The Mower

The mower stalled, twice; kneeling, I found

A hedgehog jammed up against the blades,

Killed. It had been in the long grass.

I had seen it before, and even fed it, once.

Now I had mauled its unobtrusive world

Unmendably. Burial was no help:

Next morning I got up and it did not.

The first day after a death, the new absence

Is always the same; we should be careful

Of each other, we should be kind

While there is still time.

Philip Larkin, "The Mower" from *Collected Poems*. Copyright © Estate of Philip Larkin.  Reprinted by permission of Faber and Faber, Ltd.

Source: *Collected Poems* (Farrar Straus and Giroux, 2001)

**Cut Grass**

Cut grass lies frail: Brief is the breath Mown stalks exhale. Long, long the death

It dies in the white hours  
Of young-leafed June  
With chestnut flowers,  
With hedges snowlike strewn,

White lilac bowed,  
Lost lanes of Queen Anne’s lace, And that high-builded cloud Moving at summer’s pace.

Philip Larkin, 3 June 1971, 'Cut Grass' from *Collected Poems* by Philip Larkin. Copyright  
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‘Its trouble is that it’s “music”, i.e. pointless crap.’ – compares it to Elgar – in a letter to Monica – FIND IT.

Philip Larkin, on *‘Cut Grass’*

Ref Booth p 366 note 29

He is CUTTING through with his own mower….

Like saying The Trees is crap as well…. maybe combine both poems being ‘cut down’ by his own bile.

*Spent the morning typing out poems in council time. My only regret is that I wasn’t using a council typewriter and council paper. Nothing seems more fitting to me than that the money of oafs should be devoted to the furtherance of sensitive and imaginative work. (FIND QUOTE Leaving Wellington) in Motion p147*