammelles').
 he lies hidden behind railings, erased
 by scotch-grass. His mansion, converted
 to flats, is refused planning permission
 and squatted, the windows boarded up.
 And if dereliction is justice, I cast now
 this stone for his garden of forgetfulness.

