A POEM

Sylvia Townsend Warner

Stab, pleasant friends, so tried and true,
(The back is best), so true and tried
By all my well-meants multiplied –
But stab outclassed, since I on you
Scored that first wound which rankles still,
The first, worst vantage of good-will.

This poem was typed on rag paper and inserted into Warner’s diary for September 30th – 31st 1952. It does not appear in either the Collected Poems or New Collected Poems – both edited by Claire Harman – nor is it known who prompted such intense feeling.