The Home Book of Verse, Volume 2

Burton Egbert Stevenson

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The Home Book of Verse, Volume 2

by Burton Egbert Stevenson

Contents of Volume I of the two volume set are in our Volume 1
This includes contents of Volumes 1 through 4 of our Etext editions.

PART II

POEMS OF LOVE

EROS

The sense of the world is short, -
Long and various the report, -
To love and be beloved;
Men and gods have not outlearned it;
And, how oft soe'er they've turned it,
'Tis not to be improved.

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803-1882]

"NOW WHAT IS LOVE"

"NOW WHAT IS LOVE"

Now what is Love, I pray thee, tell?
It is that fountain and that well
Where pleasure and repentance dwell;
It is, perhaps, the sauncing bell
That tolls all into heaven or hell;
And this is Love, as I hear tell.

Yet what is Love, I prithee, say?
It is a work on holiday,
It is December matched with May,
When lusty bloods in fresh array
Hear ten months after of the play;
And this is Love, as I hear say.

Yet what is Love, good shepherd, sain?
It is a sunshine mixed with rain,
It is a toothache or like pain,
It is a game where none hath gain;
The lass saith no, yet would full fain;
And this is Love, as I hear sain.

Yet, shepherd, what is Love, I pray?
It is a yes, it is a nay,
A pretty kind of sporting fray,
It is a thing will soon away.
Then, nymphs, take vantage while ye may;
And this is Love, as I hear say.

Yet what is Love, good shepherd, show?
A thing that creeps, it cannot go,
A prize that passeth to and fro,
A thing for one, a thing for moe,
And he that proves shall find it so;
And shepherd, this is Love, I trow.

Walter Raleigh [1552?-1618]

WOOING SONG
From "Christ's Victory"

Love is the blossom where there blows
Every thing that lives or grows:
Love doth make the Heavens to move,
And the Sun doth burn in love:
Love the strong and weak doth yoke,
And makes the ivy climb the oak,
Under whose shadows lions wild,
Softened by love, grow tame and mild:
Love no medicine can appease,
He burns fishes in the seas:
Not all the skill his wounds can stench,
Not all the sea his fire can quench.

Love did make the bloody spear
Once a leavy coat to wear,
While in his leaves there shrouded lay
Sweet birds, for love that sing and play
And of all love's joyful flame
I the bud and blossom am.
Only bend thy knee to me,
Thy wooing shall thy winning be!

See, see the flowers that below
Now as fresh as morning blow;
And of all the virgin rose
That as bright Aurora shows;
How they all unleaved die,
Losing their virginity!
Like unto a summer shade,
But now born, and now they fade.
Every thing doth pass away;
There is danger in delay:
Come, come, gather then the rose,
Gather it, or it you lose!
All the sand of Tagus' shore
Into my bosom casts his ore:
All the valleys' swimming corn
To my house is yearly borne:
Every grape of every vine
Is gladly bruised to make me wine:
While ten thousand kings, as proud,
To carry up my train have bowed,
And a world of ladies send me
In my chambers to attend me:
All the stars in Heaven that shine,
And ten thousand more, are mine:
Only bend thy knee to me,
Thy wooing shall thy winning be.

Giles Fletcher [1549?-1611]

ROSALIND'S MADRIGAL
From "Rosalind"

Love in my bosom like a bee
Doth suck his sweet:
Now with his wings he plays with me,
Now with his feet.
Within mine eyes he makes his nest,
His bed amidst my tender breast;
My kisses are his daily feast,
And yet he robs me of my rest:
Ah! wanton, will ye?

And if I sleeps, then percheth he
With pretty flight,
And makes his pillow of my knee
The livelong night.
Strike I my lute, he tunes the string;
He music plays if so I sing;

He lends me every lovely thing,
Yet cruel he my heart doth sting:
Whist, wanton, still ye!

Else I with roses every day
Will whip you hence,
And bind you, when you long to play,
For your offence.
I'll shut mine eyes to keep you in;
I'll make you fast it for your sin;
I'll count your power not worth a pin.
- Alas! what hereby shall I win
If he gainsay me?

What if I beat the wanton boy
With many a rod?
He will repay me with annoy,
Because a god.
Then sit thou safely on my knee;
Then let thy bower my bosom be;
Lurk in mine eyes, I like of thee;
O Cupid, so thou pity me,
Spare not, but play thee!

Thomas Lodge [1558?-1625]

SONG
From "Hymen's Triumph"

Love is a sickness full of woes,
All remedies refusing;
A plant that with most cutting grows,
Most barren with best using.
Why so?
More we enjoy it, more it dies;
If not enjoyed, it sighing cries -
Heigh ho!

Love is a torment of the mind,
A tempest everlasting;
And Jove hath made it of a kind
Not well, nor full nor fasting.
Why so?
More we enjoy it, more it dies;
If not enjoyed, it sighing cries -
Heigh ho!

Samuel Daniel [1562-1619]

LOVE'S PERJURIES
From "Love's Labor's Lost"

On a day, alack the day!
Love, whose month is ever May,
Spied a blossom passing fair
Playing in the wanton air:

Through the velvet leaves the wind,
All unseen, 'gan passage find;
That the lover, sick to death,
Wished himself the heaven's breath.
Air, quoth he, thy cheeks may blow;
Air, would I might triumph so!
But, alack, my hand is sworn
Ne'er to pluck thee from thy thorn:
Vow, alack, for youth unmeet;
Youth so apt to pluck a sweet.
Do not call it sin in me
That I am forsworn for thee:
Thou for whom e'en Jove would swear
Juno but an Ethiope were,
And deny himself for Jove,
Turning mortal for thy love.

William Shakespeare [1564-1616]

VENUS' RUNAWAY
From "The Hue and Cry After Cupid"

Beauties, have ye seen this toy,
Called Love, a little boy,
Almost naked, wanton, blind;
Cruel now, and then as kind?
If he be amongst ye, say?
He is Venus' runaway.

She that will but now discover
Where the winged wag doth hover,
Shall to-night receive a kiss,
How or where herself would wish:
But who brings him to his mother,
Shall have that kiss, and another.

He hath marks about him plenty:
You shall know him among twenty.
All his body is a fire,
And his breath a flame entire,
That, being shot like lightning in,
Wounds the heart, but not the skin.

At his sight, the sun hath turned,
Neptune in the waters burned;
Hell hath felt a greater heat;
Jove himself forsook his seat:
From the centre to the sky,
Are his trophies reared high.

Wings he hath, which though ye clip,
He will leap from lip to lip,
Over liver, lights, and heart,
But not stay in any part;
But if chance his arrow misses,
He will shoot himself in kisses.

He doth bear a golden bow,
And a quiver, hanging low,
Full of arrows, that outbrave
Dian's shafts; where, if he have
Any head more sharp than other,
With that first he strikes his mother.

Still the fairest are his fuel.
When his days are to be cruel,
Lovers' hearts are all his food,
And his baths their warmest blood:
Naught but wounds his hands doth season,
And he hates none like to Reason.

Trust him not; his words, though sweet,
Seldom with his heart do meet.
All his practice is deceit;
Every gift it is a bait;
Not a kiss but poison bears;
And most treason in his tears.

Idle minutes are his reign;
Then, the straggler makes his gain
By presenting maids with toys,
And would have ye think them joys:
'Tis the ambition of the elf
To have all childish as himself.

If by these ye please to know him,
Beauties, be not nice, but show him.
Though ye had a will to hide him,
Now, we hope, ye'll not abide him;
Since you hear his falser play,
And that he's Venus' runaway.

Ben Jonson [1573?-1637]

WHAT IS LOVE?
From "The Captain"

Tell me, dearest, what is love?
'Tis a lightning from above;
'Tis an arrow, 'tis a fire,
'Tis a boy they call Desire.
'Tis a grave,
Gapes to have
Those poor fools that long to prove.

Tell me more, are women true?
Yes, some are, and some as you.
Some are willing, some are strange,
Since you men first taught to change.
And till troth
Be in both,
All shall love, to love anew.

Tell me more yet, can they grieve?

Yes, and sicken sore, but live,
And be wise, and delay,
When you men are wise as they.
Then I see,
Faith will be
Never till they both believe.

John Fletcher [1579-1625]

LOVE'S EMBLEMS
From "Valentinian"

Now the lusty spring is seen;
Golden yellow, gaudy blue,
Daintily invite the view:
Everywhere on every green
Roses blushing as they blow,
And enticing men to pull,
Lilies whiter than the snow,
Woodbines of sweet honey full:
All love's emblems, and all cry,
"Ladies, if not plucked, we die."

Yet the lusty spring hath stayed;
Blushing red and purest white
Daintily to love invite
Every woman, every maid:
Cherries kissing as they grow,
And inviting men to taste,
Apples even ripe below,
Winding gently to the waist:
All love's emblems, and all cry,
"Ladies, if not plucked, we die."

John Fletcher [1579-1625]

THE POWER OF LOVE
From "Valentinian"

Hear, ye ladies that despise
What the mighty Love has done;
Fear examples and be wise:
Fair Callisto was a nun;
Leda, sailing on the stream
To deceive the hopes of man,
Love accounting but a dream,
Doted on a silver swan;
Danae, in a brazen tower,
Where no love was, loved a shower.

Hear, ye ladies that are coy,
What the mighty Love can do;
Fear the fierceness of the boy:
The chaste Moon he makes to woo;
Vesta, kindling holy fires,
Circled round about with spies,

Never dreaming loose desires,
Doting at the altar dies;
Ilion, in a short hour, higher
He can build, and once more fire.

John Fletcher [1579-1625]

ADVICE TO A LOVER

The sea hath many thousand sands,
The sun hath motes as many;
The sky is full of stars, and Love
As full of woes as any:
Believe me, that do know the elf,
And make no trial by thyself!

It is in truth a pretty toy
For babes to play withal:
But O, the honies of our youth
Are oft our age's gall:
Self-proof in time will make thee know
He was a prophet told thee so:

A prophet that, Cassandra-like,
Tells truth without belief;
For headstrong Youth will run his race,
Although his goal be grief: -
Love's Martyr, when his heat is past,
Proves Care's Confessor at the last.

Unknown

LOVE'S HOROSCOPE

Love, brave Virtue's younger brother,
Erst hath made my heart a mother,
She consults the anxious spheres,
To calculate her young son's years;
She asks if sad or saving powers
Gave omen to his infant hours;
She asks each star that then stood by
If poor Love shall live or die.

Ah, my heart! is that the way?
Are these the beams that rule thy day?
Thou know'st a face in whose each look
Beauty lays ope Love's fortune-book,
On whose fair revolutions wait
The obsequious motions of Love's fate.
Ah, my heart! her eyes and she
Have taught thee new astrology.
Howe'er Love's native hours were set,
Whatever starry synod met,
'Tis in the mercy of her eye,
If poor Love shall live or die.

If those sharp rays, putting on
Points of death, bid Love be gone; -
Though the heavens in council sate
To crown an uncontrolled fate;
Though their best aspects twined upon
The kindest constellation,
Cast amorous glances on its birth,
And whispered the confederate earth
To pave his paths with all the good
That warms the bed of youth and blood: -
Love has no plea against her eye;
Beauty frowns, and Love must die.

But if her milder influence move,
And gild the hopes of humble Love; -
Though heaven's inauspicious eye
Lay black on Love's nativity;
Though every diamond in Jove's crown
Fixed his forehead to a frown; -
Her eye a strong appeal can give,
Beauty smiles, and Love shall live.

O, if Love shall live, O where,
But in her eye, or in her ear,
In her breast, or in her breath,
Shall I hide poor Love from death?
For in the life aught else can give,
Love shall die, although he live.

Or, if Love shall die, O where,
But in her eye, or in her ear,
In her breath, or in her breast,
Shall I build his funeral nest?
While Love shall thus entombed lie,
Love shall live, although he die!

Richard Crashaw [1613?-1649]

"AH, HOW SWEET IT IS TO LOVE!"
From "Tyrannic Love"

Ah, how sweet it is to love!
Ah, how gay is young Desire!
And what pleasing pains we prove
When we first approach Love's fire!
Pains of Love be sweeter far
Than all other pleasures are.

Sighs which are from lovers blown
Do but gently heave the heart:
Even the tears they shed alone
Cure, like trickling balm, their smart:
Lovers, when they lose their breath,
Bleed away in easy death.

Love and Time with reverence use,
Treat them like a parting friend;

Nor the golden gifts refuse
Which in youth sincere they send:
For each year their price is more,
And they less simple than before.

Love, like spring-tides full and high,
Swells in every youthful vein;
But each tide does less supply,
Till they quite shrink in again:
If a flow in age appear,
'Tis but rain, and runs not clear.

John Dryden [1631-1700]

SONG

Love still has something of the sea,
From whence his Mother rose;
No time his slaves from doubt can free,
Nor give their thoughts repose.

They are becalmed in clearest days,
And in rough weather tossed;
They wither under cold delays,
Or are in tempests lost.

One while they seem to touch the port,
Then straight into the main
Some angry wind, in cruel sport,
The vessel drives again.

At first Disdain and Pride they fear,
Which if they chance to 'scape,
Rivals and Falsehood soon appear,
In a more dreadful shape.

By such degrees to joy they come,
And are so long withstood,
So slowly they receive the sum,
It hardly does them good.

'Tis cruel to prolong a pain;
And to defer a joy,
Believe me, gentle Celemene,
Offends the winged boy.

An hundred thousand oaths your fears,
Perhaps, would not remove;
And if I gazed a thousand years,
I could no deeper love.

Charles Sedley [1639?-1710]

THE VINE
From "Sunday Up the River"

The wine of Love is music,
And the feast of Love is song:
And when Love sits down to the banquet,
Love sits long:

Sits long and arises drunken,
But not with the feast and the wine;
He reeleth with his own heart,
That great, rich Vine.

James Thomson [1834-1882]

SONG

Fain would I change that note
To which fond love hath charmed me,
Long, long to sing by rote,
Fancying that that harmed me:
Yet when this thought doth come, -
Love is the perfect sum
Of all delight.
I have no other choice
Either for pen or voice
To sing or write.

O love, they wrong thee much
That say thy sweet is bitter
When thy rich fruit is such
As nothing can be sweeter.
Fair house of joy and bliss
Where truest pleasure is,
I do adore thee:
I know thee what thou art,
I serve thee with my heart,
And fall before thee.

Unknown

CUPID STUNG

Cupid once upon a bed
Of roses laid his weary head;
Luckless urchin, not to see
Within the leaves a slumbering bee.
The bee awaked - with anger wild
The bee awaked, and stung the child.
Loud and piteous are his cries;
To Venus quick he runs, he flies;
"Oh Mother! I am wounded through -
I die with pain - in sooth I do!
Stung by some little angry thing,
Some serpent on a tiny wing -
A bee it was - for once, I know,
I heard a rustic call it so."
Thus he spoke, and she the while
Heard him with a soothing smile;

Then said, "My infant, if so much
Thou feel the little wild bee's touch,
How must the heart, ah, Cupid! be,
The hapless heart that's stung by thee!"

Thomas Moore [1779-1852]

CUPID DROWNED

T'other day, as I was twining
Roses, for a crown to dine in,
What, of all things, 'mid the heap,
Should I light on, fast asleep,
But the little desperate elf,
The tiny traitor, Love, himself!
By the wings I picked him up
Like a bee, and in a cup
Of my wine I plunged and sank him,
Then what d'ye think I did? - I drank him.
Faith, I thought him dead. Not he!
There he lives with ten-fold glee;
And now this moment with his wings
I feel him tickling my heart-strings.

Leigh Hunt [1784-1859]

SONG
From "The Heir of Vironi"

Oh! say not woman's love is bought
With vain and empty treasure.
Oh! say not woman's heart is caught
By every idle pleasure.
When first her gentle bosom knows
Love's flame, it wanders never;
Deep in her heart the passion glows,
She loves, and loves for ever.

Oh! say not woman's false as fair,
That, like the bee, she ranges,
Still seeking flowers more sweet and rare,
As fickle fancy changes.
Ah no! the love that first can warm
Will leave her bosom never;
No second passion e'er can charm,
She loves, and loves for ever.

Isaac Pocock [1782-1835]

"IN THE DAYS OF OLD"
From "Crotchet Castle"

In the days of old
Lovers felt true passion,
Deeming years of sorrow

By a smile repaid:
Now the charms of gold,
Spells of pride and fashion,
Bid them say Good-morrow
To the best-loved Maid.

Through the forests wild,
O'er the mountains lonely,
They were never weary
Honor to pursue:
If the damsel smiled
Once in seven years only,
All their wanderings dreary
Ample guerdon knew.

Now one day's caprice
Weighs down years of smiling,
Youthful hearts are rovers,
Love is bought and sold.
Fortune's gifts may cease,
Love is less beguiling:
Wiser were the lovers
In the days of old.

Thomas Love Peacock [1785-1866]

SONG

How delicious is the winning
Of a kiss at Love's beginning,
When two mutual hearts are sighing
For the knot there's no untying!

Yet remember, 'midst your wooing,
Love has bliss, but Love has ruing;
Other smiles may make you fickle,
Tears for other charms may trickle.

Love he comes, and Love he tarries,
Just as fate or fancy carries;
Longest stays, when sorest chidden;
Laughs and flies, when pressed and bidden.

Bind the sea to slumber stilly,
Bind its odor to the lily,
Bind the aspen ne'er to quiver,
Then bind Love to last forever!

Love's a fire that needs renewal
Of fresh beauty for its fuel:
Love's wing moults when caged and captured,
Only free, he soars enraptured.

Can you keep the bee from ranging,
Or the ringdove's neck from changing?
No! nor fettered Love from dying
In the knot there's no untying.

Thomas Campbell [1777-1844]

STANZAS

Could Love for ever
Run like a river,
And Time's endeavor
Be tried in vain -
No other pleasure
With this could measure,
And like a treasure
We'd hug the chain.
But since our sighing
Ends not in dying,
And, formed for flying,
Love plumes his wing;
Then for this reason
Let's love a season;
But let that season
Be only Spring.

When lovers parted
Feel broken-hearted,
And, all hopes thwarted,
Expect to die;
A few years older,
Ah! how much colder
They might behold her
For whom they sigh!
When linked together,
In every weather,
They pluck Love's feather
From out his wing -
He'll stay for ever,
But sadly shiver
Without his plumage,
When past the Spring.

Like Chiefs of Faction,
His life is action -
A formal paction
That curbs his reign,
Obscures his glory,
Despot no more, he
Such territory
Quits with disdain.
Still, still advancing,
With banners glancing,
His power enhancing,
He must move on -
Repose but cloys him,
Retreat destroys him,
Love brooks not a
Degraded throne.

Wait not, fond lover!

Till years are over,
And then recover,
As from a dream.
While each bewailing
The other's failing,
With wrath and railing,
All hideous seem -
While first decreasing,
Yet not quite ceasing,
Wait not till teasing
All passion blight:
If once diminished
Love's reign is finished -
Then part in friendship, -
And bid good-night.

So shall Affection
To recollection
The dear connection
Bring back with joy:
You had not waited
Till, tired or hated,
Your passions sated
Began to cloy.
Your last embraces
Leave no cold traces -
The same fond faces
As through the past;
And eyes, the mirrors
Of your sweet errors,
Reflect but rapture -
Not least though last.

True, separations
Ask more than patience;
What desperations
From such have risen!
But yet remaining,
What is't but chaining
Hearts which, once waning,
Beat 'gainst their prison?
Time can but cloy love,
And use destroy love:
The winged boy, Love,
Is but for boys -
You'll find it torture
Though sharper, shorter,
To wean and not
Wear out your joys.

George Gordon Byron [1788-1824]

"THEY SPEAK O' WILES"

They speak o' wiles in woman's smiles,
An' ruin in her ee;
I ken they bring a pang at whiles

That's unco' sair to dree;

But mind ye this, the half-ta'en kiss,
The first fond fa'in' tear,
Is, heaven kens, fu' sweet amends,
An' tints o' heaven here.

When two leal hearts in fondness meet,
Life's tempests howl in vain;
The very tears o' love are sweet
When paid with tears again.

Shall hapless prudence shake its pow?
Shall cauldrife caution fear?
Oh, dinna, dinna droun the lowe
That lights a heaven here!

William Thom [1798?-1848]

"LOVE WILL FIND OUT THE WAY"

Over the mountains
And over the waves,
Under the fountains
And under the graves,
Under floods that are deepest,
Which Neptune obey,
Over rocks that are steepest,
Love will find out the way.

Where there is no place
For the glow-worm to lie,
Where there is no space
For receipt of a fly,
Where the midge dares not venture,
Lest herself fast she lay,
If Love come, he will enter,
And find out the way.

You may esteem him
A child for his might,
Or you may deem him
A coward from his flight:
But if she whom Love doth honor
Be concealed from the day,
Set a thousand guards upon her,
Love will find out the way.

Some think to lose him,
By having him confined,
And some do suppose him,
Poor thing, to be blind;
But if ne'er so close ye wall him,
Do the best that you may,
Blind Love, if so ye call him,
Will find out the way.

You may train the eagle
To stoop to your fist,
Or you may inveigle
The phoenix of the east;
The tiger, ye may move her
To give over her prey;
But you'll ne'er stop a lover -
He will find out the way.

Unknown

A WOMAN'S SHORTCOMINGS

She has laughed as softly as if she sighed,
She has counted six, and over,
Of a purse well filled, and a heart well tried -
Oh, each a worthy lover!
They "give her time"; for her soul must slip
Where the world has set the grooving;
She will lie to none with her fair red lip:
But love seeks truer loving.

She trembles her fan in a sweetness dumb,
As her thoughts were beyond recalling;
With a glance for one, and a glance for some,
From her eyelids rising and falling;
Speaks common words with a blushful air,
Hears bold words, unreproving;
But her silence says - what she never will swear -
And love seeks better loving.

Go, lady! lean to the night-guitar,
And drop a smile to the bringer;
Then smile as sweetly, when he is far,
At the voice of an in-door singer.
Bask tenderly beneath tender eyes;
Glance lightly, on their removing;
And join new vows to old perjuries -
But dare not call it loving!

Unless you can think, when the song is done,
No other is soft in the rhythm;
Unless you can feel, when left by One,
That all men else go with him;
Unless you can know, when unpraised by his breath,
That your beauty itself wants proving;
Unless you can swear "For life, for death!" -
Oh, fear to call it loving!

Unless you can muse in a crowd all day
On the absent face that fixed you;
Unless you can love, as the angels may,
With the breadth of heaven betwixt you;
Unless you can dream that his faith is fast,
Through behoving and unbehoving;
Unless you can die when the dream is past -
Oh, never call it loving!

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806-1861]

"LOVE HATH A LANGUAGE"
From "To My Son"

Love hath a language for all years -
Fond hieroglyphs, obscure and old -
Wherein the heart reads, writ in tears,
The tale which never yet was told.

Love hath his meter too, to trace
Those bounds which never yet were given, -
To measure that which mocks at space,
Is deep as death, and high as heaven.

Love hath his treasure hoards, to pay
True faith, or goodly service done, -
Dear priceless nothings, which outweigh
All riches that the sun shines on.

Helen Selina Sheridan [1807-1867]

SONG
From "Maud"

O, let the solid ground,
Not fail beneath my feet
Before my life has found
What some have found so sweet;
Then let come what come may,
What matter if I go mad,
I shall have had my day.

Let the sweet heavens endure,
Not close and darken above me
Before I am quite quite sure
That there is one to love me!
Then let come what come may
To a life that has been so sad,
I shall have had my day.

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

AMATURUS

Somewhere beneath the sun,
These quivering heart-strings prove it,
Somewhere there must be one
Made for this soul to move it;
Some one that hides her sweetness
From neighbors whom she slights,
Nor can attain completeness,
Nor give her heart its rights;
Some one whom I could court

With no great change of manner,
Still holding reason's fort,
Though waving fancy's banner;
A lady, not so queenly
As to disdain my hand,
Yet born to smile serenely
Like those that rule the land;
Noble, but not too proud;
With soft hair simply folded,
And bright face crescent-browed,
And throat by Muses moulded;
And eyelids lightly falling
On little glistening seas,
Deep-calm, when gales are brawling,
Though stirred by every breeze;
Swift voice, like flight of dove
Through minster-arches floating,
With sudden turns, when love
Gets overnear to doting;
Keen lips, that shape soft sayings
Like crystals of the snow,
With pretty half-betrayings
Of things one may not know;
Fair hand whose touches thrill,
Like golden rod of wonder,
Which Hermes wields at will
Spirit and flesh to sunder;
Light foot, to press the stirrup
In fearlessness and glee,
Or dance, till finches chirrup,
And stars sink to the sea.

Forth, Love, and find this maid,
Wherever she be hidden:
Speak, Love, be not afraid,
But plead as thou art bidden;
And say, that he who taught thee
His yearning want and pain,
Too dearly, dearly bought thee
To part with thee in vain.

William Johnson-Cory [1823-1892]

THE SURFACE AND THE DEPTHS

Love took my life and thrilled it
Through all its strings,
Played round my mind and filled it
With sound of wings;
But to my heart he never came
To touch it with his golden flame.

Therefore it is that singing
I do rejoice,
Nor heed the slow years bringing
A harsher voice;
Because the songs which he has sung

Still leave the untouched singer young.

But whom in fuller fashion
The Master sways,
For him, swift-winged with passion,
Fleet the brief days.
Betimes the enforced accents come,
And leave him ever after dumb.

Lewis Morris [1833-1907]

A BALLAD OF DREAMLAND

I hid my heart in a nest of roses,
Out of the sun's way, hidden apart;
In a softer bed then the soft white snow's is,
Under the roses I hid my heart.
Why would it sleep not? why should it start,
When never a leaf of the rose-tree stirred?
What made sleep flutter his wings and part?
Only the song of a secret bird.

Lie still, I said, for the wind's wing closes,
And mild leaves muffle the keen sun's dart;
Lie still, for the wind on the warm seas dozes,
And the wind is unquieter yet than thou art.
Does a thought in thee still as a thorn's wound smart?
Does the fang still fret thee of hope deferred?
What bids the lips of thy sleep dispart?
Only the song of a secret bird.

The green land's name that a charm encloses,
It never was writ in the traveller's chart,
And sweet on its trees as the fruit that grows is,
It never was sold in the merchant's mart.
The swallows of dreams through its dim fields dart,
And sleep's are the tunes in its tree-tops heard;
No hound's note wakens the wildwood hart,
Only the song of a secret bird.

ENVOI
In the world of dreams I have chosen my part,
To sleep for a season and hear no word
Of true love's truth or of light love's art,
Only the song of a secret bird.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

ENDYMION

The rising moon has hid the stars;
Her level rays, like golden bars,
Lie on the landscape green,
With shadows brown between.

And silver white the river gleams,

As if Diana, in her dreams
Had dropped her silver bow
Upon the meadows low.

On such a tranquil night as this,
She woke Endymion with a kiss,
When, sleeping in the grove,
He dreamed not of her love.

Like Dian's kiss, unasked, unsought,
Love gives itself, but is not bought;
Nor voice, nor sound betrays
Its deep, impassioned gaze.

It comes, - the beautiful, the free,
The crown of all humanity, -
In silence and alone
To seek the elected one.

It lifts the boughs, whose shadows deep
Are life's oblivion, the soul's sleep,
And kisses the closed eyes
Of him who slumbering lies.

O weary hearts! O slumbering eyes!
O drooping souls, whose destinies
Are fraught with fear and pain,
Ye shall be loved again!

No one is so accursed by fate,
No one so utterly desolate,
But some heart, though unknown,
Responds unto his own.

Responds, - as if with unseen wings,
An angel touched its quivering strings;
And whispers, in its song,
"Where hast thou stayed so long?"

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807-1882]

FATE

Two shall be born, the whole wide world apart,
And speak in different tongues and have no thought
Each of the other's being, and no heed.
And these, o'er unknown seas, to unknown lands
Shall cross, escaping wreck, defying death;
And all unconsciously shape every act
And bend each wandering step to this one end -
That, one day, out of darkness they shall meet
And read life's meaning in each other's eyes.

And two shall walk some narrow way of life
So nearly side by side that, should one turn
Ever so little space to left or right,
They needs must stand acknowledged, face to face.

And, yet, with wistful eyes that never meet
And groping hands that never clasp and lips
Calling in vain to ears that never hear,
They seek each other all their weary days
And die unsatisfied - and this is Fate!

Susan Marr Spalding [1841-1908]

"GIVE ALL TO LOVE"

Give all to love;
Obey thy heart;
Friends, kindred, days,
Estate, good fame,
Plans, credit, and the Muse, -
Nothing refuse.

'Tis a brave master;
Let it have scope:
Follow it utterly,
Hope beyond hope:
High and more high
It dives into noon,
With wing unspent,

But it is a god,
Knows its own path
And the outlets of the sky.

It was never for the mean;
It requireth courage stout.
Souls above doubt,
Valor unbending,
It will reward, -
They shall return
More than they were,
And ever ascending.

Leave all for love;
Yet, hear me, yet,
One word more thy heart behoved,
One pulse more of firm endeavor, -
Keep thee to-day,
To-morrow, forever,
Free as an Arab
Of thy beloved.

Cling with life to the maid;
But when the surprise,
First vague shadow of surmise,
Flits across her bosom young,
Of a joy apart from thee,
Free be she, fancy-free;
Nor thou detain her vesture's hem,
Nor the palest rose she flung
From her summer diadem.

Though thou loved her as thyself,
As a self of purer clay,
Though her parting dims the day,
Stealing grace from all alive;
Heartily know,
When half-gods go,
The gods arrive.

Ralph Waldo Emerson [1803-1882]

"O, LOVE IS NOT A SUMMER MOOD"

O, love is not a summer mood,
Nor flying phantom of the brain,
Nor youthful fever of the blood,
Nor dream, nor fate, nor circumstance.
Love is not born of blinded chance,
Nor bred in simple ignorance.

Love is the flower of maidenhood;
Love is the fruit of mortal pain;
And she hath winter in her blood.
True love is steadfast as the skies,
And once alight, she never flies;
And love is strong, and love is wise.

Richard Watson Gilder [1844-1909]

WHEN WILL LOVE COME?

Some find Love late, some find him soon,
Some with the rose in May,
Some with the nightingale in June,
And some when skies are gray;
Love comes to some with smiling eyes,
And comes with tears to some;
For some Love sings, for some Love sighs,
For some Love's lips are dumb.

How will you come to me, fair Love?
Will you come late or soon?
With sad or smiling skies above,
By light of sun or moon?
Will you be sad, will you be sweet,
Sing, sigh, Love, or be dumb?
Will it be summer when we meet,
Or autumn ere you come?

Pakenham Beatty [1855-

"AWAKE, MY HEART"

Awake, my heart, to be loved, awake, awake!

It leaps in the sky: unrisen lustres slake

The o'ertaken moon. Awake, O heart, awake!

She too that loveth awaketh and hopes for thee:
Her eyes already have sped the shades that flee,
Already they watch the path thy feet shall take:
Awake, O heart, to be loved, awake, awake!

And if thou tarry from her, - if this could be, -
She cometh herself, O heart, to be loved, to thee;
For thee would unashamed herself forsake:
Awake, to be loved, my heart, awake, awake!

Awake! The land is scattered with light, and see,
Uncanopied sleep is flying from field and tree;
And blossoming boughs of April in laughter shake:
Awake, O heart, to be loved, awake, awake!

Lo, all things wake and tarry and look for thee:
She looketh and saith, "O sun, now bring him to me.
Come, more adored, O adored, for his coming's sake,
And awake, my heart, to be loved, awake, awake!"

Robert Bridges [1844-1930]

THE SECRET

Nightingales warble about it
All night under blossom and star;
The wild swan is dying without it,
And the eagle crieth afar;
The sun, he doth mount but to find it,
Searching the green earth o'er;
But more doth a man's heart mind it -
O more, more, more!

Over the gray leagues of ocean
The infinite yearneth alone;
The forests with wandering emotion
The thing they know not intone;
Creation arose but to see it,
A million lamps in the blue;
But a lover, he shall be it,
If one sweet maid is true.

George Edward Woodberry [1855-1930]

THE ROSE OF STARS

When Love, our great Immortal,
Put on mortality,
And down from Eden's portal
Brought this sweet life to be,
At the sublime archangel
He laughed with veiled eyes,
For he bore within his bosom
The seed of Paradise.

He hid it in his bosom,
And there such warmth it found,
It brake in bud and blossom
And the rose fell on the ground;
As the green light on the prairie,
As the red light on the sea,
Through fragrant belts of summer
Came this sweet life to be.

And the grave archangel seeing,
Spread his mighty wings for flight,
But the glow hung round him fleeing
Like the rose of an Arctic night;
And sadly moving heavenward
By Venus and by Mars,
He heard the joyful planets
Hail Earth, the Rose of Stars.

George Edward Woodberry [1855-1930]

SONG OF EROS
From "Agathon"

When love in the faint heart trembles,
And the eyes with tears are wet,
O, tell me what resembles
Thee, young Regret?
Violets with dewdrops drooping,
Lilies o'erfull of gold,
Roses in June rains stooping,
That weep for the cold,
Are like thee, young Regret.

Bloom, violets, lilies, and roses!
But what, young Desire,
Like thee, when love discloses
Thy heart of fire?
The wild swan unreturning,
The eagle alone with the sun,
The long-winged storm-gulls burning
Seaward when day is done,
Are like thee, young Desire.

George Edward Woodberry [1855-1930]

LOVE IS STRONG

A viewless thing is the wind,
But its strength is mightier far
Than a phalanxed host in battle line,
Than the limbs of a Samson are.

And a viewless thing is Love,
And a name that vanisheth;
But her strength is the wind's wild strength above,

For she conquers shame and Death.

Richard Burton [1861-

"LOVE ONCE WAS LIKE AN APRIL DAWN"

Love once was like an April dawn:
Song throbbed within the heart by rote,
And every tint of rose or fawn
Was greeted by a joyous note.
How eager was my thought to see
Into that morning mystery!

Love now is like an August noon,
No spot is empty of its shine;
The sun makes silence seem a boon,
And not a voice so dumb as mine.
Yet with what words I'd welcome thee -
Couldst thou return, dear mystery!

Robert Underwood Johnson [1853-

THE GARDEN OF SHADOW

Love heeds no more the sighing of the wind
Against the perfect flowers: thy garden's close
Is grown a wilderness, where none shall find
One strayed, last petal of one last year's rose.

O bright, bright hair! O mouth like a ripe fruit!
Can famine be so nigh to harvesting?
Love, that was songful, with a broken lute
In grass of graveyards goeth murmuring.

Let the wind blow against the perfect flowers,
And all thy garden change and glow with spring:
Love is grown blind with no more count of hours
Nor part in seed-time nor in harvesting.

Ernest Dowson [1867-1900]

THE CALL

Love comes laughing up the valleys,
Hand in hand with hoyden Spring;
All the Flower-People nodding,
All the Feathered-Folk a-wing.

"Higher! Higher!" call the thrushes;
"Wilder! Freer!" breathe the trees;
And the purple mountains beckon
Upward to their mysteries.

Always farther leagues to wander,
Peak to peak and slope to slope;

Lips to sing and feet to follow,
Eyes to dream and heart to hope!

Tarry? Nay, but who can tarry?
All the world is on the wing;
Love comes laughing up the valleys,
Hand in hand with hoyden Spring.

Reginald Wright Kauffman [1877-

THE HIGHWAY

All day long on the highway
The King's fleet couriers ride;
You may hear the tread of their horses sped
Over the country side.
They ride for life and they ride for death
And they override who tarrieth.
With show of color and flush of pride
They stir the dust on the highway.

Let them ride on the highway wide.
Love walks in little paths aside.

All day long on the highway
Is a tramp of an army's feet;
You may see them go in a marshaled row
With the tale of their arms complete:
They march for war and they march for peace,
For the lust of gold and fame's increase,
For victories sadder than defeat
They raise the dust on the highway.

All the armies of earth defied,
Love dwells in little paths aside.

All day long on the highway
Rushes an eager band,
With straining eyes for a worthless prize
That slips from the grasp like sand.
And men leave blood where their feet have stood
And bow them down unto brass and wood -
Idols fashioned by their own hand -
Blind in the dust of the highway.

Power and gold and fame denied,
Love laughs glad in the paths aside.

Louise Driscoll [1875-

SONG

Take it, love!
'Twill soon be over,
With the thickening of the clover,
With the calling of the plover,

Take it, take it, lover.

Take it, boy!
The blossom's falling,
And the farewell cuckoo's calling,
While the sun and showers are one,
Take your love out in the sun.

Take it, girl!
And fear no after,
Take your fill of all this laughter,
Laugh or not, the tears will fall,
Take the laughter first of all.

Richard Le Gallienne [1866-

"NEVER GIVE ALL THE HEART"

Never give all the heart, for love
Will hardly seem worth thinking of
To passionate women, if it seem
Certain, and they never dream
That it fades out from kiss to kiss;
For everything that's lovely is
But a brief, dreamy, kind delight.
O never give the heart outright
For they, for all smooth lips can say,
Have given their hearts up to the play,
And who can play it well enough
If deaf and dumb and blind with love?
He that made this knows all the cost,
For he gave all his heart and lost.

William Butler Yeats [1865-

SONG

I came to the door of the House of Love
And knocked as the starry night went by;
And my true love cried "Who knocks?" and I said
"It is I."

And Love looked down from a lattice above
Where the roses were dry as the lips of the dead:
"There is not room in the House of Love
For you both," he said.

I plucked a leaf from the porch and crept
Away through a desert of scoffs and scorns
To a lonely place where I prayed and wept
And wove me a crown of thorns.

I came once more to the House of Love
And knocked, ah, softly and wistfully,
And my true love cried "Who knocks?" and I said
"None now but thee."

And the great doors opened wide apart
And a voice rang out from a glory of light,
"Make room, make room for a faithful heart
In the House of Love, to-night."

Alfred Noyes [1880-

"CHILD, CHILD"

Child, child, love while you can
The voice and the eyes and the soul of a man,
Never fear though it break your heart -
Out of the wound new joy will start;
Only love proudly and gladly and well
Though love be heaven or love be hell.

Child, child, love while you may,
For life is short as a happy day;
Never fear the thing you feel -
Only by love is life made real;
Love, for the deadly sins are seven,
Only through love will you enter heaven.

Sara Teasdale [1884-1933]

WISDOM

The young girl questions: "Whether were it better
To lie for ever, a warm slug-a-bed,
Or to rise up and bide by Fate and Chance,
The rawness of the morning,
The gibing and the scorning
Of the stern Teacher of my ignorance?"
"I know not," Wisdom said.

The young girl questions: "Friend, shall I die calmer,
If I've lain for ever, sheets above the head,
Warm in a dream, or rise to take the worst
Of peril in the highways
Of straying in the by-ways,
Of hunger for the truth, of drought and thirst?"
"We do not know," he said,
"Nor may till we be dead."

Ford Madox Ford [1873-

EPILOGUE
From "Emblems Of Love"

What shall we do for Love these days?
How shall we make an altar-blaze
To smite the horny eyes of men
With the renown of our Heaven,
And to the unbelievers prove

Our service to our dear god, Love?
What torches shall we lift above
The crowd that pushes through the mire,
To amaze the dark heads with strange fire?
I should think I were much to blame,
If never I held some fragrant flame
Above the noises of the world,
And openly 'mid men's hurrying stares,
Worshipped before the sacred fears
That are like flashing curtains furled
Across the presence of our lord Love.
Nay, would that I could fill the gaze
Of the whole earth with some great praise
Made in a marvel for men's eyes,
Some tower of glittering masonries,
Therein such a spirit flourishing
Men should see what my heart can sing:
All that Love hath done to me
Built into stone, a visible glee;
Marble carried to gleaming height
As moved aloft by inward delight;
Not as with toil of chisels hewn,
But seeming poised in a mighty tune.
For of all those who have been known
To lodge with our kind host, the sun,
I envy one for just one thing:
In Cordova of the Moors
There dwelt a passion-minded King,
Who set great bands of marble-hewers
To fashion his heart's thanksgiving
In a tall palace, shapen so
All the wondering world might know
The joy he had of his Moorish lass.
His love, that brighter and larger was
Than the starry places, into firm stone
He sent, as if the stone were glass
Fired and into beauty blown.
Solemn and invented gravely
In its bulk the fabric stood,
Even as Love, that trusteth bravely
In its own exceeding good
To be better than the waste
Of time's devices; grandly spaced,
Seriously the fabric stood.
But over it all a pleasure went
Of carven delicate ornament,
Wreathing up like ravishment,
Mentioning in sculptures twined
The blitheness Love hath in his mind;
And like delighted senses were
The windows, and the columns there
Made the following sight to ache
As the heart that did them make.
Well I can see that shining song
Flowering there, the upward throng
Of porches, pillars and windowed walls,
Spires like piercing panpipe calls,
Up to the roof's snow-cloud flight;

All glancing in the Spanish light
White as water of arctic tides,
Save an amber dazzle on sunny sides.
You had said, the radiant sheen
Of that palace might have been
A young god's fantasy, ere he came
His serious worlds and suns to frame;
Such an immortal passion
Quivered among the slim hewn stone.
And in the nights it seemed a jar
Cut in the substance of a star,
Wherein a wine, that will be poured
Some time for feasting Heaven, was stored.
But within this fretted shell,
The wonder of Love made visible,
The King a private gentle mood
There placed, of pleasant quietude.
For right amidst there was a court,
Where always musked silences
Listened to water and to trees;
And herbage of all fragrant sort, -
Lavender, lad's-love, rosemary,
Basil, tansy, centaury, -
Was the grass of that orchard, hid
Love's amazements all amid.
Jarring the air with rumor cool,
Small fountains played into a pool
With sound as soft as the barley's hiss
When its beard just sprouting is;
Whence a young stream, that trod on moss,
Prettily rimpled the court across.
And in the pool's clear idleness,
Moving like dreams through happiness,
Shoals of small bright fishes were;
In and out weed-thickets bent
Perch and carp, and sauntering went
With mounching jaws and eyes a-stare;
Or on a lotus leaf would crawl
A brindled loach to bask and sprawl,
Tasting the warm sun ere it dipped
Into the water; but quick as fear
Back his shining brown head slipped
To crouch on the gravel of his lair,
Where the cooled sunbeams, broke in wrack,
Spilt shattered gold about his back.
So within that green-veiled air,
Within that white-walled quiet, where
Innocent water thought aloud, -
Childish prattle that must make
The wise sunlight with laughter shake
On the leafage overbowed, -
Often the King and his love-lass
Let the delicious hours pass.
All the outer world could see
Graved and sawn amazingly
Their love's delighted riotise,
Fixed in marble for all men's eyes;
But only these twain could abide

In the cool peace that withinside
Thrilling desire and passion dwelt;
They only knew the still meaning spelt
By Love's flaming script, which is
God's word written in ecstasies.
And where is now that palace gone,
All the magical skilled stone,
All the dreaming towers wrought
By Love as if no more than thought
The unresisting marble was?
How could such a wonder pass?
Ah, it was but built in vain
Against the stupid horns of Rome,
That pushed down into the common loam
The loveliness that shone in Spain.
But we have raised it up again!
A loftier palace, fairer far,
Is ours, and one that fears no war.
Safe in marvellous walls we are;
Wondering sense like builded fires,
High amazement of desires,
Delight and certainty of love,
Closing around, roofing above
Our unapproached and perfect hour
Within the splendors of love's power.

Lascelles Abercrombie [1881-

ON HAMPSTEAD HEATH

Against the green flame of the hawthorn-tree,
His scarlet tunic burns;
And livelier than the green sap's mantling glee
The Spring fire tingles through him headily
As quivering he turns
And stammers out the old amazing tale
Of youth and April weather;
While she, with half-breathed jests that, sobbing, fail,
Sits, tight-lipped, quaking, eager-eyed and pale,
Beneath her purple feather.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson [1878-

ONCE ON A TIME

Once on a time, once on a time,
Before the Dawn began,
There was a nymph of Dian's train
Who was beloved of Pan;
Once on a time a peasant lad
Who loved a lass at home;
Once on a time a Saxon king
Who loved a queen of Rome.

The world has but one song to sing,
And it is ever new,

The first and last of all the songs
For it is ever true -
A little song, a tender song,
The only song it hath;
"There was a youth of Ascalon
Who loved a girl of Gath."

A thousand thousand years have gone,
And aeons still shall pass,
Yet shall the world forever sing
Of him who loved a lass -
An olden song, a golden song,
And sing it unafraid:
"There was a youth, once on a time,
Who dearly loved a maid."

Kendall Banning [1879-

IN PRAISE OF HER

FIRST SONG
From "Astrophel and Stella"

Doubt you to whom my Muse these notes intendeth,
Which now my breast, o'ercharged, to music lendeth?
To you! to you! all song of praise is due;
Only in you my song begins and endeth.

Who hath the eyes which marry state with pleasure?
Who keeps the key of Nature's chiefest treasure?
To you! to you! all song of praise is due;
Only for you the heaven forgat all measure.

Who hath the lips where wit in fairness reigneth?
Who womankind at once both decks and staineth?
To you! to you! all song of praise is due;
Only by you Cupid his crown maintaineth.

Who hath the feet, whose step all sweetness planteth?
Who else, for whom Fame worthy trumpets wanteth?
To you! to you! all song of praise is due;
Only to you her sceptre Venus granteth.

Who hath the breast, whose milk doth passions nourish?
Whose grace is such, that when it chides doth cherish?
To you! to you! all song of praise is due;
Only through you the tree of life doth flourish.

Who hath the hand, which without stroke subdueth?
Who long-dead beauty with increase reneweth?
To you! to you! all song of praise is due;
Only at you all envy hopeless rueth.

Who hath the hair, which loosest fastest tieth?
Who makes a man live then glad when he dieth?
To you! to you! all song of praise is due;
Only of you the flatterer never lieth.

Who hath the voice, which soul from senses sunders?
Whose force but yours the bolts of beauty thunders?
To you! to you! all song of praise is due;
Only with you not miracles are wonders.

Doubt you to whom my Muse these notes intendeth,
Which now my breast, o'ercharged, to music lendeth?
To you! to you! all song of praise is due;
Only in you my song begins and endeth.

Philip Sidney [1554-1586]

SILVIA
From "The Two Gentlemen of Verona"

Who is Silvia? What is she?
That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she;
The heaven such grace did lend her,
That she might admired be.

Is she kind as she is fair?
For beauty lives with kindness:
Love doth to her eyes repair,
To help him of his blindness;
And, being helped, inhabits there.

Then to Silvia let us sing,
That Silvia is excelling;
She excels each mortal thing
Upon the dull earth dwelling:
To her let us garlands bring.

William Shakespeare [1564-1616]

CUPID AND CAMPASPE
From "Alexander and Campaspe"

Cupid and my Campaspe played
At cards for kisses; Cupid paid:
He stakes his quiver, bow, and arrows,
His mother's doves, and team of sparrows;
Loses them too; then down he throws
The coral of his lip, the rose
Growing on's cheek (but none knows how);
With these, the crystal of his brow,

And then the dimple on his chin;
All these did my Campaspe win:
And last he set her both his eyes -
She won, and Cupid blind did rise.

What shall, alas! become of me?

John Lyly [1554?-1606]

APOLLO'S SONG
From "Midas"

My Daphne's hair is twisted gold,
Bright stars apiece her eyes do hold,
My Daphne's brow enthrones the Graces,
My Daphne's beauty stains all faces,
On Daphne's cheek grow rose and cherry,
On Daphne's lip a sweeter berry,
Daphne's snowy hand but touched does melt,
And then no heavenlier warmth is felt,
My Daphne's voice tunes all the spheres,
My Daphne's music charms all ears.
Fond am I thus to sing her praise;
These glories now are turned to bays.

John Lyly [1554?-1606]

"FAIR IS MY LOVE FOR APRIL'S IN HER FACE"
From "Perimedes"

Fair is my love for April's in her face,
Her lovely breasts September claims his part,
And lordly July in her eyes takes place,
But cold December dwelleth in her heart;
Blest be the months that set my thoughts on fire,
Accurst that month that hindereth my desire.

Like Phoebus' fire, so sparkle both her eyes,
As air perfumed with amber is her breath,
Like swelling waves her lovely breasts do rise,
As earth, her heart, cold, dateth me to death:
Aye me, poor man, that on the earth do live,
When unkind earth death and despair doth give!

In pomp sits mercy seated in her face,
Love 'twixt her breasts his trophies doth imprint,
Her eyes shine favor, courtesy, and grace,
But touch her heart, ah, that is framed of flint!
Therefore my harvest in the grass bears grain;
The rock will wear, washed with a winter's rain.

Robert Greene [1560?-1592]

SAMELA
From "Menaphon"

Like to Diana in her summer weed,
Girt with a crimson robe of brightest dye,
Goes fair Samela;
Whiter than be the flocks that straggling feed,
When washed by Arethusa's Fount they lie,
Is fair Samela.

As fair Aurora in her morning-gray,
Decked with the ruddy glister of her love,
Is fair Samela;
Like lovely Thetis on a calmed day,
Whenas her brightness Neptune's fancy move,
Shines fair Samela.

Her tresses gold, her eyes like glassy streams,
Her teeth are pearl, the breasts are ivory
Of fair Samela;
Her cheeks like rose and lily yield forth gleams;
Her brows bright arches framed of ebony:
Thus fair Samela

Passeth fair Venus in her bravest hue,
And Juno in the show of majesty,
For she's Samela;
Pallas, in wit, - all three, if you well view,
For beauty, wit, and matchless dignity
Yield to Samela.

Robert Greene [1560?-1592]

DAMELUS' SONG OF HIS DIAPHENIA

Diaphenia like the daffadowndilly,
White as the sun, fair as the lily,
Heigh ho, how I do love thee!
I do love thee as my lambs
Are beloved of their dams; -
How blest were I if thou would'st prove me.

Diaphenia like the spreading roses,
That in thy sweets all sweets encloses,
Fair sweet, how I do love thee!
I do love thee as each flower
Loves the sun's life-giving power;
For dead, thy breath to life might move me.

Diaphenia like to all things blessed,
When all thy praises are expressed,
Dear joy, how I do love thee!
As the birds do love the spring,
Or the bees their careful king:
Then in requite, sweet virgin, love me!

Henry Constable [1562-1613]

MADRIGAL

My love in her attire doth show her wit,
It doth so well become her;
For every season she hath dressings fit,
For Winter, Spring, and Summer.

No beauty she doth miss
When all her robes are on:
But Beauty's self she is
When all her robes are gone.

Unknown

ON CHLORIS WALKING IN THE SNOW

I saw fair Chloris walk alone,
Whilst feathered rain came softly down,
As Jove descended from his tower
To court her in a silver shower.
The wanton snow flew on her breast
Like little birds unto their nest,
But, overcome with whiteness there,
For grief it thawed into a tear;
Thence falling on her garment's hem,
To deck her, froze into a gem.

William Strode [1602-1645]

"THERE IS A LADY SWEET AND KIND"

There is a lady sweet and kind,
Was never face so pleased my mind;
I did but see her passing by,
And yet I love her till I die.

Her gesture, motion, and her smiles,
Her wit, her voice my heart beguiles,
Beguiles my heart, I know not why,
And yet I love her till I die.

Cupid is winged and doth range,
Her country so my love doth change:
But change she earth, or change she sky,
Yet I will love her till I die.

Unknown

CHERRY-RIPE

There is a garden in her face
Where roses and white lilies blow;
A heavenly paradise is that place,
Wherein all pleasant fruits do flow:
There cherries grow which none may buy

Till "Cherry-ripe" themselves do cry.

Those cherries fairly do enclose
Of orient pearl a double row,
Which when her lovely laughter shows,
They look like rose-buds filled with snow;
Yet them nor peer nor prince can buy
Till "Cherry-ripe" themselves do cry.

Her eyes like angels watch them still;
Her brows like bended bows do stand,
Threatening with piercing frowns to kill
All that attempt with eye or hand
Those sacred cherries to come nigh,
Till "Cherry-ripe" themselves do cry.

Thomas Campion [? -1619]

AMARILLIS

I care not for these ladies,
That must be wooed and prayed:
Give me kind Amarillis,
The wanton countrymaid.
Nature art disdaineth,
Her beauty is her own.
Her when we court and kiss,
She cries, Forsooth, let go!
But when we come where comfort is,
She never will say No.

If I love Amarillis,
She gives me fruit and flowers:
But if we love these ladies,
We must give golden showers.
Give them gold, that sell love,
Give me the Nut-brown lass,
Who, when we court and kiss,
She cries, Forsooth, let go:
But when we come where comfort is,
She never will say No.

These ladies must have pillows,
And beds by strangers wrought;
Give me a bower of willows,
Of moss and leaves unbought,
And fresh Amarillis,
With milk and honey fed;
Who, when we court and kiss,
She cries, Forsooth, let go:
But when we come where comfort is,
She never will say No!

Thomas Campion [? -1619]

ELIZABETH OF BOHEMIA

You meaner beauties of the night,
That poorly satisfy our eyes
More by your number than your light,
You common people of the skies;
What are you when the moon shall rise?

You curious chanters of the wood,
That warble forth Dame Nature's lays,
Thinking your passions understood
By your weak accents; what's your praise
When Philomel her voice shall raise?

You violets that first appear,
By your pure purple mantles known
Like the proud virgins of the year,
As if the spring were all your own;
What are you when the rose is blown?

So, when my mistress shall be seen
In form and beauty of her mind,
By virtue first, then choice, a Queen,
Tell me, if she were not designed
Th' eclipse and glory of her kind.

Henry Walton [1568-1639]

HER TRIUMPH
From "A Celebration of Charis"

See the Chariot at hand here of Love,
Wherein my Lady rideth!
Each that draws is a swan or a dove,
And well the car Love guideth.
As she goes, all hearts do duty
Unto her beauty;
And, enamored, do wish, so they might
But enjoy such a sight,
That they still were to run by her side,
Through swords, through seas, whither she would ride.

Do but look on her eyes, they do light
All that Love's world compriseth!
Do but look on her hair, it is bright
As Love's star when it riseth!
Do but mark, her forehead's smoother
Than Words that soothe her!
And from her arched brows such a grace
Sheds itself through the face,
As alone there triumphs to the life
All the gain, all the good, of the elements' strife.

Have you seen but a bright lily grow
Before rude hands have touched it?
Have you marked but the fall o' the snow
Before the soil hath smutched it?
Have you felt the wool of beaver,

Or swan's down ever?
Or have smelt o' the bud o' the brier?
Or the nard in the fire?
Or have tasted the bag o' the bee?
O so white, O so soft, O so sweet is she!

Ben Jonson [1573?-1637]

OF PHYLLIS

In petticoat of green,
Her hair about her eyne,
Phyllis beneath an oak
Sat milking her fair flock:
Among that sweet-strained moisture, rare delight,
Her hand seemed milk in milk, it was so white.

William Drummond [1585-1649]

A WELCOME

Welcome, welcome, do I sing,
Far more welcome than the spring;
He that parteth from you never
Shall enjoy a spring forever.

He that to the voice is near,
Breaking from your ivory pale,
Need not walk abroad to hear
The delightful nightingale.

He that looks still on your eyes,
Though the winter have begun
To benumb our arteries,
Shall not want the summer's sun.

He that still may see your cheeks,
Where all rareness still reposes,
Is a fool if e'er he seeks
Other lilies, other roses.

He to whom your soft lip yields,
And perceives your breath in kissing,
All the odors of the fields
Never, never shall be missing.

He that question would anew
What fair Eden was of old,
Let him rightly study you,
And a brief of that behold.

Welcome, welcome, then I sing,
Far more welcome than the spring;
He that parteth from you never,
Shall enjoy a spring forever.

William Browne [1591-1643?]

THE COMPLETE LOVER

For her gait, if she be walking;
Be she sitting, I desire her
For her state's sake; and admire her
For her wit if she be talking;
Gait and state and wit approve her;
For which all and each I love her.

Be she sullen, I commend her
For a modest. Be she merry,
For a kind one her prefer I.
Briefly, everything doth lend her
So much grace, and so approve her,
That for everything I love her.

William Browne [1591-1643?]

RUBIES AND PEARLS

Some asked me where the rubies grew,
And nothing I did say,
But with my finger pointed to
The lips of Julia.

Some asked how pearls did grow, and where;
Then spoke I to my girl,
To part her lips, and showed them there
The quarrelets of pearl.

Robert Herrick [1591-1674]

UPON JULIA'S CLOTHES

Whenas in silks my Julia goes,
Then, then, methinks, how sweetly flows
The liquefaction of her clothes!
Next, when I cast mine eyes and see
That brave vibration each way free,
- O how that glittering taketh me!

Robert Herrick [1591-1674]

TO CYNTHIA ON CONCEALMENT OF HER BEAUTY

Do not conceal those radiant eyes,
The starlight of serenest skies;
Lest, wanting of their heavenly light,
They turn to chaos' endless night!

Do not conceal those tresses fair,
The silken snares of thy curled hair;

Lest, finding neither gold nor ore,
The curious silk-worm work no more.

Do not conceal those breasts of thine,
More snow-white than the Apennine;
Lest, if there be like cold and frost,
The lily be for ever lost.

Do not conceal that fragrant scent,
Thy breath, which to all flowers hath lent
Perfumes; lest, it being suppressed,
No spices grow in all the East.

Do not conceal thy heavenly voice,
Which makes the hearts of gods rejoice;
Lest, music hearing no such thing,
The nightingale forget to sing.

Do not conceal, nor yet eclipse,
Thy pearly teeth with coral lips;
Lest that the seas cease to bring forth
Gems which from thee have all their worth.

Do not conceal no beauty, grace,
That's either in thy mind or face;
Lest virtue overcome by vice
Make men believe no Paradise.

Francis Kynaston [1587-1642]

SONG

Ask me no more where Jove bestows,
When June is past, the fading rose;
For in your beauty's orient deep
These flowers, as in their causes, sleep.

Ask me no more whither do stray
The golden atoms of the day;
For in pure love heaven did prepare
Those powders to enrich your hair.

Ask me no more whither doth haste
The nightingale when May is past;
For in your sweet dividing throat
She winters and keeps warm her note.

Ask me no more where those stars 'light
That downwards fall in dead of night;
For in your eyes they sit, and there
Fixed become as in their sphere.

Ask me no more if east or west
The Phoenix builds her spicy nest;
For unto you at last she flies,
And in your fragrant bosom dies.

Thomas Carew [1598?-1639?]

A DEVOUT LOVER

I have a mistress, for perfections rare
In every eye, but in my thoughts most fair.
Like tapers on the altar shine her eyes;
Her breath is the perfume of sacrifice;
And wheresoe'er my fancy would begin,
Still her perfection lets religion in.
We sit and talk, and kiss away the hours
As chastely as the morning dews kiss flowers:
I touch her, like my beads, with devout care,
And come unto my courtship as my prayer.

Thomas Randolph [1605-1635]

ON A GIRDLE

That which her slender waist confined
Shall now my joyful temples bind;
No monarch but would give his crown
His arms might do what this has done.

It was my Heaven's extremest sphere,
The pale which held that lovely deer:
My joy, my grief, my hope, my love,
Did all within this circle move.

A narrow compass! and yet there
Dwelt all that's good, and all that's fair!
Give me but what this ribbon bound,
Take all the rest the sun goes round!

Edmund Waller [1606-1687]

CASTARA

Like the violet, which alone
Prospers in some happy shade,
My Castara lives unknown,
To no looser eye betrayed:
For she's to herself untrue
Who delights i' the public view

Such is her beauty as no arts
Have enriched with borrowed grace.
Her high birth no pride imparts,
For she blushes in her place.
Folly boasts a glorious blood;
She is noblest, being good.

Cautious, she knew never yet
What a wanton courtship meant;
Nor speaks loud to boast her wit,

In her silence, eloquent.
Of herself survey she takes,
But 'tween men no difference makes.

She obeys with speedy will
Her grave parents' wise commands;
And so innocent, that ill
She nor acts, nor understands.
Women's feet run still astray
If to ill they know the way.

She sails by that rock, the court,
Where oft virtue splits her mast;
And retiredness thinks the port
Where her fame may anchor cast.
Virtue safely cannot sit
Where vice is enthroned for wit.

She holds that day's pleasure best
Where sin waits not on delight;
Without mask, or ball, or feast,
Sweetly spends a winter's night.
O'er that darkness whence is thrust
Prayer and sleep, oft governs lust.

She her throne makes reason climb,
While wild passions captive lie;
And, each article of time,
Her pure thoughts to heaven fly;
All her vows religious be,
And she vows her love to me.

William Habington [1605-1654]

TO ARAMANTHA
That She Would Dishevel Her Hair

Aramantha, sweet and fair,
Ah, braid no more that shining hair!
As my curious hand or eye
Hovering round thee, let it fly.

Let it fly as unconfined
As its calm ravisher the wind,
Who hath left his darling, th' east,
To wanton in that spicy nest.

Every tress must be confessed;
But neatly tangled at the best;
Like a clew of golden thread
Most excellently ravelled.

Do not, then, wind up that light
In ribbons, and o'er-cloud in night,
Like the sun in's early ray;
But shake your head and scatter day.

Richard Lovelace [1618-1658]

CHLOE DIVINE

Chloe's a Nymph in flowery groves,
A Nereid in the streams;
Saint-like she in the temple moves,
A woman in my dreams.

Love steals artillery from her eyes,
The Graces point her charms;
Orpheus is rivalled in her voice,
And Venus in her arms.

Never so happily in one
Did heaven and earth combine;
And yet 'tis flesh and blood alone
That makes her so divine.

Thomas D'Urfey [1653-1723]

MY PEGGY

My Peggy is a young thing,
Just entered in her teens,
Fair as the day, and sweet as May,
Fair as the day, and always gay:
My Peggy is a young thing,
And I'm na very auld,
Yet weel I like to meet her at
The wauking o' the fauld.

My Peggy speaks sae sweetly
Whene'er we meet alane,
I wish nae mair to lay my care,
I wish nae mair o' a' that's rare:
My Peggy speaks sae sweetly,
To a' the lave I'm cauld;
But she gars a' my spirits glow
At wauking o' the fauld.

My Peggy smiles sae kindly
Whene'er I whisper love,
That I look doun on a' the toun,
That I look doun upon a croun:
My Peggy smiles sae kindly,
It makes me blithe and bauld,
And naething gi'es me sic delight
As waulking o' the fauld.

My Peggy sings sae saftly,
When on my pipe I play;
By a' the rest it is confessed,
By a' the rest that she sings best:
My Peggy sings sae saftly,
And in her sangs are tauld,

Wi' innocence the wale o' sense,
At wauking o' the fauld.

Allan Ramsay [1686-1758]

SONG
From "Acis and Galatea"

O ruddier than the cherry!
O sweeter than the berry!
O nymph more bright
Than moonshine night,
Like kidlings blithe and merry!
Ripe as the melting luster;
Yet hard to tame
As raging flame,
And fierce as storms that bluster!

John Gay [1685-1732]

"TELL ME, MY HEART, IF THIS BE LOVE"

When Delia on the plain appears,
Awed by a thousand tender fears
I would approach, but dare not move:
Tell me, my heart, if this be love?

Whene'er she speaks, my ravished ear
No other voice than hers can hear,
No other wit but hers approve:
Tell me, my heart, if this be love?

If she some other youth commend,
Though I was once his fondest friend,
His instant enemy I prove:
Tell me, my heart, if this be love?

When she is absent, I no more
Delight in all that pleased before -
The clearest spring, or shadiest grove:
Tell me, my heart, if this be love?

When fond of power, of beauty vain,
Her nets she spread for every swain,
I strove to hate, but vainly strove:
Tell me, my heart, if this be love?

George Lyttleton [1709-1773]

THE FAIR THIEF

Before the urchin well could go,
She stole the whiteness of the snow;
And more, that whiteness to adorn,
She stole the blushes of the morn;

Stole all the sweetness ether sheds
On primrose buds and violet beds.

Still to reveal her artful wiles
She stole the Graces' silken smiles;
She stole Aurora's balmy breath;
And pilfered orient pearl for teeth;
The cherry, dipped in morning dew,
Gave moisture to her lips, and hue.

These were her infant spoils, a store;
And she, in time, still pilfered more!
At twelve, she stole from Cyprus' queen
Her air and love-commanding mien;
Stole Juno's dignity; and stole
From Pallas sense to charm the soul.

Apollo's wit was next her prey;
Her next, the beam that lights the day;
She sang; - amazed the Sirens heard,
And to assert their voice appeared.
She played; - the Muses from their hill,
Wondered who thus had stole their skill.

Great Jove approved her crimes and art;
And, t'other day, she stole my heart!
If lovers, Cupid, are thy care,
Exert thy vengeance on this Fair:
To trial bring her stolen charms,
And let her prison be my arms!

Charles Wyndham [1710-1763]

AMORET

If rightly tuneful bards decide,
If it be fixed in Love's decrees,
That Beauty ought not to be tried
But by its native power to please,
Then tell me, youths and lovers, tell -
What fair can Amoret excel?

Behold that bright unsullied smile,
And wisdom speaking in her mien:
Yet - she so artless all the while,
So little studious to be seen -
We naught but instant gladness know,
Nor think to whom the gift we owe.

But neither music, nor the powers
Of youth and mirth and frolic cheer,
Add half the sunshine to the hours,
Or make life's prospect half so clear,
As memory brings it to the eye
From scenes where Amoret was by.

This, sure, is Beauty's happiest part;

This gives the most unbounded sway;
This shall enchant the subject heart
When rose and lily fade away;
And she be still, in spite of Time,
Sweet Amoret, in all her prime.

Mark Akenside [1721-1770]

SONG

The shape alone let others prize,
The features of the fair:
I look for spirit in her eyes,
And meaning in her air.

A damask cheek, an ivory arm,
Shall ne'er my wishes win:
Give me an animated form,
That speaks a mind within.

A face where awful honor shines,
Where sense and sweetness move,
And angel innocence refines
The tenderness of love.

These are the soul of beauty's frame;
Without whose vital aid
Unfinished all her features seem,
And all her roses dead.

But ah! where both their charms unite,
How perfect is the view,
With every image of delight,
With graces ever new:

Of power to charm the greatest woe,
The wildest rage control,
Diffusing mildness o'er the brow,
And rapture through the soul.

Their power but faintly to express
All language must despair;
But go, behold Arpasia's face,
And read it perfect there.

Mark Akenside [1721-1770]

KATE OF ABERDEEN

The silver moon's enamored beam
Steals softly through the night,
To wanton with the winding stream,
And kiss reflected light.
To beds of state go balmy sleep
('Tis where you've seldom been),
May's vigil while the shepherds keep

With Kate of Aberdeen.

Upon the green the virgins wait,
In rosy chaplets gay,
Till morn unbar her golden gate,
And give the promised May.
Methinks I hear the maids declare,
The promised May, when seen,
Not half so fragrant, half so fair,
As Kate of Aberdeen.

Strike up the tabor's boldest notes,
We'll rouse the nodding grove;
The nested birds shall raise their throats,
And hail the maid of love;
And see - the matin lark mistakes,
He quits the tufted green:
Fond bird! 'tis not the morning breaks, -
'Tis Kate of Aberdeen.

Now lightsome o'er the level mead,
Where midnight fairies rove,
Like them the jocund dance we'll lead,
Or tune the reed to love:
For see the rosy May draws nigh,
She claims a virgin Queen;
And hark, the happy shepherds cry,
'Tis Kate of Aberdeen.

John Cunningham [1729-1773]

SONG

Who has robbed the ocean cave,
To tinge thy lips with coral hue?
Who from India's distant wave
For thee those pearly treasures drew?
Who from yonder orient sky
Stole the morning of thine eye?

A thousand charms, thy form to deck,
From sea, and earth, and air are torn;
Roses bloom upon thy cheek,
On thy breath their fragrance borne.
Guard thy bosom from the day,
Lest thy snows should melt away.

But one charm remains behind,
Which mute earth can ne'er impart;
Nor in ocean wilt thou find,
Nor in the circling air, a heart.
Fairest! wouldst thou perfect be,
Take, oh, take that heart from me.

John Shaw [1559-1625]

CHLOE

It was the charming month of May,
When all the flowers were fresh and gay;
One morning, by the break of day,
The youthful, charming Chloe
From peaceful slumber she arose,
Girt on her mantle and her hose,
And o'er the flowery mead she goes,
The youthful, charming Chloe.
Lovely was she by the dawn,
Youthful Chloe, charming Chloe,
Tripping o'er the pearly lawn,
The youthful, charming Chloe.

The feathered people you might see,
Perched all around on every tree,
In notes of sweetest melody
They hail the charming Chloe;
Till, painting gay the eastern skies,
The glorious sun began to rise,
Out-rivalled by the radiant eyes
Of youthful, charming Chloe.
Lovely was she by the dawn,
Youthful Chloe, charming Chloe,
Tripping o'er the pearly lawn,
The youthful, charming Chloe.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

"O MALLY'S MEEK, MALLY'S SWEET"

As I was walking up the street,
A barefit maid I chanced to meet;
But O the road was very hard
For that fair maiden's tender feet.
O Mally's meek, Mally's sweet,
Mally's modest and discreet,
Mally's rare, Mally's fair,
Mally's every way complete.

It were more meet that those fine feet
Were weel laced up in silken shoon,
And 'twere more fit that she should sit
Within yon chariot gilt aboon.

Her yellow hair, beyond compare,
Comes trinkling down her swan-white neck,
And her two eyes, like stars in skies,
Would keep a sinking ship frae wreck.
O Mally's meek, Mally's sweet,
Mally's modest and discreet,
Mally's rare, Mally's fair,
Mally's every way complete.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

THE LOVER'S CHOICE

You, Damon, covet to possess
The nymph that sparkles in her dress;
Would rustling silks and hoops invade,
And clasp an armful of brocade.

Such raise the price of your delight
Who purchase both their red and white,
And, pirate-like, surprise your heart
With colors of adulterate art.

Me, Damon, me the maid enchants
Whose cheeks the hand of nature paints;
A modest blush adorns her face,
Her air an unaffected grace.

No art she knows, or seeks to know;
No charm to wealthy pride will owe;
No gems, no gold she needs to wear;
She shines intrinsically fair.

Thomas Bedingfield [? -1613]

RONDEAU REDOUBLE

My day and night are in my lady's hand;
I have no other sunrise than her sight;
For me her favor glorifies the land;
Her anger darkens all the cheerful light.
Her face is fairer than the hawthorn white,
When all a-flower in May the hedgerows stand;
While she is kind, I know of no affright;
My day and night are in my lady's hand.

All heaven in her glorious eyes is spanned;
Her smile is softer than the summer's night,
Gladder than daybreak on the Faery strand;
I have no other sunrise than her sight.
Her silver speech is like the singing flight
Of runnels rippling o'er the jewelled sand;
Her kiss a dream of delicate delight;
For me her favor glorifies the land.

What if the Winter chase the Summer bland!
The gold sun in her hair burns ever bright.
If she be sad, straightway all joy is banned;
Her anger darkens all the cheerful light.
Come weal or woe, I am my lady's knight
And in her service every ill withstand;
Love is my Lord in all the world's despite
And holdeth in the hollow of his hand
My day and night.

John Payne [1842-1916]

"MY LOVE SHE'S BUT A LASSIE YET"

My love she's but a lassie yet,
A lightsome lovely lassie yet;
It scarce wad do
To sit an' woo
Down by the stream sae glassy yet.

But there's a braw time coming yet,
When we may gang a-roaming yet;
An' hint wi' glee
O' joys to be,
When fa's the modest gloaming yet.

She's neither proud nor saucy yet,
She's neither plump nor gaucy yet;
But just a jinking,
Bonny blinking,
Hilty-skilty lassie yet.

But O, her artless smile's mair sweet
Than hinny or than marmalete;
An' right or wrang,
Ere it be lang,
I'll bring her to a parley yet.

I'm jealous o' what blesses her,
The very breeze that kisses her,
The flowery beds
On which she treads,
Though wae for ane that misses her.

Then O, to meet my lassie yet,
Up in yon glen sae grassy yet;
For all I see
Are naught to me,
Save her that's but a lassie yet.

James Hogg [1770-1835]

JESSIE, THE FLOWER O' DUNBLANE

The sun has gane down o'er the lofty Benlomond
And left the red clouds to preside o'er the scene,
While lanely I stray, in the calm simmer gloamin',
To muse on sweet Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane.

How sweet is the brier, wi' its saft fauldin' blossom,
And sweet is the birk, wi' its mantle o' green;
Yet sweeter and fairer, and dear to this bosom,
Is lovely young Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane.

She's modest as ony, and blithe as she's bonnie;
For guileless simplicity marks her its ain;
And far be the villain, divested of feeling,
Wha'd blight in its bloom the sweet Flower o' Dunblane.

Sing on, thou sweet mavis, thy hymn to the e'ening!
Thou'rt dear to the echoes of Calderwood glen;
Sae dear to this bosom, sae artless and winning,
Is charming young Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane.

How lost were my days till I met wi' my Jessie!
The sports o' the city seemed foolish and vain;
I ne'er saw a nymph I would ca' my dear lassie
Till charmed wi' sweet Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane.

Though mine were the station o' loftiest grandeur,
Amidst its profusion I'd languish in pain,
And reckon as naething the height o' its splendor,
If wanting sweet Jessie, the Flower o' Dunblane.

Robert Tannahill [1774-1810]

MARGARET AND DORA

Margaret's beauteous - Grecian arts
Ne'er drew form completer,
Yet why, in my hearts of hearts,
Hold I Dora's sweeter?

Dora's eyes of heavenly blue
Pass all painting's reach,
Ringdoves' notes are discord to
The music of her speech.

Artists! Margaret's smile receive,
And on canvas show it;
But for perfect worship leave
Dora to her poet.

Thomas Campbell [1777-1844]

DAGONET'S CANZONET

A queen lived in the South;
And music was her mouth,
And sunshine was her hair,
By day, and all the night
The drowsy embers there
Remembered still the light;
My soul, was she not fair!

But for her eyes - they made
An iron man afraid;
Like sky-blue pools they were,
Watching the sky that knew
Itself transmuted there
Light blue, or deeper blue;
My soul, was she not fair!

The lifting of her hands

Made laughter in the lands
Where the sun is, in the South:
But my soul learnt sorrow there
In the secrets of her mouth,
Her eyes, her hands, her hair:
O soul, was she not fair!

Ernest Rhys [1859-

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

There be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me:
When, as if its sound were causing
The charmed ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lulled winds seem dreaming.

And the midnight moon is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep,
Whose breast is gently heaving,
As an infant's asleep:
So the spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee;
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

George Gordon Byron [1788-1824]

"FLOWERS I WOULD BRING"

Flowers I would bring if flowers could make thee fairer,
And music, if the Muse were dear to thee;
(For loving these would make thee love the bearer)
But sweetest songs forget their melody,
And loveliest flowers would but conceal the wearer: -
A rose I marked, and might have plucked; but she
Blushed as she bent, imploring me to spare her,
Nor spoil her beauty by such rivalry.
Alas! and with what gifts shall I pursue thee,
What offerings bring, what treasures lay before thee;
When earth with all her floral train doth woo thee,
And all old poets and old songs adore thee;
And love to thee is naught; from passionate mood
Secured by joy's complacent plenitude!

Aubrey Thomas de Vere [1814-1902]

"IT IS NOT BEAUTY I DEMAND"

It is not Beauty I demand,
A crystal brow, the moon's despair,
Nor the snow's daughter, a white hand,

Nor mermaid's yellow pride of hair:

Tell me not of your starry eyes,
Your lips that seem on roses fed,
Your breasts, where Cupid tumbling lies
Nor sleeps for kissing of his bed: -

A bloomy pair of vermeil cheeks
Like Hebe's in her ruddiest hours,
A breath that softer music speaks
Than summer winds a-wooing flowers, -

These are but gauds: nay, what are lips?
Coral beneath the ocean-stream,
Whose brink when your adventurer sips
Full oft he perisheth on them.

And what are cheeks but ensigns oft
That wave hot youth to fields of blood?
Did Helen's breast, though ne'er so soft,
Do Greece or Ilium any good?

Eyes can with baleful ardor burn;
Poison can breathe, that erst perfumed;
There's many a white hand holds an urn
With lovers' hearts to dust consumed.

For crystal brows - there's naught within;
They are but empty cells for pride;
He who the Siren's hair would win
Is mostly strangled in the tide.

Give me, instead of Beauty's bust,
A tender heart, a loyal mind
Which with temptation I could trust,
Yet never linked with error find, -

One in whose gentle bosom I
Could pour my secret heart of woes,
Like the care-burthened honey-fly
That hides his murmurs in the rose, -

My earthly Comforter! whose love
So indefeasible might be
That, when my spirit won above,
Hers could not stay, for sympathy.

George Darley [1795-1846]

SONG

She is not fair to outward view
As many maidens be,
Her loveliness I never knew
Until she smiled on me;
Oh! then I saw her eye was bright,
A well of love, a spring of light.

But now her looks are coy and cold,
To mine they ne'er reply,
And yet I cease not to behold
The love-light in her eye:
Her very frowns are fairer far
Than smiles of other maidens are.

Hartley Coleridge [1796-1849]

SONG

A violet in her lovely hair,
A rose upon her bosom fair!
But O, her eyes
A lovelier violet disclose,
And her ripe lips the sweetest rose
That's 'neath the skies.

A lute beneath her graceful hand
Breathes music forth at her command;
But still her tongue
Far richer music calls to birth
Than all the minstrel power on earth
Can give to song.

And thus she moves in tender light,
The purest ray, where all is bright,
Serene, and sweet;
And sheds a graceful influence round,
That hallows e'en the very ground
Beneath her feet!

Charles Swain [1801-1874]

EILEEN AROON

When like the early rose,
Eileen Aroon!
Beauty in childhood blows,
Eileen Aroon!
When, like a diadem,
Buds blush around the stem,
Which is the fairest gem? -
Eileen Aroon!

Is it the laughing eye,
Eileen Aroon!
Is it the timid sigh,
Eileen Aroon!
Is it the tender tone,
Soft as the stringed harp's moan?
O, it is truth alone, -
Eileen Aroon!

When like the rising day,

Eileen Aroon!
Love sends his early ray,
Eileen Aroon!
What makes his dawning glow,
Changeless through joy or woe?
Only the constant know: -
Eileen Aroon!

I know a valley fair,
Eileen Aroon!
I knew a cottage there,
Eileen Aroon!
Far in that valley's shade
I knew a gentle maid,
Flower of a hazel glade, -
Eileen Aroon!

Who in the song so sweet?
Eileen Aroon!
Who in the dance so fleet?
Eileen Aroon!
Dear were her charms to me
Dearer her laughter free,
Dearest her constancy, -
Eileen Aroon!

Were she no longer true,
Eileen Aroon!
What should her lover do?
Eileen Aroon!
Fly with his broken chain
Far o'er the sounding main,
Never to love again, -
Eileen Aroon!

Youth must with time decay,
Eileen Aroon!
Beauty must fade away,
Eileen Aroon!
Castles are sacked in war,
Chieftains are scattered far,
Truth is a fixed star, -
Eileen Aroon!

Gerald Griffin [1803-1840]

ANNIE LAURIE

Maxwelton braes are bonnie
Where early fa's the dew,
And it's there that Annie Laurie
Gie'd me her promise true -
Gie'd me her promise true,
Which ne'er forgot will be;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doun and dee.

Her brow is like the snaw-drift;
Her throat is like the swan;
Her face it is the fairest
That e'er the sun shone on -
That e'er the sun shone on -
And dark blue is her ee;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doun and dee.

Like dew on the gowan lying
Is the fa' o' her fairy feet;
And like the winds in summer sighing,
Her voice is low and sweet -
Her voice is low and sweet -
And she's a' the world to me;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doun and dee.

William Douglas [1672?-1748]

TO HELEN

Helen, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicaean barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary, wayworn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs, have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
Are Holy Land!

Edgar Allan Poe [1809-1849]

"A VOICE BY THE CEDAR TREE"
From "Maud"

I
A voice by the cedar tree,
In the meadow under the Hall!
She is singing an air that is known to me,
A passionate ballad gallant and gay,
A martial song like a trumpet's call!
Singing alone in the morning of life,
In the happy morning of life and of May,
Singing of men that in battle array,
Ready in heart and ready in hand,
March with banner and bugle and fife

To the death, for their native land.

II
Maud with her exquisite face,
And wild voice pealing up to the sunny sky,
And feet like sunny gems on an English green,
Maud in the light of her youth and her grace,
Singing of Death, and of Honor that cannot die,
Till I well could weep for a time so sordid and mean,
And myself so languid and base.

III
Silence, beautiful voice!
Be still, for you only trouble the mind
With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,
A glory I shall not find.
Still! I will hear you no more,
For your sweetness hardly leaves me a choice
But to move to the meadow and fall before
Her feet on the meadow grass, and adore,
Not her, who is neither courtly nor kind,
Not her, not her, but a voice.

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

SONG

Nay but you, who do not love her,
Is she not pure gold, my mistress?
Holds earth aught - speak truth - above her?
Aught like this tress, see, and this tress,
And this last fairest tress of all,
So fair, see, ere I let it fall?

Because you spend your lives in praising;
To praise, you search the wide world over:
Then why not witness, calmly gazing,
If earth holds aught - speak truth - above her?
Above this tress, and this, I touch
But cannot praise, I love so much!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

THE HENCHMAN

My lady walks her morning round,
My lady's page her fleet greyhound,
My lady's hair the fond winds stir,
And all the birds make songs for her.

Her thrushes sing in Rathburn bowers,
And Rathburn side is gay with flowers;
But ne'er like hers, in flower or bird,
Was beauty seen or music heard.

The distance of the stars is hers;

The least of all her worshipers,
The dust beneath her dainty heel,
She knows not that I see or feel.

Oh, proud and calm! - she cannot know
Where'er she goes with her I go;
Oh, cold and fair! - she cannot guess
I kneel to share her hound's caress!

Gay knights beside her hunt and hawk,
I rob their ears of her sweet talk;
Her suitors come from east and west,
I steal her smiles from every guest.

Unheard of her, in loving words,
I greet her with the song of birds;
I reach her with her green-armed bowers,
I kiss her with the lips of flowers.

The hound and I are on her trail,
The wind and I uplift her veil;
As if the calm, cold moon she were,
And I the tide, I follow her.

As unrebuked as they, I share
The license of the sun and air,
And in a common homage hide
My worship from her scorn and pride.

World-wide apart, and yet so near,
I breathe her charmed atmosphere,
Wherein to her my service brings
The reverence due to holy things.

Her maiden pride, her haughty name,
My dumb devotion shall not shame;
The love that no return doth crave
To knightly levels lifts the slave.

No lance have I, in joust or fight,
To splinter in my lady's sight;
But, at her feet, how blest were I
For any need of hers to die!

John Greenleaf Whittier [1807-1892]

LOVELY MARY DONNELLY

Oh, lovely Mary Donnelly, it's you I love the best!
If fifty girls were round you I'd hardly see the rest.
Be what it may the time of day, the place be where it will,
Sweet looks of Mary Donnelly, they bloom before me still.

Her eyes like mountain water that's flowing on a rock,
How clear they are, how dark they are! they give me many a shock.
Red rowans warm in sunshine and wetted with a shower,
Could ne'er express the charming lip that has me in its power.

Her nose is straight and handsome, her eyebrows lifted up,
Her chin is very neat and pert, and smooth like a china cup,
Her hair's the brag of Ireland, so weighty and so fine;
It's rolling down upon her neck, and gathered in a twine.

The dance o' last Whit-Monday night exceeded all before;
No pretty girl for miles about was missing from the floor;
But Mary kept the belt of love, and O but she was gay!
She danced a jig, she sung a song, that took my heart away.

When she stood up for dancing, her steps were so complete,
The music nearly killed itself to listen to her feet;
The fiddler moaned his blindness, he heard her so much praised,
But blessed his luck he wasn't deaf when once her voice she raised.

And evermore I'm whistling or lilting what you sung,
Your smile is always in my heart, your name beside my tongue;
But you've as many sweethearts as you'd count on both your hands,
And for myself there's not a thumb or little finger stands.

Oh, you're the flower o' womankind in country or in town;
The higher I exalt you, the lower I'm cast down.
If some great lord should come this way, and see your beauty bright,
And you to be his lady, I'd own it was but right.

O might we live together in a lofty palace hall,
Where joyful music rises, and where scarlet curtains fall!
O might we live together in a cottage mean and small,
With sods of grass the only roof, and mud the only wall!

O lovely Mary Donnelly, your beauty's my distress:
It's far too beauteous to be mine, but I'll never wish it less.
The proudest place would fit your face, and I am poor and low;
But blessings be about you, dear, wherever you may go!

William Allingham [1824-1889]

LOVE IN THE VALLEY

Under yonder beech-tree single on the green-sward,
Couched with her arms behind her golden head,
Knees and tresses folded to slip and ripple idly,
Lies my young love sleeping in the shade.
Had I the heart to slide an arm beneath her,
Press her parting lips as her waist I gather slow,
Waking in amazement she could not but embrace me:
Then would she hold me and never let me go?

Shy as the squirrel and wayward as the swallow,
Swift as the swallow along the river's light
Circleting the surface to meet his mirrored winglets,
Fleeter she seems in her stay than in her flight.
Shy as the squirrel that leaps among the pine-tops,
Wayward as the swallow overhead at set of sun,
She whom I love is hard to catch and conquer,
Hard, but O the glory of the winning were she won!

When her mother tends her before the laughing mirror,
Tying up her laces, looping up her hair,
Often she thinks, were this wild thing wedded,
More love should I have, and much less care.
When her mother tends her before the lighted mirror,
Loosening her laces, combing down her curls,
Often she thinks, were this wild thing wedded,
I should miss but one for many boys and girls.

Heartless she is as the shadow in the meadows,
Flying to the hills on a blue and breezy noon.
No, she is athirst and drinking up her wonder:
Earth to her is young as the slip of the new moon.
Deals she an unkindness, 'tis but her rapid measure,
Even as in a dance; and her smile can heal no less:
Like the swinging May-cloud that pelts the flowers with hailstones
Off a sunny border, she was made to bruise and bless.

Lovely are the curves of the white owl sweeping
Wavy in the dusk lit by one large star.
Lone on the fir-branch, his rattle-note unvaried,
Brooding o'er the gloom, spins the brown eve-jar.
Darker grows the valley, more and more forgetting:
So were it with me if forgetting could be willed.
Tell the grassy hollow that holds the bubbling well-spring,
Tell it to forget the source that keeps it filled.

Stepping down the hill with her fair companions,
Arm in arm, all against the raying West,
Boldly she sings, to the merry tune she marches;
Brave in her shape, and sweeter unpossessed.
Sweeter, for she is what my heart first awaking
Whispered the world was; morning light is she.
Love that so desires would fain keep her changeless;
Fain would fling the net, and fain have her free.

Happy happy time, when the white star hovers
Low over dim fields fresh with bloomy dew,
Near the face of dawn, that draws athwart the darkness,
Threading it with color, like yewberries the yew.
Thicker crowd the shades as the grave East deepens
Glowing, and with crimson a long cloud swells.
Maiden still the morn is; and strange she is, and secret;
Strange her eyes; her cheeks are cold as cold sea-shells.

Sunrays, leaning on our southern hills and lighting
Wild cloud-mountains that drag the hills along,
Oft ends the day of your shifting brilliant laughter
Chill as a dull face frowning on a song.
Ay, but shows the South-west a ripple-feathered bosom
Blown to silver while the clouds are shaken and ascend
Scaling the mid-heavens as they stream, there comes a sunset
Rich, deep like love in beauty without end.

When at dawn she sighs, and like an infant to the window
Turns grave eyes craving light, released from dreams,
Beautiful she looks, like a white water-lily

Bursting out of bud in havens of the streams.
When from bed she rises clothed from neck to ankle
In her long nightgown sweet as boughs of May,
Beautiful she looks, like a tall garden-lily
Pure from the night, and splendid for the day.

Mother of the dews, dark eye-lashed twilight,
Low-lidded twilight, o'er the valley's brim,
Rounding on thy breast sings the dew-delighted skylark,
Clear as though the dewdrops had their voice in him.
Hidden where the rose-flush drinks the rayless planet,
Fountain-full he pours the spraying fountain-showers.
Let me hear her laughter, I would have her ever
Cool as dew in twilight, the lark above the flowers.

All the girls are out with their baskets for the primrose;
Up lanes, woods through, they troop in joyful bands.
My sweet leads: she knows not why, but now she loiters,
Eyes the bent anemones, and hangs her hands.
Such a look will tell that the violets are peeping,
Coming the rose: and unaware a cry
Springs in her bosom for odors and for color,
Covert and the nightingale; she knows not why.

Kerchiefed head and chin she darts between her tulips,
Streaming like a willow gray in arrowy rain:
Some bend beaten cheek to gravel, and their angel
She will be; she lifts them, and on she speeds again.
Black the driving rain cloud breasts the iron gateway:
She is forth to cheer a neighbor lacking mirth.
So when sky and grass met rolling dumb for thunder
Saw I once a white dove, sole light of earth.

Prim little scholars are the flowers of her garden,
Trained to stand in rows, and asking if they please.
I might love them well but for loving more the wild ones:
O my wild ones! they tell me more than these.
You, my wild one, you tell of honied field-rose,
Violet, blushing eglantine in life; and even as they,
They by the wayside are earnest of your goodness,
You are of life's, on the banks that line the way.

Peering at her chamber the white crowns the red rose,
Jasmine winds the porch with stars two and three.
Parted is the window; she sleeps; the starry jasmine
Breathes a falling breath that carries thoughts of me.
Sweeter unpossessed, have I said of her my sweetest?
Not while she sleeps: while she sleeps the jasmine breathes,
Luring her to love: she sleeps; the starry jasmine
Bears me to her pillow under white rose-wreaths.

Yellow with birdfoot-trefoil are the grass-glades;
Yellow with cinquefoil of the dew-gray leaf;
Yellow with stonecrop; the moss-mounds are yellow;
Blue-necked the wheat sways, yellowing to the sheaf.
Green-yellow bursts from the copse the laughing yaffle;
Sharp as a sickle is the edge of shade and shine:
Earth in her heart laughs looking at the heavens,

Thinking of the harvest: I look and think of mine.

This I may know: her dressing and undressing
Such a change of light shows as when the skies in sport
Shift from cloud to moonlight; or edging over thunder
Slips a ray of sun; or sweeping into port
White sails furl; or on the ocean borders
White sails lean along the waves leaping green.
Visions of her shower before me, but from eyesight
Guarded she would be like the sun were she seen.

Front door and back of the mossed old farmhouse
Open with the morn, and in a breezy link
Freshly sparkles garden to stripe-shadowed orchard,
Green across a rill where on sand the minnows wink.
Busy in the grass the early sun of summer
Swarms, and the blackbird's mellow fluting notes
Call my darling up with round and roguish challenge:
Quaintest, richest carol of all the singing throats!

Cool was the woodside; cool as her white dairy
Keeping sweet the cream-pan; and there the boys from school,
Cricketing below, rushed brown and red with sunshine;
O the dark translucence of the deep-eyed cool!
Spying from the farm, herself she fetched a pitcher
Full of milk, and tilted for each in turn the beak.
Then a little fellow, mouth up and on tiptoe,
Said, "I will kiss you": she laughed and leaned her cheek.

Doves of the fir-wood walling high our red roof
Through the long noon coo, crooning through the coo.
Loose droop the leaves, and down the sleepy roadway
Sometimes pipes a chaffinch; loose droops the blue.
Cows flap a slow tail knee-deep in the river,
Breathless, given up to sun and gnat and fly.
Nowhere is she seen; and if I see her nowhere,
Lightning may come, straight rains and tiger sky.

O the golden sheaf, the rustling treasure-armful!
O the nutbrown tresses nodding interlaced!
O the treasure-tresses one another over
Nodding! O the girdle slack about the waist!
Slain are the poppies that shot their random scarlet
Quick amid the wheat-ears: wound about the waist,
Gathered, see these brides of Earth one blush of ripeness!
O the nutbrown tresses nodding interlaced.

Large and smoky red the sun's cold disk drops,
Clipped by naked hills, on violet shaded snow:
Eastward large and still lights up a bower of moonrise,
Whence at her leisure steps the moon aglow.
Nightlong on black print-branches our beech-tree
Gazes in this whiteness: nightlong could I.
Here may life on death or death on life be painted.
Let me clasp her soul to know she cannot die!

Gossips count her faults; they scour a narrow chamber
Where there is no window, read not heaven or her.

"When she was a tiny," one aged woman quavers,
Plucks at my heart and leads me by the ear.
Faults she had once as she learned to run and tumbled:
Faults of feature some see, beauty not complete.
Yet, good gossips, beauty that makes holy
Earth and air, may have faults from head to feet.

Hither she comes; she comes to me; she lingers,
Deepens her brown eyebrows, while in new surprise
High rise the lashes in wonder of a stranger;
Yet am I the light and living of her eyes.
Something friends have told her fills her heart to brimming,
Nets her in her blushes, and wounds her, and tames. -
Sure of her haven, O like a dove alighting,
Arms up, she dropped: our souls were in our names.

Soon will she lie like a white frost sunrise.
Yellow oats and brown wheat, barley pale as rye,
Long since your sheaves have yielded to the thresher,
Felt the girdle loosened, seen the tresses fly.
Soon will she lie like a blood-red sunset.
Swift with the to-morrow, green-winged Spring!
Sing from the South-west, bring her back the truants,
Nightingale and swallow, song and dipping wing.

Soft new beech-leaves, up to beamy April
Spreading bough on bough a primrose mountain, you,
Lucid in the moon, raise lilies to the skyfields,
Youngest green transfused in silver shining through:
Fairer than the lily, than the wild white cherry:
Fair as in image my seraph love appears
Borne to me by dreams when dawn is at my eyelids:
Fair as in the flesh she swims to me on tears.

Could I find a place to be alone with heaven,
I would speak my heart out: heaven is my need.
Every woodland tree is flushing like the dogwood,
Flashing like the whitebeam, swaying like the reed.
Flushing like the dogwood crimson in October;
Streaming like the flag-reed South-west blown;
Flashing as in gusts the sudden-lighted whitebeam:
All seem to know what is for heaven alone.

George Meredith [1828-1909]

MARIAN

She can be as wise as we,
And wiser when she wishes;
She can knit with cunning wit,
And dress the homely dishes.
She can flourish staff or pen,
And deal a wound that lingers;
She can talk the talk of men,
And touch with thrilling fingers.

Match her ye across the sea,

Natures fond and fiery;
Ye who zest the turtle's nest
With the eagle's eyrie.
Soft and loving is her soul,
Swift and lofty soaring;
Mixing with its dove-like dole
Passionate adoring.

Such a she who'll match with me?
In flying or pursuing,
Subtle wiles are in her smiles
To set the world a-wooing.
She is steadfast as a star,
And yet the maddest maiden:
She can wage a gallant war,
And give the peace of Eden.

George Meredith [1828-1909]

PRAISE OF MY LADY

My lady seems of ivory
Forehead, straight nose, and cheeks that be
Hollowed a little mournfully.
Beata mea Domina!

Her forehead, overshadowed much
By bows of hair, has a wave such
As God was good to make for me.
Beata mea Domina!

Not greatly long my lady's hair,
Nor yet with yellow color fair,
But thick and crisped wonderfully:
Beata mea Domina!

Heavy to make the pale face sad,
And dark, but dead as though it had
Been forged by God most wonderfully
Beata mea Domina!

Of some strange metal, thread by thread,
To stand out from my lady's head,
Not moving much to tangle me.
Beata mea Domina!

Beneath her brows the lids fall slow,
The lashes a clear shadow throw
Where I would wish my lips to be.
Beata mea Domina!

Her great eyes, standing far apart,
Draw up some memory from her heart,
And gaze out very mournfully;
Beata mea Domina!

So beautiful and kind they are,

But most times looking out afar,
Waiting for something, not for me.
Beata mea Domina!

I wonder if the lashes long
Are those that do her bright eyes wrong,
For always half tears seem to be
Beata mea Domina!

Lurking below the underlid,
Darkening the place where they lie hid:
If they should rise and flow for me!
Beata mea Domina!

Her full lips being made to kiss,
Curled up and pensive each one is;
This makes me faint to stand and see.
Beata mea Domina!

Her lips are not contented now,
Because the hours pass so slow
Towards a sweet time: (pray for me),
Beata mea Domina!

Nay, hold thy peace! for who can tell?
But this at least I know full well,
Her lips are parted longingly,
Beata mea Domina!

So passionate and swift to move,
To pluck at any flying love,
That I grow faint to stand and see.
Beata mea Domina!

Yea! there beneath them is her chin,
So fine and round, it were a sin
To feel no weaker when I see
Beata mea Domina!

God's dealings; for with so much care
And troublous, faint lines wrought in there,
He finishes her face for me.
Beata mea Domina!

Of her long neck what shall I say?
What things about her body's sway,
Like a knight's pennon or slim tree
Beata mea Domina!

Set gently waving in the wind;
Or her long hands that I may find
On some day sweet to move o'er me?
Beata mea Domina!

God pity me though, if I missed
The telling, how along her wrist
The veins creep, dying languidly
Beata mea Domina!

Inside her tender palm and thin.
Now give me pardon, dear, wherein
My voice is weak and vexes thee.
Beata mea Domina!

All men that see her any time,
I charge you straightly in this rhyme,
What, and wherever you may be,
Beata mea Domina!

To kneel before her; as for me
I choke and grow quite faint to see
My lady moving graciously.
Beata mea Domina!

William Morris [1834-1896]

MADONNA MIA

Under green apple boughs
That never a storm will rouse,
My lady hath her house
Between two bowers;
In either of the twain
Red roses full of rain;
She hath for bondwomen
All kind of flowers.

She hath no handmaid fair
To draw her curled gold hair
Through rings of gold that bear
Her whole hair's weight;
She hath no maids to stand
Gold-clothed on either hand;
In all that great green land
None is so great.

She hath no more to wear
But one white hood of vair
Drawn over eyes and hair,
Wrought with strange gold,
Made for some great queen's head,
Some fair great queen since dead;
And one strait gown of red
Against the cold.

Beneath her eyelids deep
Love lying seems asleep,
Love, swift to wake, to weep,
To laugh, to gaze;
Her breasts are like white birds,
And all her gracious words
As water-grass to herds
In the June-days.

To her all dews that fall

And rains are musical;
Her flowers are fed from all,
Her joys from these;
In the deep-feathered firs
Their gift of joy is hers,
In the least breath that stirs
Across the trees.

She grows with greenest leaves,
Ripens with reddest sheaves,
Forgets, remembers, grieves,
And is not sad;
The quiet lands and skies
Leave light upon her eyes;
None knows her, weak or wise,
Or tired or glad.

None knows, none understands,
What flowers are like her hands;
Though you should search all lands
Wherein time grows,
What snows are like her feet,
Though his eyes burn with heat
Through gazing on my sweet, -
Yet no man knows.

Only this thing is said;
That white and gold and red,
God's three chief words, man's bread
And oil and wine,
Were given her for dowers,
And kingdom of all hours,
And grace of goodly flowers
And various vine.

This is my lady's praise:
God after many days
Wrought her in unknown ways,
In sunset lands;
This is my lady's birth;
God gave her might and mirth.
And laid his whole sweet earth
Between her hands.

Under deep apple boughs
My lady hath her house;
She wears upon her brows
The flower thereof;
All saying but what God saith
To her is as vain breath;
She is more strong than death,
Being strong as love.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

"MEET WE NO ANGELS, PANSIE?"

Came, on a Sabbath morn, my sweet,
In white, to find her lover;
The grass grew proud beneath her feet,
The green elm-leaves above her: -
Meet we no angels, Pansie?

She said, "We meet no angels now";
And soft lights streamed upon her;
And with white hand she touched a bough;
She did it that great honor: -
What! meet no angels, Pansie?

O sweet brown hat, brown hair, brown eyes,
Down-dropped brown eyes, so tender!
Then what said I? - gallant replies
Seem flattery, and offend her: -
But, - meet we no angels, Pansie?

Thomas Ashe [1836-1889]

TO DAPHNE

Like apple-blossoms, white and red;
Like hues of dawn, which fly too soon;
Like bloom of peach, so softly spread;
Like thorn of May and rose of June -
Oh, sweet! oh, fair! beyond compare,
Are Daphne's cheeks,
Are Daphne's blushing cheeks, I swear.

That pretty rose, which comes and goes
Like April sunshine in the sky,
I can command it when I choose -
See how it rises if I cry:
Oh, sweet! oh, fair! beyond compare,
Are Daphne's cheeks,
Are Daphne's blushing cheeks, I swear.

Ah! when it lies round lips and eyes,
And fades away, again to spring,
No lover, sure, could ask for more
Than still to cry, and still to sing:
Oh, sweet! oh, fair! beyond compare,
Are Daphne's cheeks,
Are Daphne's blushing cheeks, I swear.

Walter Besant [1836-1901]

"GIRL OF THE RED MOUTH"

Girl of the red mouth,
Love me! Love me!
Girl of the red mouth,
Love me!
'Tis by its curve, I know,
Love fashioneth his bow,

And bends it - ah, even so!
Oh, girl of the red mouth, love me!

Girl of the blue eye,
Love me! Love me!
Girl of the dew eye,
Love me!
Worlds hang for lamps on high;
And thought's world lives in thy
Lustrous and tender eye -
Oh, girl of the blue eye, love me!

Girl of the swan's neck,
Love me! Love me!
Girl of the swan's neck,
Love me!
As a marble Greek doth grow
To his steed's back of snow,
Thy white neck sits thy shoulder so, -
Oh, girl of the swan's neck, love me!

Girl of the low voice,
Love me! Love me!
Girl of the sweet voice,
Love me!
Like the echo of a bell, -
Like the bubbling of a well, -
Sweeter! Love within doth dwell, -
Oh, girl of the low voice, love me!

Martin MacDermott [1823-1905]

THE DAUGHTER OF MENDOZA

O lend to me, sweet nightingale,
Your music by the fountain,
And lend to me your cadences,
O river of the mountain!
That I may sing my gay brunette,
A diamond spark in coral set,
Gem for a prince's coronet -
The daughter of Mendoza.

How brilliant is the morning star,
The evening star how tender, -
The light of both is in her eyes,
Their softness and their splendor.
But for the lash that shades their light
They were too dazzling for the sight,
And when she shuts them, all is night -
The daughter of Mendoza.

O ever bright and beauteous one,
Bewildering and beguiling,
The lute is in thy silvery tones,
The rainbow in thy smiling;
And thine, is, too, o'er hill and dell,

The bounding of the young gazelle,
The arrow's flight and ocean's swell -
Sweet daughter of Mendoza!

What though, perchance, we no more meet, -
What though too soon we sever?
Thy form will float like emerald light
Before my vision ever.
For who can see and then forget
The glories of my gay brunette -
Thou art too bright a star to set,
Sweet daughter of Mendoza!

Mirabeau Bonaparte Lamar [1798-1859]

"IF SHE BE MADE OF WHITE AND RED"

If she be made of white and red,
As all transcendent beauty shows;
If heaven be blue above her head,
And earth be golden, as she goes:
Nay, then thy deftest words restrain;
Tell not that beauty, it is vain.

If she be filled with love and scorn,
As all divinest natures are;
If 'twixt her lips such words are born,
As can but Heaven or Hell confer:
Bid Love be still, nor ever speak,
Lest he his own rejection seek.

Herbert P. Horne [1864-

THE LOVER'S SONG

Lend me thy fillet, Love!
I would no longer see:
Cover mine eyelids close awhile,
And make me blind like thee.

Then might I pass her sunny face,
And know not it was fair;
Then might I hear her voice, nor guess
Her starry eyes were there.

Ah! banished so from stars and sun -
Why need it be my fate?
If only she might dream me good
And wise, and be my mate!

Lend her thy fillet, Love!
Let her no longer see:
If there is hope for me at all,
She must be blind like thee.

Edward Rowland Sill [1841-1887]

"WHEN FIRST I SAW HER"

When first I saw her, at the stroke
The heart of nature in me spoke;
The very landscape smiled more sweet,
Lit by her eyes, pressed by her feet;
She made the stars of heaven more bright
By sleeping under them at night;
And fairer made the flowers of May
By being lovelier than they.

O, soft, soft, where the sunshine spread,
Dark in the grass I laid my head;
And let the lights of earth depart
To find her image in my heart;
Then through my being came and went
Tones of some heavenly instrument,
As if where its blind motions roll
The world should wake and be a soul.

George Edward Woodberry [1855-1930]

MY APRIL LADY

When down the stair at morning
The sunbeams round her float,
Sweet rivulets of laughter
Are rippling in her throat;
The gladness of her greeting
Is gold without alloy;
And in the morning sunlight
I think her name is Joy.

When in the evening twilight
The quiet book-room lies,
We read the sad old ballads,
While from her hidden eyes
The tears are falling, falling,
That give her heart relief;
And in the evening twilight,
I think her name is Grief.

My little April lady,
Of sunshine and of showers
She weaves the old spring magic,
And breaks my heart in flowers!
But when her moods are ended,
She nestles like a dove;
Then, by the pain and rapture,
I know her name is Love.

Henry Van Dyke [1852-1933]

THE MILKMAID

A New Song To An Old Tune

Across the grass I see her pass;
She comes with tripping pace, -
A maid I know, - and March winds blow
Her hair across her face; -
With a hey, Dolly! ho, Dolly!
Dolly shall be mine,
Before the spray is white with May,
Or blooms the eglantine.

The March winds blow. I watch her go:
Her eye is brown and clear;
Her cheek is brown, and soft as down,
(To those who see it near!) -
With a hey, Dolly! ho, Dolly!
Dolly shall be mine,
Before the spray is white with May,
Or blooms the eglantine.

What has she not that those have got, -
The dames that walk in silk!
If she undo her kerchief blue,
Her neck is white as milk.
With a hey, Dolly! ho, Dolly!
Dolly shall be mine,
Before the spray is white with May,
Or blooms the eglantine.

Let those who will be proud and chill!
For me, from June to June,
My Dolly's words are sweet as curds -
Her laugh is like a tune; -
With a hey, Dolly! ho, Dolly!
Dolly shall be mine,
Before the spray is white with May,
Or blooms the eglantine.

Break, break to hear, O crocus-spear!
O tall Lent-lilies flame!
There'll be a bride at Easter-tide,
And Dolly is her name.
With a hey, Dolly! ho, Dolly!
Dolly shall be mine,
Before the spray is white with May,
Or blooms the eglantine.

Austin Dobson [1840-1921]

SONG

This peach is pink with such a pink
As suits the peach divinely;
The cunning color rarely spread
Fades to the yellow finely;
But where to spy the truest pink
Is in my Love's soft cheek, I think.

The snowdrop, child of windy March,
Doth glory in her whiteness;
Her golden neighbors, crocuses,
Unenvious praise her brightness!
But I do know where, out of sight,
My sweetheart keeps a warmer white.

Norman Gale [1862-

IN FEBRUARY

My Lady's birthday crowns the growing year;
A flower of Spring before the Spring is here;
To sing of her and this fair day to keep
The very Loves forsake their Winter sleep;
Where'er she goes their circling wings they spread,
And shower celestial roses o'er her head.
I, too, would chant her worth and dare to raise
A hymn to what's beyond immortal praise.
Go, little verse, and lay in vesture meet
Of poesy, my homage at her feet.

Henry Simpson [1868-

"LOVE, I MARVEL WHAT YOU ARE"

Love, I marvel what you are!
Heaven in a pearl of dew,
Lilies hearted with a star -
All are you.

Spring along your forehead shines
And the summer blooms your breast.
Graces of autumnal vines
Round you rest.

Birds about a limpid rose
Making song and light of wing
While the warm wind sunny blows, -
So you sing.

Darling, if the little dust,
That I know is merely I,
Have availed to win your trust,
Let me die.

Trumbull Stickney [1874-1904]

BALLADE OF MY LADY'S BEAUTY

Squire Adam had two wives, they say,
Two wives had he for his delight;
He kissed and clypt them all the day,
And clypt and kissed them all the night.

Now Eve like ocean foam was white,
And Lilith, roses dipped in wine,
But though they were a goodly sight,
No lady is so fair as mine.

To Venus some folk tribute pay,
And Queen of Beauty she is hight,
And Sainte Marie the world doth sway,
In cerule napery bedight.
My wonderment these twain invite,
Their comeliness it is divine;
And yet I say in their despite,
No lady is so fair as mine.

Dame Helen caused a grievous fray,
For love of her brave men did fight,
The eyes of her made sages fey
And put their hearts in woeful plight.
To her no rhymes will I indite,
For her no garlands will I twine;
Though she be made of flowers and light,
No lady is so fair as mine.

L'ENVOI
Prince Eros, Lord of lovely might,
Who on Olympus doth recline,
Do I not tell the truth aright?
No lady is so fair as mine.

Joyce Kilmer [1886-1918]

URSULA

I see her in the festal warmth to-night,
Her rest all grace, her motion all delight.
Endowed with all the woman's arts that please,
In her soft gown she seems a thing of ease,
Whom sorrow may not reach or evil blight.

To-morrow she will toil from floor to floor
To smile upon the unreplying poor,
To stay the tears of widows, and to be
Confessor to men's erring hearts . . . ah me!
She knows not I am beggar at her door.

Robert Underwood Johnson [1853-

VILLANELLE OF HIS LADY'S TREASURES

I took her dainty eyes, as well
As silken tendrils of her hair:
And so I made a Villanelle!

I took her voice, a silver bell,
As clear as song, as soft as prayer;
I took her dainty eyes as well.

It may be, said I, who can tell,
These things shall be my less despair?
And so I made a Villanelle!

I took her whiteness virginal
And from her cheeks two roses rare:
I took her dainty eyes as well.

I said: "It may be possible
Her image from my heart to tear!"
And so I made a Villanelle!

I stole her laugh, most musical:
I wrought it in with artful care;
I took her dainty eyes as well;
And so I made a Villanelle.

Ernest Dowson [1867-1900]

SONG

Love, by that loosened hair
Well now I know
Where the lost Lilith went
So long ago.

Love, by those starry eyes
I understand
How the sea maidens lure
Mortals from land.

Love, by that welling laugh
Joy claims his own
Sea-born and wind-wayward
Child of the sun.

Bliss Carman [1861-1929]

SONG

O, like a queen's her happy tread,
And like a queen's her golden head!
But O, at last, when all is said,
Her woman's heart for me!

We wandered where the river gleamed
'Neath oaks that mused and pines that dreamed,
A wild thing of the woods she seemed,
So proud, and pure, and free!

All heaven drew nigh to hear her sing,
When from her lips her soul took wing;
The oaks forgot their pondering,
The pines their reverie.

And O, her happy, queenly tread,
And O, her queenly golden head!
But O, her heart, when all is said,
Her woman's heart for me!

William Watson [1858-1935]

ANY LOVER, ANY LASS

Why are her eyes so bright, so bright,
Why do her lips control
The kisses of a summer night,
When I would love her soul?

God set her brave eyes wide apart
And painted them with fire;
They stir the ashes of my heart
To embers of desire.

Her lips so tenderly are wrought
In so divine a shape,
That I am servant to my thought
And can no wise escape.

Her body is a flower, her hair
About her neck doth play;
I find her colors everywhere,
They are the pride of day.

Her little hands are soft, and when
I see her fingers move
I know in very truth that men
Have died for less than love.

Ah, dear, live, lovely thing! my eyes
Have sought her like a prayer;
It is my better self that cries
"Would she were not so fair!"

Would I might forfeit ecstasy
And find a calmer place,
Where I might undesirous see
Her too desired face:

Nor find her eyes so bright, so bright,
Nor hear her lips unroll
Dream after dream the lifelong night,
When I would love her soul.

Richard Middleton [1882-1911]

SONGS ASCENDING

Love has been sung a thousand ways -
So let it be;
The songs ascending in your praise

Through all my days
Are three.

Your cloud-white body first I sing;
Your love was heaven's blue,
And I, a bird, flew carolling
In ring on ring
Of you.

Your nearness is the second song;
When God began to be,
And bound you strongly, right or wrong,
With his own thong,
To me.

But oh, the song, eternal, high,
That tops these two! -
You live forever, you who die,
I am not I
But you.

Witter Bynner [1881-

SONG

"Oh! Love," they said, "is King of Kings,
And Triumph is his crown.
Earth fades in flame before his wings,
And Sun and Moon bow down." -
But that, I knew, would never do;
And Heaven is all too high.
So whenever I meet a Queen, I said,
I will not catch her eye.

"Oh! Love," they said, and "Love," they said,
"The gift of Love is this;
A crown of thorns about thy head,
And vinegar to thy kiss!" -
But Tragedy is not for me;
And I'm content to be gay.
So whenever I spied a Tragic Lady,
I went another way.

And so I never feared to see
You wander down the street,
Or come across the fields to me
On ordinary feet.
For what they'd never told me of,
And what I never knew;
It was that all the time, my love,
Love would be merely you.

Rupert Brooke [1887-1915]

SONG

How do I love you?
I do not know.
Only because of you
Gladly I go.

Only because of you
Labor is sweet,
And all the song of you
Sings in my feet.

Only the thought of you
Trembles and lies
Just where the world begins -
Under my eyes.

Irene Rutherford McLeod [1891-

TO. . . IN CHURCH

If I was drawn here from a distant place,
'Twas not to pray nor hear our friend's address,
But, gazing once more on your winsome face,
To worship there Ideal Loveliness.
On that pure shrine that has too long ignored
The gifts that once I brought so frequently
I lay this votive offering, to record
How sweet your quiet beauty seemed to me.
Enchanting girl, my faith is not a thing
By futile prayers and vapid psalm-singing
To vent in crowded nave and public pew.
My creed is simple: that the world is fair,
And beauty the best thing to worship there,
And I confess it by adoring you.

Alan Seeger [1888-1916]

AFTER TWO YEARS

She is all so slight
And tender and white
As a May morning.
She walks without hood
At dusk. It is good
To hear her sing.

It is God's will
That I shall love her still
As He loves Mary.
And night and day
I will go forth to pray
That she love me.

She is as gold
Lovely, and far more cold.
Do thou pray with me,
For if I win grace

To kiss twice her face
God has done well to me.

Richard Aldington [1892-

PRAISE

Dear, they are praising your beauty,
The grass and the sky:
The sky in a silence of wonder,
The grass in a sigh.

I too would sing for your praising,
Dearest, had I
Speech as the whispering grass,
Or the silent sky.

These have an art for the praising
Beauty so high.
Sweet, you are praised in a silence,
Sung in a sigh.

Seumas O'Sullivan [1879-

PLAINTS AND PROTESTATIONS

"FORGET NOT YET"

The Lover Beseecheth His Mistress
Not To Forget His Steadfast Faith
And True Intent

Forget not yet the tried intent
Of such a truth as I have meant:
My great travail so gladly spent,
Forget not yet!

Forget not yet when first began
The weary life ye know, since when
The suit, the service, none tell can;
Forget not yet!

Forget not yet the great assays,
The cruel wrong, the scornful ways,
The painful patience in delays,
Forget not yet!

Forget not! O, forget not this! -
How long ago hath been, and is,
The mind that never meant amiss -
Forget not yet!

Forget not then thine own approved,
The which so long hath thee so loved,
Whose steadfast faith yet never moved:
Forget not this!

Thomas Wyatt [1503?-1542]

FAWNIA
From "Pandosto"

Ah! were she pitiful as she is fair,
Or but as mild as she is seeming so,
Then were my hopes greater than my despair,
Then all the world were heaven, nothing woe.

Ah! were her heart relenting as her hand,
That seems to melt even with the mildest touch,
Then knew I where to seat me in a land
Under wide heavens, but yet there is not such.
So as she shows she seems the budding rose,
Yet sweeter far than is an earthly flower;
Sovereign of beauty, like the spray she grows;
Compassed she is with thorns and cankered flower.
Yet were she willing to be plucked and worn,
She would be gathered, though she grew on thorn.

Ah! when she sings, all music else be still,
For none must be compared to her note;
Ne'er breathed such glee from Philomela's bill,
Nor from the morning-singer's swelling throat.
Ah! when she riseth from her blissful bed
She comforts all the world as doth the sun,
And at her sight the night's foul vapor's fled;
When she is set the gladsome day is done.
O glorious sun, imagine me the west,
Shine in my arms, and set thou in my breast!

Robert Greene [1560?-1592]

THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE

Come live with me and be my Love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That hills and valleys, dales and fields,
Or woods or steepy mountain yields.

And we will sit upon the rocks,
And see the shepherds feed their flocks
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses
And a thousand fragrant posies;
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle.

A gown made of the finest wool
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Fair-lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold.

A belt of straw and ivy-buds
With coral clasps and amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me and be my Love.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my Love.

Christopher Marlowe [1564-1593]

THE NYMPH'S REPLY TO THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD

If all the world and love were young,
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move
To live with thee, and be thy Love.

But Time drives flocks from field to fold;
When rivers rage and rocks grow cold;
And Philomel becometh dumb;
The rest complains of cares to come.

The flowers do fade, and wanton fields
To wayward Winter reckoning yields:
A honey tongue, a heart of gall,
Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall.

Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of roses,
Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies,
Soon break, soon wither, - soon forgotten,
In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy belt of straw and ivy-buds,
Thy coral clasps and amber studs, -
All these in me no means can move
To come to thee and be thy Love.

But could youth last, and love still breed,
Had joys no date, nor age no need,
Then these delights my mind might move
To live with thee and be thy Love.

Walter Raleigh [1552?-1618]

"WRONG NOT, SWEET EMPRESS OF MY HEART"

Wrong not, sweet empress of my heart,
The merit of true passion,
With thinking that he feels no smart,
That sues for no compassion.

Silence in love bewrays more woe
Than words, though ne'er so witty:
A beggar that is dumb, you know,
May challenge double pity.

Then wrong not, dearest to my heart,
My true, though secret passion;
He smarteth most that hides his smart,
And sues for no compassion.

Walter Raleigh [1552?-1618]

TO HIS COY LOVE

I pray thee, leave, love me no more,
Call home the heart you gave me!
I but in vain that saint adore
That can but will not save me.
These poor half-kisses kill me quite -
Was ever man thus served:
Amidst an ocean of delight
For pleasure to be starved!

Show me no more those snowy breasts
With azure riverets branched,
Where, whilst mine eye with plenty feasts,
Yet is my thirst not stanched;
O Tantalus, thy pains ne'er tell!
By me thou art prevented:
'Tis nothing to be plagued in Hell,
But thus in Heaven tormented.

Clip me no more in those dear arms,
Nor thy life's comfort call me,
O these are but too powerful charms,
And do but more enthral me!
But see how patient I am grown
In all this coil about thee:
Come, nice thing, let my heart alone,
I cannot live without thee!

Michael Drayton [1563-1631]

HER SACRED BOWER

Where she her sacred bower adorns,
The rivers clearly flow,
The groves and meadows swell with flowers,
The winds all gently blow.

Her sun-like beauty shines so fair,
Her spring can never fade:
Who then can blame the life that strives
To harbor in her shade?

Her grace I sought, her love I wooed;
Her love thought to obtain;
No time, no toil, no vow, no faith,
Her wished grace can gain.
Yet truth can tell my heart is hers
And her will I adore;
And from that love when I depart,
Let heaven view me no more!

Her roses with my prayers shall spring;
And when her trees I praise,
Their boughs shall blossom, mellow fruit
Shall strew her pleasant ways.
The words of hearty zeal have power
High wonders to effect;
O, why should then her princely ear
My words or zeal neglect?

If she my faith misdeems, or worth,
Woe worth my hapless fate!
For though time can my truth reveal,
That time will come too late.
And who can glory in the worth
That cannot yield him grace?
Content in everything is not,
Nor joy in every place.

But from her Bower of Joy since I
Must now excluded be,
And she will not relieve my cares,
Which none can help but she;
My comfort in her love shall dwell,
Her love lodge in my breast,
And though not in her bower, yet I
Shall in her temple rest.

Thomas Campion [? -1619]

TO LESBIA
After Catullus

My sweetest Lesbia, let us live and love,
And though the sager sort our deeds reprove,
Let us not weigh them. Heaven's great lamps do dive
Into their west, and straight again revive:
But soon as once set is our little light,
Then must we sleep one ever-during night.

If all would lead their lives in love like me,
Then bloody swords and armor should not be;
No drum nor trumpet peaceful sleeps should move,
Unless alarm came from the Camp of Love:

But fools do live and waste their little light,
And seek with pain their ever-during night.

When timely death my life and fortune ends,
Let not my hearse be vexed with mourning friends;
But let all lovers, rich in triumph, come
And with sweet pastimes grace my happy tomb:
And, Lesbia, close up thou my little light,
And crown with love my ever-during night.

Thomas Campion [? -1619]

"LOVE ME OR NOT"

Love me or not, love her I must or die;
Leave her or not, follow her needs must I.
O that her grace would my wished comforts give!
How rich in her, how happy should I live!

All my desire, all my delight should be
Her to enjoy, her to unite to me;
Envy should cease, her would I love alone:
Who loves by looks, is seldom true to one.

Could I enchant, and that it lawful were,
Her would I charm softly that none should hear;
But love enforced rarely yields firm content:
So would I love that neither should repent.

Thomas Campion [? -1619]

"THERE IS NONE, O NONE BUT YOU"

There is none, O none but you,
That from me estrange the sight,
Whom mine eyes affect to view,
And chained ears hear with delight.

Other beauties others move:
In you I all graces find;
Such is the effect of Love,
To make them happy that are kind.

Women in frail beauty trust,
Only seem you fair to me:
Still prove truly kind and just,
For that may not dissembled be.

Sweet, afford me then your sight,
That, surveying all your looks,
Endless volumes I may write,
And fill the world with envied books:

Which, when after-ages view,
All shall wonder and despair, -
Woman, to find a man so true,

Or man, a woman half so fair!

Thomas Campion [? -1619]

OF CORINNA'S SINGING

When to her lute Corinna sings,
Her voice revives the leaden strings,
And doth in highest notes appear,
As any challenged echo clear:
But when she doth of mourning speak,
E'en with her sighs, the strings do break.

And as her lute doth live or die,
Led by her passion, so must I!
For when of pleasure she doth sing,
My thoughts enjoy a sudden spring:
But if she doth of sorrow speak,
E'en from my heart the strings do break.

Thomas Campion [? -1619]

"WERE MY HEART AS SOME MEN'S ARE"

Were my heart as some men's are, thy errors would not move me;
But thy faults I curious find, and speak because I love thee:
Patience is a thing divine, and far, I grant, above me.

Foes sometimes befriend us more, our blacker deeds objecting,
Than the obsequious bosom-guest with false respect affecting:
Friendship is the Glass of Truth, our hidden stains detecting.

When I use of eyes enjoy, and inward light of reason,
Thy observer will I be and censor, but in season:
Hidden mischief to conceal in State and Love is treason.

Thomas Campion [? -1619]

"KIND ARE HER ANSWERS"

Kind are her answers,
But her performance keeps no day;
Breaks time, as dancers
From their own music when they stray.
All her free favors
And smooth words wing my hopes in vain.
O, did ever voice so sweet but only feign?
Can true love yield such delay,
Converting joy to pain?

Lost is our freedom
When we submit to women so:
Why do we need 'em
When, in their best, they work our woe?
There is no wisdom

Can alter ends by fate prefixed.
O, why is the good of man with evil mixed?
Never were days yet called two
But one night went betwixt.

Thomas Campion [? -1619]

TO CELIA
From "The Forest"

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine;
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
I would not change for thine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honoring thee
As giving it a hope that there
It could not withered be;
But thou thereon didst only breathe,
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself but thee!

Ben Jonson [1573?-1637]

SONG
From "The Forest"

O, do not wanton with those eyes,
Lest I be sick with seeing;
Nor cast them down, but let them rise,
Lest shame destroy their being.

O, be not angry with those fires,
For then their threats will kill me;
Nor look too kind on my desires,
For then my hopes will spill me.

O, do not steep them in thy tears,
For so will sorrow slay me;
Nor spread them as distract with fears;
Mine own enough betray me.

Ben Jonson [1573?-1637]

SONG

Go and catch a falling star,
Get with child a mandrake root,
Tell me where all past years are,

Or who cleft the Devil's foot;
Teach me to hear mermaid's singing,
Or to keep off envy's stinging,
And find
What wind
Serves to advance an honest mind.

If thou be'st born to strange sights,
Things invisible go see,
Ride ten thousand days and nights
Till Age snow white hairs on thee;
Thou, when thou return'st, wilt tell me
All strange wonders that befell thee,
And swear
No where
Lives a woman true and fair.

If thou find'st one, let me know;
Such a pilgrimage were sweet.
Yet do not; I would not go,
Though at next door we might meet.
Though she were true when you met her,
And last till you write your letter,
Yet she
Will be
False, ere I come, to two or three.

John Donne [1573-1631]

THE MESSAGE

Send home my long-strayed eyes to me,
Which, O! too long have dwelt on thee:
But if from you they've learned such ill,
To sweetly smile,
And then beguile,
Keep the deceivers, keep them still.

Send home my harmless heart again,
Which no unworthy thought could stain:
But if it has been taught by thine
To forfeit both
Its word and oath,
Keep it, for then 'tis none of mine.

Yet send me back my heart and eyes,
For I'll know all thy falsities;
That I one day may laugh, when thou
Shalt grieve and mourn -
Of one the scorn,
Who proves as false as thou art now.

John Donne [1573-1631]

SONG

Ladies, though to your conquering eyes
Love owes his chiefest victories,
And borrows those bright arms from you
With which he does the world subdue,
Yet you yourselves are not above
The empire nor the griefs of love.

Then rack not lovers with disdain,
Lest Love on you revenge their pain:
You are not free because you're fair:
The Boy did not his Mother spare.
Beauty's but an offensive dart:
It is no armor for the heart.

George Etherege [1635?-1691]

TO A LADY ASKING HIM HOW LONG HE WOULD LOVE HER

It is not, Celia, in our power
To say how long our love will last;
It may be we within this hour
May lose those joys we now do taste:
The Blessed, that immortal be,
From change in love are only free.

Then since we mortal lovers are,
Ask not how long our love will last;
But while it does, let us take care
Each minute be with pleasure passed:
Were it not madness to deny
To live because we're sure to die?

George Etherege [1635?-1691]

TO AENONE

What conscience, say, is it in thee,
When I a heart had one,
To take away that heart from me,
And to retain thy own?

For shame or pity now incline
To play a loving part;
Either to send me kindly thine,
Or give me back my heart.

Covet not both; but if thou dost
Resolve to part with neither,
Why, yet to show that thou art just,
Take me and mine together!

Robert Herrick [1591-1674]

TO ANTHEA, WHO MAY COMMAND HIM ANYTHING

Bid me to live, and I will live
Thy Protestant to be;
Or bid me love, and I will give
A loving heart to thee.

A heart as soft, a heart as kind,
A heart as sound and free
As in the whole world thou canst find,
That heart I'll give to thee.

Bid that heart stay, and it will stay
To honor thy decree;
Or bid it languish quite away,
And 't shall do so for thee.

Bid me to weep, and I will weep,
While I have eyes to see;
And having none, yet will I keep
A heart to weep for thee.

Bid me despair, and I'll despair,
Under that cypress tree;
Or bid me die, and I will dare
E'en death, to die for thee.

Thou art my life, my love, my heart,
The very eyes of me;
And hast command of every part,
To live and die for thee.

Robert Herrick [1591-1674]

THE BRACELET: TO JULIA

Why I tie about thy wrist,
Julia, this silken twist;
For what other reason is't
But to show thee how, in part,
Thou my pretty captive art?
But thy bond-slave is my heart:
'Tis but silk that bindeth thee,
Snap the thread and thou art free;
But 'tis otherwise with me;
I am bound and fast bound, so
That from thee I cannot go;
If I could, I would not so.

Robert Herrick [1591-1674]

TO THE WESTERN WIND

Sweet western wind, whose luck it is,
Made rival with the air,
To give Perenna's lip a kiss,
And fan her wanton hair:

Bring me but one, I'll promise thee,
Instead of common showers,
Thy wings shall be embalmed by me,
And all beset with flowers.

Robert Herrick [1591-1674]

TO MY INCONSTANT MISTRESS

When thou, poor Excommunicate
From all the joys of Love, shalt see
The full reward and glorious fate
Which my strong faith shall purchase me,
Then curse thine own Inconstancy.

A fairer hand than thine shall cure
That heart which thy false oaths did wound;
And to my soul a soul more pure
Than thine shall by Love's hand be bound,
And both with equal glory crowned.

Then shalt thou weep, entreat, complain
To Love, as I did once to thee:
When all thy tears shall be as vain
As mine were then: for thou shalt be
Damned for thy false Apostasy.

Thomas Carew [1598?-1639?]

PERSUASIONS TO ENJOY

If the quick spirits in your eye
Now languish and anon must die;
If every sweet and every grace
Must fly from that forsaken face:
Then, Celia, let us reap our joys
Ere Time such goodly fruit destroys.

Or, if that golden fleece must grow
For ever free from aged snow;
If those bright suns must know no shade,
Nor your fresh beauties ever fade:
Then fear not, Celia, to bestow
What, still being gathered, still must grow.

Thus either Time his sickle brings
In vain, or else in vain his wings.

Thomas Carew [1598?-1639?]

MEDIOCRITY IN LOVE REJECTED

Give me more love, or more disdain:
The torrid, or the frozen zone
Bring equal ease unto my pain;

The temperate affords me none:
Either extreme, of love or hate,
Is sweeter than a calm estate.

Give me a storm; if it be love,
Like Danae in that golden shower,
I'll swim in pleasure; if it prove
Disdain, that torrent will devour
My vulture-hopes; and he's possessed
Of heaven, that's but from hell released.

Then crown my joys, or cure my pain:
Give me more love, or more disdain.

Thomas Carew [1598?-1639?]

THE MESSAGE

Ye little birds that sit and sing
Amidst the shady valleys,
And see how Phillis sweetly walks
Within her garden-alleys;
Go, pretty birds, about her bower;
Sing, pretty birds, she may not lower;
Ah me! methinks I see her frown!
Ye pretty wantons, warble.

Go tell her through your chirping bills,
As you by me are bidden,
To her is only known my love,
Which from the world is hidden.
Go, pretty birds, and tell her so,
See that your notes strain not too low,
For still methinks I see her frown;
Ye pretty wantons, warble.

Go tune your voices' harmony
And sing, I am her lover;
Strain loud and sweet, that every note
With sweet content may move her:
And she that hath the sweetest voice,
Tell her I will not change my choice:
- Yet still methinks I see her frown!
Ye pretty wantons, warble.

O fly! make haste! see, see, she falls
Into a pretty slumber!
Sing round about her rosy bed
That waking she may wonder:
Say to her, 'tis her lover true
That sendeth love to you, to you!
And when you hear her kind reply,
Return with pleasant warblings.

Thomas Heywood [? -1650?]

"HOW CAN THE HEART FORGET HER"

At her fair hands how have I grace entreated
With prayers oft repeated!
Yet still my love is thwarted:
Heart, let her go, for she'll not be converted -
Say, shall she go?
O no, no, no, no, no!
She is most fair, though she be marble-hearted.

How often have my sighs declared my anguish,
Wherein I daily languish!
Yet still she doth procure it:
Heart, let her go, for I cannot endure it -
Say, shall she go?
O no, no, no, no, no!
She gave the wound, and she alone must cure it.

But shall I still a true affection owe her,
Which prayers, sighs, tears do show her,
And shall she still disdain me?
Heart, let her go, if they no grace can gain me -
Say, shall she go?
O no, no, no, no, no!
She made me hers, and hers she will retain me.

But if the love that hath and still doth burn me
No love at length return me,
Out of my thoughts I'll set her:
Heart, let her go, O heart I pray thee, let her!
Say, shall she go?
O no, no, no, no, no!
Fixed in the heart, how can the heart forget her?

Francis Davison [fl. 1602]

TO ROSES IN THE BOSOM OF CASTARA

Ye blushing virgins happy are
In the chaste nunnery of her breasts -
For he'd profane so chaste a fair,
Whoe'er should call them Cupid's nests.

Transplanted thus how bright ye grow!
How rich a perfume do ye yield!
In some close garden cowslips so
Are sweeter than in the open field.

In those white cloisters live secure
From the rude blasts of wanton breath! -
Each hour more innocent and pure,
Till you shall wither into death.

Then that which living gave you room,
Your glorious sepulcher shall be.
There wants no marble for a tomb
Whose breast hath marble been to me.

William Habington [1605-1654]

TO FLAVIA

'Tis not your beauty can engage
My wary heart;
The sun, in all his pride and rage,
Has not that art;
And yet he shines as bright as you,
If brightness could our souls subdue.

'Tis not the pretty things you say,
Nor those you write,
Which can make Thyrsis' heart your prey:
For that delight,
The graces of a well-taught mind,
In some of our own sex we find.

No, Flavia, 'tis your love I fear;
Love's surest darts,
Those which so seldom fail him, are
Headed with hearts:
Their very shadows make us yield;
Dissemble well, and win the field!

Edmund Waller [1606-1687]

"LOVE NOT ME FOR COMELY GRACE"

Love not me for comely grace,
For my pleasing eye or face;
Nor for any outward part,
No, nor for a constant heart:
For these may fail or turn to ill,
So thou and I shall sever.
Keep, therefore, a true woman's eye,
And love me still, but know not why;
So hast thou the same reason still
To doat upon me ever.

Unknown

"WHEN, DEAREST, I BUT THINK OF THEE"

When, dearest, I but think of thee,
Methinks all things that lovely be
Are present, and my soul delighted:
For beauties that from worth arise
Are, like the grace of deities,
Still present with us, though unsighted.

Thus while I sit and sigh the day
With all his borrowed lights away,
Till night's black wings do overtake me,

Thinking on thee, thy beauties then,
As sudden lights do sleepy men,
So they by their bright rays awake me.

Thus absence dies, and dying proves
No absence can subsist with loves
That do partake of fair perfection:
Since in the darkest night they may
By their quick motion find a way
To see each other by reflection.

The waving sea can with each flood
Bathe some high promont that hath stood
Far from the main up in the river:
O think not then but love can do
As much! for that's an ocean too,
Which flows not every day, but ever!

John Suckling [1609-1642]
or Owen Fellltham [1602?-1668]

A DOUBT OF MARTYRDOM

O for some honest lover's ghost,
Some kind unbodied post
Sent from the shades below!
I strangely long to know
Whether the noble chaplets wear
Those that their mistress' scorn did bear
Or those that were used kindly.

For whatsoe'er they tell us here
To make those sufferings dear,
'Twill there, I fear, be found
That to the being crowned
To have loved alone will not suffice,
Unless we also have been wise
And have our loves enjoyed.

What posture can we think him in
That, here unloved, again
Departs, and's thither gone
Where each sits by his own?
Or how can that Elysium be
Where I my mistress still must see
Circled in other's arms?

For there the judges all are just,
And Sophonisba must
Be his whom she held dear,
Not his who loved her here.
The sweet Philoclea, since she died,
Lies by her Pirocles his side,
Not by Amphialus.

Some bays, perchance, or myrtle bough
For difference crowns the brow

Of those kind souls that were
The noble martyrs here:
And if that be the only odds
(As who can tell?), ye kinder gods,
Give me the woman here!

John Suckling [1609-1642]

TO CHLOE
Who For His Sake Wished Herself Younger

Chloe, why wish you that your years
Would backwards run till they meet mine,
That perfect likeness, which endears
Things unto things, might us combine?
Our ages so in date agree,
That twins do differ more than we.

There are two births; the one when light
First strikes the new awakened sense;
The other when two souls unite,
And we must count our life from thence:
When you loved me and I loved you
Then both of us were born anew.

Love then to us new souls did give
And in those souls did plant new powers;
Since when another life we live,
The breath we breathe is his, not ours:
Love makes those young whom age doth chill,
And whom he finds young keeps young still.

Love, like that angel that shall call
Our bodies from the silent grave,
Unto one age doth raise us all;
None too much, none too little have;
Nay, that the difference may be none,
He makes two, not alike, but one.

And now since you and I are such,
Tell me what's yours, and what is mine?
Our eyes, our ears, our taste, smell, touch,
Do, like our souls, in one combine;
So, by this, I as well may be
Too old for you, as you for me.

William Cartwright [1611-1643]

"I'll NEVER LOVE THEE MORE"

My dear and only Love, I pray
This little world of thee
Be governed by no other sway
Than purest monarchy;
For if confusion have a part,
Which virtuous souls abhor,

And hold a synod in thy heart,
I'll never love thee more.

Like Alexander I will reign,
And I will reign alone;
My thoughts did evermore disdain
A rival on my throne.
He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
That dares not put it to the touch
To gain or lose it all.

But I must rule and govern still,
And always give the law,
And have each subject at my will
And all to stand in awe.
But 'gainst my batteries if I find
Thou kick, or vex me sore,
As that thou set me up a blind,
I'll never love thee more!

Or in the empire of thy heart,
Where I should solely be,
If others do pretend a part
And dare to vie with me,
Or if committees thou erect,
And go on such a score,
I'll laugh and sing at thy neglect,
And never love thee more.

But if thou wilt be faithful, then,
And constant of thy word,
I'll make thee glorious by my pen
And famous by my sword;
I'll serve thee in such noble ways
Were never heard before;
I'll crown and deck thee all with bays,
And love thee evermore.

James Graham [1612-1650]

TO ALTHEA, FROM PRISON

When Love with unconfined wings
Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
To whisper at the grates;
When I lie tangled in her hair
And fettered to her eye,
The birds that wanton in the air
Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round
With no allaying Thames,
Our careless heads with roses bound,
Our hearts with loyal flames;
When thirsty grief in wine we steep,

When healths and draughts go free -
Fishes that tipple in the deep
Know no such liberty.

When, like committed linnets, I
With shriller throat shall sing
The sweetness, mercy, majesty,
And glories of my King;
When I shall voice aloud how good
He is, how great should be,
Enlarged winds, that curl the flood,
Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage;
If I have freedom in my love
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.

Richard Lovelace [1618-1658]

WHY I LOVE HER

'Tis not her birth, her friends, nor yet her treasure,
Nor do I covet her for sensual pleasure,
Nor for that old morality
Do I love her, 'cause she loves me.

Sure he that loves his lady 'cause she's fair,
Delights his eye, so loves himself, not her.
Something there is moves me to love, and I
Do know I love, but know not how, nor why.

Alexander Brome [1620-1666]

TO HIS COY MISTRESS

Had we but world enough, and time,
This coyness, Lady, were no crime.
We would sit down and think which way
To walk and pass our long love's day.
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
Shouldst rubies find: I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the Flood,
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires, and more slow;
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes and on thy forehead gaze;
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest;

An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart.
For, Lady, you deserve this state,
Nor would I love at lower rate.
But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.
Thy beauty shall no more be found,
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
My echoing song: then worms shall try
That long preserved virginity,
And your quaint honor turn to dust,
And into ashes all my lust:
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.
Now therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,
And while thy willing soul transpires
At every pore with instant fires,
Now let us sport us while we may,
And now, like amorous birds of prey,
Rather at once our time devour
Than languish in his slow-chapt power.
Let us roll all our strength and all
Our sweetness up into one ball,
And tear our pleasures with rough strife
Through the iron gates of life:
Thus, though we cannot make our sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

Andrew Marvell [1621-1678]

A DEPOSITION FROM BEAUTY

Though when I loved thee thou wert fair,
Thou art no longer so;
These glories all the pride they wear
Unto opinion owe.
Beauties, like stars, in borrowed luster shine;
And 'twas my love that gave thee thine.

The flames that dwelt within thine eye
Do now with mine expire;
Thy brightest graces fade and die
At once with my desire.
Love's fires thus mutual influence return;
Thine cease to shine, when mine to burn.

Then, proud Celinda, hope no more
To be implored or wooed,
Since by thy scorn thou dost restore
Thy wealth my love bestowed:
And thy despised disdain too late shall find
That none are fair but who are kind.

Thomas Stanley [1625-1678]

"LOVE IN THY YOUTH, FAIR MAID"

Love in thy youth, fair maid, be wise,
Old Time will make thee colder,
And though each morning new arise,
Yet we each day grow older.

Thou as heaven art fair and young,
Thine eyes like twin stars shining;
But ere another day be sprung,
All these will be declining;

Then winter comes with all his fears,
And all thy sweets shall borrow;
Too late then wilt thou shower thy tears,
And I, too late, shall sorrow.

Unknown

TO CELIA

When, Celia, must my old day set,
And my young morning rise
In beams of joy so bright as yet
Ne'er blessed a lover's eyes?
My state is more advanced than when
I first attempted thee:
I sued to be a servant then,
But now to be made free.

I've served my time faithful and true,
Expecting to be placed
In happy freedom, as my due,
To all the joys thou hast:
Ill husbandry in love is such
A scandal to love's power,
We ought not to misspend so much
As one poor short-lived hour.

Yet think not, sweet, I'm weary grown,
That I pretend such haste;
Since none to surfeit e'er was known
Before he had a taste:
My infant love could humbly wait
When, young, it scarce knew how
To plead; but grown to man's estate,
He is impatient now.

Charles Cotton [1630-1687]

TO CELIA

Not, Celia, that I juster am
Or better than the rest!

For I would change each hour, like them,
Were not my heart at rest.

But I am tied to very thee
By every thought I have;
Thy face I only care to see,
Thy heart I only crave.

All that in woman is adored
In thy dear self I find -
For the whole sex can but afford
The handsome and the kind.

Why then should I seek further store,
And still make love anew?
When change itself can give no more,
'Tis easy to be true!

Charles Sedley [1639-1701]

A SONG

My dear mistress has a heart
Soft as those kind looks she gave me;
When with love's restless art,
And her eyes, she did enslave me.
But her constancy's so weak,
She's so wild and apt to wander,
That my jealous heart would break
Should we live one day asunder.

Melting joys about her move,
Killing pleasures, wounding blisses;
She can dress her eyes in love,
And her lips can arm with kisses.
Angels listen when she speaks;
She's my delight, all mankind's wonder;
But my jealous heart would break
Should we live one day asunder.

John Wilmot [1647-1680]

LOVE AND LIFE

All my past life is mine no more;
The flying hours are gone,
Like transitory dreams given o'er,
Whose images are kept in store
By memory alone.

The time that is to come is not;
How can it then be mine?
The present moment's all my lot;
And that, as fast as it is got,
Phillis, is only thine.

Then talk not of inconstancy,
False hearts, and broken vows;
If I by miracle can be
This live-long minute true to thee,
'Tis all that Heaven allows.

John Wilmot [1647-1680]

CONSTANCY

I cannot change as others do,
Though you unjustly scorn;
Since that poor swain that sighs for you
For you alone was born.
No, Phillis, no; your heart to move
A surer way I'll try;
And, to revenge my slighted love,
Will still live on, will still live on and die.

When, killed with grief, Amyntas lies,
And you to mind shall call
The sighs that now unpitied rise,
The tears that vainly fall -
That welcome hour that ends this smart,
Will then begin your pain;
For such a faithful tender heart
Can never break, can never break in vain.

John Wilmot [1647-1680]

SONG

Too late, alas! I must confess,
You need not arts to move me;
Such charms by nature you possess,
'Twere madness not to love ye.

Then spare a heart you may surprise,
And give my tongue the glory
To boast, though my unfaithful eyes
Betray a tender story.

John Wilmot [1647-1680]

SONG

Come, Celia, let's agree at last
To love and live in quiet;
Let's tie the knot so very fast
That time shall ne'er untie it.
Love's dearest joys they never prove,
Who free from quarrels live;
'Tis sure a god like part of love
Each other to forgive.

When least I seemed concerned I took
No pleasure, nor had rest;
And when I feigned an angry look,
Alas! I loved you best.
Say but the same to me, you'll find
How blest will be our fate;
Sure to be grateful, to be kind,
Can never be too late.

John Sheffield [1648-1721]

THE ENCHANTMENT

I did but look and love awhile,
'Twas but for one half-hour;
Then to resist I had no will,
And now I have no power.

To sigh and wish is all my ease;
Sighs which do heat impart
Enough to melt the coldest ice,
Yet cannot warm your heart.

O would your pity give my heart
One corner of your breast,
'Twould learn of yours the winning art,
And quickly steal the rest.

Thomas Otway [1652-1685]

SONG

Only tell her that I love:
Leave the rest to her and Fate:
Some kind planet from above
May perhaps her pity move:
Lovers on their stars must wait. -
Only tell her that I love!

Why, O why should I despair!
Mercy's pictured in her eye:
If she once vouchsafe to hear,
Welcome Hope and farewell Fear!
She's too good to let me die. -
Why, O why should I despair?

John Cutts [1661-1707]

"FALSE THOUGH SHE BE"

False though she be to me and love,
I'll ne'er pursue revenge;
For still the charmer I approve,
Though I deplore her change.

In hours of bliss we oft have met:
They could not always last;
And though the present I regret,
I'm grateful for the past.

William Congreve [1670-1729]

TO SILVIA
From "The Cautious Lovers"

Silvia, let us from the crowd retire,
For what to you and me
(Who but each other do desire)
Is all that here we see?

Apart we'll live, though not alone;
For who alone can call
Those who in deserts live with one
If in that one they've all?

The world a vast meander is,
Where hearts confusedly stray;
Where few do hit, whilst thousands miss,
The happy mutual way.

Anne Finch [? -1720]

"WHY, LOVELY CHARMER"

Why, lovely charmer, tell me why,
So very kind, and yet so shy?
Why does that cold, forbidding air
Give damps of sorrow and despair?
Or why that smile my soul subdue,
And kindle up my flames anew?

In vain you strive with all your art,
By turns to fire and freeze my heart;
When I behold a face so fair,
So sweet a look, so soft an air,
My ravished soul is charmed all o'er,
I cannot love thee less or more.

Unknown

AGAINST INDIFFERENCE

More love or more disdain I crave;
Sweet, be not still indifferent:
O send me quickly to my grave,
Or else afford me more content!
Or love or hate me more or less,
For love abhors all lukewarmness.

Give me a tempest if 'twill drive

Me to the place where I would be;
Or if you'll have me still alive,
Confess you will be kind to me.
Give hopes of bliss or dig my grave:
More love or more disdain I crave.

Charles Webbe [c. 1678]

A SONG TO AMORET

If I were dead, and, in my place,
Some fresher youth designed
To warm thee, with new fires; and grace
Those arms I left behind:

Were he as faithful as the Sun,
That's wedded to the Sphere;
His blood as chaste and temperate run,
As April's mildest tear;

Or were he rich; and, with his heap
And spacious share of earth,
Could make divine affection cheap,
And court his golden birth;

For all these arts, I'd not believe
(No! though he should be thine!),
The mighty Amorist could give
So rich a heart as mine!

Fortune and beauty thou might'st find,
And greater men than I;
But my true resolved mind
They never shall come nigh.

For I not for an hour did love,
Or for a day desire,
But with my soul had from above
This endless holy fire.

Henry Vaughan [1622-1695]

THE LASS OF RICHMOND HILL

On Richmond Hill there lives a lass
More bright than May-day morn,
Whose charms all other maids surpass, -
A rose without a thorn.

This lass so neat, with smiles so sweet,
Has won my right good-will;
I'd crowns resign to call her mine,
Sweet lass of Richmond Hill.

Ye zephyrs gay, that fan the air,
And wanton through the grove,

O, whisper to my charming fair,
I die for her I love.

How happy will the shepherd be
Who calls this nymph his own!
O, may her choice be fixed on me!
Mine's fixed on her alone.

James Upton [1670-1749]

SONG
From "Sunday Up the River"

Let my voice ring out and over the earth,
Through all the grief and strife,
With a golden joy in a silver mirth:
Thank God for life!

Let my voice swell out through the great abyss
To the azure dome above,
With a chord of faith in the harp of bliss:
Thank God for Love!

Let my voice thrill out beneath and above,
The whole world through:
O my Love and Life, O my Life and Love,
Thank God for you!

James Thomson [1834-1882]

GIFTS
From "Sunday Up the River"

Give a man a horse he can ride,
Give a man a boat he can sail;
And his rank and wealth, his strength and health,
On sea nor shore shall fail.

Give a man a pipe he can smoke,
Give a man a book he can read:
And his home is bright with a calm delight,
Though the room be poor indeed.

Give a man a girl he can love,
As I, O my love, love thee;
And his heart is great with the pulse of Fate,
At home, on land, on sea.

James Thomson [1834-1882]

AMYNTA

My sheep I neglected, I broke my sheep-crook,
And all the gay haunts of my youth I forsook;
No more for Amynta fresh garlands I wove;

For ambition, I said would soon cure me of love.

Oh, what had my youth with ambition to do?
Why left I Amynta? Why broke I my vow?
Oh, give me my sheep, and my sheep-hook restore,
And I'll wander from love and Amynta no more.

Through regions remote in vain do I rove,
And bid the wide ocean secure me from love!
O fool! to imagine that aught could subdue
A love so well founded, a passion so true!

Alas! 'tis too late at thy fate to repine;
Poor shepherd, Amynta can never be thine:
Thy tears are all fruitless, thy wishes are vain,
The moments neglected return not again.

Gilbert Elliot [1722-1777]

"O NANCY! WILT THOU GO WITH ME"

O Nancy, wilt thou go with me,
Nor sigh to leave the flaunting town:
Can silent glens have charms for thee,
The lowly cot, the russet gown?
No longer dressed in silken sheen,
No longer decked with jewels rare,
Say, canst thou quit each courtly scene
Where thou wert fairest of the fair?

O Nancy! when thou'rt far away,
Wilt thou not cast a wish behind?
Say, canst thou face the parching ray,
Nor shrink before the wintry wind?
O! can that soft and gentle mien
Extremes of hardship learn to bear,
Nor, sad, regret each courtly scene
Where thou wert fairest of the fair?

O Nancy! canst thou love so true,
Through perils keen with me to go,
Or when thy swain mishap shall rue,
To share with him the pang of woe?
Say, should disease or pain befall,
Wilt thou assume the nurse's care;
Nor wistful those gay scenes recall
Where thou wert fairest of the fair?

And when at last thy love shall die,
Wilt thou receive his parting breath?
Wilt thou repress each struggling sigh,
And cheer with smiles the bed of death?
And wilt thou o'er his breathless clay
Strew flowers and drop the tender tear?
Nor then regret those scenes so gay
Where thou wert fairest of the fair?

Thomas Percy [1729-1811]

CAVALIER'S SONG

If doughty deeds my lady please,
Right soon I'll mount my steed;
And strong his arm and fast his seat,
That bears frae me the meed.
I'll wear thy colors in my cap,
Thy picture in my heart;
And he that bends not to thine eye
Shall rue it to his smart!
Then tell me how to woo thee, Love;
O tell me how to woo thee!
For thy dear sake nae care I'll take,
Though ne'er another trow me.

If gay attire delight thine eye
I'll dight me in array;
I'll tend thy chamber door all night,
And squire thee all the day.
If sweetest sounds can win thine ear,
These sounds I'll strive to catch;
Thy voice I'll steal to woo thysel',
That voice that nane can match.
Then tell me how to woo thee, Love;
O tell me how to woo thee!
For thy dear sake nae care I'll take
Though ne'er another trow me.

But if fond love thy heart can gain,
I never broke a vow;
Nae maiden lays her skaith to me,
I never loved but you.
For you alone I ride the ring,
For you I wear the blue;
For you alone I strive to sing,
O tell me how to woo!
Then tell me how to woo thee, Love;
O tell me how to woo thee!
For thy dear sake nae care I'll take
Though ne'er another trow me.

Robert Cunninghame-Graham [? -1797?]

"MY HEART IS A LUTE"

Alas, that my heart is a lute,
Whereon you have learned to play!
For a many years it was mute,
Until one summer's day
You took it, and touched it, and made it thrill,
And it thrills and throbs, and quivers still!

I had known you, dear, so long!
Yet my heart did not tell me why

It should burst one morn into song,
And wake to new life with a cry,
Like a babe that sees the light of the sun,
And for whom this great world has just begun.

Your lute is enshrined, cased in,
Kept close with love's magic key,
So no hand but yours can win
And wake it to minstrelsy;
Yet leave it not silent too long, nor alone,
Lest the strings should break, and the music be done.

Anne Barnard [1750-1825]

SONG
From "The Duenna"

Had I a heart for falsehood framed,
I ne'er could injure you;
For though your tongue no promise claimed,
Your charms would make me true:
Then, lady, dread not here deceit,
Nor fear to suffer wrong,
For friends in all the aged you'll meet,
And lovers in the young.

But when they find that you have blessed
Another with your heart,
They'll bid aspiring passion rest,
And act a brother's part:
Then, lady, dread not here deceit
Nor fear to suffer wrong;
For friends in all the aged you'll meet,
And brothers in the young.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan [1751-1816]

MEETING

My Damon was the first to wake
The gentle flame that cannot die;
My Damon is the last to take
The faithful bosom's softest sigh:
The life between is nothing worth,
O cast it from thy thought away!
Think of the day that gave it birth,
And this its sweet returning day.

Buried be all that has been done,
Or say that naught is done amiss;
For who the dangerous path can shun
In such bewildering world as this?
But love can every fault forgive,
Or with a tender look reprove;
And now let naught in memory live
But that we meet, and that we love.

George Crabbe [1754-1832]

"O WERE MY LOVE YON LILAC FAIR"

O were my Love yon lilac fair,
Wi' purple blossoms to the spring,
And I a bird to shelter there,
When wearied on my little wing;
How I wad mourn when it was torn
By autumn wild and winter rude!
But I wad sing on wanton wing
When youthfu' May its bloom renewed.

O gin my Love were yon red rose
That grows upon the castle wa',
And I mysel a drap o' dew,
Into her bonnie breast to fa';
O there, beyond expression blest,
I'd feast on beauty a' the night;
Sealed on her silk-saft faulds to rest,
Till fleyed awa' by Phoebus' light.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

"BONNIE WEE THING"

Bonnie wee thing! cannie wee thing!
Lovely wee thing! wert thou mine,
I wad wear thee in my bosom,
Lest my jewel I should tine.
Wishfully I look, and languish
In that bonnie face o' thine;
And my heart it stounds wi' anguish,
Lest my wee thing be na mine.

Wit and grace, and love and beauty,
In ae constellation shine;
To adore thee is my duty,
Goddess o' this soul o' mine!
Bonnie wee thing, cannie wee thing,
Lovely wee thing, wert thou mine,
I wad wear thee in my bosom,
Lest my jewel I should tine.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

ROSE AYLMER

Ah, what avails the sceptered race!
Ah, what the form divine!
What every virtue, every grace!
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes

May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and sighs
I consecrate to thee.

Walter Savage Landor [1775-1864]

"TAKE BACK THE VIRGIN PAGE"
Written On Returning A Blank Book

Take back the Virgin Page
White and unwritten still;
Some hand more calm and sage
The leaf must fill.
Thoughts came as pure as light -
Pure as even you require:
But oh! each word I write
Love turns to fire.

Yet let me keep the book:
Oft shall my heart renew,
When on its leaves I look,
Dear thoughts of you.
Like you, 'tis fair and bright;
Like you, too bright and fair
To let wild passion write
One wrong wish there.

Haply, when from those eyes
Far, far away I roam,
Should calmer thoughts arise
Towards you and home;
Fancy may trace some line
Worthy those eyes to meet,
Thoughts that not burn, but shine.
Pure, calm, and sweet.

And as o'er ocean far
Seamen their records keep,
Led by some hidden star
Through the cold deep;
So may the words I write
Tell through what storms I stray,
You still the unseen light
Guiding my way.

Thomas Moore [1779-1852]

"BELIEVE ME, IF ALL THOSE ENDEARING YOUNG CHARMS"

Believe me, if all those endearing young charms,
Which I gaze on so fondly to-day,
Were to change by to-morrow, and fleet in my arms,
Like fairy-gifts fading away,
Thou wouldst still be adored, as this moment thou art,
Let thy loveliness fade as it will,
And around the dear ruin each wish of my heart

Would entwine itself verdantly still.

It is not while beauty and youth are thine own,
And thy cheeks unprofaned by a tear,
That the fervor and faith of a soul may be known,
To which time will but make thee more dear!
No, the heart that has truly loved never forgets,
But as truly loves on to the close,
As the sunflower turns to her god when he sets
The same look which she turned when he rose!

Thomas Moore [1779-1852]

THE NUN

If you become a nun, dear,
A friar I will be;
In any cell you run, dear,
Pray look behind for me.
The roses all turn pale, too;
The doves all take the veil, too;
The blind will see the show;
What! you become a nun, my dear,
I'll not believe it, no!

If you become a nun, dear,
The bishop Love will be:
The Cupids every one, dear,
Will chant, "We trust in thee!"
The incense will go sighing,
The candles fall a-dying,
The water turn to wine:
What! you go take the vows, my dear?
You may - but they'll be mine.

Leigh Hunt [1784-1859]

ONLY OF THEE AND ME

Only of thee and me the night wind sings,
Only of us the sailors speak at sea,
The earth is filled with wondered whisperings
Only of thee and me.

Only of thee and me the breakers chant,
Only of us the stir in bush and tree;
The rain and sunshine tell the eager plant
Only of thee and me.

Only of thee and me, till all shall fade;
Only of us the whole world's thoughts can be -
For we are Love, and God Himself is made
Only of thee and me.

Louis Untermeyer [1885-

TO ---

One word is too often profaned
For me to profane it,
One feeling too falsely disdained
For thee to disdain it.
One hope is too like despair
For prudence to smother,
And Pity from thee more dear
Than that from another.

I can give not what men call love;
But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above
And the Heavens reject not:
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow?

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792-1822]

FROM THE ARABIC

My faint spirit was sitting in the light
Of thy looks, my love;
It panted for thee like the hind at noon
For the brooks, my love.
Thy barb, whose hoofs outspeed the tempest's flight,
Bore thee far from me;
My heart, for my weak feet were weary soon,
Did companion thee.

Ah! fleeter far than fleetest storm or steed,
Or the death they bear,
The heart which tender thought clothes like a dove
With the wings of care;
In the battle, in the darkness, in the need,
Shall mine cling to thee,
Nor claim one smile for all the comfort, love,
It may bring to thee.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792-1822]

THE WANDERING KNIGHT'S SONG

My ornaments are arms,
My pastime is in war,
My bed is cold upon the wold,
My lamp yon star.

My journeyings are long,
My slumbers short and broken;
From hill to hill I wander still,
Kissing thy token.

I ride from land to land,
I sail from sea to sea;
Some day more kind I fate may find,
Some night, kiss thee.

John Gibson Lockhart [1794-1854]

SONG

Love's on the highroad,
Love's in the byroad -
Love's on the meadow, and Love's in the mart!
And down every byway
Where I've taken my way
I've met Love a-smiling - for Love's in my heart!

Dana Burnet [1888-

THE SECRET LOVE

You and I have found the secret way,
None can bar our love or say us nay:
All the world may stare and never know
You and I are twined together so.

You and I for all his vaunted width
Know the giant Space is but a myth;
Over miles and miles of pure deceit
You and I have found our lips can meet.

You and I have laughed the leagues apart
In the soft delight of heart to heart.
If there's a gulf to meet or limit set,
You and I have never found it yet.

You and I have trod the backward way
To the happy heart of yesterday,
To the love we felt in ages past.
You and I have found it still to last.

You and I have found the joy had birth
In the angel childhood of the earth,
Hid within the heart of man and maid.
You and I of Time are not afraid.

You and I can mock his fabled wing,
For a kiss is an immortal thing.
And the throb wherein those old lips met
Is a living music in us yet.

A. E. (George William Russell) [1867-1935]

THE FLOWER OF BEAUTY

Sweet in her green dell the flower of beauty slumbers,
Lulled by the faint breezes sighing through her hair;
Sleeps she, and hears not the melancholy numbers
Breathed to my sad lute amid the lonely air?

Down from the high cliffs the rivulet is teeming
To wind round the willow-banks that lure him from above:
Oh that, in tears from my rocky prison streaming,
I too could glide to the bower of my love!

Ah, where the woodbines with sleepy arms have wound her,
Opes she her eyelids at the dream of my lay,
Listening like the dove, while the fountains echo round her,
To her lost mate's call in the forest far away?

Come, then, my bird! for the peace thou ever bearest,
Still Heaven's messenger of comfort be to me;
Come! this fond bosom, my faithfulest, my fairest,
Bleeds with its death-wound, - but deeper yet for thee.

George Darley [1795-1846]

MY SHARE OF THE WORLD

I am jealous: I am true:
Sick at heart for love of you,
O my share of the world!
I am cold, O, cold as stone
To all men save you alone.

Seven times slower creeps the day
When your face is far away,
O my share of the world!
Seven times darker falls the night.
When you gladden not my sight.

Measureless my joy and pride
Would you choose me for your bride,
O my share of the world!
For your face is my delight,
Morn and even, noon and night.

To the dance and to the wake
Still I go but for your sake,
O my share of the world!
Just to see your face awhile
Meet your eyes and win your smile.

And the gay word on my lip
Never lets my secret slip
To my share of the world!
Light my feet trip over the green -
But my heart cries in the keen!

My poor mother sighs anew
When my looks go after you,
O my share of the world!

And my father's brow grows black
When you smile and turn your back.

I would part with wealth and ease,
I would go beyond the seas,
For my share of the world!
I would leave my hearth and home
If he only whispered "Come!"

Houseless under sun and dew,
I would beg my bread with you,
O my share of the world!
Houseless in the snow and storm,
Your heart's love would keep me warm.

I would pray and I would crave
To be with you in the grave,
O my share of the world!
I would go through fire and flood,
I would give up all but God
For my share of the world!

Alice Furlong [1875-

SONG

A lake and a fairy boat
To sail in the moonlight clear, -
And merrily we would float
From the dragons that watch us here!

Thy gown should be snow-white silk,
And strings of orient pearls,
Like gossamers dipped in milk,
Should twine with thy raven curls.

Red rubies should deck thy hands,
And diamonds be thy dower -
But fairies have broke their wands,
And wishing has lost its power!

Thomas Hood [1799-1845]

"SMILE AND NEVER HEED ME"

Though, when other maids stand by,
I may deign thee no reply,
Turn not then away, and sigh, -
Smile, and never heed me!

If our love, indeed, be such
As must thrill at every touch,
Why should others learn as much? -
Smile, and never heed me!

Even if, with maiden pride,

I should bid thee quit my side,
Take this lesson for thy guide, -
Smile, and never heed me!

But when stars and twilight meet,
And the dew is falling sweet,
And thou hear'st my coming feet, -
Then - thou then - mayst heed me!

Charles Swain [1801-1874]

ARE THEY NOT ALL MINISTERING SPIRITS?

We see them not - we cannot hear
The music of their wing -
Yet know we that they sojourn near,
The Angels of the spring!

They glide along this lovely ground
When the first violet grows;
Their graceful hands have just unbound
The zone of yonder rose.

I gather it for thy dear breast,
From stain and shadow free:
That which an Angel's touch hath blest
Is meet, my love, for thee!

Robert Stephen Hawker [1803-1875]

MAIDEN EYES

You never bade me hope, 'tis true;
I asked you not to swear:
But I looked in those eyes of blue,
And read a promise there.

The vow should bind, with maiden sighs
That maiden lips have spoken:
But that which looks from maiden eyes
Should last of all be broken.

Gerald Griffin [1803-1840]

HALLOWED PLACES

I pass my days among the quiet places
Made sacred by your feet.
The air is cool in the fresh woodland spaces,
The meadows very sweet.

The sunset fills the wide sky with its splendor,
The glad birds greet the night;
I stop and listen for a voice strong, tender,
I wait those dear eyes' light.

You are the heart of every gleam of glory,
Your presence fills the air,
About you gathers all the fair year's story;
I read you everywhere.

Alice Freeman Palmer [1855-1902]

THE LADY'S "YES"

"Yes," I answered you last night;
"No," this morning, sir, I say:
Colors seen by candle-light
Will not look the same by day.

When the viols played their best,
Lamps above, and laughs below,
Love me sounded like a jest,
Fit for yes or fit for no.

Call me false or call me free,
Vow, whatever light may shine, -
No man on your face shall see
Any grief for change on mine.

Yet the sin is on us both;
Time to dance is not to woo;
Wooing light makes fickle troth,
Scorn of me recoils on you.

Learn to win a lady's faith
Nobly, as the thing is high,
Bravely, as for life and death,
With a loyal gravity.

Lead her from the festive boards,
Point her to the starry skies,
Guard her, by your truthful words,
Pure from courtship's flatteries.

By your truth she shall be true,
Ever true, as wives of yore;
And her yes, once said to you,
SHALL be Yes for evermore.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806-1861]

SONG
From "The Miller's Daughter"

It is the miller's daughter,
And she is grown so dear, so dear,
That I would be the jewel
That trembles in her ear;
For hid in ringlets day and night,
I'd touch her neck so warm and white.

And I would be the girdle
About her dainty, dainty waist,
And her heart would beat against me,
In sorrow and in rest;
And I should know if it beat right,
I'd clasp it round so close and tight.

And I would be the necklace,
And all day long to fall and rise
Upon her balmy bosom
With her laughter or her sighs;
And I would lie so light, so light,
I scarce should be unclasped at night.

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

LILIAN

Airy, fairy Lilian,
Flitting, fairy Lilian,
When I ask her if she love me,
Clasps her tiny hand above me,
Laughing all she can;
She'll not tell me if she love me,
Cruel little Lilian.

When my passion seeks
Pleasance in love-sighs,
She, looking through and through me,
Thoroughly to undo me,
Smiling, never speaks:
So innocent-arch, so cunning-simple,
From beneath her gathered wimple
Glancing with black-beaded eyes,
Till the lightning laughters dimple
The baby-roses in her cheeks;
Then away she flies.

Prithee weep, May Lilian!
Gaiety without eclipse
Wearieth me, May Lilian:
Through my very heart it thrilleth,
When from crimson-threaded lips
Silver-treble laughter thrilleth:
Prithee weep, May Lilian!

Praying all I can,
If prayers will not hush thee,
Airy Lilian,
Like a rose-leaf I will crush thee,
Fairy Lilian.

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

BUGLE SONG

From "The Princess"

The splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

RONSARD TO HIS MISTRESS

"Quand vous serez bien vieille, le soir a la chandelle
Assise aupres du feu devisant et filant,
Direz, chantant mes vers en vous esmerveillant,
Ronsard m'a celebre du temps que j'etois belle."

Some winter night, shut snugly in
Beside the fagot in the hall,
I think I see you sit and spin,
Surrounded by your maidens all.
Old tales are told, old songs are sung,
Old days come back to memory;
You say, "When I was fair and young,
A poet sang of me!"

There's not a maiden in your hall,
Though tired and sleepy ever so,
But wakes, as you my name recall,
And longs the history to know.
And, as the piteous tale is said,
Of lady cold and lover true,
Each, musing, carries it to bed,
And sighs and envies you!

"Our lady's old and feeble now,"
They'll say: "she once was fresh and fair,
And yet she spurned her lover's vow,
And heartless left him to despair.
The lover lies in silent earth,
No kindly mate the lady cheers;
She sits beside a lonely hearth,

With threescore and ten years!"

Ah! dreary thoughts and dreams are those,
But wherefore yield me to despair,
While yet the poet's bosom glows,
While yet the dame is peerless fair!
Sweet lady mine! while yet 'tis time
Requite my passion and my truth,
And gather in their blushing prime
The roses of your youth!

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811-1863]

"WHEN YOU ARE OLD"
After Pierre de Ronsard

When you are old and gray and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true;
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face.

And bending down beside the glowing bars
Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

William Butler Yeats [1865-

SONG
From "Pippa Passes"

You'll love me yet - and I can tarry
Your love's protracted growing:
June reared that bunch of flowers you carry,
From seeds of April's sowing.

I plant a heartfull now: some seed
At least is sure to strike,
And yield - what you'll not pluck indeed,
Not love, but, may be, like.

You'll look at least on love's remains,
A grave's one violet:
Your look? - that pays a thousand pains.
What's death? You'll love me yet!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

LOVE IN A LIFE

Room after room,
I hunt the house through
We inhabit together.
Heart, fear nothing, for, heart, thou shalt find her -
Next time, herself! - not the trouble behind her
Left in the curtain, the couch's perfume!
As she brushed it, the cornice-wreath blossomed anew:
Yon looking-glass gleamed at the wave of her feather.

Yet the day wears,
And door succeeds door;
I try the fresh fortune -
Range the wide house from the wing to the center.
Still the same chance! she goes out as I enter.
Spend my whole day in the quest, - who cares?
But 'tis twilight, you see, - with such suites to explore,
Such closets to search, such alcoves to importune!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

LIFE IN A LOVE

Escape me?
Never -
Beloved!
While I am I, and you are you,
So long as the world contains us both,
Me the loving and you the loth,
While the one eludes, must the other pursue.
My life is a fault at last, I fear:
It seems too much like a fate, indeed!
Though I do my best I shall scarce succeed.
But what if I fail of my purpose here?
It is but to keep the nerves at strain,
To dry one's eyes and laugh at a fall,
And, baffled, get up and begin again, -
So the chase takes up one's life, that's all.
While, look but once from your farthest bound
At me so deep in the dust and dark,
No sooner the old hope drops to ground
Than a new one, straight to the self-same mark,
I shape me -
Ever
Removed!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

THE WELCOME

Come in the evening, or come in the morning;
Come when you're looked for, or come without warning:
Kisses and welcome you'll find here before you,
And the oftener you come here the more I'll adore you!
Light is my heart since the day we were plighted;
Red is my cheek that they told me was blighted;
The green of the trees looks far greener than ever,

And the linnets are singing, "True lovers don't sever!"

I'll pull you sweet flowers, to wear if you choose them, -
Or, after you've kissed them, they'll lie on my bosom;
I'll fetch from the mountain its breeze to inspire you;
I'll fetch from my fancy a tale that won't tire you.
Oh! your step's like the rain to the summer-vexed farmer,
Or saber and shield to a knight without armor;
I'll sing you sweet songs till the stars rise above me,
Then, wandering, I'll wish you in silence to love me.

We'll look through the trees at the cliff and the eyrie;
We'll tread round the rath on the track of the fairy;
We'll look on the stars, and we'll list to the river,
Till you ask of your darling what gift you can give her:
Oh! she'll whisper you - "Love, as unchangeably beaming,
And trust, when in secret, most tunefully streaming;
Till the starlight of heaven above us shall quiver,
As our souls flow in one down eternity's river."

So come in the evening, or come in the morning;
Come when you're looked for, or come without warning:
Kisses and welcome you'll find here before you,
And the oftener you come here the more I'll adore you!
Light is my heart since the day we were plighted;
Red is my cheek that they told me was blighted;
The green of the trees looks far greener than ever,
And the linnets are singing, "True lovers don't sever!"

Thomas Osborne Davis [1814-1845]

URANIA

She smiles and smiles, and will not sigh,
While we for hopeless passion die;
Yet she could love, those eyes declare,
Were but men nobler than they are.

Eagerly once her gracious ken
Was turned upon the sons of men;
But light the serious visage grew -
She looked, and smiled, and saw them through.

Our petty souls, cur strutting wits,
Our labored, puny passion-fits -
Ah, may she scorn them still, till we
Scorn them as bitterly as she!

Yet show her once, ye heavenly Powers,
One of some worthier race than ours!
One for whose sake she once might prove
How deeply she who scorns can love.

His eyes be like the starry lights;
His voice like sounds of summer nights;
In all his lovely mien let pierce
The magic of the universe!

And she to him will reach her hand,
And gazing in his eyes will stand,
And know her friend, and weep for glee,
And cry, Long, long I've looked for thee!

Then will she weep - with smiles, till then
Coldly she mocks the sons of men.
Till then her lovely eyes maintain
Their pure, unwavering, deep disdain.

Matthew Arnold [1822-1888]

THREE SHADOWS

I looked and saw your eyes in the shadow of your hair,
As a traveler sees the stream in the shadow of the wood; -
And I said, "My faint heart sighs, ah me! to linger there,
To drink deep and to dream in that sweet solitude."

I looked and saw your heart in the shadow of your eyes,
As a seeker sees the gold in the shadow of the stream;
And I said, Ah, me! what art should win the immortal prize,
Whose want must make life cold and Heaven a hollow dream?"

I looked and saw your love in the shadow of your heart,
As a diver sees the pearl in the shadow of the sea;
And I murmured, not above my breath, but all apart, -
"Ah! you can love, true girl, and is your love for me?"

Dante Gabriel Rossetti [1828-1882]

SINCE WE PARTED

Since we parted yester eve,
I do love thee, love, believe,
Twelve times dearer, twelve hours longer, -
One dream deeper, one night stronger,
One sun surer, - thus much more
Than I loved thee, love, before.

Edward Robert Bulwer Lytton [1831-1891]

A MATCH

If love were what the rose is,
And I were like the leaf,
Our lives would grow together
In sad or singing weather,
Blown fields or flowerful closes,
Green pleasure or gray grief;
If love were what the rose is,
And I were like the leaf.

If I were what the words are,

And love were like the tune,
With double sound and single
Delight our lips would mingle,
With kisses glad as birds are
That get sweet rain at noon;
If I were what the words are,
And love were like the tune.

If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death,
We'd shine and snow together
Ere March made sweet the weather
With daffodil and starling
And hours of fruitful breath;
If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death.

If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy,
We'd play for lives and seasons
With loving looks and treasons
And tears of night and morrow
And laughs of maid and boy;
If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy.

If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May,
We'd throw with leaves for hours
And draw for days with flowers,
Till day like night were shady
And night were bright like day;
If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May.

If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain,
We'd hunt down love together,
Pluck out his flying-feather,
And teach his feet a measure,
And find his mouth a rein;
If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

A BALLAD OF LIFE

I found in dreams a place of wind and flowers,
Full of sweet trees and color of glad grass,
In midst whereof there was
A lady clothed like summer with sweet hours,
Her beauty, fervent as a fiery moon
Made my blood burn and swoon
Like a flame rained upon.
Sorrow had filled her shaken eyelids' blue,
And her mouth's sad red heavy rose all through

Seemed sad with glad things gone.

She held a little cithern by the strings,
Shaped heartwise, strung with subtle-colored hair
Of some dead lute player
That in dead years had done delicious things.
The seven strings were named accordingly;
The first string charity,
The second tenderness,
The rest were pleasure, sorrow, sleep, and sin,
And loving kindness, that is pity's kin
And is most pitiless.

There were three men with her, each garmented
With gold, and shod with gold upon the feet;
And with plucked ears of wheat.
The first man's hair was wound upon his head:
His face was red, and his mouth curled and sad;
All his gold garment had
Pale stains of dust and rust.
A riven hood was pulled across his eyes;
The token of him being upon this wise
Made for a sign of Lust.

The next 'was Shame, with hollow heavy face
Colored like green wood when flame kindles it.
He hath such feeble feet
They may not well endure in any place.
His face was full of gray old miseries.
And all his blood's increase
Was even increase of pain.
The last was Fear, that is akin to Death;
He is Shame's friend, and always as Shame saith
Fear answers him again.

My soul said in me: This is marvelous,
Seeing the air's face is not so delicate
Nor the sun's grace so great,
If sin and she be kin or amorous.
And seeing where maidens served her on their knees,
I bade one crave of these
To know the cause thereof.
Then Fear said: I am Pity that was dead.
And Shame said: I am Sorrow comforted.
And Lust said: I am Love.

Thereat her hands began a lute-playing
And her sweet mouth a song in a strange tongue;
And all the while she sung
There was no sound but long tears following
Long tears upon men's faces, waxen white
With extreme sad delight.
But those three following men
Became as men raised up among the dead;
Great glad mouths open, and fair cheeks made red
With child's blood come again.

Then I said: Now assuredly I see

My lady is perfect, and transfigureth
All sin and sorrow and death,
Making them fair as her own eyelids be,
Or lips wherein my whole soul's life abides;
Or as her sweet white sides
And bosom carved to kiss.
Now therefore, if her pity further me,
Doubtless for her sake all my days shall be
As righteous as she is.

Forth, ballad, and take roses in both arms,
Even till the top rose touch thee in the throat
Where the least thornprick harms;
And girdled in thy golden singing-coat,
Come thou before my lady and say this:
Borgia, thy gold hair's color burns in me,
Thy mouth makes beat my blood in feverish rhymes;
Therefore so many as these roses be,
Kiss me so many times.
Then it may be, seeing how sweet she is,
That she will stoop herself none otherwise
Than a blown vine-branch doth,
And kiss thee with soft laughter on thine eyes,
Ballad, and on thy mouth.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

A LEAVE-TAKING

Let us go hence, my songs; she will not hear.
Let us go hence together without fear;
Keep silence now, for singing time is over,
And over all old things and all things dear.
She loves not you nor me as all we love her.
Yea, though we sang as angels in her ear,
She would not hear.

Let us rise up and part; she will not know.
Let us go seaward as the great winds go,
Full of blown sand and foam; what help is there?
There is no help, for all these things are so,
And all the world is bitter as a tear,
And how these things are, though ye strove to show,
She would not know.

Let us go home and hence; she will not weep.
We gave love many dreams and days to keep,
Flowers without scent, and fruits that would not grow,
Saying, "If thou wilt, thrust in thy sickle and reap."
All is reaped now; no grass is left to mow;
And we that sowed, though all we fell on sleep,
She would not weep.

Let us go hence and rest; she will not love.
She shall not hear us if we sing hereof,
Nor see love's ways how sore they are and steep.
Come hence, let be, lie still; it is enough.

Love is a barren sea, bitter and deep;
And though she saw all heaven in flower above,
She would not love.

Let us give up, go down; she will not care.
Though all the stars made gold of all the air,
And the sea moving saw before it move
One moon-flower making all the foam-flowers fair;
Though all those waves went over us, and drove
Deep down the stifling lips and drowning hair,
She would not care.

Let us go hence, go hence; she will not see.
Sing all once more together; surely she,
She too, remembering days and words that were,
Will turn a little towards us, sighing; but we,
We are hence, we are gone, as though we had not been there.
Nay, and though all men seeing had pity on me,
She would not see.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

A LYRIC

There's nae lark loves the lift, my dear,
There's nae ship loves the sea,
There's nae bee loves the heather-bells,
That loves as I love thee, my love,
That loves as I love thee.

The whin shines fair upon the fell,
The blithe broom on the lea:
The muirside wind is merry at heart:
It's a' for love of thee, my love,
It's a' for love of thee.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

MAUREEN

O, you plant the pain in my heart with your wistful eyes,
Girl of my choice, Maureen!
Will you drive me mad for the kisses your shy, sweet mouth denies,
Maureen?

Like a walking ghost I am, and no words to woo,
White rose of the West, Maureen:
For it's pale you are, and the fear on you is over me too,
Maureen!

Sure it's one complaint that's on us, asthore, this day,
Bride of my dreams, Maureen:
The smart of the bee that stung us his honey must cure, they say,
Maureen!

I'll coax the light to your eyes, and the rose to your face,

Mavourneen, my own Maureen!
When I feel the warmth of your breast, and your nest is my arm's embrace,
Maureen!

O where was the King o' the World that day - only me?
My one true love, Maureen!
And you the Queen with me there, and your throne in my heart, machree,
Maureen!

John Todhunter [1839-?]

A LOVE SYMPHONY

Along the garden ways just now
I heard the flowers speak;
The white rose told me of your brow,
The red rose of your cheek;
The lily of your bended head,
The bindweed of your hair;
Each looked its loveliest and said
You were more fair.

I went into the wood anon,
And heard the wild birds sing,
How sweet you were, they warbled on,
Piped, trilled, the selfsame thing.
Thrush, blackbird, linnet, without pause
The burden did repeat,
And still began again because
You were more sweet.

And then I went down to the sea,
And heard it murmuring too,
Part of an ancient mystery,
All made of me and you:
How many a thousand years ago
I loved, and you were sweet -
Longer I could not stay, and so
I fled back to your feet.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy [1844-1881]

LOVE ON THE MOUNTAIN

My love comes down from the mountain
Through the mists of dawn;
I look, and the star of the morning
From the sky is gone.

My love comes down from the mountain,
At dawn, dewy sweet;
Did you step from the star to the mountain,
O little white feet?

O whence came your twining tresses
And your shining eyes,

But out of the gold of the morning
And the blue of the skies?

The misty mountain is burning
In the sun's red fire,
And the heart in my breast is burning
And lost in desire.

I follow you into the valley
But no word can I say;
To the East or the West I will follow
Till the dusk of my day.

Thomas Boyd [1867-

KATE TEMPLE'S SONG

Only a touch, and nothing more;
Ah! but never so touched before!
Touch of lip, was it? Touch of hand?
Either is easy to understand.
Earth may be smitten with fire or frost -
Never the touch of true love lost.

Only a word, was it? Scarce a word!
Musical whisper, softly heard,
Syllabled nothing - just a breath -
'Twill outlast life and 'twill laugh at death.
Love with so little can do so much -
Only a word, sweet! Only a touch!

Mortimer Collins [1827-1876]

MY QUEEN

When and how shall I earliest meet her?
What are the words she first will say?
By what name shall I learn to greet her?
I know not now; it will come some day!
With the selfsame sunlight shining upon her,
Shining down on her ringlets' sheen,
She is standing somewhere - she I shall honor,
She that I wait for, my queen, my queen!

Whether her hair be golden or raven,
Whether her eyes be hazel or blue,
I know not now; but 'twill be engraven
Some day hence as my loveliest hue.
Many a girl I have loved for a minute,
Worshipped many a face I have seen:
Ever and aye there was something in it,
Something that could not be hers, my queen!

I will not dream of her tall and stately,
She that I love may be fairy light;
I will not say she must move sedately, -

Whatever she does it will then be right.
She may be humble or proud, my lady,
Or that sweet calm which is just between;
And whenever she comes she will find me ready
To do her homage, my queen, my queen!

But she must be courteous, she must be holy,
Pure in her spirit, this maiden I love;
Whether her birth be noble or lowly
I care no more than the spirits above.
But I'll give my heart to my lady's keeping,
And ever her strength on mine shall lean;
And the stars may fall, and the saints be weeping
Ere I cease to love her, my queen, my queen!

Unknown

"DARLING, TELL ME YES"

One little minute more, Maud,
One little whisper more;
I have a word to speak, Maud,
I never breathed before.
What can it be but love, Maud;
And do I rightly guess
'Tis pleasant to your ear, Maud?
O darling! tell me yes!

The burden of my heart, Maud,
There's little need to tell;
There's little need to say, Maud,
I've loved you long and well.
There's language in a sigh, Maud,
One's meaning to express,
And yours - was it for me, Maud?
O darling! tell me yes!

My eyes have told my love, Maud,
And on my burning cheek,
You've read the tender thought, Maud,
My lips refused to speak.
I gave you all my heart, Maud,
'Tis needless to confess;
And did you give me yours, Maud?
O darling! tell me yes!

'Tis sad to starve a love, Maud,
So worshipful and true;
I know a little cot, Maud,
Quite large enough for two;
And you will be my wife, Maud?
So may you ever bless
Through all your sunny life, Maud,
The day you answered yes!

John Godfrey Saxe [1816-1877]

"DO I LOVE THEE?"

Do I love thee? Ask the bee
If she loves the flowery lea,
Where the honeysuckle blows
And the fragrant clover grows.
As she answers, Yes or No,
Darling! take my answer so.

Do I love thee? Ask the bird
When her matin song is heard,
If she loves the sky so fair,
Fleecy cloud and liquid air.
As she answers, Yes, or No,
Darling! take my answer so.

Do I love thee? Ask the flower
If she loves the vernal shower,
Or the kisses of the sun,
Or the dew, when day is done.
As she answers, Yes or No,
Darling! take my answer so.

John Godfrey Saxe [1816-1887]

"O WORLD, BE NOBLER"

O world be nobler, for her sake!
If she but knew thee what thou art,
What wrongs are borne, what deeds are done
In thee, beneath thy daily sun,
Know'st thou not that her tender heart
For pain and very shame would break?
O World, be nobler, for her sake!

Laurence Binyon [1869-

"IN THE DARK, IN THE DEW"

In the dark, in the dew,
I am smiling back at you;
But you cannot see the smile,
And you're thinking all the while
How I turn my face from you,
In the dark, in the dew.

In the dark, in the dew,
All my love goes out to you,
Flutters like a bird in pain,
Dies and comes to life again;
While you whisper, "Sweetest, hark;
Someone's sighing in the dark,
In the dark, in the dew!"

In the dark, in the dew,

All my heart cries out to you,
As I cast it at your feet,
Sweet indeed, but not too sweet;
Wondering will you hear it beat,
Beat for you, and bleed for you,
In the dark, in the dew!

Mary Newmarch Prescott [1849-1888]

NANNY

Oh, for an hour when the day is breaking,
Down by the shore where the tide is making,
Fair as white cloud, thou, love, near me,
None but the waves and thyself to hear me!
Oh, to my breast how these arms would press thee!
Wildly my heart in its joy would bless thee!
Oh, how the soul thou has won would woo thee,
Girl of the snow neck, closer to me!

Oh, for an hour as the day advances,
Out where the breeze on the broom-bush dances,
Watching the lark, with the sun-ray o'er us,
Winging the notes of his Heaven-taught chorus!
Oh, to be there, and my love before me,
Soft as a moonbeam smiling o'er me!
Thou would'st but love, and I would woo thee,
Girl of the dark eye, closer to me!

Oh, for an hour where the sun first found us,
Out in the eve with its red sheets round us,
Brushing the dew from the gale's soft winglets,
Pearly and sweet, with thy long dark ringlets!
Oh, to be there on the sward beside thee,
Telling my tale, though I know you'd chide me!
Sweet were thy voice, though it should undo me, -
Girl of the dark locks, closer to me!

Oh, for an hour by night or by day, love,
Just as the Heavens and thou might say, love!
Far from the stare of the cold-eyed many,
Bound in the breath of my dove-souled Nanny!
Oh, for the pure chains that have bound me,
Warm from thy red lips circling round me!
Oh, in my soul, as the light above me,
Queen of the pure hearts, do I love thee!

Francis Davis [1810-1885]

A TRIFLE

I know not why, but even to me
My songs seem sweet when read to thee.

Perhaps in this the pleasure lies -
I read my thoughts within thine eyes,

And so dare fancy that my art
May sink as deeply as thy heart.

Perhaps I love to make my words
Sing round thee like so many birds,

Or, maybe, they are only sweet
As they seem offerings at thy feet.

Or haply, Lily, when I speak,
I think, perchance, they touch thy cheek,

Or with a yet more precious bliss,
Die on thy red lips in a kiss.

Each reason here - I cannot tell -
Or all perhaps may solve the spell.

But if she watch when I am by,
Lily may deeper see than I.

Henry Timrod [1829-1867]

ROMANCE

I will make you brooches and toys for your delight
Of bird-song at morning and star-shine at night.
I will make a palace fit for you and me,
Of green days in forests and blue days at sea.

I will make my kitchen, and you shall keep your room,
Where white flows the river and bright blows the broom,
And you shall wash your linen and keep your body white
In rainfall at morning and dewfall at night.

And this shall be for music when no one else is near
The fine song for singing, the rare song to hear!
That only I remember, that only you admire,
Of the broad road that stretches and the roadside fire.

Robert Louis Stevenson [1850-1894]

"OR EVER THE KNIGHTLY YEARS WERE GONE"

Or ever the knightly years were gone
With the old world to the grave,
I was a King in Babylon
And you were a Christian Slave.

I saw, I took, I cast you by,
I bent and broke your pride.
You loved me well, or I heard them lie,
But your longing was denied.
Surely I knew that by and by
You cursed your gods and died.

And a myriad suns have set and shone
Since then upon the grave
Decreed by the King in Babylon
To her that had been his Slave.

The pride I trampled is now my scathe,
For it tramples me again.
The old resentment lasts like death,
For you love, yet you refrain.
I break my heart on your hard unfaith,
And I break my heart in vain.

Yet not for an hour do I wish undone
The deed beyond the grave,
When I was a King in Babylon
And you were a Virgin Slave.

William Ernest Henley [1849-1903]

RUS IN URBE

Poets are singing the whole world over
Of May in melody, joys for June;
Dusting their feet in the careless clover,
And filling their hearts with the blackbird's tune.
The "brown bright nightingale" strikes with pity
The Sensitive heart of a count or clown;
But where is the song for our leafy city,
And where the rhymes for our lovely town?

"O for the Thames, and its rippling reaches,
Where almond rushes, and breezes sport!
Take me a walk under Burnham Beeches,
Give me dinner at Hampton Court!
Poets, be still, though your hearts I harden;
We've flowers by day and have scents at dark,
The limes are in leaf in the cockney garden,
And lilacs blossom in Regent's Park.

"Come for a blow," says a reckless fellow,
Burned red and brown by passionate sun;
"Come to the downs, where the gorse is yellow;
The season of kisses has just begun!
Come to the fields where bluebells shiver,
Hear cuckoo's carol, or plaint of dove;
Come for a row on the silent river;
Come to the meadows and learn to love!"

Yes, I will come when this wealth is over
Of softened color and perfect tone -
The lilac's better than fields of clover;
I'll come when blossoming May has flown.
When dust and dirt of a trampled city
Have dragged the yellow laburnum down,
I'll take my holiday - more's the pity -
And turn my back upon London town.

Margaret! am I so wrong to love it,
This misty town that your face shines through?
A crown of blossom is waved above it;
But heart and life of the whirl - 'tis you!
Margaret! pearl! I have sought and found you;
And, though the paths of the wind are free,
I'll follow the ways of the world around you,
And build my nest on the nearest tree!

Clement Scott [1841-1904]

MY ROAD

There's a road to heaven, a road to hell,
A road for the sick and one for the well;
There's a road for the false and a road for the true,
But the road for me is the road to you.

There's a road through prairie and forest and glen,
A road to each place in human ken;
There's a road over earth and a road over sea,
But the road to you is the road for me.

There's a road for animal, bird, and beast,
A road for the greatest, a road for the least;
There's a road that is old and a road that is new,
But the road for me is the road to you.

There's a road for the heart and a road for the soul,
There's a road for a part and a road for the whole;
There's a road for love, - which few ever see, -
'Tis the road to you and the road for me.

Oliver Opdyke [1878-

A WHITE ROSE

The red rose whispers of passion,
And the white rose breathes of love;
Oh, the red rose is a falcon,
And the white rose is a dove.

But I send you a cream white rosebud
With a flush on its petal tips;
For the love that is purest and sweetest
Has a kiss of desire on the lips.

John Boyle O'Reilly [1844-1890]

"SOME DAY OF DAYS"

Some day, some day of days, threading the street
With idle, heedless pace,
Unlooking for such grace

I shall behold your face!
Some day, some day of days, thus may we meet.

Perchance the sun may shine from skies of May,
Or winter's icy chill
Touch whitely vale and hill.
What matter? I shall thrill
Through every vein with summer on that day.

Once more life's perfect youth will all come back,
And for a moment there
I shall stand fresh and fair,
And drop the garment care;
Once more my perfect youth will nothing lack.

I shut my eyes now, thinking how 'twill be -
How face to face each soul
Will slip its long control,
Forget the dismal dole
Of dreary Fate's dark, separating sea;

And glance to glance, and hand to hand in greeting,
The past with all its fears,
Its silences and tears,
Its lonely, yearning years,
Shall vanish in the moment of that meeting.

Nora Perry [1832-1896]

THE TELEPHONE

"When I was just as far as I could walk
From here to-day,
There was an hour
All still
When leaning with my head against a flower
I heard you talk.
Don't say I didn't, for I heard you say -
You spoke from that flower on the window sill -
Do you remember what it was you said?"

"First tell me what it was you thought you heard."

"Having found the flower and driven a bee away,
I leaned my head,
And holding by the stalk,
I listened and I thought I caught the word -
What was it? Did you call me by my name?
Or did you say -
Someone said 'Come' - I heard it as I bowed."

"I may have thought as much, but not aloud."

"Well, so I came."

Robert Frost [1875-

WHERE LOVE IS

By the rosy cliffs of Devon, on a green hill's crest,
I would build me a house as a swallow builds its nest;
I would curtain it with roses, and the wind should breathe to me
The sweetness of the roses and the saltness of the sea.

Where the Tuscan olives whiten in the hot blue day,
I would hide me from the heat in a little hut of gray,
While the singing of the husbandmen should scale my lattice green
From the golden rows of barley that the poppies blaze between.

Narrow is the street, Dear, and dingy are the walls
Wherein you wait my coming as the twilight falls.
All day with dreams I gild the grime till at your step I start -
Ah Love, my country in your arms - my home upon your heart!

Amelia Josephine Burr [1878-

THAT DAY YOU CAME

Such special sweetness was about
That day God sent you here,
I knew the lavender was out,
And it was mid of year.

Their common way the great winds blew,
The ships sailed out to sea;
Yet ere that day was spent I knew
Mine own had come to me.

As after song some snatch of tune
Lurks still in grass or bough,
So, somewhat of the end o' June
Lurks in each weather now.

The young year sets the buds astir,
The old year strips the trees;
But ever in my lavender
I hear the brawling bees.

Lizette Woodworth Reese [1856-1935]

AMANTIUM IRAE

When this, our rose, is faded,
And these, our days, are done,
In lands profoundly shaded
From tempest and from sun:
Ah, once more come together,
Shall we forgive the past,
And safe from worldly weather
Possess our souls at last?

Or in our place of shadows

Shall still we stretch a hand
To green, remembered meadows,
Of that old pleasant land?
And vainly there foregathered,
Shall we regret the sun?
The rose of love, ungathered?
The bay, we have not won?

Ah, child! the world's dark marges
May lead to Nevermore,
The stately funeral barges
Sail for an unknown shore,
And love we vow to-morrow,
And pride we serve to-day:
What if they both should borrow
Sad hues of yesterday?

Our pride! Ah, should we miss it,
Or will it serve at last?
Our anger, if we kiss it,
Is like a sorrow past.
While roses deck the garden,
While yet the sun is high,
Doff sorry pride: for pardon,
Or ever love go by.

Ernest Dowson [1867-1900]

IN A ROSE GARDEN

A hundred years from now, dear heart,
We shall not care at all.
It will not matter then a whit,
The honey or the gall.
The summer days that we have known
Will all forgotten be and flown;
The garden will be overgrown
Where now the roses fall.

A hundred years from now, dear heart,
We shall not mind the pain;
The throbbing crimson tide of life
Will not have left a stain.
The song we sing together, dear,
The dream we dream together here,
Will mean no more than means a tear
Amid a summer rain.

A hundred years from now, dear heart,
The grief will all be o'er;
The sea of care will surge in vain
Upon a careless shore.
These glasses we turn down to-day
Here at the parting of the way -
We shall be wineless then as they,
And shall not mind it more.

A hundred years from now, dear heart,
We'll neither know nor care
What came of all life's bitterness,
Or followed love's despair.
Then fill the glasses up again,
And kiss me through the rose-leaf rain;
We'll build one castle more in Spain,
And dream one more dream there.

John Bennett [1865-

"GOD BLESS YOU, DEAR, TO-DAY"

If there be graveyards in the heart
From which no roses spring,
A place of wrecks and old gray tombs
From which no birds take wing,
Where linger buried hopes and dreams
Like ghosts among the graves,
Why, buried hopes are dismal things,
And lonely ghosts are knaves!

If there come dreary winter days,
When summer roses fall
And lie, forgot, in withered drifts
Along the garden wall;
If all the wreaths a lover weaves
Turn thorns upon the brow, -
Then out upon the silly fool
Who makes not merry now!

For if we cannot keep the past,
Why care for what's to come?
The instant's prick is all that stings,
And then the place is numb.
If Life's a lie, and Love's a cheat,
As I have heard men say,
Then here's a health to fond deceit -
God bless you, dear, to-day!

John Bennett [1865-

TO-DAY

I bring you all my olden days,
My childhood's morning glow;
I love you down the meadow ways
Where early blossoms blow:
And up deep lanes of long-gone-by,
Shining with dew-drops yet, -
I wander still, till you and I
Over the world are met.

I bring you all my lonely days,
My heart that hungered so;
I love you through the wistful haze

Of autumns burning low;
And on pale seas, beneath wan sky,
By weary tides beset,
I voyage still, till you and I
Over the world are met.

I bring you all my happy days, -
Armfuls of flowers - oh,
I love you as the sunlight stays
On mountains heaped with snow:
And where the dearest dream-buds lie,
With tears and dew-drops wet,
I toss to-day; for you and I
Over the world are met!

Benjamin R. C. Low [1880-

TO ARCADY

Across the hills of Arcady
Into the Land of Song -
Ah, dear, if you will go with me
The way will not be long!

It will not lead through solitudes
Of wind-blown woods or sea;
Dear, no! the city's weariest moods
May scarce veil Arcady.

'Tis in no unfamiliar land
Lit by some distant star.
No! Arcady is where you stand,
And Song is where you are!

So walk but hand in hand with me -
No road can lead us wrong;
These are the hills of Arcady -
Here is the Land of Song!

Charles Buxton Going [1863-

WILD WISHES

I wish, because the sweetness of your passing
Makes all the earth a garden where you tread,
That I might be the meanest of your roses,
To pave your path with petals passion-red!

I wish, because the softness of your breathing
Stirs the white jasmine at your window frame,
That I might be the fragrance of a flower,
To stir the night breeze with your dearest name!

I wish, because the glory of your dreaming
Strews all the field of heaven with throbbing stars,
That I might storm the portals of your slumber,

And soar with you beyond night's golden bars!

I wish to be the day you die, Beloved,
Though at its close my foolish heart must break!
But most of all, I wish, my dearest darling,
To be the Blessed Morning when you wake!

Ethel M. Hewitt [18 -

"BECAUSE OF YOU"

Sweet have I known the blossoms of the morning
Tenderly tinted to their hearts of dew:
But now my flowers have found a fuller fragrance,
Because of you.

Long have I worshiped in my soul's enshrining
High visions of the noble and the true -
Now all my aims and all my prayers are purer,
Because of you.

Wise have I seen the uses of life's labor;
To all its puzzles found some answering clue.
But now my life has learned a nobler meaning,
Because of you.

In the past days I chafed at pain and waiting,
Grasping at gladness as the children do;
Now it is sweet to wait and joy to suffer,
Because of you.

In the long years of silences that part us
Dimmed by my tears and darkened to my view,
Close shall I hold my memories and my madness,
Because of you.

Whether our lips shall touch or hands shall hunger,
Whether our love be fed or joys be few,
Life will be sweeter and more worth the living,
Because of you.

Sophia Almon Hensley [1866-

THEN

I give thee treasures hour by hour,
That old-time princes asked in vain,
And pined for in their useless power,
Or died of passion's eager pain.

I give thee love as God gives light,
Aside from merit, or from prayer,
Rejoicing in its own delight,
And freer than the lavish air.

I give thee prayers, like jewels strung

On golden threads of hope and fear;
And tenderer thoughts than ever hung
In a sad angel's pitying tear.

As earth pours freely to the sea
Her thousand streams of wealth untold,
So flows my silent life to thee,
Glad that its very sands are gold.

What care I for thy carelessness?
I give from depths that overflow,
Regardless that their power to bless
Thy spirit cannot sound or know.

Far lingering on a distant dawn,
My triumph shines, more sweet than late;
When, from these mortal mists withdrawn,
Thy heart shall know me - I can wait.

Rose Terry Cooke [1827-1892]

THE MISSIVE

I that tremble at your feet
Am a rose;
Nothing dewier or more sweet
Buds or blows;
He that plucked me, he that threw me
Breathed in fire his whole soul through me.

How the cold air is infused
With the scent!
See, this satin leaf is bruised -
Bruised and bent,
Lift me, lift the wounded blossom,
Soothe it at your rosier bosom!

Frown not with averted eyes!
Joy's a flower
That is born a god, and dies
In an hour.
Take me, for the Summer closes,
And your life is but a rose's.

Edmund Gosse [1849-1928]

PLYMOUTH HARBOR

Oh, what know they of harbors
Who toss not on the sea!
They tell of fairer havens
But none so fair there be

As Plymouth town outstretching
Her quiet arms to me;
Her breast's broad welcome spreading

From Mewstone to Penlee.

Ah, with this home-thought, darling,
Come crowding thoughts of thee.
Oh, what know they of harbors
Who toss not on the sea!

Mrs. Ernest Radford [1858-

THE SERF'S SECRET

I know a secret, such a one
The hawthorn blossoms spider-spun,
The dew-damp daisies in the grass
Laugh up to greet me as I pass
To meet the upland sun.

It is that I would rather be
The little page, on bended knee,
Who stoops to gather up her train
Beneath the porch-lamp's ruby rain
Than hold a realm in fee.

It is that in her scornful eye,
Too hid for courtly sneer to spy,
I saw, one day, a look which said
That I, and only I, might shed
Love-light across her sky.

I know a secret, such a one
The hawthorn blossoms spider-spun,
The dew-damp daisies in the grass
Laugh up to greet me as I pass
To meet the upland sun.

William Vaughn Moody [1869-1910]

"O, INEXPRESSIBLE AS SWEET"

O, inexpressible as sweet,
Love takes my voice away;
I cannot tell thee when we meet
What most I long to say.

But hadst thou hearing in thy heart
To know what beats in mine,
Then shouldst thou walk, where'er thou art,
In melodies divine.

So warbling birds lift higher notes
Than to our ears belong;
The music fills their throbbing throats,
But silence steals the song.

George Edward Woodberry [1855-1930]

THE CYCLAMEN

Over the plains where Persian hosts
Laid down their lives for glory
Flutter the cyclamens, like ghosts
That witness to their story.
Oh, fair! Oh, white! Oh, pure as snow!
On countless graves how sweet they grow!

Or crimson, like the cruel wounds
From which the life-blood, flowing,
Poured out where now on grassy mounds
The low, soft winds are blowing:
Oh, fair! Oh, red! Like blood of slain;
Not even time can cleanse that stain.

But when my dear these blossoms holds,
All loveliness her dower,
All woe and joy the past enfolds
In her find fullest flower.
Oh, fair! Oh, pure! Oh, white and red!
If she but live, what are the dead!

Arlo Bates [1850-1918]

THE WEST-COUNTRY LOVER

Then, lady, at last thou art sick of my sighing?
Good-bye!
So long as I sue, thou wilt still be denying?
Good-bye!
Ah, well! shall I vow then to serve thee forever,
And swear no unkindness our kinship can sever?
Nay, nay, dear my lass! here's an end of endeavor.
Good-bye!

Yet let no sweet ruth for my misery grieve thee.
Good-bye!
The man who has loved knows as well how to leave thee.
Good-bye!
The gorse is enkindled, there's bloom on the heather,
And love is my joy, and so too is fair weather;
I still ride abroad, though we ride not together.
Good-bye!

My horse is my mate; let the wind be my master.
Good-bye!
Though Care may pursue, yet my hound follows faster.
Good-bye!
The red deer's a-tremble in coverts unbroken.
He hears the hoof-thunder; he scents the death-token.
Shall I mope at home, under vows never spoken?
Good-bye!

The brown earth's my book, and I ride forth to read it.
Good-bye!

The stream runneth fast, but my will shall outspeed it.
Good-bye!
I love thee, dear lass, but I hate the hag Sorrow.
As sun follows rain, and to-night has its morrow,
So I'll taste of joy, though I steal, beg, or borrow!
Good-bye!

Alice Brown [1857-

"BE YE IN LOVE WITH APRIL-TIDE"

Be ye in love with April-tide?
I' faith, in love am I!
For now 'tis sun, and now 'tis shower,
And now 'tis frost and now 'tis flower,
And now 'tis Laura laughing-eyed,
And now 'tis Laura shy!

Ye doubtful days, O slower glide!
Still smile and frown, O sky!
Some beauty unforeseen I trace
In every change of Laura's face; -
Be ye in love with April-tide?
I' faith, in love am I!

Clinton Scollard [1860-1932]

UNITY

Heart of my heart, the world is young:
Love lies hidden in every rose!
Every song that the skylark sung
Once, we thought, must come to a close:
Now we know the spirit of song,
Song that is merged in the chant of the whole,
Hand in hand as we wander along,
What should we doubt of the years that roll?

Heart of my heart, we can not die!
Love triumphant in flower and tree,
Every life that laughs at the sky
Tells us nothing can cease to be;
One, we are one with a song to-day,
One with the clover that scents the wold,
One with the Unknown, far away,
One with the stars, when earth grows old.

Heart of my heart, we are one with the wind,
One with the clouds that are whirled o'er the lea,
One in many, O broken and blind,
One as the waves are at one with the sea!
Ay! when life seems scattered apart,
Darkens, ends as a tale that is told,
One, we are one, O heart of my heart,
One, still one, while the world grows old.

Alfred Noyes [1880-

THE QUEEN

He loves not well whose love is bold!
I would not have thee come too nigh:
The sun's gold would not seem pure gold
Unless the sun were in the sky:
To take him thence and chain him near
Would make his glory disappear.

He keeps his state, - keep thou in thine,
And shine upon me from afar!
So shall I bask in light divine,
That falls from love's own guiding star;
So shall thy eminence be high,
And so my passion shall not die;

But all my life shall reach its hands
Of lofty longing toward thy face,
And be as one who, speechless, stands
In rapture at some perfect grace!
My love, my hope, my all shall be
To look to heaven and look to thee!

Thy eyes shall be the heavenly lights,
Thy voice the gentle summer breeze, -
What time it sways, on moonlit nights,
The murmuring tops of leafy trees;
And I shall touch thy beauteous form
In June's red roses, rich and warm.

But thou thyself shall come not down
From that pure region far above;
But keep thy throne and wear thy crown,
Queen of my heart and queen of love!
A monarch in thy realm complete,
And I a monarch - at thy feet!

William Winter [1836-1917]

A LOVER'S ENVY

I envy every flower that blows
Beside the pathway where she goes,
And every bird that sings to her,
And every breeze that brings to her
The fragrance of the rose.

I envy every poet's rhyme
That moves her heart at eventime,
And every tree that wears for her
Its brightest bloom, and bears for her
The fruitage of its prime.

I envy every Southern night

That paves her path with moonbeams white,
And silvers all the leaves for her,
And in their shadow weaves for her
A dream of dear delight.

I envy none whose love requires
Of her a gift, a task that tires:
I only long to live to her,
I only ask to give to her
All that her heart desires.

Henry Van Dyke [1852-1933]

STAR SONG

When sunset flows into golden glows
And the breath of the night is new,
Love, find afar eve's eager star -
That is my thought of you.

O tear-wet eye that scans the sky
Your lonely lattice through:
Choose any one, from sun to sun -
That is my thought of you.

And when you wake at the morning's break
To rival rose and dew,
The star that stays till the leaping rays -
That is my thought of you.

Ay, though by day they seem away
Beyond or cloud or blue,
From dawn to night unquenched their light -
As are my thoughts of you.

Robert Underwood Johnson [1853-

"MY HEART SHALL BE THY GARDEN"

My heart shall be thy garden. Come, my own,
Into thy garden; thine be happy hours
Among my fairest thoughts, my tallest flowers,
From root to crowning petal, thine alone.
Thine is the place from where the seeds are sown
Up to the sky inclosed, with all its showers.
But ah, the birds, the birds! Who shall build bowers
To keep these thine? O friend, the birds have flown.

For as these come and go, and quit our pine
To follow the sweet season, or, new-corners,
Sing one song only from our alder-trees,
My heart has thoughts, which, though thine eyes hold mine.
Flit to the silent world and other summers,
With wings that dip beyond the silver seas.

Alice Meynell [1853-1922]

AT NIGHT

Home, home from the horizon far and clear,
Hither the soft wings sweep;
Flocks of the memories of the day draw near
The dovecote doors of sleep.

Oh which are they that come through sweetest light
Of all these homing birds?
Which with the straightest and the swiftest flight?
Your words to me, your words!

Alice Meynell [1850-1922]

SONG

Song is so old,
Love is so new -
Let me be still
And kneel to you.

Let me be still
And breathe no word,
Save what my warm blood
Sings unheard.

Let my warm blood
Sing low of you -
Song is so fair,
Love is so new!

Hermann Hagedorn [1882-

"ALL LAST NIGHT"

All last night I had quiet
In a fragrant dream and warm:
She had become my Sabbath,
And round my neck, her arm.

I knew the warmth in my dreaming;
The fragrance, I suppose,
Was her hair about me,
Or else she wore a rose.

Her hair, I think; for likest
Woodruffe 'twas, when Spring
Loitering down wet woodways
Treads it sauntering.

No light, nor any speaking;
Fragrant only and warm.
Enough to know my lodging,
The white Sabbath of her arm.

Lascelles Abercrombie [1881-

THE LAST WORD

When I have folded up this tent
And laid the soiled thing by,
I shall go forth 'neath different stars,
Under an unknown sky.

And yet whatever house I find
Beneath the grass or snow
Will ne'er be tenantless of love
Or lack the face I know.

O lips - wild roses wet with rain!
Blown hair of drifted brown!
O passionate eyes! O panting heart -
When in that colder town

I lie, the one inhabitant,
My hands across my breast,
How warm through all eternity
The summer of my rest!

To each frail root beneath the ground
That thrusts its flower above,
I shall impart a fiercer sap -
I who have known your love!

And growing things will lean to me
To learn what love hath won,
Till I shall whisper to the dust
That secret of the Sun.

Yea, though my spirit never wake
To hear the voice I knew,
Even an endless sleep would be
Stirred by the dreams of You!

Frederic Lawrence Knowles [1869-1905]

"HEART OF MY HEART"

Heart of my heart, my life, my light!
If you were lost what should I do?
I dare not let you from my sight
Lest Death should fall in love with you.

Such countless terrors lie in wait!
The gods know well how dear you are!
What if they left me desolate
And plucked and set you for their star!

Then hold me close, the gods are strong,
And perfect joy so rare a flower

No man may hope to keep it long -
And I may lose you any hour.

Then kiss me close, my star, my flower!
So shall the future grant me this:
That there was not a single hour
We might have kissed, and did not kiss!

Unknown

MY LADDIE

Oh, my laddie, my laddie,
I lo'e your very plaidie,
I lo'e your very bonnet
Wi' the silver buckle on it,
I lo'e your collie Harry,
I lo'e the kent ye carry;
But oh! it's past my power to tell
How much, how much I lo'e yoursel!

Oh, my dearie, my dearie,
I could luik an' never weary
At your een sae blue an' iaughin',
That a heart o' stane wad saften,
While your mouth sae proud an' curly
Gars my heart gang tirlie-wirlie;
But oh! yoursel, your very sel,
I lo'e ten thousand times as well!

Oh! my darlin', my darlin',
Let's flit whaur flits the starlin',
Let's loll upo' the heather
A' this bonny, bonny weather;
Ye shall fauld me in your plaidie,
My luve, my luve, my laddie;
An' close, an' close into your ear
I'll tell ye how I lo'e ye, dear.

Amelie Rives [1863-

THE SHADED POOL

A laughing knot of village maids
Goes gaily tripping to the brook,
For water-nymphs they mean to be,
And seek some still, secluded nook.
Here Laura goes, my own delight,
And Colin's love, the madcap Jane,
And half a score of goddesses
Trip over daisies in the plain:
Already now they loose their hair
And peep from out the tangled gold,
Or speed the flying foot to reach
The brook that's only summer-cold;
The lovely locks stream out behind

The shepherdesses on the wing,
And Laura's is the wealth I love,
And Laura's is the gold I sing.

A-row upon the bank they pant,
And all unlace the country shoe;
Their fingers tug the garter-knots
To loose the hose of varied hue.
The flashing knee at last appears,
The lower curves of youth and grace,
Whereat the girls intently scan
The mazy thickets of the place.
But who's to see except the thrush
Upon the wild crab-apple tree?
Within his branchy haunt he sits -
A very Peeping Tom is he!
Now music bubbles in his throat,
And now he pipes the scene in song -
The virgins slipping from their robes,
The cheated stockings lean and long,
The swift-descending petticoat,
The breasts that heave because they ran,
The rounded arms, the brilliant limbs,
The pretty necklaces of tan.
Did ever amorous God in Greece,
In search of some young mouth to kiss,
By any river chance upon
A sylvan scene as bright as this?
But though each maid is pure and fair,
For one alone my heart I bring,
And Laura's is the shape I love,
And Laura's is the snow I sing.

And now upon the brook's green brink,
A milk-white bevy, lo, they stand,
Half shy, half frightened, reaching back
The beauty of a poising hand!
How musical their little screams
When ripples kiss their shrinking feet!
And then the brook embraces all
Till gold and white and water meet!
Within the streamlet's soft cool arms
Delight and love and gracefulness
Sport till a flock of tiny waves
Swamps all the beds of floating cress;
And on his shining face are seen
Great yellow lilies drifting down
Beyond the ringing apple-tree,
Beyond the empty homespun gown.
Did ever Orpheus with his lute,
When making melody of old,
E'er find a stream in Attica
So ripely full of pink and gold?

At last they climb the sloping bank
And shake upon the thirsty soil
A treasury of diamond-drops
Not gained by aught of grimy toil.

Again the garters clasp the hose,
Again the velvet knee is hid,
Again the breathless babble tells
What Colin said, what Colin did.
In grace upon the grass they lie
And spread their tresses to the sun,
And rival, musical as they,
The blackbird's alto shake and run.
Did ever Love, on hunting bent,
Come idly humming through the hay,
And, to his sudden joyfulness,
Find fairer game at close of day?
Though every maid's a lily-rose,
And meet to sway a sceptred king,
Yet Laura's is the face I love,
And Laura's are the lips I sing.

Norman Gale [1862-

GOOD-NIGHT

Good-night. Good-night. Ah, good the night
That wraps thee in its silver light.
Good-night. No night is good for me
That does not hold a thought of thee.
Good-night.

Good-night. Be every night as sweet
As that which made our love complete,
Till that last night when death shall be
One brief "Good-night," for thee and me.
Good-night.

S. Weir Mitchell [1829-1914]

THE MYSTIC

By seven vineyards on one hill
We walked. The native wine
In clusters grew beside us two,
For your lips and for mine,

When, "Hark!" you said, - "Was that a bell
Or a bubbling spring we heard?"
But I was wise and closed my eyes
And listened to a bird;

For as summer leaves are bent and shake
With singers passing through,
So moves in me continually
The winged breath of you.

You tasted from a single vine
And took from that your fill -
But I inclined to every kind,
All seven on one hill.

Witter Bynner [1881-

"I AM THE WIND"

I am the wind that wavers,
You are the certain land;
I am the shadow that passes
Over the sand.

I am the leaf that quivers,
You the unshaken tree;
You are the stars that are steadfast,
I am the sea.

You are the light eternal,
Like a torch I shall die...
You are the surge of deep music,
I - but a cry!

Zoe Akins [1886-

"I LOVE MY LIFE, BUT NOT TOO WELL"

I love my life, but not too well
To give it to thee like a flower,
So it may pleasure thee to dwell
Deep in its perfume but an hour.
I love my life, but not too well.

I love my life, but not too well
To sing it note by note away,
So to thy soul the song may tell
The beauty of the desolate day.
I love my life, but not too well.

I love my life, but not too well
To cast it like a cloak on thine,
Against the storms that sound and swell
Between thy lonely heart and mine.
I love my life, but not too well.

Harriet Monroe [1860-1936]

"THIS IS MY LOVE FOR YOU"

I have brought the wine
And the folded raiment fine,
Pilgrim staff and shoe -
This is my love for you.

I will smooth your bed,
Lay away your coverlid,
Sing the whole day through.
This is my love for you.

Mayhap in the night,
When the dark beats back the light,
I shall struggle too . . .
This is my love for you.

In your dream, once more,
Will a star lead to my door?
To stars and dreams be true
This is my love for you . . .

Grace Fallow Norton [1876-

MY LADY'S LIPS

LIPS AND EYES
From "Blurt, Master Constable"

Love for such a cherry lip
Would be glad to pawn his arrows;
Venus here to take a sip
Would sell her doves and team of sparrows.
But they shall not so;
Hey nonny, nonny no!
None but I this lip must owe;
Hey nonny, nonny no!

Did Jove see this wanton eye,
Ganymede must wait no longer;
Phoebe here one night did lie,
Would change her face and look much younger.
But they shall not so;
Hey nonny, nonny no!
None but I this lip must owe;
Hey nonny, nonny no!

Thomas Middleton [1570?-1627]

THE KISS
From "Cynthia's Revels"

O that joy so soon should waste!
Or so sweet a bliss
As a kiss
Might not for ever last!
So sugared, so melting, so soft, so delicious,
The dew that lies on roses,

When the morn herself discloses,
Is not so precious.
O, rather than I would it smother,
Were I to taste such another,
It should be my wishing
That I might die with kissing.

Ben Jonson [1573?-1637]

"TAKE, O TAKE THOSE LIPS AWAY"

Take, O take those lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworn,
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn;
But my kisses bring again,
Seals of love, but sealed in vain.

Hide, O hide those hills of snow,
Which thy frozen bosom bears,
On whose tops the pinks that grow
Are of those that April wears!
But first set my poor heart free,
Bound in those icy chains by thee.

The first stanza from " Measure for Measure," by
William Shakespeare [1564-1616]
The second stanza from "The Bloody Brothers," by
John Fletcher [1579-1625]

A STOLEN KISS

Now gentle sleep hath closed up those eyes
Which, waking, kept my boldest thoughts in awe;
And free access unto that sweet lip lies,
From which I long the rosy breath to draw.
Methinks no wrong it were, if I should steal
From those two melting rubies one poor kiss;
None sees the theft that would the thief reveal,
Nor rob I her of aught that she can miss;
Nay, should I twenty kisses take away,
There would be little sign I had done so;
Why then should I this robbery delay?
O, she may wake, and therewith angry grow!
Well if she do, I'll back restore that one,
And twenty hundred thousand more for loan.

George Wither [1588-1667]

SONG

My Love bound me with a kiss
That I should no longer stay;
When I felt so sweet a bliss
I had less power to part away:

Alas! that women do not know
Kisses make men loath to go.

Yes, she knows it but too well,
For I heard when Venus' dove
In her ear did softly tell
That kisses were the seals of love:
O muse not then though it be so,
Kisses make men loath to go.

Wherefore did she thus inflame
My desires, heat my blood,
Instantly to quench the same
And starve whom she had given food?
Ay, ay, the common sense can show,
Kisses make men loath to go.

Had she bid me go at first
I would ne'er have grieved my heart
Hope delayed had been the worst;
But ah to kiss and then to part!
How deep it struck, speak, gods! you know
Kisses make men loath to go.

Unknown

TO ELECTRA

I dare not ask a kiss,
I dare not beg a smile,
Lest having that, or this,
I might grow proud the while.

No, no, the utmost share
Of my desire shall be
Only to kiss that air
That lately kissed thee.

Robert Herrick [1591-1674]

"COME, CHLOE, AND GIVE ME SWEET KISSES"

Come, Chloe, and give me sweet kisses,
For sweeter sure never girl gave;
But why in the midst of my blisses,
Do you ask me how many I'd have?
I'm not to be stinted in pleasure,
Then, prithee, my charmer, be kind,
For whilst I love thee above measure,
To numbers I'll ne'er be confined.

Count the bees that on Hybla are playing,
Count the flowers that enamel its fields,
Count the flocks that on Tempe are straying,
Or the grain that rich Sicily yields,
Go number the stars in the heaven,

Count how many sands on the shore,
When so many kisses you've given,
I still shall be craving for more.

To a heart full of love, let me hold thee,
To a heart that, dear Chloe, is thine;
In my arms I'll for ever enfold thee,
And twist round thy limbs like a vine.
What joy can be greater than this is?
My life on thy lips shall be spent!
But the wretch that can number his kisses,
With few will be ever content.

Charles Hanbury Williams [1708-1759]

A RIDDLE

I am just two and two, I am warm, I am cold,
And the parent of numbers that cannot be told,
I am lawful, unlawful - a duty, a fault -
I am often sold dear, good for nothing when bought;
An extraordinary boon, and a matter of course,
And yielded with pleasure when taken by force.

William Cowper [1731-1800]

TO A KISS

Soft child of love, thou balmy bliss,
Inform me, O delicious kiss,
Why thou so suddenly art gone,
Lost in the moment thou art won?

Yet go! For wherefore should I sigh?
On Delia's lips, with raptured eye,
On Delia's blushing lips I see
A thousand full as sweet as thee.

John Wolcot [1738-1819]

SONG

Often I have heard it said
That her lips are ruby-red.
Little heed I what they say,
I have seen as red as they.
Ere she smiled on other men,
Real rubies were they then.

When she kissed me once in play,
Rubies were less bright than they,
And less bright than those which shone
In the palace of the Sun.
Will they be as bright again?
Not if kissed by other men.

Walter Savage Landor [1775-1864]

THE FIRST KISS OF LOVE

Away with your fictions of flimsy romance,
Those tissues of falsehood which folly has wove!
Give me the mild beam of the soul-breathing glance,
Or the rapture which dwells on the first kiss of love.

Ye rhymers, whose bosoms with phantasy glow,
Whose pastoral passions are made for the grove;
From what blest inspiration your sonnets would flow,
Could you ever have tasted the first kiss of love!

If Apollo should e'er his assistance refuse,
Or the Nine be disposed from your service to rove,
Invoke them no more, bid adieu to the muse,
And try the effect of the first kiss of love.

I hate you, ye cold compositions of art!
Though prudes may condemn me, and bigots reprove,
I court the effusions that spring from the heart,
Which throbs with delight to the first kiss of love.

Your shepherds, your flocks, those fantastical themes,
Perhaps may amuse, yet they never can move:
Arcadia displays but a region of dreams;
What are visions like these to the first kiss of love?

Oh! cease to affirm that man, since his birth,
From Adam till now, has with wretchedness strove;
Some portion of Paradise still is on earth,
And Eden revives in the first kiss of love.

When age chills the blood, when our pleasures are past -
For years fleet away with the wings of the dove -
The dearest remembrance will still be the last,
Our sweetest memorial the first kiss of love.

George Gordon Byron [1788-1824]

"JENNY KISSED ME"

Jenny kissed me when we met,
Jumping from the chair she sat in;
Time, you thief, who love to get
Sweets into your list, put that in!
Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,
Say that health and wealth have missed me,
Say I'm growing old, but add,
Jenny kissed me.

Leigh Hunt [1784-1859]

"I FEAR THY KISSES, GENTLE MAIDEN"

I fear thy kisses, gentle maiden;
Thou needest not fear mine;
My spirit is too deeply laden
Ever to burthen thine.

I fear thy mien, thy tones, thy motion;
Thou needest not fear mine;
Innocent is the heart's devotion
With which I worship thine.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792-1822]

LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY

The fountains mingle with the river,
And the rivers with the ocean,
The winds of heaven mix forever
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single;
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle; -
Why not I with thine?

See the mountains kiss high heaven,
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother;
And the sunlight clasps the earth,
And the moonbeams kiss the sea;
What are all these kissings worth,
If thou kiss not me?

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792-1822]

SONG
From "In a Gondola"

The moth's kiss, first!
Kiss me as if you made believe
You were not sure, this eve,
How my face, your flower, had pursed
Its petals up; so, here and there
You brush it, till I grow aware
Who wants me, and wide ope I burst.

The bee's kiss, now!
Kiss me as if you entered gay
My heart at some noonday,
A bud that dares not disallow
The claim, so all is rendered up,
And passively its shattered cup
Over your head to sleep I bow.

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

SUMMUM BONUM

All the breath and the bloom of the year in the bag of one bee:
All the wonder and wealth of the mine in the heart of one gem:
In the core of one pearl all the shade and the shine of the sea:
Breath and bloom, shade and shine, - wonder, wealth,
  and - how far above them -
Truth, that's brighter than gem,
Trust, that's purer than pearl, -
Brightest truth, purest trust in the universe - all were for me
In the kiss of one girl.

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

THE FIRST KISS

If only in dreams may man be fully blest,
Is heaven a dream? Is she I clasped a dream?
Or stood she here even now where dewdrops gleam
And miles of furze shine golden down the West?
I seem to clasp her still - still on my breast
Her bosom beats, - I see the blue eyes beam: -
I think she kissed these lips, for now they seem
Scarce mine: so hallowed of the lips they pressed!
Yon thicket's breath - can that be eglantine?
Those birds - can they be morning's choristers?
Can this be earth? Can these be banks of furze?
Like burning bushes fired of God they shine!
I seem to know them, though this body of mine
Passed into spirit at the touch of hers!

Theodore Watts-Dunton [1836-1914]

TO MY LOVE

Kiss me softly and speak to me low;
Malice has ever a vigilant ear;
What if Malice were lurking near?
Kiss me, dear!
Kiss me softly and speak to me low.

Kiss me softly and speak to me low;
Envy, too, has a watchful ear;
What if Envy should chance to hear?
Kiss me, dear!
Kiss me softly and speak to me low,

Kiss me softly and speak to me low;
Trust me, darling, the time is near
When lovers may love with never a fear;
Kiss me, dear!
Kiss me softly and speak to me low.

John Godfrey Saxe [1816-1887]

TO LESBIA

Give me kisses! Do not stay,
Counting in that careful way.
All the coins your lips can print
Never will exhaust the mint.
Kiss me, then,
Every moment - and again!

Give me kisses! Do not stop,
Measuring nectar by the drop.
Though to millions they amount,
They will never drain the fount.
Kiss me, then,
Every moment - and again!

Give me kisses! All is waste
Save the luxury we taste;
And for kissing, - kisses live
Only when we take or give.
Kiss me, then,
Every moment - and again!

Give me kisses! Though their worth
Far exceeds the gems of earth,
Never pearls so rich and pure
Cost so little, I am sure.
Kiss me, then,
Every moment - and again!

Give me kisses! Nay, 'tis true
I am just as rich as you;
And for every kiss I owe,
I can pay you back, you know,
Kiss me, then,
Every moment - and again!

John Godfrey Saxe [1816-1887]

MAKE BELIEVE

Kiss me, though you make believe;
Kiss me, though I almost know
You are kissing to deceive:
Let the tide one moment flow
Backward ere it rise and break,
Only for poor pity's sake!

Give me of your flowers one leaf,
Give me of your smiles one smile,
Backward roll this tide of grief
Just a moment, though, the while,
I should feel and almost know
You are trifling with my woe.

Whisper to me sweet and low;
Tell me how you sit and weave
Dreams about me, though I know
It is only make believe!
Just a moment, though 'tis plain
You are jesting with my pain.

Alice Cary [1820-1871]

KISSING'S NO SIN

Some say that kissing's a sin;
But I think it's nane ava,
For kissing has wonn'd in this warld
Since ever that there was twa.

O, if it wasna lawfu'
Lawyers wadna allow it;
If it wasna holy,
Ministers wadna do it.

If it wasna modest,
Maidens wadna tak' it;
If it wasna plenty,
Puir folk wadna get it.

Unknown

TO ANNE

How many kisses do I ask?
Now you set me to my task.
First, sweet Anne, will you tell me
How many waves are in the sea?
How many stars are in the sky?
How many lovers you make sigh?
How many sands are on the shore?
I shall want just one kiss more.

William Stirling-Maxwell [1818-1878]

SONG

There is many a love in the land, my love,
But never a love like this is;
Then kill me dead with your love, my love,
And cover me up with kisses.

So kill me dead and cover me deep
Where never a soul discovers;
Deep in your heart to sleep, to sleep,
In the darlingest tomb of lovers.

Joaquin Miller [1839-1913]

PHILLIS AND CORYDON

Phillis took a red rose from the tangles of her hair, -
Time, the Golden Age; the place, Arcadia, anywhere, -

Phillis laughed, the saucy jade: "Sir Shepherd, wilt have this,
Or" - Bashful god of skipping lambs and oaten reeds! - "a kiss?"

Bethink thee, gentle Corydon! A rose lasts all night long,
A kiss but slips from off your lips like a thrush's evening song.

A kiss that goes, where no one knows! A rose, a crimson rose!
Corydon made his choice and took - Well, which do you suppose?

Arthur Colton [1868-

AT HER WINDOW

"HARK, HARK, THE LARK"
From "Cymbeline"

Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phoebus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes:
With everything that pretty bin,
My lady sweet, arise:
Arise, arise.

William Shakespeare [1564-1616]

"SLEEP, ANGRY BEAUTY"

Sleep, angry beauty, sleep and fear not me!
For who a sleeping lion dares provoke?
It shall suffice me here to sit and see
Those lips shut up, that never kindly spoke:
What sight can more content a lover's mind
Than beauty seeming harmless, if not kind?

My words have charmed her, for secure she sleeps,
Though guilty much of wrong done to my love;

Dreams often more than waking passions move.
Plead, Sleep, my cause, and make her soft like thee:
That she is peace may wake and pity me.

Thomas Campion [? -1619]

MATIN SONG

Rise, Lady Mistress, rise!
The night hath tedious been;
No sleep hath fallen into mine eyes
Nor slumbers made me sin.
Is not she a saint then, say,
Thoughts of whom keep sin away?

Rise, Madam! rise and give me light,
Whom darkness still will cover,
And ignorance, darker than night,
Till thou smile on thy lover.
All want day till thy beauty rise;
For the gray morn breaks from thine eyes.

Nathaniel Field [1587-1633]

THE NIGHT-PIECE: TO JULIA

Her eyes the glow-worm lend thee,
The shooting stars attend thee;
And the elves also,
Whose little eyes glow
Like the sparks of fire, befriend thee.

No Will-o'-the-wisp mislight thee,
Nor snake or slow-worm bite thee;
But on, on thy way
Not making a stay,
Since ghost there's none to affright thee.

Let not the dark thee cumber:
What though the moon does slumber?
The stars of the night
Will lend thee their light
Like tapers clear without number.

Then, Julia, let me woo thee,
Thus, thus to come unto me;
And when I shall meet
Thy silvery feet,
My soul I'll pour into thee.

Robert Herrick [1591-1674]

MORNING

The lark now leaves his watery nest,
And climbing shakes his dewy wings,
He takes your window for the east,
And to implore your light, he sings;
Awake, awake, the morn will never rise,
Till she can dress her beauty at your eyes.

The merchant bows unto the seaman's star,
The ploughman from the sun his season takes;
But still the lover wonders what they are,
Who look for day before his mistress wakes;
Awake, awake, break through your veils of lawn!
Then draw your curtains and begin the dawn.

William D'Avenant [1606-1668]

MATIN-SONG
From "The Rape of Lucrece"

Pack, clouds, away, and welcome, day,
With night we banish sorrow.
Sweet air, blow soft; mount, lark, aloft
To give my Love good-morrow!
Wings from the wind to please her mind
Notes from the lark I'll borrow:
Bird, prune thy wing, nightingale, sing,
To give my Love good-morrow;
To give my Love good-morrow
Notes from them both I'll borrow.

Wake from thy nest, Robin-red-breast,
Sing, birds, in every furrow;
And from each hill, let music shrill
Give my fair Love good-morrow!
Blackbird and thrush in every bush,
Stare, linnet, and cock-sparrow,
You pretty elves, amongst yourselves
Sing my fair Love good-morrow;
To give my Love good-morrow
Sing, birds, in every furrow!

Thomas Heywood [? -1650?]

THE ROSE

Sweet, serene, sky-like flower,
Haste to adorn her bower;
From thy long-cloudy bed,
Shoot forth thy damask head.

New-startled blush of Flora,
The grief of pale Aurora
(Who will contest no more),
Haste, haste to strew her floor!

Vermilion ball that's given

From lip to lip in Heaven;
Love's couch's coverled,
Haste, haste to make her bed.

Dear offspring of pleased Venus
And jolly, plump Silenus,
Haste, haste to deck the hair
Of the only sweetly fair!

See! rosy is her bower,
Her floor is all this flower
Her bed a rosy nest
By a bed of roses pressed.

But early as she dresses,
Why fly you her bright tresses?
Ah! I have found, I fear, -
Because her cheeks are near.

Richard Lovelace [1618-1658]

SONG

See, see, she wakes! Sabina wakes!
And now the sun begins to rise;
Less glorious is the morn that breaks
From his bright beams, than her fair eyes.

With light united, day they give;
But different fates ere night fulfil;
How many by his warmth will live!
How many will her coldness kill!

William Congreve [1670-1729]

MARY MORISON

O Mary, at thy window be,
It is the wished, the trysted hour!
Those smiles and glances let me see,
That make the miser's treasure poor:
How blithely wad I bide the stour
A weary slave frae sun to sun,
Could I the rich reward secure,
The lovely Mary Morison!

Yestreen, when to the trembling string
The dance gaed through the lighted ha',
To thee my fancy took its wing,
I sat, but neither heard nor saw:
Though this was fair, and that was braw,
And yon the toast of a' the town,
I sighed, and said amang them a',
"Ye arena Mary Morison."

O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace,

Wha for thy sake wad gladly die?
Or canst thou break that heart of his,
Whase only faut is loving thee?
If love for love thou wiltna gie,
At least be pity to me shown;
A thought ungentle canna be
The thought o' Mary Morison.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

WAKE, LADY!

Up! quit thy bower! late wears the hour,
Long have the rooks cawed round the tower;
O'er flower and tree loud hums the bee,
And the wild kid sports merrily.
The sun is bright, the sky is clear:
Wake, lady, wake! and hasten here.

Up! maiden fair, and bind thy hair,
And rouse thee in the breezy air!
The lulling stream that soothed thy dream
Is dancing in the sunny beam.
Waste not these hours, so fresh and gay;
Leave thy soft couch, and haste away!

Up! Time will tell the morning bell
Its service-sound has chimed well;
The aged crone keeps house alone,
The reapers to the fields are gone.
Lose not these hours, so cool and gay:
Lo! while thou sleep'st they haste away!

Joanna Baillie [1762-1851]

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

Sleep on, and dream of Heaven awhile -
Though shut so close thy laughing eyes,
Thy rosy lips still wear a smile
And move, and breathe delicious sighs!

Ah, now soft blushes tinge her cheeks
And mantle o'er her neck of snow:
Ah, now she murmurs, now she speaks
What most I wish - and fear to know!

She starts, she trembles, and she weeps!
Her fair hands folded on her breast:
- And now, how like a saint she sleeps!
A seraph in the realms of rest!

Sleep on secure! Above control
Thy thoughts belong to Heaven and thee:
And may the secret of thy soul
Remain within its sanctuary!

Samuel Rogers [1763-1855]

"THE YOUNG MAY MOON"

The young May moon is beaming, love,
The glow-worm's lamp is gleaming, love;
How sweet to rove
Through Morna's grove,
When the drowsy world is dreaming, love!
Then awake! - the heavens look bright, my dear,
'Tis never too late for delight, my dear;
And the best of all ways
To lengthen our days
Is to steal a few hours from the night, my dear!

Now all the world is sleeping, love,
But the Sage, his star-watch keeping, love,
And I, whose star
More glorious far
Is the eye from that casement peeping, love.
Then awake! - till rise of sun, my dear,
The Sage's glass we'll shun, my dear,
Or in watching the flight
Of bodies of light
He might happen to take thee for one, my dear!

Thomas Moore [1779-1852]

"ROW GENTLY HERE"

Row gently here,
My gondolier,
So softly wake the tide,
That not an ear,
On earth, may hear,
But hers to whom we glide.
Had Heaven but tongues to speak, as well
As starry eyes to see,
Oh think what tales 'twould have to tell
Of wandering youths like me!

Now rest thee here,
My gondolier;
Hush, hush, for up I go,
To climb yon light
Balcony's height,
While thou keep'st watch below.
Ah! did we take for Heaven above
But half such pains as we
Take, day and night, for woman's love,
What angels we should be!

Thomas Moore [1779-1852]

MORNING SERENADE

Awake! the dawn is on the hills!
Behold, at her cool throat a rose,
Blue-eyed and beautiful she goes,
Leaving her steps in daffodils. -
Awake! arise! and let me see
Thine eyes, whose deeps epitomize
All dawns that were or are to be,
O love, all Heaven in thine eyes! -
Awake! arise! come down to me!

Behold! the dawn is up: behold!
How all the birds around her float,
Wild rills of music, note on note,
Spilling the air with mellow gold. -
Arise! awake! and, drawing near,
Let me but hear thee and rejoice!
Thou, who keep'st captive, sweet and clear,
All song, O love, within thy voice!
Arise! awake! and let me hear!

See, where she comes, with limbs of day,
The dawn! with wild-rose hands and feet,
Within whose veins the sunbeams beat,
And laughters meet of wind and ray.
Arise! come down! and, heart to heart,
Love, let me clasp in thee all these -
The sunbeam, of which thou art part,
And all the rapture of the breeze! -
Arise! come down! loved that thou art!

Madison Cawein [1865-1914]

SERENADE

Softly, O midnight Hours!
Move softly o'er the bowers
Where lies in happy sleep a girl so fair!
For ye have power, men say,
Our hearts in sleep to sway,
And cage cold fancies in a moonlight snare.
Round ivory neck and arm
Enclasp a separate charm;
Hang o'er her poised, but breathe nor sigh nor prayer:
Silently ye may smile,
But hold your breath the while,
And let the wind sweep back your cloudy hair!

Bend down your glittering urns,
Ere yet the dawn returns,
And star with dew the lawn her feet shall tread;
Upon the air rain balm,
Bid all the woods be calm,
Ambrosial dreams with healthful slumbers wed;
That so the Maiden may
With smiles your care repay,

When from her couch she lifts her golden head;
Waking with earliest birds,
Ere yet the misty herds
Leave warm 'mid the gray grass their dusky bed.

Aubrey Thomas De Vere [1814-1902]

LINES TO AN INDIAN AIR

I arise from dreams of thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low,
And the stars are shining bright.
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Has led me - who knows how?
To thy chamber window, sweet!

The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream;
The champak odors fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
The nightingale's complaint,
It dies upon her heart,
As I must die on thine,
O beloved as thou art!

O lift me from the grass!
I die, I faint, I fail!
Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast;
Oh! press it close to thine again,
Where it must break at last.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792-1822]

GOOD-NIGHT

Good-night? ah! no; the hour is ill
Which severs those it should unite;
Let us remain together still,
Then it will be good night.

How can I call the lone night good,
Though thy sweet wishes wing its flight?
Be it not said, thought, understood,
Then it will be good night.

To hearts which near each other move
From evening close to morning light,
The night is good; because, my love,
They never say good-night.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792-1822]

SERENADE
From "Sylvia"

Awake thee, my lady-love,
Wake thee and rise!
The sun through the bower peeps
Into thine eyes!

Behold how the early lark
Springs from the corn!
Hark, hark how the flower-bird
Winds her wee horn!

The swallow's glad shriek is heard
All through the air;
The stock-dove is murmuring
Loud as she dare!

Apollo's winged bugleman
Cannot contain,
But peals his loud trumpet-call
Once and again!

Then wake thee, my lady-love -
Bird of my bower!
The sweetest and sleepiest
Bird at this hour!

George Darley [1795-1846]

SERENADE

Ah, sweet, thou little knowest how
I wake and passionate watches keep;
And yet, while I address thee now,
Methinks thou smilest in thy sleep.
'Tis sweet enough to make me weep,
That tender thought of love and thee,
That while the world is hushed so deep,
Thy soul's perhaps awake to me!

Sleep on, sleep on, sweet bride of sleep!
With golden visions for thy dower,
While I this midnight vigil keep,
And bless thee in thy silent bower;
To me 'tis sweeter than the power
Of sleep, and fairy dreams unfurled,
That I alone, at this still hour,
In patient love outwatch the world.

Thomas Hood [1799-1845]

SERENADE

Look out upon the stars, my love,
And shame them with thine eyes,
On which, than on the lights above,
There hang more destinies.
Night's beauty is the harmony
Of blending shades and light:
Then, lady, up, - look out, and be
A sister to the night!

Sleep not! - thine image wakes for aye
Within my watching breast;
Sleep not! - from her soft sleep should fly,
Who robs all hearts of rest.
Nay, lady, from thy slumbers break,
And make this darkness gay,
With looks whose brightness well might make
Of darker nights a day.

Edward Coote Pinkney [1802-1828]

SERENADE

Hide, happy damask, from the stars,
What sleep enfolds behind your veil,
But open to the fairy cars
On which the dreams of midnight sail;
And let the zephyrs rise and fall
About her in the curtained gloom,
And then return to tell me all
The silken secrets of the room.

Ah! dearest! may the elves that sway
Thy fancies come from emerald plots,
Where they have dozed and dreamed all day
In hearts of blue forget-me-nots.
And one perhaps shall whisper thus:
Awake! and light the darkness, Sweet!
While thou art reveling with us,
He watches in the lonely street.

Henry Timrod [1829-1867]

SERENADE
From "The Spanish Student"

Stars of the summer night!
Far in yon azure deeps,
Hide, hide your golden light!
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps!
Sleeps!

Moon of the summer night!
Far down yon western steeps,
Sink, sink in silver light!
She sleeps!

My lady sleeps!
Sleeps!

Wind of the summer night!
Where yonder woodbine creeps,
Fold, fold thy pinions light!
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps!
Sleeps!

Dreams of the summer night!
Tell her, her lover keeps
Watch! while in slumbers light
She sleeps!
My lady sleeps!
Sleeps!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [1807-1882]

"COME INTO THE GARDEN, MAUD"
From "Maud"

Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown,
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone;
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the rose is blown.

For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of Love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
To faint in his light, and to die.

All night have the roses heard
The flute, violin, bassoon;
All night has the casement jessamine stirred
To the dancers dancing in tune;
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
And a hush with the setting moon.

I said to the lily, "There is but one
With whom she has heart to be gay.
When will the dancers leave her alone?
She is weary of dance and play."
Now half to the setting moon are gone,
And half to the rising day;
Low on the sand and loud on the stone
The last wheel echoes away.

I said to the rose, "The brief night goes
In babble and revel and wine.
O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
For one that will never be thine?
But mine, but mine," so I sware to the rose,

"For ever and ever, mine."

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,
As the music clashed in the hall:
And long by the garden lake I stood,
For I heard your rivulet fall
From the lake to the meadow and on to the wood,
Our wood, that is dearer than all;

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet
That whenever a March-wind sighs
He sets the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes,
To the woody hollows in which we meet
And the valleys of Paradise.

The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree;
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,
Knowing your promise to me;
The lilies and roses were all awake,
They sighed for the dawn and thee.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one;
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,
To the flowers, and be their sun.

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear;
She is coming, my life, my fate;
The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near";
And the white rose weeps, "She is late";
The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear";
And the lily whispers, "I wait."

She is coming my own, my sweet;
Were it ever so airy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthy bed;
My dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead;
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red.

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

AT HER WINDOW

Ah, Minstrel, how strange is
The carol you sing!
Let Psyche, who ranges

The garden of spring,
Remember the changes
December will bring.

Beating Heart! we come again
Where my Love reposes:
This is Mabel's window-pane;
These are Mabel's roses.

Is she nested? Does she kneel
In the twilight stilly,
Lily clad from throat to heel,
She, my virgin Lily?

Soon the wan, the wistful stars,
Fading, will forsake her;
Elves of light, on beamy bars,
Whisper then, and wake her.

Let this friendly pebble plead
At her flowery grating;
If she hear me will she heed?
Mabel, I am waiting.

Mabel will be decked anon,
Zoned in bride's apparel;
Happy zone! Oh hark to yon
Passion-shaken carol!

Sing thy song, thou tranced thrush,
Pipe thy best, thy clearest; -
Hush, her lattice moves, oh hush -
Dearest Mabel! - dearest....

Frederick Locker-Lampson [1821-1895]

BEDOUIN SONG

From the Desert I come to thee
On a stallion shod with fire;
And the winds are left behind
In the speed of my desire.
Under thy window I stand,
And the midnight hears my cry:
I love thee, I love but thee,
With a love that shall not die
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment
Book unfold!

Look from thy window and see
My passion and my pain;
I lie on the sands below,
And I faint in thy disdain.
Let the night-winds touch thy brow
With the heat of my burning sigh,

And melt thee to hear the vow
Of a love that shall not die
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment
Book unfold!

My steps are nightly driven,
By the fever in my breast,
To hear from thy lattice breathed
The word that shall give me rest.
Open the door of thy heart,
And open thy chamber door,
And my kisses shall teach thy lips
The love that shall fade no more
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment
Book unfold!

Bayard Taylor [1825-1878]

NIGHT AND LOVE
From "Ernest Maltravers"

When stars are in the quiet skies,
Then most I pine for thee;
Bend on me, then, thy tender eyes,
As stars look on the sea!

For thoughts, like waves that glide by night,
Are stillest when they shine;
Mine earthly love lies hushed in light
Beneath the heaven of thine.

There is an hour when angels keep
Familiar watch o'er men,
When coarser souls are wrapped in sleep -
Sweet spirit, meet me then

There is an hour when holy dreams
Through slumber fairest glide;
And in that mystic hour it seems
Thou shouldst be by my side.

My thoughts of thee too sacred are
For daylight's common beam:
I can but know thee as my star,
My angel and my dream!

Edward George Earle Bulwer Lytton [1803-1873]

NOCTURNE

Up to her chamber window
A slight wire trellis goes,

And up this Romeo's ladder
Clambers a bold white rose.

I lounge in the ilex shadows,
I see the lady lean,
Unclasping her silken girdle,
The curtain's folds between.

She smiles on her white-rose lover,
She reaches out her hand
And helps him in at the window -
I see it where I stand!

To her scarlet lip she holds him,
And kisses him many a time -
Ah, me! it was he that won her
Because he dared to climb!

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1837-1907]

PALABRAS CARINOSAS
Spanish Air

Good-night! I have to say good-night
To such a host of peerless things!
Good-night unto the slender hand
All queenly with its weight of rings;
Good-night to fond, uplifted eyes,
Good-night to chestnut braids of hair,
Good-night unto the perfect mouth,
And all the sweetness nestled there -
The snowy hand detains me, then
I'll have to say Good-night again!

But there will come a time, my love,
When, if I read our stars aright,
I shall not linger by this porch
With my farewells. Till then, good-night!
You wish the time were now? And I.
You do not blush to wish it so?
You would have blushed yourself to death
To own so much a year ago -
What, both these snowy hands! ah, then
I'll have to say Good-night again!

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1837-1907]

SERENADE

The western wind is blowing fair
Across the dark Aegean sea,
And at the secret marble stair
My Tyrian galley waits for thee.
Come down! the purple sail is spread,
The watchman sleeps within the town;
O leave thy lily-flowered bed,

O Lady mine, come down, come down!

She will not come, I know her well,
Of lover's vows she hath no care,
And little good a man can tell
Of one so cruel and so fair.
True love is but a woman's toy,
They never know the lover's pain,
And I, who love as loves a boy,
Must love in vain, must love in vain.

O noble pilot, tell me true,
Is that the sheen of golden hair?
Or is it but the tangled dew
That binds the passion-flowers there?
Good sailor, come and tell me now,
Is that my Lady's lily hand?
Or is it but the gleaming prow,
Or is it but the silver sand?

No! no! 'tis not the tangled dew,
'Tis not the silver-fretted sand,
It is my own dear Lady true
With golden hair and lily hand!
O noble pilot, steer for Troy!
Good sailor, ply the laboring oar!
This is the Queen of life and joy
Whom we must bear from Grecian shore!

The waning sky grows faint and blue;
It wants an hour still of day;
Aboard! aboard! my gallant crew,
O Lady mine, away! away!
O noble pilot, steer for Troy!
Good sailor, ply the laboring oar!
O loved as only loves a boy!
O loved for ever, evermore!

Oscar Wilde [1856-1900]

THE LITTLE RED LARK

O swan of slenderness,
Dove of tenderness,
Jewel of joys, arise!
The little red lark,
Like a soaring spark
Of song, to his sunburst flies;
But till thou art arisen,
Earth is a prison,
Full of my lonesome sighs:
Then awake and discover,
To thy fond lover,
The morn of thy matchless eyes.
The dawn is dark to me,
Hark! oh, hark to me,

Pulse of my heart, I pray!
And out of thy hiding
With blushes gliding,
Dazzle me with thy day.
Ah, then once more to thee
Flying I'll pour to thee
Passion so sweet and gay,
The larks shall listen,
And dew-drops glisten,
Laughing on every spray.

Alfred Perceval Graves [1846-1931]

SERENADE

By day my timid passions stand
Like begging children at your gate,
Each with a mute, appealing hand
To ask a dole of Fate;
But when night comes, released from doubt,
Like merry minstrels they appear,
The stars ring out their hopeful shout,
Beloved, can you hear?

They dare not sing to you by day
Their all-desirous song, or take
The world with their adventurous lay
For your enchanted sake.
But when the night-wind wakes and thrills
The shadows that the night unbars,
Their music fills the dreamy hills,
And folds the friendly stars.

Beloved, can you hear? They sing
Words that no mortal lips can sound;
Love through the world has taken wing,
My passions are unbound.
And now, and now, my lips, my eyes,
Are stricken dumb with hope and fear,
It is my burning soul that cries,
Beloved, can you hear?

Richard Middleton [1882-1911]

THE COMEDY OF LOVE

A LOVER'S LULLABY

Sing lullaby, as women do,
Wherewith they bring their babes to rest;
And lullaby can I sing too,
As womanly as can the best.
With lullaby they still the child;
And if I be not much beguiled,
Full many a wanton babe have I,
Which must be stilled with lullaby.

First lullaby my youthful years,
It is now time to go to bed:
For crooked age and hoary hairs
Have won the haven within my head.
With lullaby, then, youth be still;
With lullaby content thy will;
Since courage quails and comes behind,
Go sleep, and so beguile thy mind!

Next lullaby my gazing eyes,
Which wonted were to glance apace;
For every glass may now suffice
To show the furrows in thy face.
With lullaby then wink awhile;
With lullaby your looks beguile;
Let no fair face, nor beauty bright,
Entice you eft with vain delight.

And lullaby my wanton will;
Let reason's rule now reign thy thought;
Since all too late I find by skill
How dear I have thy fancies bought;
With lullaby now take thine ease,
With lullaby thy doubts appease;
For trust to this, if thou be still,
My body shall obey thy will.

Thus lullaby my youth, mine eyes,
My will, my ware, and all that was:
I can no more delays devise;
But welcome pain, let pleasure pass.
With lullaby now take your leave;
With lullaby your dreams deceive;
And when you rise with waking eye,
Remember then this lullaby.

George Gascoigne [1525?-1577]

PHILLIDA AND CORIDON

In the merry month of May,
In a morn by break of day,
Forth I walked by the wood-side
When as May was in his pride:
There I spied all alone
Phillida and Coridon.

Much ado there was, God wot!
He would love and she would not.
She said, Never man was true;
He said, None was false to you.
He said, He had loved her long;
She said, Love should have no wrong.
Coridon would kiss her then;
She said, Maids must kiss no men
Till they did for good and all;
Then she made the shepherd call
All the heavens to witness truth
Never loved a truer youth.
Thus with many a pretty oath,
Yea and nay, and faith and troth,
Such as silly shepherds use
When they will not Love abuse,
Love, which had been long deluded,
Was with kisses sweet concluded;
And Phillida, with garlands gay,
Was made the Lady of the May.

Nicholas Breton [1545?-1626?]

"CRABBED AGE AND YOUTH"
From "The Passionate Pilgrim"

Crabbed Age and Youth
Cannot live together:
Youth is full of pleasance,
Age is full of care;
Youth like summer morn,
Age like winter weather;
Youth like summer brave,
Age like winter bare.
Youth is full of sport,
Age's breath is short;
Youth is nimble, Age is lame;
Youth is hot and bold,
Age is weak and cold;
Youth is wild, and Age is tame.
Age, I do abhor thee;
Youth, I do adore thee;
O, my Love, my Love is young!
Age, I do defy thee:
O, sweet shepherd, hie thee!
For methinks thou stay'st too long.

William Shakespeare [1564-1616]

"IT WAS A LOVER AND HIS LASS"
From "As You Like It"

It was a lover and his lass,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
That o'er the green corn-field did pass,
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,

When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

Between the acres of the rye,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
These pretty country folks would lie,
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

This carol they began that hour,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
How that life was but a flower
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

And, therefore, take the present time
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
For love is crowned with the prime
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

William Shakespeare [1564-1616]

"I LOVED A LASS"

I loved a lass, a fair one,
As fair as e'er was seen;
She was indeed a rare one,
Another Sheba Queen:
But, fool as then I was,
I thought she loved me too:
But now, alas! she's left me,
Falero, lero, loo!

Her hair like gold did glister,
Each eye was like a star,
She did surpass her sister,
Which passed all others far;
She would me honey call,
She'd - O she'd kiss me too!
But now, alas! she's left me,
Falero, lero, loo!

Many a merry meeting
My love and I have had;
She was my only sweeting,
She made my heart full glad;
The tears stood in her eyes
Like to the morning dew:
But now, alas! she's left me,
Falero, lero, loo!

Her cheeks were like the cherry,

Her skin was white as snow;
When she was blithe and merry
She angel-like did show;
Her waist exceeding small,
The fives did fit her shoe:
But now, alas! she's left me,
Falero, lero, loo!

In summer time or winter
She had her heart's desire;
I still did scorn to stint her
From sugar, sack, or fire;
The world went round about,
No cares we ever knew:
But now, alas! she's left me,
Falero, lero, loo!

To maidens' vows and swearing
Henceforth no credit give;
You may give them the hearing,
But never them believe;
They are as false as fair,
Unconstant, frail, untrue:
For mine, alas! hath left me,
Falero, lero, loo!

George Wither [1588-1667]

TO CHLORIS

Ah, Chloris! that I now could sit
As unconcerned as when
Your infant beauty could beget
No pleasure, nor no pain!
When I the dawn used to admire,
And praised the coming day,
I little thought the growing fire
Must take my rest away.

Your charms in harmless childhood lay
Like metals in the mine;
Age from no face took more away
Than youth concealed in thine.
But as your charms insensibly
To their perfection pressed,
Fond love as unperceived did fly,
And in my bosom rest.

My passion with your beauty grew,
And Cupid at my heart,
Still as his mother favored you,
Threw a new flaming dart:
Each gloried in their wanton part;
To make a lover, he
Employed the utmost of his art -
To make a beauty, she.

Charles Sedley [1639?-1701]

SONG

The merchant, to secure his treasure,
Conveys it in a borrowed name:
Euphelia serves to grace my measure;
But Chloe is my real flame.

My softest verse, my darling lyre,
Upon Euphelia's toilet lay;
When Chloe noted her desire
That I should sing, that I should play.

My lyre I tune, my voice I raise;
But with my numbers mix my sighs:
And while I sing Euphelia's praise,
I fix my soul on Chloe's eyes.

Fair Chloe blushed: Euphelia frowned:
I sung, and gazed: I played, and trembled:
And Venus to the Loves around
Remarked, how ill we all dissembled.

Matthew Prior [1664-1721]

PIOUS SELINDA

Pious Selinda goes to prayers,
If I but ask her favor;
And yet the silly fool's in tears
If she believes I'll leave her;
Would I were free from this restraint,
Or else had hopes to win her:
Would she could make of me a saint,
Or I of her a sinner.

William Congreve [1670-1729]

FAIR HEBE

Fair Hebe I left, with a cautious design
To escape from her charms, and to drown them in wine,
I tried it; but found, when I came to depart,
The wine in my head, and still love in my heart.

I repaired to my Reason, entreated her aid;
Who paused on my case and each circumstance weighed,
Then gravely pronounced, in return to my prayer,
That "Hebe was fairest of all that was fair!"

"That's a truth," replied I, "I've no need to be taught;
I came for your counsel to find out a fault."
"If that's all," quoth Reason, "return as you came;
To find fault with Hebe, would forfeit my name."

What hopes then, alas! of relief from my pain,
While, like lightning, she darts through each throbbing vein?
My Senses surprised, in her favor took arms;
And Reason confirms me a slave to her charms.

John West [1693-1766]

A MAIDEN'S IDEAL OF A HUSBAND
From "The Contrivances"

Genteel in personage,
Conduct, and equipage,
Noble by heritage,
Generous and free:
Brave, not romantic;
Learned, not pedantic;
Frolic, not frantic;
This must he be.

Honor maintaining,
Meanness disdaining,
Still entertaining,
Engaging and new.
Neat, but not finical;
Sage, but not cynical;
Never tyrannical,
But ever true.

Henry Carey [? -1743]

"PHILLADA FLOUTS ME"

O what a plague is love!
How shall I bear it?
She will inconstant prove,
I greatly fear it.
She so torments my mind
That my strength faileth,
And wavers with the wind
As a ship saileth.
Please her the best I may,
She loves still to gainsay;
Alack and well-a-day!
Phillada flouts me.

At the fair yesterday
She did pass by me;
She looked another way
And would not spy me:
I wooed her for to dine,
But could not get her;
Will had her to the wine -
He might entreat her.
With Daniel she did dance,
On me she looked askance:

O thrice unhappy chance!
Phillada flouts me.

Fair maid, be not so coy,
Do not disdain me!
I am my mother's joy:
Sweet, entertain me!
She'll give me, when she dies,
All that is fitting:
Her poultry and her bees,
And her goose sitting,
A pair of mattress beds,
And a bag full of shreds;
And yet, for all this guedes,
Phillada flouts me!

She hath a clout of mine
Wrought with blue coventry,
Which she keeps for a sign
Of my fidelity:
But i' faith, if she flinch
She shall not wear it;
To Tib, my t'other wench,
I mean to bear it.
And yet it grieves my heart
So soon from her to part:
Death strike me with his dart!
Phillada flouts me.

Thou shalt eat crudded cream
All the year lasting,
And drink the crystal stream
Pleasant in tasting;
Whig and whey whilst thou lust,
And bramble-berries,
Pie-lid and pastry-crust,
Pears, plums, and cherries.
Thy raiment shall be thin,
Made of a weevil's skin -
Yet all's not worth a pin!
Phillada flouts me.

In the last month of May
I made her posies;
I heard her often say
That she loved roses.
Cowslips and gillyflowers
And the white lily
I brought to deck the bowers
For my sweet Philly.
But she did all disdain,
And threw them back again;
Therefore 'tis flat and plain
Phillada flouts me.

Fair maiden, have a care,
And in time take me;
I can have those as fair

If you forsake me:
For Doll the dairy-maid
Laughed at me lately,
And wanton Winifred
Favors me greatly.
One throws milk on my clothes,
T'other plays with my nose;
What wanting signs are those?
Phillada flouts me.

I cannot work nor sleep
At all in season:
Love wounds my heart so deep
Without all reason
I 'gin to pine away
In my love's shadow,
Like as a fat beast may,
Penned in a meadow,
I shall be dead, I fear,
Within this thousand year:
And all for that my dear
Phillada flouts me.

Unknown

"WHEN MOLLY SMILES"

When Molly smiles beneath her cow,
I feel my heart - I can't tell how;
When Molly is on Sunday dressed,
On Sundays I can take no rest.

What can I do? On worky days
I leave my work on her to gaze.
What shall I say? At sermons, I
Forget the text when Molly's by.

Good master curate, teach me how
To mind your preaching and my plow:
And if for this you'll raise a spell,
A good fat goose shall thank you well.

Unknown

CONTENTIONS

It was a lordling's daughter, the fairest one of three,
That liked of her master as well as well might be;
Till looking on an Englishman, the fair'st that eye could see
Her fancy fell a-turning.

Long was the combat doubtful that love with love did fight,
To leave the master loveless, or kill the gallant knight:
To put in practice either, alas! it was a spite
Unto the silly damsel.

But one must be refused: more mickle was the pain,
That nothing could be used to turn them both to gain;
For of the two the trusty knight was wounded with disdain:
Alas! she could not help it.

Thus art with arms contending was victor of the day,
Which by a gift of learning did bear the maid away;
Then lullaby, the learned man hath got the lady gays
For now my song is ended.

Unknown

"I ASKED MY FAIR, ONE HAPPY DAY"
After Lessing

I asked my fair, one happy day,
What I should call her in my lay;
By what sweet name from Rome or Greece;
Lalage, Neaera, Chloris,
Sappho, Lesbia, or Doris,
Arethusa or Lucrece.

"Ah!" replied my gentle fair,
"Beloved, what are names but air?
Choose thou whatever suits the line;
Call me Sappho, call me Chloris,
Call me Lalage or Doris,
Only - only call me thine."

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772-1834]

THE EXCHANGE

We pledged our hearts, my love and I, -
I in my arms the maiden clasping:
I could not tell the reason why,
But oh! I trembled like an aspen.

Her father's love she bade me gain;
I went, and shook like any reed!
I strove to act the man - in vain!
We had exchanged our hearts indeed.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772-1834]

"COMIN' THROUGH THE RYE"

Comin' through the rye, poor body,
Comin' through the rye,
She draiglet a' her petticoatie,
Comin' through the rye.

Oh Jenny's a' wat poor body,
Jenny's seldom dry;
She draiglet a' her petticoatie,

Comin' through the rye.

Gin a body meet a body,
Comin' through the rye,
Gin a body kiss a body,
Need a body cry?

Gin a body meet a body
Comin' through the glen,
Gin a body kiss a body,
Need the warld ken?

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

"GREEN GROW THE RASHES, O!"

There's naught but care on every han',
In every hour that passes, O!
What signifies the life o' man,
An' 'twere na for the lasses, O?

Green grow the rashes, O!
Green grow the rashes, O!
The sweetest hours that e'er I spend,
Are spent amang the lasses, O!

The warl'ly race may riches chase,
An' riches still may fly them, O!
An' though at last they catch them fast,
Their hearts can ne'er enjoy them, O!

Gie me a canny hour at e'en;
My arms about my dearie, O!
An' warl'ly cares, an' warl'ly men,
May a' gae tapsalteerie, O!

For you sae douce, ye sneer at this;
Ye'er naught but senseless asses, O!
The wisest man the warl' e'er saw
He dearly loved the lasses, O!

Auld Nature swears the lovely dears
Her noblest work she classes, O!
Her 'prentice han' she tried on man,
An' then she made the lasses, O!

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

DEFIANCE

Catch her and hold her if you can -
See, she defies you with her fan,
Shuts, opens, and then holds it spread
In threatening guise above your head.
Ah! why did you not start before
She reached the porch and closed the door?

Simpleton! will you never learn
That girls and time will not return;
Of each you should have made the most;
Once gone, they are forever lost.
In vain your knuckles knock your brow,
In vain will you remember how
Like a slim brook the gamesome maid
Sparkled, and ran into the shade.

Walter Savage Landor [1775-1864]

OF CLEMENTINA

In Clementina's artless mien
Lucilla asks me what I see,
And are the roses of sixteen
Enough for me?

Lucilla asks, if that be all,
Have I not culled as sweet before:
Ah yes, Lucilla! and their fall
I still deplore.

I now behold another scene,
Where Pleasure beams with Heaven's own light,
More pure, more constant, more serene,
And not less bright.

Faith, on whose breast the Loves repose,
Whose chain of flowers no force can sever,
And Modesty who, when she goes,
Is gone for ever.

Walter Savage Landor [1775-1864]

"THE TIME I'VE LOST IN WOOING"

The time I've lost in wooing,
In watching and pursuing
The light that lies
In woman's eyes,
Has been my heart's undoing.
Though Wisdom oft has sought me,
I scorned the lore she brought me, -
My only books
Were women's looks,
And folly's all they taught me.

Her smile when Beauty granted,
I hung with gaze enchanted,
Like him the sprite
Whom maids by night
Oft meet in glen that's haunted.
Like him, too, Beauty won me;
But when the spell was on me,
If once their ray

Was turned away,
O! winds could not outrun me.

And are those follies going?
And is my proud heart growing
Too cold or wise
For brilliant eyes
Again to set it glowing?
No - vain, alas! th' endeavor
From bonds so sweet to sever; -
Poor Wisdom's chance
Against a glance
Is now as weak as ever.

Thomas Moore [1779-1852]

DEAR FANNY

"She has beauty, but you must keep your heart cool;
She has wit, but you mustn't be caught so":
Thus Reason advises, but Reason's a fool,
And 'tis not the first time I have thought so,
Dear Fanny,
'Tis not the first time I have thought so.

"She is lovely; then love her, nor let the bliss fly;
'Tis the charm of youth's vanishing season";
Thus Love has advised me, and who will deny
That Love reasons better than Reason,
Dear Fanny
Love reasons much better than Reason.

Thomas Moore [1779-1852]

A CERTAIN YOUNG LADY

There's a certain young lady,
Who's just in her hey-day,
And full of all mischief, I ween;
So teasing! so pleasing!
Capricious! delicious!
And you know very well whom I mean.

With an eye dark as night,
Yet than noonday more bright,
Was ever a black eye so keen?
It can thrill with a glance,
With a beam can entrance,
And you know very well whom I mean.

With a stately step - such as
You'd expect in a duchess -
And a brow might distinguish a queen,
With a mighty proud air,
That says "touch me who dare,"
And you know very well whom I mean.

With a toss of the head
That strikes one quite dead,
But a smile to revive one again;
That toss so appalling!
That smile so enthralling!
And you know very well whom I mean.

Confound her! de'il take her! -
A cruel heart-breaker -
But hold! see that smile so serene.
God love her! God bless her!
May nothing distress her!
You know very well whom I mean.

Heaven help the adorer
Who happens to bore her,
The lover who wakens her spleen;
But too blest for a sinner
Is he who shall win her,
And you know very well whom I mean.

Washington Irving [1783-1859]

"WHERE BE YOU GOING, YOU DEVON MAID"

Where be you going, you Devon maid?
And what have ye there in the basket?
Ye tight little fairy, just fresh from the dairy,
Will ye give me some cream if I ask it?

I love your hills and I love your dales,
And I love your flocks a-bleating;
But oh, on the heather to lie together,
With both our hearts a-beating!

I'll put your basket all safe in a nook;
Your shawl I'll hang on a willow;
And we will sigh in the daisy's eye,
And kiss on a grass-green pillow.

John Keats [1795-1821]

LOVE IN A COTTAGE

They may talk of love in a cottage,
And bowers of trellised vine, -
Of nature bewitchingly simple,
And milkmaids half divine;
They may talk of the pleasure of sleeping
In the shade of a spreading tree,
And a walk in the fields at morning,
By the side of a footstep free!

But give me a sly flirtation
By the light of a chandelier, -

With music to play in the pauses,
And nobody very near;
Or a seat on a silken sofa,
With a glass of pure old wine,
And mamma too blind to discover
The small white hand in mine.

Your love in a cottage is hungry,
Your vine is a nest for flies, -
Your milkmaid shocks the Graces,
And simplicity talks of pies!
You lie down to your shady slumber
And wake with a bug in your ear,
And your damsel that walks in the morning
Is shod like a mountaineer.

True love is at home on a carpet,
And mightily likes his ease; -
And true love has an eye for a dinner,
And starves beneath shady trees.
His wing is the fan of a lady,
His foot's an invisible thing,
And his arrow is tipped with a jewel,
And shot from a silver string.

Nathaniel Parker Willis [1806-1867]

SONG OF THE MILKMAID
From "Queen Mary"

Shame upon you, Robin,
Shame upon you now!
Kiss me would you? with my hands
Milking the cow?
Daisies grow again,
Kingcups blow again,
And you came and kissed me milking the cow.

Robin came behind me,
Kissed me well, I vow;
Cuff him could I? with my hands
Milking the cow?
Swallows fly again,
Cuckoos cry again,
And you came and kissed me milking the cow.

Come, Robin, Robin,
Come and kiss me now;
Help it can I? with my hands
Milking the cow?
Ringdoves coo again,
All things woo again,
Come behind and kiss me milking the cow!

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

"WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO KNOW"

I know a girl with teeth of pearl,
And shoulders white as snow;
She lives, - ah well,
I must not tell, -
Wouldn't you like to know?

Her sunny hair is wondrous fair,
And wavy in its flow;
Who made it less
One little tress, -
Wouldn't you like to know?

Her eyes are blue (celestial hue!)
And dazzling in their glow;
On whom they beam
With melting gleam, -
Wouldn't you like to know?

Her lips are red and finely wed,
Like roses ere they blow;
What lover sips
Those dewy lips, -
Wouldn't you like to know?

Her fingers are like lilies fair
When lilies fairest grow;
Whose hand they press
With fond caress, -
Wouldn't you like to know?

Her foot is small, and has a fall
Like snowflakes on the snow;
And where it goes
Beneath the rose, -
Wouldn't you like to know?

She has a name, the sweetest name
That language can bestow.
'Twould break the spell
If I should tell, -
Wouldn't you like to know?

John Godfrey Saxe [1816-1887]

"SING HEIGH-HO!"

There sits a bird on every tree;
Sing heigh-ho!
There sits a bird on every tree,
And courts his love as I do thee;
Sing heigh-ho, and heigh-ho!
Young maids must marry.

There grows a flower on every bough;
Sing heigh-ho!

There grows a flower on every bough,
Its petals kiss - I'll show you how:
Sing heigh-ho, and heigh-ho!
Young maids must marry.

From sea to stream the salmon roam;
Sing heigh-ho!
From sea to stream the salmon roam;
Each finds a mate and leads her home;
Sing heigh-ho, and heigh-ho!
Young maids must marry.

The sun's a bridegroom, earth a bride;
Sing heigh-ho!
They court from morn till eventide:
The earth shall pass, but love abide.
Sing heigh-ho, and heigh-ho!
Young maids must marry.

Charles Kingsley [1819-1875]

THE GOLDEN FISH

Love is a little golden fish,
Wondrous shy . . . ah, wondrous shy . . .
You may catch him if you wish;
He might make a dainty dish . . .
But I . . .
Ah, I've other fish to fry!

For when I try to snare this prize,
Earnestly and patiently,
All my skill the rogue defies,
Lurking safe in Aimee's eyes . . .
So, you see,
I am caught and Love goes free!

George Arnold [1834-1865]

THE COURTIN'

God makes sech nights, all white an' still
Fur 'z you can look or listen,
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill,
All silence an' all glisten.

Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown
An' peeked in thru' the winder,
An' there sot Huldy all alone,
'ith no one nigh to hender.

A fireplace filled the room's one side,
With half a cord o' wood in -
There warn't no stoves (tell comfort died)
To bake ye to a puddin'.

The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out
Towards the pootiest, bless her!
An' leetle flames danced all about
The chiny on the dresser.

Agin the chimbley crook-necks hung,
An' in amongst 'em rusted
The ole queen's-arm thet gran'ther Young
Fetched back f'om Concord busted.

The very room, coz she was in,
Seemed warm f'om floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
Ez the apples she was peelin.

'Twas kin' o' kingdom-come to look
On sech a blessed cretur,
A dogrose blushin' to a brook
Ain't modester nor sweeter.

He was six foot o' man, A I,
Clear grit an' human natur';
None couldn't quicker pitch a ton,
Nor dror a furrer straighter.

He'd sparked it with full twenty gals,
He'd squired 'em, danced 'em, druv 'em,
Fust this one, an' then thet, by spells -
All is, he couldn't love 'em.

But long o' her his veins 'ould run
All crinkly like curled maple,
The side she breshed felt full o' sun
Ez a south slope in Ap'il.

She thought no v'ice hed sech a swing
Ez hisn in the choir;
My! when he made Ole Hundred ring,
She knowed the Lord was nigher.

An' she'd blush scarlit, right in prayer,
When her new meetin'-bunnet
Felt somehow thru' its crown a pair
O' blue eyes sot upun it.

Thet night, I tell ye, she looked some!
She seemed to've gut a new soul,
For she felt sartin-sure he'd come,
Down to her very shoe-sole.

She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,
A-raspin' on the scraper, -
All ways to once her feelin's flew
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,
Some doubtfle o' the sekle,
His heart kep' goin' pitty-pat,

But hern went pity Zekle.

An' yit she gin her cheer a jerk
Ez though she wished him furder,
An' on her apples kep' to work,
Parin' away like murder.

"You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?"
"Wal . . . no . . . I come dasignin"
"To see my Ma? She's sprinklin' clo'es
Agin to-morrer's i'nin'."

To say why gals acts so or so,
Or don't, 'ould be presumin';
Mebby to mean yes an' say no
Comes nateral to women.

He stood a spell on one foot fust,
Then stood a spell on t'other,
An' on which one he felt the wust
He couldn't ha' told ye nuther.

Says he, "I'd better call ag'in";
Says she, "Think likely, Mister";
Thet last word pricked him like a pin,
An' . . . Wal, he up an' kissed her.

When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,
Huldy sot pale ez ashes,
All kin' o' smily roun' the lips
An' teary roun' the lashes.

For she was jes' the quiet kind
Whose naturs never vary,
Like streams that keep a summer mind
Snow-hid in Jenooary.

The blood clost roun' her heart felt glued
Too tight for all expressin',
Tell mother see how metters stood
And gin 'em both her blessin'.

Then her red come back like the tide
Down to the Bay o' Fundy,
An' all I know is they was cried
In meetin' come nex' Sunday.

James Russell Lowell [1819-1891]

L'EAU DORMANTE

Curled up and sitting on her feet,
Within the window's deep embrasure,
Is Lydia; and across the street,
A lad, with eyes of roguish azure,
Watches her buried in her book.
In vain he tries to win a look,

And from the trellis over there
Blows sundry kisses through the air,
Which miss the mark, and fall unseen,
Uncared for. Lydia is thirteen.

My lad, if you, without abuse,
Will take advice from one who's wiser,
And put his wisdom to more use
Than ever yet did your adviser;
If you will let, as none will do,
Another's heartbreak serve for two,
You'll have a care, some four years hence,
How you lounge there by yonder fence
And blow those kisses through that screen -
For Lydia will be seventeen.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1837-1907]

A PRIMROSE DAME

She has a primrose at her breast,
I almost wish I were a Tory.
I like the Radicals the best;
She has a primrose at her breast;
Now is it chance she so is dressed,
Or must I tell a story?
She has a primrose at her breast,
I almost wish I were a Tory.

Gleeson White [1851-1898]

IF

Oh, if the world were mine, Love,
I'd give the world for thee!
Alas! there is no sign, Love,
Of that contingency.

Were I a king, - which isn't
To be considered now, -
A diadem had glistened
Upon that lovely brow.

Had fame with laurels crowned me, -
She hasn't, up to date, -
Nor time nor change had found me
To love and thee ingrate.

If Death threw down his gage, Love,
Though life is dear to me,
I'd die, e'en of old age, Love,
To win a smile from thee.

But being poor, we part, dear,
And love, sweet love, must die;
Thou wilt not break thy heart, dear,

No more, I think, shall I!

James Jeffrey Roche [1847-1908]

DON'T

Your eyes were made for laughter:
Sorrow befits them not;
Would you be blithe hereafter,
Avoid the lover's lot.

The rose and lily blended
Possess your cheeks so fair;
Care never was intended
To leave his furrows there.

Your heart was not created
To fret itself away,
By being unduly mated
To common human clay.

But hearts were made for loving -
Confound philosophy!
Forget what I've been proving,
Sweet Phyllis, and love me!

James Jeffrey Roche [1847-1908]

AN IRISH LOVE-SONG

In the years about twenty
(When kisses are plenty)
The love of an Irish lass fell to my fate -
So winsome and sightly,
So saucy and sprightly,
The priest was a prophet that christened her Kate.

Soft gray of the dawning,
Bright blue of the morning,
The sweet of her eye there was nothing to mate;
A nose like a fairy's,
A cheek like a cherry's,
And a smile - well, her smile was like - nothing but Kate.

To see her was passion,
To love her, the fashion;
What wonder my heart was unwilling to wait!
And, daring to love her,
I soon did discover
A Katherine masking in mischievous Kate.

No Katy unruly
But Katherine, truly -
Fond, serious, patient, and even sedate;
With a glow in her gladness
That banishes sadness -

Yet stay! Should I credit the sunshine to Kate?

Love cannot outlive it,
Wealth cannot o'ergive it -
The saucy surrender she made at the gate.
O Time, be but human,
Spare the girl in the woman!
You gave me my Katherine - leave me my Kate!

Robert Underwood Johnson [1853-

GROWING OLD

Sweet sixteen is shy and cold,
Calls me "sir," and thinks me old;
Hears in an embarrassed way
All the compliments I pay;

Finds my homage quite a bore,
Will not smile on me, and more
To her taste she finds the noise
And the chat of callow boys.

Not the lines around my eye,
Deepening as the years go by;
Not white hairs that strew my head,
Nor my less elastic tread;

Cares I find, nor joys I miss,
Make me feel my years like this: -
Sweet sixteen is shy and cold,
Calls me "sir," and thinks me old.

Walter Learned [1847-1915]

TIME'S REVENGE

When I was ten and she fifteen -
Ah, me! how fair I thought her.
She treated with disdainful mien
The homage that I brought her,
And, in a patronizing way,
Would of my shy advances say:
"It's really quite absurd, you see;
He's very much too young for me."

I'm twenty now, she twenty-five -
Well, well! how old she's growing.
I fancy that my suit might thrive
If pressed again; but, owing
To great discrepancy in age,
Her marked attentions don't engage
My young affections, for, you see,
She's really quite too old for me.

Walter Learned [1847-1915]

IN EXPLANATION

Her lips were so near
That - what else could I do?
You'll be angry, I fear.
But her lips were so near -
Well, I can't make it clear,
Or explain it to you.
But - her lips were so near
That - what else could I do?

Walter Learned [1847-1915]

OMNIA VINCIT

Long from the lists of love I stood aloof
My heart was steeled and I was beauty-proof;
Yet I, unscathed in many a peril past,
Lo! here am I defeated at the last.

My practice was, in easy-chair reclined,
Superior-wise to speak of womankind,
Waving away the worn-out creed of love
To join the smoke that wreathed itself above.

Love, I said in my wisdom, Love is dead,
For all his fabled triumphs - and instead
We find a calm affectionate respect,
Doled forth by Intellect to Intellect.

Yet when Love, taking vengeance, smote me sore,
My Siren called me from no classic shore;
It was no Girton trumpet that laid low
The walls of this Platonic Jericho.

For when my peace of mind at length was stole,
I thought no whit of Intellect or Soul,
Nay! I was cast in pitiful distress
By brown eyes wide with truth and tenderness.

Alfred Cochrane [1865-

A PASTORAL

Along the lane beside the mead
Where cowslip-gold is in the grass
I matched the milkmaid's easy speed,
A tall and springing country lass:
But though she had a merry plan
To shield her from my soft replies,
Love played at Catch-me-if-you-Can
In Mary's eyes.

A mile or twain from Varley bridge

I plucked a dock-leaf for a fan,
And drove away the constant midge,
And cooled her forehead's strip of tan.
But though the maiden would not spare
My hand her pretty finger-tips,
Love played at Kiss-me-if-you-Dare
On Mary's lips.

Since time was short and blood was bold,
I drew me closer to her side,
And watched her freckles change from gold
To pink beneath a blushing tide.
But though she turned her face away,
How much her panting heart confessed!
Love played at Find-me-for-you-May
In Mary's breast.

Norman Gale [1862-

A ROSE

'Twas a Jacqueminot rose
That she gave me at parting;
Sweetest flower that blows,
'Twas a Jacqueminot rose.
In the love garden close,
With the swift blushes starting,
'Twas a Jacqueminot rose
That she gave me at parting.

If she kissed it, who knows -
Since I will not discover,
And love is that close,
If she kissed it, who knows?
Or if not the red rose
Perhaps then the lover!
If she kissed it, who knows,
Since I will not discover.

Yet at least with the rose
Went a kiss that I'm wearing!
More I will not disclose,
Yet at least with the rose
Went whose kiss no one knows, -
Since I'm only declaring,
"Yet at least with the rose
Went a kiss that I'm wearing."

Arlo Bates [1850-1918]

"WOOED AND MARRIED AND A'"

The bride cam' out o' the byre,
And oh, as she dighted her cheeks:
"Sirs, I'm to be married the night,
And ha'e neither blankets nor sheets;

Ha'e neither blankets nor sheets,
Nor scarce a coverlet too;
The bride that has a' thing to borrow,
Has e'en right muckle ado!"
Wooed and married, and a',
Married and wooed and a'!
And was she nae very weel aff,
That was wooed and married and a'?

Out spake the bride's father,
As he cam' in frae the pleugh:
"Oh, haud your tongue, my dochter,
And ye'se get gear eneugh;
The stirk stands i' the tether,
And our braw bawsint yaud,
Will carry ye hame your corn -
What wad ye be at, ye jaud?"

Out spake the bride's mither:
"What deil needs a' this pride?
I had nae a plack in my pouch
That night I was a bride;
My gown was linsey woolsey,
And ne'er a sark ava;
And ye ha'e ribbons and buskins,
Mair than ane or twa."

Out spake the bride's brither,
As he cam' in wi' the kye:
"Poor Willie wad ne'er ha'e ta'en ye,
Had he kent ye as weel as I;
For ye're baith proud and saucy
And no for a puir man's wife;
Gin I canna get a better,
I'se ne'er tak' ane i' my life."

Out spake the bride's sister,
As she cam' in frae the byre:
"O gin I were but married,
It's a' that I desire;
But we puir folk maun live single,
And do the best we can;
I dinna ken what I should want,
If I could get but a man!"

Alexander Ross [1699-1784]

"OWRE THE MUIR AMANG THE HEATHER"

Comin' though the craigs o' Kyle,
Amang the bonnie bloomin' heather,
There I met a bonnie lassie,
Keepin' a' her ewes thegither.

Owre the muir amang the heather,
Owre the muir amang the heather;
There I met a bonnie lassie,

Keepin' a' her ewes thegither.

Says I, My dear, where is thy hame, -
In muir or dale, pray tell me whether?
She says, I tent the fleecy flocks
That feed amang the bloomin' heather.

We laid us down upon a bank,
Sae warm and sunny was the weather:
She left her flocks at large to rove
Amang the bonnie bloomin' heather.

While thus we lay, she sung a sang,
Till echo rang a mile and farther;
And aye the burden of the sang
Was, Owre the muir amang the heather.

She charmed my heart, and aye sinsyne
I couldna think on ony ither:
By sea and sky! she shall be mine,
The bonnie lass amang the heather.

Jean Glover [1758-1801]

MARRIAGE AND THE CARE O'T

Quoth Rab to Kate, My sonsy dear,
I've wooed ye mair than ha' a year,
An' if ye'd wed me ne'er cou'd speer,
Wi' blateness, an' the care o't.
Now to the point: sincere I'm wi't:
Will ye be my ha'f-marrow, sweet?
Shake han's, and say a bargain be't
An' ne'er think on the care o't.

Na, na, quo' Kate, I winna wed,
O' sic a snare I'll aye be rede;
How mony, thochtless, are misled
By marriage, an' the care o't!
A single life's a life o' glee,
A wife ne'er think to mak' o' me,
Frae toil an' sorrow I'll keep free,
An' a' the dool an' care o't.

Weel, weel, said Robin, in reply,
Ye ne'er again shall me deny,
Ye may a toothless maiden die
For me, I'll tak' nae care o't.
Fareweel for ever! - aff I hie; -
Sae took his leave without a sigh;
Oh! stop, quo' Kate, I'm yours, I'll try
The married life, an' care o't.

Rab wheel't about, to Kate cam' back,
An' ga'e her mou' a hearty smack,
Syne lengthened out a lovin' crack
'Bout marriage an' the care o't.

Though as she thocht she didna speak,
An' lookit unco mim an' meek,
Yet blithe was she wi' Rab to cleek,
In marriage, wi' the care o't.

Robert Lochore [1762-1852]

THE WOMEN FOLK

O sairly may I rue the day
I fancied first the womenkind;
For aye sinsyne I ne'er can ha'e
Ae quiet thought or peace o' mind!
They ha'e plagued my heart, an' pleased my e'e,
An' teased an' flattered me at will,
But aye, for a' their witchery,
The pawky things! I lo'e them still.
O, the women folk! O, the women folk,
But they ha'e been the wreck o' me;
O, weary fa' the women folk,
For they winna let a body be!

I ha'e thought an' thought, but darena tell,
I've studied them wi' a' my skill,
I've lo'ed them better than mysel',
I've tried again to like them ill.
Wha sairest strives, will sairest rue,
To comprehend what nae man can;
When he has done what man can do,
He'll end at last where he began.
That they ha'e gentle forms an' meet,
A man wi' half a look may see;
An' gracefu' airs, an' faces sweet,
An' waving curls aboon the bree!
An' smiles as saft as the young rose-bud,
An' e'en sae pawky, bright, an' rare,
Wad lure the laverock frae the clud -
But, laddie, seek to ken nae mair!

James Hogg [1770-1835]

"LOVE IS LIKE A DIZZINESS"

I lately lived in quiet ease,
An' never wished to marry, O!
But when I saw my Peggy's face,
I felt a sad quandary, O!
Though wild as ony Athol deer,
She has trepanned me fairly, O!
Her cherry cheeks an' een sae clear
Torment me late an' early, O!
O, love, love, love!
Love is like a dizziness;
It winna let a poor body
Gang about his biziness!

To tell my feats this single week
Wad mak a daft-like diary, O!
I drave my cart out owre a dike,
My horses in a miry, O!
I wear my stockings white an' blue,
My love's sae fierce an' fiery, O!
I drill the land that I should pleugh,
An' pleugh the drills entirely, O!

Ae morning, by the dawn o' day,
I rase to theek the stable, O!
I cuist my coat, an' plied away
As fast as I was able, O!
I wrought that morning out an' out,
As I'd been redding fire, O!
When I had done an' looked about,
Gudefaith, it was the byre, O!

Her wily glance I'll ne'er forget,
The dear, the lovely blinkin' o't
Has pierced me through an' through the heart,
An' plagues me wi' the prinkling o't.
I tried to sing, I tried to pray,
I tried to drown 't wi' drinkin' o't,
I tried wi' sport to drive 't away,
But ne'er can sleep for thinkin' o't.

Nae man can tell what pains I prove,
Or how severe my pliskie, O!
I swear I'm sairer drunk wi' love
Than ever I was wi' whiskey, O!
For love has raked me fore an' aft,
I scarce can lift a leggie, O!
I first grew dizzy, then gaed daft,
An' soon I'll dee for Peggy, O!

James Hogg [1770-1835]

"BEHAVE YOURSEL' BEFORE FOLK"

Behave yoursel' before folk,
Behave yoursel' before folk,
And dinna be sae rude to me,
As kiss me sae before folk.

It wadna gi'e me meikle pain,
Gin we were seen and heard by nane,
To tak' a kiss, or grant you ane;
But guidsake! no before folk.
Behave yoursel' before folk.
Behave yoursel' before folk;
Whate'er ye do, when out o' view,
Be cautious aye before folk.

Consider, lad, how folk will crack,
And what a great affair they'll mak'
O' naething but a simple smack,

That's gi'en or ta'en before folk.
Behave yoursel' before folk,
Behave yoursel' before folk;
Nor gi'e the tongue o' auld or young
Occasion to come o'er folk.

It's no through hatred o' a kiss,
That I sae plainly tell you this;
But, losh! I tak' it sair amiss
To be sae teased before folk.
Behave yoursel' before folk,
Behave yoursel' before folk;
When we're our lane ye may tak' ane,
But fient a ane before folk.

I'm sure wi' you I've been as free
As ony modest lass should be;
But yet it doesna do to see
Sic freedom used before folk.
Behave yoursel' before folk,
Behave yoursel' before folk;
I'll ne'er submit again to it -
So mind you that - before folk.

Ye tell me that my face is fair;
It may be sae - I dinna care -
But ne'er again gar't blush sae sair
As ye ha'e done before folk.
Behave yoursel' before folk,
Behave yoursel' before folk;
Nor heat my cheeks wi' your mad freaks,
But aye be douce before folk.

Ye tell me that my lips are sweet,
Sic tales, I doubt, are a' deceit;
At ony rate, it's hardly meet
To pree their sweets before folk.
Behave yoursel' before folk,
Behave yoursel' before folk;
Gin that's the case, there's time, and place,
But surely no before folk.

But, gin you really do insist
That I should suffer to be kissed,
Gae, get a license frae the priest,
And mak' me yours before folk.
Behave yoursel' before folk,
Behave yoursel' before folk;
And when we're ane, baith flesh and bane,
Ye may tak' ten - before folk.

Alexander Rodger [1784-1846]

RORY O'MORE; OR, GOOD OMENS

Young Rory O'More courted Kathleen bawn,
He was bold as a hawk, - she as soft as the dawn;

He wished in his heart pretty Kathleen to please,
And he thought the best way to do that was to tease.
"Now, Rory, be aisy," sweet Kathleen would cry
(Reproof on her lip, but a smile in her eye),
"With your tricks I don't know, in troth, what I'm about,
Faith, you've teased till I've put on my cloak inside out."
"Och! jewel," says Rory, "that same is the way
You've thrated my heart for this many a day;
And 'tis plazed that I am, and why not, to be sure?
For 'tis all for good luck," says bold Rory O'More.

"Indeed, then," says Kathleen, "don't think of the like,
For I half gave a promise to soothering Mike;
The ground that I walk on he loves, I'll be bound."
"Faith," says Rory, "I'd rather love you than the ground."
"Now, Rory, I'll cry if you don't let me go;
Sure I drame ev'ry night that I'm hating you so!"
"Oh," says Rory, "that same I'm delighted to hear,
For drames always go by conthrairies, my dear;
So, jewel, keep draming that same till you die,
And bright mornin' will give dirty night the black lie!
And 'tis plazed that I am, and why not, to be sure?
Since 'tis all for good luck," says bold Rory O'More.

"Arrah, Kathleen, my darlint, you've teased me enough,
Sure I've thrashed for your sake Dinny Grimes and Jim Duff;
And I've made myself, drinkin' your health, quite a baste,
So I think, after that, I may talk to the praste."
Then Rory, the rogue, stole his arm round her neck,
So soft and so white, without freckle or speck,
And he looked in her eyes that were beaming with light,
And he kissed her sweet lips; - don't you think he was right?
"Now, Rory, leave off, sir: you'll hug me no more;
That's eight times to-day that you've kissed me before."
"Then here goes another," says he, "to make sure,
For there's luck in odd numbers," says Rory O'More.

Samuel Lover [1797-1868]

ASK AND HAVE

"Oh, 'tis time I should talk to your mother,
Sweet Mary," says I;
"Oh, don't talk to my mother," says Mary,
Beginning to cry:
"For my mother says men are deceivers,
And never, I know, will consent;
She says girls in a hurry to marry,
At leisure repent."

"Then, suppose I would talk to your father,
Sweet Mary," says I;
"Oh, don't talk to my father," says Mary,
Beginning to cry:
"For my father he loves me so dearly,
He'll never consent I should go -
If you talk to my father," says Mary,

"He'll surely say, 'No.'"

"Then how shall I get you, my jewel?
Sweet Mary," says I;
"If your father and mother's so cruel,
Most surely I'll die!"
"Oh, never say die, dear," says Mary;
"A way now to save you I see;
Since my parents are both so contrary -
You'd better ask me!"

Samuel Lover [1797-1868]

KITTY OF COLERAINE

As beautiful Kitty one morning was tripping,
With a pitcher of milk, from the fair of Coleraine,
When she saw me she stumbled, the pitcher down tumbled,
And all the sweet buttermilk watered the plain.

"Oh! what shall I do now - 'twas looking at you, now;
Sure, sure, such a pitcher I'll ne'er meet again!
'Twas the pride of my dairy! Oh! Barney MacCleary,
You're sent as a plague to the girls of Coleraine."

I sat down beside her and gently did chide her,
That such a misfortune should give her such pain;
A kiss then I gave her, and, ere I did leave her,
She vowed for such pleasure she'd break it again.

'Twas hay-making season - I can't tell the reason -
Misfortunes will never come single, 'tis plain;
For very soon after poor Kitty's disaster
The devil a pitcher was whole in Coleraine.

Charles Dawson Shanly [1811-1875]

THE PLAIDIE

Upon ane stormy Sunday,
Coming adoon the lane,
Were a score of bonnie lassies -
And the sweetest I maintain,
Was Caddie,
That I took un'neath my plaidie,
To shield her from the rain.

She said the daisies blushed
For the kiss that I had ta'en;
I wadna hae thought the lassie
Wad sae of a kiss complain;
"Now, laddie!
I winna stay under your plaidie,
If I gang hame in the rain!"

But, on an after Sunday,

When cloud there was not ane,
This self-same winsome lassie
(We chanced to meet in the lane)
Said, "Laddie,
Why dinna ye wear your plaidie?
Wha kens but it may rain?"

Charles Sibley [?]

KITTY NEIL

"Ah, sweet Kitty Neil, rise up from that wheel,
Your neat little foot will be weary from spinning;
Come trip down with me to the sycamore-tree,
Half the parish is there, and the dance is beginning.
The sun is gone down, but the full harvest-moon
Shines sweetly and cool on the dew-whitened valley,
While all the air rings with the soft, loving things
Each little bird sings in the green shaded alley."

With a blush and a smile, Kitty rose up the while,
Her eye in the glass, as she bound her hair, glancing;
'Tis hard to refuse when a young lover sues,
So she couldn't but choose to go off to the dancing.
And now on the green the glad groups are seen,
Each gay-hearted lad with the lass of his choosing;
And Pat, without fail, leads out sweet Kitty Neil, -
Somehow, when he asked, she ne'er thought of refusing.

Now, Felix Magee puts his pipes to his knee,
And with flourish so free sets each couple in motion;
With a cheer and a bound, the lads patter the ground,
The maids move around just like swans on the ocean:
Cheeks bright as the rose - feet light as the doe's,
Now coyly retiring, now boldly advancing -
Search the world all around, from the sky to the ground,
No such sight can be found as an Irish lass dancing!

Sweet Kate! who could view your bright eyes of deep blue,
Beaming humidly through their dark lashes so mildly,
Your fair-turned arm, heaving breast, rounded form,
Nor feel his heart warm, and his pulses throb wildly?
Young Pat feels his heart, as he gazes, depart,
Subdued by the smart of such painful yet sweet love;
The sight leaves his eye, as he cries with a sigh,
"Dance light, for my heart it lies under your feet, love!"

John Francis Waller [1810-1894]

"THE DULE'S I' THIS BONNET O' MINE"

The dule's i' this bonnet o' mine;
My ribbins'll never be reet;
Here, Mally, aw'm like to be fine,
For Jamie'll be comin' to-neet;
He met me i' th' lone t'other day, -

Aw're gooin' for wayter to th' well, -
An' he begged that aw'd wed him i' May; -
Bi th' mass, iv he'll let me, aw will!

When he took my two honds into his,
Good Lord, heaw they trembled between;
An' aw durstn't look up in his face,
Becose on him seein' my e'en;
My cheek went as red as a rose; -
There's never a mortal can tell
Heaw happy aw felt; for, thea knows,
One couldn't ha' axed him theirsel'.

But th' tale wur at th' end o' my tung, -
To let it eawt wouldn't be reet, -
For aw thought to seem forrud wur wrung,
So aw towd him aw'd tell him to-neet;
But Mally, thae knows very weel, -
Though it isn't a thing one should own, -
Iv aw'd th' pikein' o' th' world to mysel',
Aw'd oather ha' Jamie or noan.

Neaw, Mally, aw've towd tho my mind;
What would to do iv't wur thee?
"Aw'd tak him just while he're inclined,
An' a farrantly bargain he'd be;
For Jamie's as gradely a lad
As ever stepped eawt into th' sun; -
Go, jump at thy chance, an' get wed,
An' mak th' best o' th' job when it's done!"

Eh, dear, but it's time to be gwon, -
Aw shouldn't like Jamie to wait;
Aw connut for shame be too soon,
An' aw wouldn't for th' world be too late;
Aw'm a' ov a tremble to th' heel, -
Dost think 'at my bonnet'll do? -
"Be off, lass, - thae looks very weel;
He wants noan o' th' bonnet, thae foo!"

Edwin Waugh [1817-1890]

THE OULD PLAID SHAWL

Not far from old Kinvara, in the merry month of May,
When birds were singing cheerily, there came across my way,
As if from out the sky above an angel chanced to fall,
A little Irish cailin in an ould plaid shawl.

She tripped along right joyously, a basket on her arm;
And oh! her face; and oh! her grace, the soul of saint would charm:
Her brown hair rippled o'er her brow, but greatest charm of all
Was her modest blue eyes beaming 'neath her ould plaid shawl.

I courteously saluted her - "God save you, miss," says I;
"God save you kindly, sir," said she, and shyly passed me by;
Off went my heart along with her, a captive in her thrall,

Imprisoned in the corner of her ould plaid shawl.

Enchanted with her beauty rare, I gazed in pure delight,
Till round an angle of the road she vanished from my sight;
But ever since I sighing say, as I that scene recall,
"The grace of God about you and your ould plaid shawl."

I've heard of highway robbers that with pistols and with knives,
Make trembling travelers yield them up their money or their lives,
But think of me that handed out my heart and head and all
To a simple little cailin in an ould plaid shawl.

Oh! graceful the mantillas that the signorinas wear,
And tasteful are the bonnets of Parisian ladies fair,
But never cloak, or hood, or robe, in palace, bower, or hall,
Clad half such witching beauty as that ould plaid shawl.

Oh! some men sigh for riches, and some men live for fame,
And some on history's pages hope to win a glorious name:
My aims are not ambitious, and my wishes are but small -
You might wrap them all together in an ould plaid shawl.

I'll seek her all through Galway, and I'll seek her all through Clare,
I'll search for tale or tidings of my traveler everywhere,
For peace of mind I'll never find until my own I call
That little Irish cailin in her ould plaid shawl.

Francis A. Fahy [1854-

LITTLE MARY CASSIDY

Oh, 'tis little Mary Cassidy's the cause of all my misery,
And the raison that I am not now the boy I used to be;
Oh, she bates the beauties all that we read about in history,
And sure half the country-side is as hot for her as me.
Travel Ireland up and down, hill, village, vale and town -
Fairer than the Cailin Donn, you're looking for in vain;
Oh, I'd rather live in poverty with little Mary Cassidy
Than emperor, without her, be of Germany or Spain.

'Twas at the dance at Darmody's that first I caught a sight of her,
And heard her sing the "Droighnean Donn," till tears came in my eyes,
And ever since that blessed hour I'm dreaming day and night of her;
The devil a wink of sleep at all I get from bed to rise.
Cheeks like the rose in June, song like the lark in tune,
Working, resting, night or noon, she never leaves my mind;
Oh, till singing by my cabin fire sits little Mary Cassidy,
'Tis little aise or happiness I'm sure I'll ever find.

What is wealth, what is fame, what is all that people fight about
To a kind word from her lips or a love-glance from her eye?
Oh, though troubles throng my breast, sure they'd soon go to the right-about
If I thought the curly head of her would rest there by and by.
Take all I own to-day, kith, kin, and care away,
Ship them all across the say, or to the frozen zone:
Lave me an orphan bare - but lave me Mary Cassidy,
I never would feel lonesome with the two of us alone.

Francis A. Fahy [1854-

THE ROAD

"Now where are ye goin'," ses I, "wid the shawl
An' cotton umbrella an' basket an' all?
Would ye not wait for McMullen's machine,
Wid that iligant instep befittin' a queen?
Oh, you wid the wind-soft gray eye wid a wile in it,
You wid the lip wid the troublesome smile in it,
Sure, the road's wet, ivery rain-muddied mile in it -"
"Ah, the Saints'll be kapin' me petticoats clean!"

"But," ses I, "would ye like it to meet Clancy's bull,
Or the tinks poachin' rabbits above Slieve-na-coul?
An' the ford at Kilmaddy is big wid the snows,
An' the whisht Little People that wear the green close,
They'd run from the bog to be makin' a catch o' ye,
The king o' them's wishful o' weddin' the match o' ye,
'Twould be long, if they did, ere ye lifted the latch o' ye -"
"What fairy's to touch her that sings as she goes!"

"Ah, where are ye goin', ses I, "wid the shawl,
An' the gray eyes a-dreamin' beneath it an' all?
The road by the mountain's a long one, depend
Ye'll be done for, alannah, ere reachin' the end;
Ye'll be bate wid the wind on each back-breakin' bit on it,
Wet wid the puddles and lamed wid the grit on it, -
Since lonesome ye're layin' yer delicut fit on it -"
"Sure whin's a road lonesome that's stepped wid a friend?"

That's stepped wid a friend?
Who did Bridgy intend?
Still 'twas me that went wid her right on to the end!

Patrick R. Chalmers [18

TWICKENHAM FERRY

"Ahoy! and O-ho! and it's who's for the ferry?"
(The briar's in bud and the sun going down)
"And I'll row ye so quick and I'll row ye so steady,
And 'tis but a penny to Twickenham Town."
The ferryman's slim and the ferryman's young,
With just a soft tang in the turn of his tongue;
And he's fresh as a pippin and brown as a berry,
And 'tis but a penny to Twickenham Town.

"Ahoy! and O-ho! and it's I'm for the ferry,"
(The briar's in bud and the sun going down)
"And it's late as it is and I haven't a penny -
Oh! how can I get me to Twickenham Town?"
She'd a rose in her bonnet, and oh! she looked sweet
As the little pink flower that grows in the wheat,
With her cheeks like a rose and her lips like a cherry -

It's sure but you're welcome to Twickenham Town.

"Ahoy! and O-ho!"- You're too late for the ferry,
(The briar's in bud and the sun has gone down)
And he's not rowing quick and he's not rowing steady;
It seems quite a journey to Twickenham Town.
"Ahoy! and O-ho!" you may call as you will;
The young moon is rising o'er Petersham Hill;
And, with Love like a rose in the stern of the wherry,
There's danger in crossing to Twickenham Town.

Theophile Marzials [1850-

THE HUMOR OF LOVE

SONG

I prithee send me back my heart,
Since I cannot have thine:
For if from yours you will not part,
Why then shouldst thou have mine?

Yet now I think on't, let it lie,
To find it were in vain,
For thou hast a thief in either eye
Would steal it back again.

Why should two hearts in one breast lie,
And yet not lodge together?
O love, where is thy sympathy,
If thus our breasts thou sever?

But love is such a mystery,
I cannot find it out:
For when I think I'm best resolved,
I then am most in doubt.

Then farewell care, and farewell woe!
I will no longer pine;
For I'll believe I have her heart,
As much as she hath mine.

John Suckling [1609-1642]

A BALLAD UPON A WEDDING

I tell thee, Dick, where I have been,
Where I the rarest things have seen;
Oh, things without compare!
Such sights again cannot be found
In any place on English ground,
Be it at wake or fair.

At Charing Cross, hard by the way
Where we (thou know'st) do sell our hay,
There is a house with stairs;
And there did I see coming down
Such folk as are not in our town,
Forty at least, in pairs.

Amongst the rest, one pest'lent fine
(His beard no bigger, though, than thine)
Walked on before the rest;
Our landlord looks like nothing to him;
The king (God bless him!) 'twould undo him
Should he go still so drest.

At Course-a-park, without all doubt,
He should have first been taken out
By all the maids i' th' town:
Though lusty Roger there had been,
Or little George upon the green,
Or Vincent of the Crown.

But wot you what? The youth was going
To make an end of all his wooing;
The parson for him staid:
Yet by his leave (for all his haste),
He did not so much wish all past,
(Perchance) as did the maid.

The maid (and thereby hangs a tale)
For such a maid no Whitsun-ale
Could ever yet produce:
No grape that's kindly ripe, could be
So round, so plump, so soft, as she,
Nor half so full of juice.

Her finger was so small, the ring
Would not stay on which they did bring;
It was too wide a peck:
And to say truth (for out it must)
It looked like the great collar (just)
About our young colt's neck.

Her feet beneath her petticoat
Like little mice stole in and out,
As if they feared the light:
But oh, she dances such a way!
No sun upon an Easter-day
Is half so fine a sight.

Her cheeks so rare a white was on,
No daisy makes comparison;

Who sees them is undone;
For streaks of red were mingled there,
Such as are on a Cath'rine pear,
The side that's next the sun.

Her lips were red; and one was thin
Compared to that was next her chin
(Some bee had stung it newly);
But, Dick, her eyes so guard her face,
I durst no more upon them gaze,
Than on the sun in July.

Her mouth so small, when she does speak,
Thou'dst swear her teeth her words did break,
That they might passage get;
But she so handled still the matter,
They came as good as ours, or better,
And are not spent a whit.

Passion o' me! how I run on!
There's that that would be thought upon,
I trow, besides the bride:
The business of the kitchen's great,
For it is fit that men should eat;
Nor was it there denied.

Just in the nick the cook knocked thrice,
And all the waiters in a trice
His summons did obey;
Each serving-man, with dish in hand,
Marched boldly up, like our trained-band,
Presented and away.

When all the meat was on the table,
What man of knife, or teeth, was able
To stay to be intreated?
And this the very reason was,
Before the parson could say grace,
The company was seated.

Now hats fly off, and youths carouse;
Healths first go round, and then the house,
The bride's come thick and thick;
And when 'twas named another's health,
Perhaps he made it hers by stealth,
(And who could help it, Dick?)

O' th' sudden up they rise and dance;
Then sit again, and sigh, and glance;
Then dance again, and kiss.
Thus sev'ral ways the time did pass,
Till ev'ry woman wished her place,
And ev'ry man wished his.

By this time all were stol'n aside
To counsel and undress the bride;
But that he must not know:
But yet 'twas thought he guessed her mind,

And did not mean to stay behind
Above an hour or so.

John Suckling [1609-1642]

TO CHLOE JEALOUS

Dear Chloe, how blubbered is that pretty face!
Thy cheek all on fire, and thy hair all uncurled:
Prithee quit this caprice; and (as old Falstaff says),
Let us e'en talk a little like folks of this world.

How canst thou presume thou hast leave to destroy
The beauties which Venus but lent to thy keeping?
Those looks were designed to inspire love and joy:
More ordinary eyes may serve people for weeping.

To be vexed at a trifle or two that I writ,
Your judgment at once, and my passion you wrong:
You take that for fact, which will scarce be found wit:
Od's life! must one swear to the truth of a song?

What I speak, my fair Chloe, and what I write, shows
The difference there is betwixt nature and art:
I court others in verse, but I love thee in prose:
And they have my whimsies, but thou hast my heart.

The god of us verse-men (you know, Child) the sun,
How after his journeys he sets up his rest;
If at morning o'er earth 'tis his fancy to run;
At night he reclines on his Thetis's breast.

So when I am wearied with wandering all day,
To thee, my delight, in the evening I come:
No matter what beauties I saw in my way:
They were but my visits, but thou art my home.

Then finish, dear Chloe, this pastoral war;
And let us, like Horace and Lydia, agree:
For thou art a girl as much brighter than her,
As he was a poet sublimer than me.

Matthew Prior [1664-1721]

JACK AND JOAN

Jack and Joan they think no ill,
But loving live, and merry still;
Do their week-days' work, and pray
Devoutly on the holy day:
Skip and trip it on the green,
And help to choose the Summer Queen;
Lash out, at a country feast,
Their silver penny with the best.

Well can they judge of nappy ale,

And tell at large a winter tale;
Climb up to the apple loft,
And turn the crabs till they be soft.
Tib is all the father's joy,
And little Tom the mother's boy.
All their pleasure is content;
And care, to pay their yearly rent.

Joan can call by name her cows,
And deck her windows with green boughs;
She can wreaths and tuttyes make,
And trim with plums a bridal cake.
Jack knows what brings gain or loss;
And his long flail can stoutly toss:
Makes the hedge which others break;
And ever thinks what he doth speak.

Now, you courtly dames and knights,
That study only strange delights;
Though you scorn the home-spun gray,
And revel in your rich array:
Though your tongues dissemble deep,
And can your heads from danger keep;
Yet, for all your pomp and train,
Securer lives the silly swain.

Thomas Campion [? -1619]

PHILLIS AND CORYDON

Phillis kept sheep along the western plains,
And Corydon did feed his flocks hard by:
This shepherd was the flower of all the swains
That traced the downs of fruitful Thessaly;
And Phillis, that did far her flocks surpass
In silver hue, was thought a bonny lass.

A bonny lass, quaint in her country 'tire,
Was lovely Phillis, - Corydon swore so;
Her locks, her looks, did set the swain on fire,
He left his lambs, and he began to woo;
He looked, he sighed, he courted with a kiss,
No better could the silly swad than this.

He little knew to paint a tale of love,
Shepherds can fancy, but they cannot say:
Phillis 'gan smile, and wily thought to prove
What uncouth grief poor Corydon did pay;
She asked him how his flocks or he did fare,
Yet pensive thus his sighs did tell his care.

The shepherd blushed when Phillis questioned so,
And swore by Pan it was not for his flocks:
"'Tis love, fair Phillis, breedeth all this woe,
My thoughts are trapped within thy lovely locks;
Thine eye hath pierced, thy face hath set on fire;
Fair Phillis kindleth Corydon's desire."

"Can shepherds love?" said Phillis to the swain.
"Such saints as Phillis," Corydon replied.
"Men when they lust can many fancies feign,"
Said Phillis. This not Corydon denied,
That lust had lies; "But love," quoth he, "says truth:
Thy shepherd loves, then, Phillis, what ensu'th?"

Phillis was won, she blushed and hung her head;
The swain stepped to, and cheered her with a kiss:
With faith, with troth, they struck the matter dead;
So used they when men thought not amiss:
Thus love begun and ended both in one;
Phillis was loved, and she liked Corydon.

Robert Greene [1560?-1592]

SALLY IN OUR ALLEY

Of all the girls that are so smart
There's none like pretty Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.
There is no lady in the land
Is half so sweet as Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

Her father he makes cabbage-nets,
And through the streets does cry 'em;
Her mother she sells laces long
To such as please to buy 'em;
But sure such folks could ne'er beget
So sweet a girl as Sally!
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

When she is by, I leave my work,
I love her so sincerely;
My master comes like any Turk,
And bangs me most severely:
But let him bang his bellyful,
I'll bear it all for Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

Of all the days that's in the week
I dearly love but one day -
And that's the day that comes betwixt
A Saturday and Monday;
For then I'm dressed all in my best
To walk abroad with Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

My master carries me to church,
And often am I blamed

Because I leave him in the lurch
As soon as text is named;
I leave the church in sermon-time
And slink away to Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

When Christmas comes about again,
O, then I shall have money;
I'll hoard it up, and box it all,
I'll give it to my honey:
I would it were ten thousand pound,
I'd give it all to Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

My master and the neighbors all
Make game of me and Sally,
And, but for her, I'd better be
A slave and row a galley;
But when my seven long years are out,
O, then I'll marry Sally;
O, then we'll wed, and then we'll bed -
But not in our alley!

Henry Carey [? -1743]

THE COUNTRY WEDDING

Well met, pretty nymph, says a jolly young swain
To a lovely young shepherdess crossing the plain;
Why so much in haste? - now the month it was May -
May I venture to ask you, fair maiden, which way?
Then straight to this question the nymph did reply,
With a blush on her cheek, and a smile in her eye,
I came from the village, and homeward I go,
And now, gentle shepherd, pray why would you know?

I hope, pretty maid, you won't take it amiss,
If I tell you my reason for asking you this;
I would see you safe home - (now the swain was in love!)
Of such a companion if you would approve.
Your offer, kind shepherd, is civil, I own;
But I see no great danger in going alone;
Nor yet can I hinder, the road being free
For one as another, for you as for me.

No danger in going alone, it is true,
But yet a companion is pleasanter, too;
And if you could like - (now the swain he took heart) -
Such a sweetheart as me, why we never would part.
O that's a long word, said the shepherdess then,
I've often heard say there's no minding you men.
You'll say and unsay, and you'll flatter, 'tis true!
Then to leave a young maiden's the first thing you do.

O judge not so harshly, the shepherd replied,

To prove what I say, I will make you my bride.
To-morrow the parson - (well-said, little swain!) -
Shall join both our hands, and make one of us twain.
Then what the nymph answered to this isn't said,
The very next morn, to be sure, they were wed.
Sing hey-diddle, - ho-diddle, - hey-diddle-down, -
Now when shall we see such a wedding in town?

Unknown

"O MERRY MAY THE MAID BE"

O merry may the maid be
That marries wi' the miller,
For, foul day and fair day,
He's aye bringing till her, -
Has aye a penny in his purse
For dinner or for supper;
And, gin she please, a good fat cheese
And lumps of yellow butter.

When Jamie first did woo me,
I speired what was his calling;
"Fair maid," says he, "O come and see,
Ye're welcome to my dwalling."
Though I was shy, yet could I spy
The truth o' what he told me,
And that his house was warm and couth,
And room in it to hold me.

Behind the door a bag o' meal,
And in the kist was plenty
O' guid hard cakes his mither bakes,
And bannocks werena scanty.
A guid fat sow, a sleeky cow
Was standing in the byre,
Whilst lazy puss with mealy mouse
Was playing at the fire.

"Guid signs are these," my mither says,
And bids me tak' the miller;
For, fair day and foul day,
He's aye bringing till her;
For meal and maut she doesna want,
Nor anything that's dainty;
And now and then a kecking hen,
To lay her eggs in plenty.

In winter, when the wind and rain
Blaws o'er the house and byre,
He sits beside a clean hearth-stane,
Before a rousing fire.
With nut-brown ale he tells his tale,
Which rows him o'er fu' nappy: -
Wha'd be a king - a petty thing,
When a miller lives so happy?

John Clerk [1684-1755]

THE LASS O' GOWRIE

'Twas on a simmer's afternoon,
A wee afore the sun gaed doun,
A lassie wi' a braw new goun
Cam' owre the hills to Gowrie.
The rosebud washed in simmer's shower
Bloomed fresh within the sunny bower;
But Kitty was the fairest flower
That e'er was seen in Gowrie.

To see her cousin she cam' there;
And oh! the scene was passing fair,
For what in Scotland can compare
Wi' the Carse o' Gowrie?
The sun was setting on the Tay,
The blue hills melting into gray,
The mavis and the blackbird's lay
Were sweetly heard in Gowrie.

O lang the lassie I had wooed,
And truth and constancy had vowed,
But could nae speed wi' her I lo'ed
Until she saw fair Gowrie.
I pointed to my faither's ha' -
Yon bonnie bield ayont the shaw,
Sae loun that there nae blast could blaw: -
Wad she no bide in Gowrie?

Her faither was baith glad and wae;
Her mither she wad naething say;
The bairnies thocht they wad get play
If Kitty gaed to Gowrie.
She whiles did smile, she whiles did greet;

She naething said, and hung her head; -
But now she's Leddy Gowrie.

Carolina Nairne [1766-1845]

THE CONSTANT SWAIN AND VIRTUOUS MAID

Soon as the day begins to waste,
Straight to the well-known door I haste,
And rapping there, I'm forced to stay
While Molly hides her work with care,
Adjusts her tucker and her hair,
And nimble Becky scours away.

Entering, I see in Molly's eyes
A sudden smiling joy arise,
As quickly checked by virgin shame:
She drops a curtsey, steals a glance,
Receives a kiss, one step advance. -

If such I love, am I to blame?

I sit, and talk of twenty things,
Of South Sea stock, or death of kings,
While only "Yes" or "No," says Molly;
As cautious she conceals her thoughts,
As others do their private faults: -
Is this her prudence, or her folly?

Parting, I kiss her lip and cheek,
I hang about her snowy neck,
And cry, "Farewell, my dearest Molly!"
Yet still I hang and still I kiss,
Ye learned sages, say, is this
In me the effect of love, or folly?

No - both by sober reason move, -
She prudence shows, and I true love -
No charge of folly can be laid.
Then (till the marriage-rites proclaimed
Shall join our hands) let us be named
The constant swain, the virtuous maid.

Unknown

"WHEN THE KYE COMES HAME"

Come, all ye jolly shepherds
That whistle through the glen,
I'll tell ye of a secret
That courtiers dinna ken:
What is the greatest bliss
That the tongue o' man can name?
'Tis to woo a bonnie lassie
When the kye comes hame.
When the kye comes hame,
When the kye comes hame,
'Tween the gloamin and the mirk,
When the kye comes hame.

'Tis not beneath the coronet,
Nor canopy of state,
'Tis not on couch of velvet,
Nor arbor of the great -
'Tis beneath the spreading birk,
In the glen without the name,
Wi' a bonnie, bonnie lassie,
When the kye comes hame.

There the blackbird bigs his nest
For the mate he lo'es to see,
And on the topmost bough,
O, a happy bird is he!
Then he pours his melting ditty,
And love is a' the theme,
And he'll woo his bonnie lassie
When the kye comes hame.

When the blewart bears a pearl,
And the daisy turns a pea,
And the bonnie lucken gowan
Has fauldit up her e'e,
Then the laverock frae the blue lift
Draps down, and thinks nae shame
To woo his bonnie lassie
When the kye comes hame.

See yonder pawkie shepherd
That lingers on the hill -
His ewes are in the fauld,
And his lambs are lying still;
Yet he downa gang to bed,
For his heart is in a flame
To meet his bonnie lassie
When the kye comes hame.

When the little wee bit heart
Rises high in the breast,
And the little wee bit starn
Rises red in the east,
O there's a joy sae dear,
That the heart can hardly frame,
Wi' a bonnie, bonnie lassie,
When the kye comes hame.

Then since all nature joins
In this love without alloy,
O, wha wad prove a traitor
To Nature's dearest joy?
Or wha wad choose a crown,
Wi' its perils and its fame,
And miss his bonnie lassie
When the kye comes hame?
When the kye comes hame,
When the kye comes hame
'Tween the gloamin' and the mirk,
When the kye comes hame!

James Hogg [1770-1835]

THE LOW-BACKED CAR

When first I saw sweet Peggy,
'Twas on a market day,
A low-backed car she drove, and sat
Upon a truss of hay;
But when that hay was blooming grass
And decked with flowers of Spring,
No flower was there that could compare
With the blooming girl I sing.
As she sat in the low-backed car,
The man at the turnpike bar
Never asked for the toll,
But just rubbed his ould poll,

And looked after the low-backed car.

In battle's wild commotion,
The proud and mighty Mars,
With hostile scythes, demands his tithes
Of death - in warlike cars:
While Peggy, peaceful goddess,
Has darts in her bright eye,
That knock men down in the market town,
As right and left they fly; -
While she sits in her low-backed car,
Than battle more dangerous far, -
For the doctor's art
Cannot cure the heart
That is hit from that low-backed car.

Sweet Peggy round her car, sir,
Has strings of ducks and geese,
But the scores of hearts she slaughters
By far outnumber these;
While she among her poultry sits,
Just like a turtle-dove,
Well worth the cage, I do engage,
Of the blooming god of Love!
While she sits in her low-backed car,
The lovers come near and far,
And envy the chicken
That Peggy is pickin',
As she sits in her low-backed car.

O, I'd rather own that car, sir,
With Peggy by my side,
Than a coach-and-four, and goold galore,
And a lady for my bride;
For the lady would sit forninst me,
On a cushion made with taste,
While Peggy would sit beside me,
With my arm around her waist, -
While we drove in the low-backed car,
To be married by Father Mahar,
O, my heart would beat high
At her glance and her sigh, -
Though it beat in a low-backed car!

Samuel Lover [1797-1868]

THE PRETTY GIRL OF LOCH DAN

The shades of eve had crossed the glen
That frowns o'er infant Avonmore,
When, nigh Loch Dan, two weary men,
We stopped before a cottage door.

"God save all here!" my comrade cries,
And rattles on the raised latch-pin;
"God save you kindly!" quick replies
A clear sweet voice, and asks us in.

We enter; from the wheel she starts,
A rosy girl with soil black eyes,
Her fluttering curtsey takes our hearts,
Her blushing grace and pleased surprise.

Poor Mary, she was quite alone,
For, all the way to Glenmalure,
Her mother had that morning gone,
And left the house in charge with her.

But neither household cares, nor yet
The shame that startled virgins feel,
Could make the generous girl forget
Her wonted hospitable zeal.

She brought us, in a beechen bowl,
Sweet milk that smacked of mountain thyme,
Oat cake, and such a yellow roll
Of butter, - it gilds all my rhyme!

And, while we ate the grateful food
(With weary limbs on bench reclined),
Considerate and discreet, she stood
Apart, and listened to the wind.

Kind wishes both our souls engaged,
From breast to breast spontaneous ran
The mutual thought, - we stood and pledged
The modest rose above Loch Dan.

"The milk we drink is not more pure,
Sweet Mary, - bless those budding charms! -
Than your own generous heart, I'm sure,
Nor whiter than the breast it warms!"

She turned and gazed, unused to hear
Such language in that homely glen;
But, Mary, you have naught to fear,
Though smiled on by two stranger-men.

Not for a crown would I alarm
Your virgin pride by word or sign,
Nor need a painful blush disarm
My friend of thoughts as pure as mine.

Her simple heart could not but feel
The words we spoke were free from guile;
She stooped, she blushed, she fixed her wheel, -
'Tis all in vain, - she can't but smile!

Just like sweet April's dawn appears
Her modest face, - I see it yet, -
And though I lived a hundred years
Methinks I never could forget

The pleasure that, despite her heart,
Fills all her downcast eyes with light;

The lips reluctantly apart,
The white teeth struggling into sight,

The dimples eddying o'er her cheek, -
The rosy cheek that won't be still: -
O, who could blame what flatterers speak,
Did smiles like this reward their skill?

For such another smile, I vow,
Though loudly beats the midnight rain,
I'd take the mountain-side e'en now,
And walk to Luggelaw again!

Samuel Ferguson [1810-1886]

MUCKLE-MOUTH MEG

Frowned the Laird on the Lord: "So, red-handed I catch thee?
Death-doomed by our Law of the Border!
We've a gallows outside and a chiel to dispatch thee:
Who trespasses - hangs: all's in order."

He met frown with smile, did the young English gallant:
Then the Laird's dame: "Nay, Husband, I beg!
He's comely: be merciful! Grace for the callant
- If he marries our Muckle-mouth Meg!"

"No mile-wide-mouthed monster of yours do I marry:
Grant rather the gallows!" laughed he.
"Foul fare kith and kin of you - why do you tarry?"
"To tame your fierce temper!" quoth she.

"Shove him quick in the Hole, shut him fast for a week:
Cold, darkness, and hunger work wonders:
Who lion-like roars, now mouse-fashion will squeak,
And 'it rains' soon succeed to 'it thunders.'"

A week did he bide in the cold and dark
- Not hunger: for duly at morning
In flitted a lass, and a voice like a lark
Chirped, "Muckle-mouth Meg still ye're scorning?

"Go hang, but here's parritch to hearten ye first!"
"Did Meg's muckle-mouth boast within some
Such music as yours, mine should match it or burst:
No frog-jaws! So tell folk, my Winsome!"

Soon week came to end, and, from Hole's door set wide,
Out he marched, and there waited the lassie:
"Yon gallows, or Muckle-mouth Meg for a bride!
Consider! Sky's blue and turf's grassy:

"Life's sweet; shall I say ye wed Muckle-mouth Meg?"
"Not I," quoth the stout heart: "too eerie
The mouth that can swallow a bubblyjock's egg:
Shall I let it munch mine? Never, Dearie!"

"Not Muckle-mouth Meg? Wow, the obstinate man!
Perhaps he would rather wed me!"
"Ay, would he - with just for a dowry your can!"
"I'm Muckle-mouth Meg," chirruped she.

"Then so - so - so - so -" as he kissed her apace -
"Will I widen thee out till thou turnest
From Margaret Minnikin-mou', by God's grace,
To Muckle-mouth Meg in good earnest!"

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

MUCKLE-MOU'D MEG

"Oh, what hae ye brought us hame now, my brave lord,
Strappit flaught owre his braid saddle-bow?
Some bauld Border reiver to feast at our board,
An' harry our pantry, I trow.
He's buirdly an' stalwart in lith an' in limb;
Gin ye were his master in war
The field was a saft eneugh litter for him,
Ye needna hae brought him sae far.
Then saddle an' munt again, harness an' dunt again,
An' when ye gae hunt again, strike higher game."

"Hoot, whisht ye, my dame, for he comes o' gude kin,
An' boasts o' a lang pedigree;
This night he maun share o' our gude cheer within,
At morning's gray dawn he maun dee.
He's gallant Wat Scott, heir o' proud Harden Ha',
Wha ettled our lands clear to sweep;
But now he is snug in auld Elibank's paw,
An' shall swing frae our donjon-keep.
Though saddle an' munt again, harness an' dunt again,
I'll ne'er when I hunt again strike higher game."

"Is this young Wat Scott? an' wad ye rax his craig,
When our daughter is fey for a man?
Gae, gaur the loun marry our muckle-mou'd Meg
Or we'll ne'er get the jaud aff our han'!"
"Od! hear our gudewife, she wad fain save your life;
Wat Scott, will ye marry or hang?"
But Meg's muckle mou set young Wat's heart agrue.
Wat swore to the woodie he'd gang.
Ne'er saddle nor munt again, harness nor dunt again,
Wat ne'er shall hunt again, ne'er see his hame.

Syne muckle-mou'd Meg pressed in close to his side,
An' blinkit fu' sleely and kind,
But aye as Wat glowered at his braw proffered bride,
He shook like a leaf in the wind.
"A bride or a gallows, a rope or a wife!"
The morning dawned sunny and clear -
Wat boldly strode forward to part wi' his life,
Till he saw Meggy shedding a tear;
Then saddle an' munt again, harness an' dunt again,
Fain wad Wat hunt again, fain wad be hame.

Meg's tear touched his bosom, the gibbet frowned high,
An' slowly Wat strode to his doom;
He gae a glance round wi' a tear in his eye,
Meg shone like a star through the gloom.
She rushed to his arms, they were wed on the spot,
An' lo'ed ither muckle and lang;
Nae bauld border laird had a wife like Wat Scott;
'Twas better to marry than hang.
So saddle an' munt again, harness an' dunt again,
Elibank hunt again, Wat's snug at hame.

James Ballantine [1808-1877]

GLENLOGIE

Threescore o' nobles rade to the king's ha',
But bonnie Glenlogie's the flower o' them a',
Wi' his milk-white steed and his bonnie black e'e,
"Glenlogie, dear mither, Glenlogie for me!"

"O haud your tongue, dochter, ye'll get better than he";
"O say na sae, mither, for that canna be;
Though Doumlie is richer, and greater than he.
Yet if I maun tak' him, I'll certainly dee.

"Where will I get a bonnie boy, to win hose and shoon,
Will gae to Glenlogie, and come again soon?"
"O here am I, a bonnie boy, to win hose and shoon,
Will gae to Glenlogie and come again soon."

When he gaed to Glenlogie, 'twas "Wash and go dine";
'Twas "Wash ye, my pretty boy, wash and go dine."
"O 'twas ne'er my father's fashion, and it ne'er shall be mine
To gar a lady's errand wait till I dine.

"But there is, Glenlogie, a letter for thee."
The first line that he read, a low smile ga'e he;
The next line that he read, the tear blindit his e'e:
But the last line he read, he gart the table flee.

"Gar saddle the black horse, gar saddle the brown;
Gar saddle the swiftest steed e'er rade frae a town";
But lang ere the horse was brought round to the green,
O bonnie Glenlogie was two mile his lane.

When he cam' to Glenfeldy's door, sma' mirth was there;
Bonnie Jean's mither was tearing her hair;
"Ye're welcome, Glenlogie, ye're welcome," said she,
"Ye're welcome, Glenlogie, your Jeanie to see."

Pale and wan was she, when Glenlogie gaed ben,
But red rosy grew she whene'er he sat down;
She turned awa' her head, but the smile was in her e'e,
"O binna feared, mither, I'll maybe no dee."

Unknown

LOCHINVAR
From "Marmion"

O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide Border his steed was the best;
And, save his good broadsword, he weapon had none,
He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He stayed not for brake, and he stopped not for stone,
He swam the Eske river where ford there was none;
But, ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
The bride had consented, the gallant came late;
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,
Among bridesmen, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all.
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword,
(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word),
"O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?"

"I long wooed your daughter, my suit you denied; -
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide, -
And now am I come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kissed the goblet; the knight took it up,
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand, era her mother could bar, -
"Now tread we a measure!" said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume.
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume;
And the bride-maidens whispered, "'Twere better by far,
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar."

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reached the hall-door, and the charger stood near;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung!
"She is won! we are gone! over bank, bush, and scaur;
They'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Graemes of the Netherby clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran:
There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.

So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

Walter Scott [1771-1832]

JOCK OF HAZELDEAN

"Why weep ye by the tide, ladie?
Why weep ye by the tide?
I'll wed ye to my youngest son,
And ye sall be his bride:
And ye sall be his bride, ladie,
Sae comely to be seen" -
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

"Now let this wilfu' grief be done,
And dry that cheek so pale;
Young Frank is chief of Errington
And lord of Langley-dale;
His step is first in peaceful ha',
His sword in battle keen" -
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

"A chain of gold ye sall not lack,
Nor braid to bind your hair,
Nor mettled hound, nor managed hawk,
Nor palfrey fresh and fair;
And you the foremost o' them a'
Shall ride our forest-queen" -
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

The kirk was decked at morning-tide,
The tapers glimmered fair;
The priest and bridegroom wait the bride,
And dame and knight are there:
They sought her baith by bower and ha';
The ladie was not seen!
She's o'er the Border, and awa'
Wi' Jock of Hazeldean.

Walter Scott [1771-1832]

CANDOR
October - A Wood

I know what you're going to say," she said,
And she stood up, looking uncommonly tall:
"You are going to speak of the hectic fall,
And say you're sorry the summer's dead,
And no other summer was like it, you know,
And can I imagine what made it so.
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Yes," I said.

"I know what you're going to say," she said:
"You are going to ask if I forget
That day in June when the woods were wet,
And you carried me" - here she drooped her head -
"Over the creek; you are going to say,
Do I remember that horrid day.
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Yes," I said.

"I know what you're going to say," she said:
"You are going to say that since that time
You have rather tended to run to rhyme,
And" - her clear glance fell, and her cheek grew red -
"And have I noticed your tone was queer.
Why, everybody has seen it here!
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Yes," I said.

"I know what you're going to say," I said:
"You're going to say you've been much annoyed;
And I'm short of tact - you will say, devoid -
And I'm clumsy and awkward; and call me Ted;
And I bear abuse like a dear old lamb;
And you'll have me, anyway, just as I am.
Now aren't you, honestly?" "Ye-es," she said.

Henry Cuyler Bunner [1855-1896]

"DO YOU REMEMBER"

Do you remember when you heard
My lips breathe love's first faltering word?
You do, sweet - don't you?
When, having wandered all the day,
Linked arm in arm, I dared to say,
"You'll love me - won't you?"

And when you blushed and could not speak,
I fondly kissed your glowing cheek,
Did that affront you?
Oh, surely not - your eye expressed
No wrath - but said, perhaps in jest,
"You'll love me - won't you?"

I'm sure my eyes replied, "I will."
And you believe that promise still,
You do, sweet - don't you?
Yes, yes! when age has made our eyes
Unfit for questions or replies,
You'll love me - won't you?

Thomas Haynes Bayly [1797-1839]

BECAUSE

Sweet Nea! - for your lovely sake
I weave these rambling numbers,
Because I've lain an hour awake,

And can't compose my slumbers;
Because your beauty's gentle light
Is round my pillow beaming,
And flings, I know not why, to-night,
Some witchery o'er my dreaming!

Because we've passed some joyous days,
And danced some merry dances;
Because we love old Beaumont's plays,
And old Froissart's romances!
Because whene'er I hear your words
Some pleasant feeling lingers;
Because I think your heart has cords
That vibrate to your fingers.

Because you've got those long, soft curls,
I've sworn should deck my goddess;
Because you're not, like other girls,
All bustle blush, and bodice!
Because your eyes are deep and blue,
Your fingers long and rosy;
Because a little child and you
Would make one's home so cosy!

Because your little tiny nose
Turns up so pert and funny;
Because I know you choose your beaux
More for their mirth than money;
Because I think you'd rather twirl
A waltz, with me to guide you,
Than talk small nonsense with an earl,
And a coronet beside you!

Because you don't object to walk,
And are not given to fainting;
Because you have not learned to talk
Of flowers, and Poonah-painting;
Because I think you'd scarce refuse
To sew one on a button;
Because I know you sometimes choose
To dine on simple mutton!

Because I think I'm just so weak
As, some of those fine morrows,
To ask you if you'll let me speak
My story - and my sorrows;
Because the rest's a simple thing,
A matter quickly over
A church - a priest - a sigh - a ring -
And a chaise-and-four to Dover.

Edward Fitzgerald [1809-1883]

LOVE AND AGE
From "Gryll Grange"

I played with you 'mid cowslips blowing,

When I was six and you were four;
When garlands weaving, flower-balls throwing,
Were pleasures soon to please no more.
Through groves and meads, o'er grass and heather,
With little playmates, to and fro,
We wandered hand in hand together;
But that was sixty years ago.

You grew a lovely roseate maiden,
And still our early love was strong;
Still with no care our days were laden,
They glided joyously along;
And I did love you very dearly -
How dearly, words want power to show;
I thought your heart was touched as nearly;
But that was fifty years ago.

Then other lovers came around you,
Your beauty grew from year to year,
And many a splendid circle found you
The center of its glittering sphere.
I saw you then, first vows forsaking,
On rank and wealth, your hand bestow;
O, then, I thought my heart was breaking, -
But that was forty years ago.

And I lived on, to wed another:
No cause she gave me to repine;
And when I heard you were a mother,
I did not wish the children mine.
My own young flock, in fair progression,
Made up a pleasant Christmas row:
My joy in them was past expression; -
But that was thirty years ago.

You grew a matron plump and comely,
You dwelt in fashion's brightest blaze;
My earthly lot was far more homely;
But I too had my festal days.
No merrier eyes have ever glistened
Around the hearth-stone's wintry glow,
Than when my youngest child was christened: -
But that was twenty years ago.

Time passed. My eldest girl was married,
And I am now a grandsire gray;
One pet of four years old I've carried
Among the wild-flowered meads to play.
In our old fields of childish pleasure,
Where now, as then, the cowslips blow,
She fills her basket's ample measure, -
And that is not ten years ago.

But though first love's impassioned blindness
Has passed away in colder light,
I still have thought of you with kindness,
And shall do, till our last good-night.
The ever-rolling silent hours

Will bring a time we shall not know,
When our young days of gathering flowers
Will be an hundred years ago.

Thomas Love Peacock [1785-1866]

TO HELEN

If wandering in a wizard's car
Through yon blue ether, I were able
To fashion of a little star
A taper for my Helen's table; -
"What then?" she asks me with a laugh -
Why, then, with all heaven's luster glowing,
It would not gild her path with half
The light her love o'er mine is throwing!

Winthrop Mackworth Praed [1802-1839]

AT THE CHURCH GATE
From "Pendennis"

Although I enter not,
Yet round about the spot
Ofttimes I hover;
And near the sacred gate,
With longing eyes I wait,
Expectant of her.

The Minster bell tolls out
Above the city's rout,
And noise and humming;
They've hushed the Minster bell:
The organ 'gins to swell;
She's coming, she's coming!

My lady comes at last,
Timid, and stepping fast
And hastening hither,
With modest eyes downcast;
She comes - she's here - she's past!
May heaven go with her!

Kneel undisturbed, fair Saint!
Pour out your praise or plaint
Meekly and duly;
I will not enter there,
To sully your pure prayer
With thoughts unruly.

But suffer me to pace
Round the forbidden place,
Lingering a minute,
Like outcast spirits, who wait,
And see, through heaven's gate,
Angels within it.

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811-1863]

MABEL, IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

Fairest of the fairest, rival of the rose,
That is Mabel of the Hills, as everybody knows.

Do you ask me near what stream this sweet floweret grows?
That's an ignorant question, sir, as everybody knows.

Ask you what her age is, reckoned as time goes?
Just the age of beauty, as everybody knows.

Is she tall as Rosalind, standing on her toes?
She is just the perfect height, as everybody knows.

What's the color of her eyes, when they ope or close?
Just the color they should be, as everybody knows.

Is she lovelier dancing, or resting in repose?
Both are radiant pictures, as everybody knows.

Do her ships go sailing on every wind that blows?
She is richer far than that, as everybody knows.

Has she scores of lovers, heaps of bleeding beaux?
That question's quite superfluous, as everybody knows.

I could tell you something, if I only chose! -
But what's the use of telling what everybody knows?

James Thomas Fields [1816-1881]

TOUJOURS AMOUR

Prithee tell me, Dimple-Chin,
At what age does Love begin?
Your blue eyes have scarcely seen
Summers three, my fairy queen,
But a miracle of sweets,
Soft approaches, sly retreats,
Show the little archer there,
Hidden in your pretty hair;
When didst learn a heart to win?
Prithee tell me, Dimple-Chin!

"Oh!" the rosy lips reply,
"I can't tell you if I try.
'Tis so long I can't remember:
Ask some younger lass than I!"

Tell, O tell me, Grizzled-Face,
Do your heart and head keep pace?
When does hoary Love expire,
When do frosts put out the fire?

Can its embers burn below
All that chill December snow?
Care you still soft hands to press,
Bonny heads to smooth and bless?
When does Love give up the chase?
Tell, O tell me, Grizzled-Face!

"Ah!" the wise old lips reply,
"Youth may pass and strength may die;
But of Love I can't foretoken:
Ask some older sage than I!"

Edmund Clarence Stedman [1833-1908]

THE DOORSTEP

The conference-meeting through at last,
We boys around the vestry waited
To see the girls come tripping past,
Like snow-birds willing to be mated.

Not braver he that leaps the wall
By level musket-flashes bitten,
Than I, that stepped before them all
Who longed to see me get the mitten.

But no! she blushed and took my arm:
We let the old folks have the highway,
And started toward the Maple Farm
Along a kind of lovers' by-way.

I can't remember what we said, -
'Twas nothing worth a song or story;
Yet that rude path by which we sped
Seemed all transformed and in a glory.

The snow was crisp beneath our feet,
The moon was full, the fields were gleaming;
By hood and tippet sheltered sweet,
Her face with youth and health was beaming.

The little hand outside her muff
(O sculptor! if you could but mold it)
So lightly touched my jacket-cuff,
To keep it warm I had to hold it.

To have her with me there alone, -
'Twas love and fear and triumph blended;
At last we reached the foot-worn stone
Where that delicious journey ended.

The old folks, too, were almost home:
Her dimpled hand the latches fingered,
We heard the voices nearer come,
Yet on the doorstep still we lingered.

She shook her ringlets from her hood,

And with a "Thank you, Ned!" dissembled;
But yet I knew she understood
With what a daring wish I trembled.

A cloud passed kindly overhead,
The moon was slyly peeping through it,
Yet hid its face, as if it said -
"Come, now or never! do it! do it!"

My lips till then had only known
The kiss of mother and of sister, -
But somehow, full upon her own
Sweet, rosy, darling mouth, - I kissed her!

Perhaps 'twas boyish love: yet still,
O listless woman! weary lover!
To feel once more that fresh, wild thrill
I'd give - but who can live youth over?

Edmund Clarence Stedman [1833-1908]

THE WHITE FLAG

I sent my love two roses, - one
As white as driven snow,
And one a blushing royal red,
A flaming Jacqueminot.

I meant to touch and test my fate;
That night I should divine,
The moment I should see my love,
If her true heart were mine.

For if she holds me dear, I said,
She'll wear my blushing rose;
If not, she'll wear my cold Lamarque,
As white as winter's snows.

My heart sank when I met her: sure
I had been overbold,
For on her breast my pale rose lay
In virgin whiteness cold.

Yet with low words she greeted me,
With smiles divinely tender;
Upon her cheek the red rose dawned, -
The white rose meant surrender.

John Hay [1838-1905]

A SONG OF THE FOUR SEASONS

When Spring comes laughing
By vale and hill,
By wind-flower walking
And daffodil, -

Sing stars of morning,
Sing morning skies,
Sing blue of speedwell, -
And my Love's eyes.

When comes the Summer,
Full-leaved and strong,
And gay birds gossip
The orchard long, -
Sing hid, sweet honey
That no bee sips;
Sing red, red roses, -
And my Love's lips.

When Autumn scatters
The leaves again,
And piled sheaves bury
The broad-wheeled wain, -
Sing flutes of harvest
Where men rejoice;
Sing rounds of reapers, -
And my Love's voice.

But when comes Winter
With hail and storm,
And red fire roaring
And ingle warm, -
Sing first sad going
Of friends that part;
Then sing glad meeting, -
And my Love's heart.

Austin Dobson [1840-1921]

THE LOVE-KNOT

Tying her bonnet under her chin,
She tied her raven ringlets in;
But not alone in the silken snare
Did she catch her lovely floating hair,
For, tying her bonnet under her chin,
She tied a young man's heart within.

They were strolling together up the hill,
Where the wind came blowing merry and chill;
And it blew the curls, a frolicsome race,
All over the happy peach-colored face.
Till, scolding and laughing, she tied them in,
Under her beautiful, dimpled chin.

And it blew a color, bright as the bloom
Of the pinkest fuchsia's tossing plume,
All over the cheeks of the prettiest girl
That ever imprisoned a romping curl,
Or, in tying her bonnet under her chin,
Tied a young man's heart within.

Steeper and steeper grew the hill,
Madder, merrier, chillier still
The western wind blew down, and played
The wildest tricks with the little maid,
As, tying her bonnet under her chin,
She tied a young man's heart within.

O western wind, do you think it was fair
To play such tricks with her floating hair?
To gladly, gleefully, do your best
To blow her against the young man's breast,
Where he as gladly folded her in,
And kissed her mouth and her dimpled chin?

Ah! Ellery Vane, you little thought,
An hour ago, when you besought
This country lass to walk with you,
After the sun had dried the dew,
What terrible danger you'd be in,
As she tied her bonnet under her chin!

Nora Perry [1832-1896]

RIDING DOWN

Oh, did you see him riding down,
And riding down, while all the town
Came out to see, came out to see,
And all the bells rang mad with glee?

Oh, did you hear those bells ring out,
The bells ring out, the people shout,
And did you hear that cheer on cheer
That over all the bells rang clear?

And did you see the waving flags,
The fluttering flags, the tattered flags,
Red, white, and blue, shot through and through;
Baptized with battle's deadly dew?

And did you hear the drums' gay beat,
The drums' gay beat, the bugles sweet,
The cymbals' clash, the cannons' crash,
That rent the sky with sound and flash?

And did you see me waiting there,
Just waiting there, and watching there.
One little lass, amid the mass
That pressed to see the hero pass?

And did you see him smiling down,
And smiling down, as riding down
With slowest pace, with stately grace,
He caught the vision of a face, -

My face uplifted red and white,
Turned red and white with sheer delight,

To meet the eyes, the smiling eyes,
Outflashing in their swift surprise?

Oh, did you see how swift it came,
How swift it came like sudden flame,
That smile to me, to only me.
The little lass who blushed to see?

And at the windows all along,
Oh, all along, a lovely throng
Of faces fair, beyond compare,
Beamed out upon him riding there!

Each face was like a radiant gem,
A sparkling gem, and yet for them
No swift smile came like sudden flame,
No arrowy glance took certain aim.

He turned away from all their grace,
From all that grace of perfect face,
He turned to me, to only me,
The little lass who blushed to see!

Nora Perry [1832-1896]

"FORGETTIN"

The night when last I saw my lad
His eyes were bright an' wet.
He took my two hands in his own,
"'Tis well," says he, "we're met.
Asthore machree! the likes o' me
I bid ye now forget."

Ah, sure the same's a thriflin' thing,
'Tis more I'd do for him!
I mind the night I promised well,
Away on Ballindim. -
An' every little while or so
I thry forgettin' Jim.

It shouldn't take that long to do,
An' him not very tall:
'Tis quare the way I'll hear his voice,
A boy that's out o' call, -
An' whiles I'll see him stand as plain
As e'er a six-fut wall.

Och, never fear, my jewel!
I'd forget ye now this minute,
If I only had a notion
O' the way I should begin it;
But first an' last it isn't known
The heap o' throuble's in it.

Meself began the night ye went
An' hasn't done it yet;

I'm nearly fit to give it up,
For where's the use to fret? -
An' the memory's fairly spoilt on me
Wid mindin' to forget.

Moira O'Neill [18

"ACROSS THE FIELDS TO ANNE"

How often in the summer-tide,
His graver business set aside,
Has stripling Will, the thoughtful-eyed,
As to the pipe of Pan,
Stepped blithesomely with lover's pride
Across the fields to Anne.

It must have been a merry mile,
This summer stroll by hedge and stile,
With sweet foreknowledge all the while
How sure the pathway ran
To dear delights of kiss and smile,
Across the fields to Anne.

The silly sheep that graze to-day,
I wot, they let him go his way,
Nor once looked up, as who would say:
"It is a seemly man."
For many lads went wooing aye
Across the fields to Anne.

The oaks, they have a wiser look;
Mayhap they whispered to the brook:
"The world by him shall yet be shook,
It is in nature's plan;
Though now he fleets like any rook
Across the fields to Anne."

And I am sure, that on some hour
Coquetting soft 'twixt sun and shower,
He stooped and broke a daisy-flower
With heart of tiny span,
And bore it as a lover's dower
Across the fields to Anne.

While from her cottage garden-bed
She plucked a jasmin's goodlihede,
To scent his jerkin's brown instead;
Now since that love began,
What luckier swain than he who sped
Across the fields to Anne?

The winding path whereon I pace,
The hedgerows green, the summer's grace,
Are still before me face to face;
Methinks I almost can
Turn port and join the singing race
Across the fields to Anne.

Richard Burton [1861-

PAMELA IN TOWN

The fair Pamela came to town,
To London town, in early summer;
And up and down and round about
The beaux discussed the bright newcomer,
With "Gadzooks, sir," and "Ma'am, my duty,"
And "Odds my life, but 'tis a Beauty!"

To Ranelagh went Mistress Pam,
Sweet Mistress Pam so fair and merry,
With cheeks of cream and roses blent,
With voice of lark and lip of cherry.
Then all the beaux vowed 'twas their duty
To win and wear this country Beauty.

And first Frank Lovelace tried his wit,
With whispers bold and eyes still bolder;
The warmer grew his saucy flame,
Cold grew the charming fair and colder.
'Twas "icy bosom" - "cruel beauty" -
"To love, sweet Mistress, 'tis a duty."

Then Jack Carew his arts essayed,
With honeyed sighs and feigned weeping.
Good lack! his billets bound the curls
That pretty Pam she wore a-sleeping.
Next day these curls had richer beauty,
So well Jack's fervor did its duty.

Then Cousin Will came up to view
The way Pamela ruled the fashion;
He watched the gallants crowd about,
And flew into a rustic passion, -
Left "Squire, his mark," on divers faces,
And pinked Carew beneath his laces.

Alack! one night at Ranelagh
The pretty Sly-boots fell a-blushing;
And all the mettled bloods looked round
To see what caused that telltale flushing.
Up stepped a grizzled Poet Fellow
To dance with Pam a saltarello.

Then Jack and Frank and Will resolved,
With hand on sword and cutting glances,
That they would lead that Graybeard forth
To livelier tunes and other dances.
But who that saw Pam's eyes a-shining
With love and joy would see her pining!

And - oons! Their wrath cooled as they looked, -
That Poet stared as fierce as any!
He was a mighty proper man,

With blade on hip and inches many;
The beaux all vowed it was their duty
To toast some newer, softer Beauty.

Sweet Pam she bridled, blushed and smiled -
The wild thing loved and could but show it!
Mayhap some day you'll see in town
Pamela and her grizzled Poet.
Forsooth he taught the rogue her duty,
And won her faith, her love, her beauty.

Ellen Mackay Hutchinson Cortissoz [?-1933]

YES?

Is it true, then, my girl, that you mean it -
The word spoken yesterday night?
Does that hour seem so sweet now between it
And this has come day's sober light?
Have you woke from a moment of rapture
To remember, regret, and repent,
And to hate, perchance, him who has trapped your
Unthinking consent?

Who was he, last evening - this fellow
Whose audacity lent him a charm?
Have you promised to wed Pulchinello?
For life taking Figaro's arm?
Will you have the Court fool of the papers,
The clown in the journalists' ring,
Who earns his scant bread by his capers,
To be your heart's king?

When we met quite by chance at the theatre
And I saw you home under the moon,
I'd no thought, love, that mischief would be at her
Tricks with my tongue quite so soon;
That I should forget fate and fortune
Make a difference 'twixt Sevres and delf -
That I'd have the calm nerve to importune
You, sweet, for yourself.

It's appalling, by Jove, the audacious
Effrontery of that request!
But you - you grew suddenly gracious,
And hid your sweet face on my breast.
Why you did it I cannot conjecture;
I surprised you, poor child, I dare say,
Or perhaps - does the moonlight affect your
Head often that way?

. . . . . .

You're released! With some wooer replace me
More worthy to be your life's light;
From the tablet of memory efface me,
If you don't mean your Yes of last night.

But - unless you are anxious to see me a
Wreck of the pipe and the cup
In my birthplace and graveyard, Bohemia -
Love, don't give me up!

Henry Cuyler Bunner [1855-1896]

THE PRIME OF LIFE

Just as I thought I was growing old,
Ready to sit in my easy chair,
To watch the world with a heart grown cold,
And smile at a folly I would not share,

Rose came by with a smile for me,
And I am thinking that forty year
Isn't the age that it seems to be,
When two pretty brown eyes are near.

Bless me! of life it is just the prime,
A fact that I hope she will understand;
And forty year is a perfect rhyme
To dark brown eyes and a pretty hand.

These gray hairs are by chance, you see -
Boys are sometimes gray, I am told:
Rose came by with a smile for me,
Just as I thought I was getting old.

Walter Learned [1847-1915]

THOUGHTS ON THE COMMANDMENTS

"Love your neighbor as yourself," -
So the parson preaches:
That's one half the Decalogue, -
So the prayer-book teaches.
Half my duty I can do
With but little labor,
For with all my heart and soul
I do love my neighbor.

Mighty little credit, that,
To my self-denial,
Not to love her, though, might be
Something of a trial.
Why, the rosy light, that peeps
Through the glass above her,
Lingers round her lips, - you see
E'en the sunbeams love her.

So to make my merit more,
I'll go beyond the letter: -
Love my neighbor as myself?
Yes, and ten times better.
For she's sweeter than the breath

Of the Spring, that passes
Through the fragrant, budding woods,
O'er the meadow-grasses.

And I've preached the word I know,
For it was my duty
To convert the stubborn heart
Of the little beauty.
Once again success has crowned
Missionary labor,
For her sweet eyes own that she
Also loves her neighbor.

George Augustus Baker [1849-1906]

THE IRONY OF LOVE

"SIGH NO MORE, LADIES"
From "Much Ado About Nothing"

Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever;
One foot in sea, and one on shore;
To one thing constant never.
Then sigh not so,
But let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny.

Sing no more ditties, sing no moe
Of dumps so dull and heavy;
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was leavy.
Then sigh not so,
But let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny.

William Shakespeare [1564-1616]

A RENUNCIATION

If women could be fair, and yet not fond,
Or that their love were firm, not fickle still,

I would not marvel that they make men bond
By service long to purchase their good will;
But when I see how frail those creatures are,
I muse that men forget themselves so far.

To mark the choice they make, and how they change,
How oft from Phoebus they do flee to Pan;
Unsettled still, like haggards wild they range,
These gentle birds that fly from man to man;
Who would not scorn and shake them from the fist,
And let them fly, fair fools, which way they list?

Yet for disport we fawn and flatter both,
To pass the time when nothing else can please,
And train them to our lure with subtle oath,
Till, weary of their wiles, ourselves we ease;
And then we say when we their fancy try,
To play with fools, O what a fool was I!

Edward Vere [1550-1604]

A SONG

Ye happy swains, whose hearts are free
From Love's imperial chain,
Take warning, and be taught by me,
To avoid the enchanting pain;
Fatal the wolves to trembling flocks,
Fierce winds to blossoms prove,
To careless seamen, hidden rocks,
To human quiet, love.

Fly the fair sex, if bliss you prize;
The snake's beneath the flower:
Who ever gazed on beauteous eyes,
That tasted quiet more?
How faithless is the lovers' joy!
How constant is their care
The kind with falsehood to destroy,
The cruel, with despair.

George Etherege [1635?-1691]

TO HIS FORSAKEN MISTRESS

I do confess thou'rt smooth and fair,
And I might have gone near to love thee,
Had I not found the slightest prayer
That lips could speak, had power to move thee:
But I can let thee now alone
As worthy to be loved by none.

I do confess thou'rt sweet; yet find
Thee such an unthrift of thy sweets,
Thy favors are but like the wind
That kisseth everything it meets:

And since thou canst with more than one,
Thou'rt worthy to be kissed by none.

The morning rose that untouched stands
Armed with her briers, how sweet her smell!
But plucked and strained through ruder hands,
Her sweets no longer with her dwell:
But scent and beauty both are gone,
And leaves fall from her, one by one.

Such fate ere long will thee betide
When thou hast handled been awhile,
With sere flowers to be thrown aside;
And I shall sigh, while some will smile,
To see thy love to every one
Hath brought thee to be loved by none.

Robert Ayton [1570-1638]

TO AN INCONSTANT

I loved thee once; I'll love no more, -
Thine be the grief as is the blame;
Thou art not what thou wast before,
What reason I should be the same?
He that can love unloved again,
Hath better store of love than brain:
God send me love my debts to pay,
While unthrifts fool their love away!

Nothing could have my love o'erthrown,
If thou hadst still continued mine;
Yea, if thou hadst remained thy own,
I might perchance have yet been thine.
But thou thy freedom didst recall,
That it thou might elsewhere enthrall:
And then how could I but disdain
A captive's captive to remain?

When new desires had conquered thee,
And changed the object of thy will,
It had been lethargy in me,
Not constancy, to love thee still.
Yea, it had been a sin to go
And prostitute affection so,
Since we are taught no prayers to say
To such as must to others pray.

Yet do thou glory in thy choice, -
Thy choice of his good fortune boast;
I'll neither grieve nor yet rejoice,
To see him gain what I have lost:
The height of my disdain shall be,
To laugh at him, to blush for thee;
To love thee still, but go no more
A-begging at a beggar's door.

Robert Ayton [1570-1638]

ADVICE TO A GIRL

Never love unless you can
Bear with all the faults of man!
Men sometimes will jealous be,
Though but little cause they see,
And hang the head, as discontent,
And speak what straight they will repent.

Men, that but one Saint adore,
Make a show of love to more;
Beauty must be scorned in none,
Though but truly served in one:
For what is courtship but disguise?
True hearts may have dissembling eyes.

Men, when their affairs require,
Must awhile themselves retire;
Sometimes hunt, and sometimes hawk,
And not ever sit and talk: -
If these and such-like you can bear,
Then like, and love, and never fear!

Thomas Campion [? -1619]

SONG
That Women Are But Men's Shadows
From "The Forest"

Follow a shadow, it still flies you;
Seem to fly it, it will pursue:
So court a mistress, she denies you;
Let her alone, she will court you.
Say, are not women truly, then,
Styled but the shadows of us men?

At morn and even, shades are longest;
At noon they are or short or none:
So men at weakest, they are strongest,
But grant us perfect, they're not known.
Say, are not women truly then,
Styled but the shadows of us men?

Ben Johnson [1573?-1637]

TRUE BEAUTY

May I find a woman fair
And her mind as clear as air!
If her beauty go alone,
'Tis to me as if 'twere none.

May I find a woman rich,

And not of too high a pitch!
If that pride should cause disdain,
Tell me, Lover, where's thy gain?

May I find a woman wise,
And her falsehood not disguise!
Hath she wit as she hath will,
Double-armed she is to ill.

May I find a woman kind,
And not wavering like the wind!
How should I call that love mine
When 'tis his, and his, and thine?

May I find a woman true!
There is beauty's fairest hue:
There is beauty, love, and wit.
Happy he can compass it!

Francis Beaumont [1584-1616]

THE INDIFFERENT

Never more will I protest
To love a woman but in jest:
For as they cannot be true,
So to give each man his due,
When the wooing fit is past,
Their affection cannot last.

Therefore if I chance to meet
With a mistress fair and sweet,
She my service shall obtain,
Loving her for love again:
Thus much liberty I crave
Not to be a constant slave.

But when we have tried each other,
If she better like another,
Let her quickly change for me;
Then to change am I as free.
He or she that loves too long
Sell their freedom for a song.

Francis Beaumont [1584-1616]

THE LOVER'S RESOLUTION

Shall I, wasting in despair,
Die because a woman's fair?
Or make pale my cheeks with care
'Cause another's rosy are?
Be she fairer than the day,
Or the flowery meads in May,
If she think not well of me,
What care I how fair she be?

Shall my silly heart be pined
'Cause I see a woman kind?
Or a well disposed nature
Joined with a lovely feature?
Be she meeker, kinder, than
Turtle-dove or pelican,
If she be not so to me,
What care I how kind she be?

Shall a woman's virtues move
Me to perish for her love?
Or her well-deservings known
Make me quite forget my own?
Be she with that goodness blest
Which may merit name of Best,
If she be not such to me,
What care I how good she be?

'Cause her fortune seems too high,
Shall I play the fool and die?
She that bears a noble mind,
If not outward helps she find,
Thinks what with them he would do
That without them dares her woo;
And unless that mind I see,
What care I how great she be?

Great, or good, or kind, or fair,
I will ne'er the more despair;
If she love me, this believe,
I will die ere she shall grieve;
If she slight me when I woo,
I can scorn and let her go;
For if she be not for me,
What care I for whom she be?

George Wither [1588-1667]

HIS FURTHER RESOLUTION

Shall I (like a hermit) dwell
On a rock or in a cell;
Calling home the smallest part
That is missing of my heart,
To bestow it where I may
Meet a rival every day?
If she undervalue me,
What care I how fair she be!

Were her tresses angel-gold;
If a stranger may be bold,
Unrebuked, and unafraid,
To convert them to a braid;
And, with little more ado,
Work them into bracelets, too!
If the mine be grown so free,

What care I how rich it be!

Were her hands as rich a prize
As her hair or precious eyes;
If she lay them out to take
Kisses for good manners' sake!
And let every lover slip
From her hand unto her lip!
If she seem not chaste to me,
What care I how chaste she be!

No! She must be perfect snow
In effect as well as show!
Warming but as snowballs do;
Not like fire by burning, too!
But when she by change hath got
To her heart a second lot;
Then if others share with me,
Farewell her! whate'er she be!

Unknown

SONG
From "Britannia's Pastorals"

Shall I tell you whom I love?
Hearken then awhile to me;
And if such a woman move
As I now shall versify,
Be assured 'tis she or none,
That I love, and love alone.

Nature did her so much right
As she scorns the help of art;
In as many virtues dight
As e'er yet embraced a heart:
So much good so truly tried,
Some for less were deified.

Wit she hath, without desire
To make known how much she hath;
And her anger flames no higher
Than may fitly sweeten wrath.
Full of pity as may be,
Though perhaps not so to me.

Reason masters every sense,
And her virtues grace her birth;
Lovely as all excellence,
Modest in her most of mirth,
Likelihood enough to prove
Only worth could kindle love.

Such she is: and if you know
Such a one as I have sung;
Be she brown, or fair, or so
That she be but somewhat young;

Be assured 'tis she, or none,
That I love, and love alone.

William Browne [1591-1643?]

TO DIANEME

Sweet, be not proud of those two eyes,
Which, star-like, sparkle in their skies;
Nor be you proud that you can see
All hearts your captives, yours yet free;
Be you not proud of that rich hair,
Which wantons with the love-sick air;
Whenas that ruby which you wear,
Sunk from the tip of your soft ear,
Will last to be a precious stone
When all your world of beauty's gone.

Robert Herrick [1591-1674]

INGRATEFUL BEAUTY THREATENED

Know, Celia, since thou art so proud,
'Twas I that gave thee thy renown.
Thou hadst in the forgotten crowd
Of common beauties lived unknown,
Had not my verse extolled thy name,
And with it imped the wings of Fame.

That killing power is none of thine;
I gave it to thy voice and eyes;
Thy sweets, thy graces, all are mine;
Thou art my star, shin'st in my skies;
Then dart not from thy borrowed sphere
Lightning on him that fixed thee there.

Tempt me with such affrights no more,
Lest what I made I uncreate;
Let fools thy mystic form adore,
I know thee in thy mortal state.
Wise poets, that wrapped Truth in tales,
Knew her themselves through all her veils.

Thomas Carew [1598?-1639?]

DISDAIN RETURNED

He that loves a rosy cheek,
Or a coral lip admires,
Or from star-like eyes doth seek
Fuel to maintain his fires:
As old Time makes these decay,
So his flames must waste away.

But a smooth and steadfast mind,

Gentle thoughts, and calm desires,
Hearts with equal love combined,
Kindle never-dying fires: -
Where these are not, I despise
Lovely cheeks, or lips, or eyes.

No tears, Celia, now shall win
My resolved heart to return;
I have searched thy soul within,
And find naught but pride and scorn;
I have learned thy arts, and now
Can disdain as much as thou.

Some power, in my revenge, convey
That love to her I cast away.

Thomas Carew [1598?-1639?]

"LOVE WHO WILL, FOR I'LL LOVE NONE"

Love who will, for I'll love none,
There's fools enough beside me:
Yet if each woman have not one,
Come to me where I hide me,
And if she can the place attain,
For once I'll be her fool again.

It is an easy place to find,
And women sure should know it;
Yet thither serves not every wind,
Nor many men can show it:
It is the storehouse, where doth lie
All woman's truth and constancy.

If the journey be so long,
No woman will adventer;
But dreading her weak vessel's wrong,
The voyage will not enter:
Then may she sigh and lie alone,
In love with all, yet loved of none.

William Browne [1591-1643]

VALERIUS ON WOMEN

She that denies me I would have;
Who craves me I despise:
Venus hath power to rule mine heart,
But not to please mine eyes.

Temptations offered I still scorn;
Denied, I cling them still;
I'll neither glut mine appetite,
Nor seek to starve my will.

Diana, double-clothed, offends;

So Venus, naked quite:
The last begets a surfeit, and
The other no delight.

That crafty girl shall please me best,
That no, for yea, can say;
And every wanton willing kiss
Can season with a nay.

Thomas Heywood [?-1650?]

DISPRAISE OF LOVE, AND LOVERS' FOLLIES

If love be life, I long to die,
Live they that list for me;
And he that gains the most thereby,
A fool at least shall be.
But he that feels the sorest fits,
'Scapes with no less than loss of wits.
Unhappy life they gain,
Which love do entertain.

In day by feigned looks they live,
By lying dreams in night;
Each frown a deadly wound doth give,
Each smile a false delight.
If't hap their lady pleasant seem,
It is for others' love they deem:
If void she seem of joy,
Disdain doth make her coy.

Such is the peace that lovers find,
Such is the life they lead,
Blown here and there with every wind,
Like flowers in the mead;
Now war, now peace, now war again,
Desire, despair, delight, disdain:
Though dead in midst of life,
In peace, and yet at strife.

Francis Davison [fl. 1602]

THE CONSTANT LOVER

Out upon it, I have loved
Three whole days together!
And am like to love three more,
If it prove fair weather.

Time shall moult away his wings,
Ere he shall discover
In the whole wide world again
Such a constant lover.

But the spite on't is, no praise
Is due at all to me:

Love with me had made no stays,
Had it any been but she.

Had it any been but she,
And that very face,
There had been at least ere this
A dozen in her place.

John Suckling [1609-1642]

SONG
From "Aglaura"

Why so pale and wan, fond lover?
Prithee, why so pale?
Will, when looking well can't move her,
Looking ill prevail?
Prithee, why so pale?

Why so dull and mute, young sinner?
Prithee, why so mute?
Will, when speaking well can't win her,
Saying nothing do't?
Prithee, why so mute?

Quit, quit, for shame, this will not move:
This cannot take her.
If of herself she will not love,
Nothing can make her:
The devil take her!

John Suckling [1609-1642]

WISHES TO HIS SUPPOSED MISTRESS

Whoe'er she be,
That not impossible She
That shall command my heart and me:

Where'er she lie,
Locked up from mortal eye
In shady leaves of destiny:

Till that ripe birth
Of studied Fate stand forth,
And teach her fair steps tread our earth:

Till that divine
Idea take a shrine
Of crystal flesh, through which to shine;

Meet you her, my Wishes,
Bespeak her to my blisses,
And be ye called my absent kisses.

I wish her Beauty

That owes not all its duty
To gaudy tire, or glistering shoe-tie:

Something more than
Taffeta or tissue can,
Or rampant feather, or rich fan.

More than the spoil
Of shop, or silkworm's toil,
Or a bought blush, or a set smile.

A Face that's best
By its own beauty dressed,
And can alone commend the rest

A Face, made up
Out of no other shop
Than what Nature's white hand sets ope.

A Cheek, where youth
And blood, with pen of truth,
Write what the reader sweetly ru'th.

A Cheek, where grows
More than a morning rose,
Which to no box its being owes.

Lips, where all day
A lover's kiss may play,
Yet carry nothing thence away.

Looks, that oppress
Their richest tires, but dress
And clothe their simplest nakedness.

Eyes, that displace
The neighbor diamond, and outface
That sunshine by their own sweet grace.

Tresses, that wear
Jewels but to declare
How much themselves more precious are:

Whose native ray
Can tame the wanton day
Of gems that in their bright shades play.

Each ruby there,
Or pearl that dare appear,
Be its own blush, be its own tear.

A well-tamed Heart,
For whose more noble smart
Love may be long choosing a dart.

Eyes, that bestow
Full quivers on Love's bow,
Yet pay less arrows than they owe.

Smiles, that can warm
The blood, yet teach a charm,
That chastity shall take no harm.

Blushes, that bin
The burnish of no sin,
Nor flames of aught too hot within.

Joys, that confess
Virtue their mistress,
And have no other head to dress.

Fears, fond and slight
As the coy bride's, when night,
First does the longing lover right.

Days that need borrow
No part of their good-morrow
From a fore-spent night of sorrow.

Days that, in spite
Of darkness, by the light
Of a clear mind, are day all night.

Nights, sweet as they,
Made short by lovers' play,
Yet long by the absence of the day.

Life, that dares send
A challenge to his end,
And when it comes, say, "Welcome, friend!"

Sydneian showers
Of sweet discourse, whose powers
Can crown old Winter's head with flowers.

Soft silken hours,
Open suns, shady bowers;
'Bove all, nothing within that lowers.

Whate'er delight
Can make Day's forehead bright,
Or give down to the wings of Night.

In her whole frame
Have Nature all the name;
Art and Ornament, the shame!

Her flattery,
Picture and Poesy:
Her counsel her own virtue be.

I wish her store
Of worth may leave her poor
Of wishes; and I wish - no more.

Now, if Time knows

That Her, whose radiant brows
Weave them a garland of my vows;

Her, whose just bays
My future hopes can raise,
A trophy to her present praise;

Her, that dares be
What these lines wish to see;
I seek no further, it is She.

'Tis She, and here,
Lo! I unclothe and clear
My Wishes' cloudy character.

May She enjoy it
Whose merit dare apply it,
But modesty dares still deny it!

Such worth as this is
Shall fix my flying Wishes,
And determine them to kisses.

Let her full glory,
My fancies, fly before ye;
Be ye my fictions - but her Story!

Richard Crashaw [1613?-1649]

SONG
From "Abdelazer"

Love in fantastic triumph sate
Whilst bleeding hearts around him flowed,
For whom fresh pains he did create
And strange tyrannic power he showed:
From thy bright eyes he took his fires,
Which round about in sport he hurled;
But 'twas from mine he took desires
Enough t' undo the amorous world.

From me he took his sighs and tears,
From thee his pride and cruelty;
From me his languishments and fears,
And every killing dart from thee.
Thus thou and I the god have armed
And set him up a deity;
But my poor heart alone is harmed,
Whilst thine the victor is, and free!

Aphra Behn [1640-1689]

LES AMOURS

She that I pursue, still flies me;
Her that follows me, I fly;

She that I still court, denies me;
Her that courts me, I deny;
Thus in one web we're subtly wove,
And yet we mutiny in love.

She that can save me, must not do it;
She that cannot, fain would do;
Her love is bound, yet I still woo it;
Hers by love is bound in woe:
Yet how can I of love complain,
Since I have love for love again?

This is thy work, imperious Child,
Thine's this labyrinth of love,
That thus hast our desires beguiled,
Nor seest how thine arrows rove.
Then, prithee, to compose this stir,
Make her love me, or me love her.

But, if irrevocable are
Those keen shafts that wound us so,
Let me prevail with thee thus far,
That thou once more take thy bow;
Wound her hard heart, and by my troth,
I'll be content to take them both.

Charles Cotton [1630-1687]

RIVALS

Of all the torments, all the cares,
With which our lives are cursed;
Of all the plagues a lover bears,
Sure rivals are the worst!
By partners in each other kind
Afflictions easier grow;
In love alone we hate to find
Companions of our woe.

Sylvia, for all the pangs you see
Are laboring in my breast,
I beg not you would favor me,
Would you but slight the rest!
How great soe'er your rigors are,
With them alone I'll cope;
I can endure my own despair,
But not another's hope.

William Walsh [1663-1708]

"I LATELY VOWED, BUT 'TWAS IN HASTE"

I lately vowed, but 'twas in haste,
That I no more would court
The joys which seem when they are past
As dull as they are short.

I oft to hate my mistress swear,
But soon my weakness find:
I make my oaths when she's severe,
But break them when she's kind.

John Oldmixon [1673-1742]

THE TOUCH-STONE

A fool and knave with different views
For Julia's hand apply;
The knave to mend his fortune sues,
The fool to please his eye.

Ask you how Julia will behave,
Depend on't for a rule,
If she's a fool she'll wed the knave -
If she's a knave, the fool.

Samuel Bishop [1731-1795]

AIR
From "The Duenna"

I ne'er could any luster see
In eyes that would not look on me;
I ne'er saw nectar on a lip,
But where my own did hope to sip.
Has the maid who seeks my heart
Cheeks of rose, untouched by art?
I will own the color true
When yielding blushes aid their hue.

Is her hand so soft and pure?
I must press it, to be sure;
Nor can I be certain then,
Till it, grateful, press again.
Must I, with attentive eye,
Watch her heaving bosom sigh?
I will do so, when I see
That heaving bosom sigh for me.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan [1751-1816]

"I TOOK A HANSOM ON TO-DAY"

I took a hansom on to-day,
For a round I used to know -
That I used to take for a woman's sake
In a fever of to-and-fro.

There were the landmarks one and all -
What did they stand to show?
Street and square and river were there -

Where was the ancient woe?

Never a hint of a challenging hope
Nor a hope laid sick and low,
But a longing dead as its kindred sped
A thousand years ago!

William Ernest Henley [1849-1903]

DA CAPO

Short and sweet, and we've come to the end of it -
Our poor little love lying cold.
Shall no sonnet, then, ever be penned of it?
Nor the joys and pains of it told?
How fair was its face in the morning,
How close its caresses at noon,
How its evening grew chill without warning,
Unpleasantly soon!

I can't say just how we began it -
In a blush, or a smile, or a sigh;
Fate took but an instant to plan it;
It needs but a moment to die.
Yet - remember that first conversation,
When the flowers you had dropped at your feet
I restored. The familiar quotation
Was - "Sweets to the sweet."

Oh, their delicate perfume has haunted
My senses a whole season through.
If there was one soft charm that you wanted
The violets lent it to you.
I whispered you, life was but lonely:
A cue which you graciously took;
And your eyes learned a look for me only -
A very nice look.

And sometimes your hand would touch my hand,
With a sweetly particular touch;
You said many things in a sigh, and
Made a look express wondrously much.
We smiled for the mere sake of smiling,
And laughed for no reason but fun;
Irrational joys; but beguiling -
And all that is done!

We were idle, and played for a moment
At a game that now neither will press:
I cared not to find out what "No" meant;
Nor your lips to grow yielding with "Yes."
Love is done with and dead; if there lingers
A faint and indefinite ghost,
It is laid with this kiss on your fingers -
A jest at the most.

'Tis a commonplace, stale situation,

Now the curtain comes down from above
On the end of our little flirtation -
A travesty romance; for Love,
If he climbed in disguise to your lattice,
Fell dead of the first kisses' pain:
But one thing is left us now; that is -
Begin it again.

Henry Cuyler Bunner [1855-1896]

SONG AGAINST WOMEN

Why should I sing of women
And the softness of night,
When the dawn is loud with battle
And the day's teeth bite,
And there's a sword to lay my hand to
And a man's fight?

Why should I sing of women? . . .
There's life in the sun,
And red adventure calling
Where the roads run,
And cheery brews at the tavern
When the day's done.

I've sung of a hundred women
In a hundred lands:
But all their love is nothing
But drifting sands.
I'm sick of their tears and kisses
And their pale hands.

I've sung of a hundred women
And their bought lips;
But out on the clean horizon
I can hear the whips
Of the white waves lashing the bulwarks
Of great, strong ships:

And the trails that run to the westward
Are shot with fire,
And the winds hurl from the headland
With ancient ire;
And all my body itches
With an old desire.

So I'll deal no more in women
And the softness of night,
But I'll follow the red adventure
And the wind's flight;
And I'll sing of the sea and of battle
And of men's might.

Willard Huntington Wright [18

SONG OF THYRSIS

The turtle on yon withered bough,
That lately mourned her murdered mate,
Has found another comrade now -
Such changes all await!
Again her drooping plume is drest,
Again she's willing to be blest
And takes her lover to her nest.

If nature has decreed it so
With all above, and all below,
Let us like them forget our woe,
And not be killed with sorrow.
If I should quit your arms to-night
And chance to die before 'twas light,
I would advise you - and you might -
Love again to-morrow.

Philip Freneau [1752-1832]

THE TEST

I held her hand, the pledge of bliss,
Her hand that trembled and withdrew;
She bent her head before my kiss . . .
My heart was sure that hers was true.
Now I have told her I must part,
She shakes my hand, she bids adieu,
Nor shuns the kiss. Alas, my heart!
Hers never was the heart for you.

Walter Savage Landor [1775-1864]

"THE FAULT IS NOT MINE"

The fault is not mine if I love you too much,
I loved you too little too long,
Such ever your graces, your tenderness such,
And the music the heart gave the tongue.

A time is now coming when Love must be gone,
Though he never abandoned me yet.
Acknowledge our friendship, our passion disown,
Our follies (ah can you?) forget.

Walter Savage Lander [1775-1864]

THE SNAKE

My love and I, the other day,
Within a myrtle arbor lay,
When near us, from a rosy bed,
A little Snake put forth its head.

"See," said the maid, with laughing eyes -
"Yonder the fatal emblem lies!
Who could expect such hidden harm
Beneath the rose's velvet charm?"

Never did moral thought occur
In more unlucky hour than this;
For oh! I just was leading her
To talk of love and think of bliss.

I rose to kill the snake, but she
In pity prayed it might not be.
"No," said the girl - and many a spark
Flashed from her eyelid as she said it -
"Under the rose, or in the dark,
One might, perhaps, have cause to dread it;
But when its wicked eyes appear,
And when we know for what they wink so,
One must be very simple, dear,
To let it sting one - don't you think so?"

Thomas Moore [1779-1852]

"WHEN I LOVED YOU"

When I loved you, I can't but allow
I had many an exquisite minute;
But the scorn that I feel for you now
Hath even more luxury in it!

Thus, whether we're on or we're off,
Some witchery seems to await you;
To love you is pleasant enough,
And oh! 'tis delicious to hate you!

Thomas Moore [1779-1852]

A TEMPLE TO FRIENDSHIP

"A temple to Friendship," said Laura, enchanted,
"I'll build in this garden, - the thought is divine!"
Her temple was built, and she now only wanted
An image of Friendship to place on the shrine.
She flew to a sculptor, who set down before her
A Friendship, the fairest his art could invent;
But so cold and so dull, that the youthful adorer
Saw plainly this was not the idol she meant.

"O never," she cried, "could I think of enshrining
An image whose looks are so joyless and dim: -
But yon little god, upon roses reclining,
We'll make, if you please, sir, a Friendship of him."
So the bargain was struck. With the little god laden
She joyfully flew to her shrine in the grove:
"Farewell," said the sculptor, "you're not the first maiden
Who came but for Friendship and took away Love!"

Thomas Moore [1779-1852]

THE GLOVE AND THE LIONS

King Francis was a hearty king, and loved a royal sport,
And one day, as his lions fought, sat looking on the court.
The nobles filled the benches, and the ladies in their pride,
And 'mongst them sat the Count de Lorge, with one for whom he sighed:
And truly 'twas a gallant thing to see that crowning show,
Valor and love, and a king above, and the royal beasts below.

Ramped and roared the lions, with horrid laughing jaws;
They bit, they glared, gave blows like beams, a wind went with their paws;
With wallowing might and stifled roar they rolled on one another,
Till all the pit with sand and mane was in a thunderous smother;
The bloody foam above the bars came whisking through the air;
Said Francis then, "Faith, gentlemen, we're better here than there."

De Lorge's love o'erheard the King, a beauteous lively dame,
With smiling lips and sharp bright eyes, which always seemed the same;
She thought, "The Count, my lover, is brave as brave can be;
He surely would do wondrous things to show his love of me;
King, ladies, lovers, all look on; the occasion is divine;
I'll drop my glove to prove his love; great glory will be mine."

She dropped her glove, to prove his love, then looked at him and smiled;
He bowed, and in a moment leaped among the lions wild;
The leap was quick, return was quick, he has regained his place,
Then threw the glove, but not with love, right in the lady's face.
"By Heaven," said Francis, "rightly done!" and he rose from where he sat;
"No love," quoth he, "but vanity, sets love a task like that."

Leigh Hunt [1784-1859]

TO WOMAN

Woman! experience might have told me
That all must love thee who behold thee;
Surely experience might have taught
Thy firmest promises are naught;
But, placed in all thy charms before me,
All I forget, but to adore thee.
Oh, Memory! thou choicest blessing,
When joined with hope, when still possessing;
But how much cursed by every lover,
When hope is fled, and passion's over!
Woman, that fair and fond deceiver,
How prompt are striplings to believe her!
How throbs the pulse when first we view
The eye that rolls in glossy blue,
Or sparkles black, or mildly throws
A beam from under hazel brows!
How quick we credit every oath,
And hear her plight the willing troth!
Fondly we hope 'twill last for aye,

When, lo! she changes in a day.
This record will forever stand,
"Woman, thy vows are traced in sand."

George Gordon Byron [1788-1824]

LOVE'S SPITE

You take a town you cannot keep;
And, forced in turn to fly,
O'er ruins you have made shall leap
Your deadliest enemy!
Her love is yours - and be it so -
But can you keep it? No, no, no!

Upon her brow we gazed with awe,
And loved, and wished to love, in vain
But when the snow begins to thaw
We shun with scorn the miry plain.
Women with grace may yield: but she
Appeared some Virgin Deity.

Bright was her soul as Dian's crest
Whitening on Vesta's fane its sheen:
Cold looked she as the waveless breast
Of some stone Dian at thirteen.
Men loved: but hope they deemed to be
A sweet Impossibility!

Aubrey Thomas De Vere [1814-1902]

LADY CLARA VERE DE VERE

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
Of me you shall not win renown:
You thought to break a country heart
For pastime, ere you went to town.
At me you smiled, but unbeguiled
I saw the snare, and I retired:
The daughter of a hundred earls,
You are not one to be desired.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
I know you proud to bear your name,
Your pride is yet no mate for mine,
Too proud to care from whence I came.
Nor would I break for your sweet sake
A heart that dotes on truer charms.
A simple maiden in her flower
Is worth a hundred coats-of-arms.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
Some meeker pupil you must find,
For, were you queen of all that is,
I could not stoop to such a mind.
You sought to prove how I could love,

And my disdain is my reply.
The lion on your old stone gates
Is not more cold to you than I.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
You put strange memories in my head.
Not thrice your branching limes have blown
Since I beheld young Laurence dead.
O, your sweet eyes, your low replies!
A great enchantress you may be;
But there was that across his throat
Which you had hardly cared to see.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
When thus he met his mother's view,
She had the passions of her kind,
She spake some certain truths of you.
Indeed I heard one bitter word
That scarce is fit for you to hear;
Her manners had not that repose
Which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere,

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
There stands a specter in your hall;
The guilt of blood is at your door;
You changed a wholesome heart to gall.
You held your course without remorse,
To make him trust his modest worth,
And, last, you fixed a vacant stare,
And slew him with your noble birth.

Trust me, Clara Vere de Vere,
From yon blue heavens above us bent,
The gardener Adam and his wife
Smile at the claims of long descent.
Howe'er it be, it seems to me,
'Tis only noble to be good.
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.

I know you, Clara Vere de Vere;
You pine among your halls and towers:
The languid light of your proud eyes
Is wearied of the rolling hours.
In glowing health, with boundless wealth,
But sickening of a vague disease,
You know so ill to deal with time,
You needs must play such pranks as these.

Clara, Clara Vere de Vere,
If time be heavy on your hands,
Are there no beggars at your gate,
Nor any poor about your lands?
O, teach the orphan-boy to read,
Or teach the orphan-girl to sew,
Pray Heaven for a human heart,
And let the foolish yeoman go.

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

SHADOWS

They seemed, to those who saw them meet,
The casual friends of every day,
Her smile was undisturbed and sweet,
His courtesy was free and gay.

But yet if one the other's name
In some unguarded moment heard,
The heart you thought so calm and tame
Would struggle like a captured bird:

And letters of mere formal phrase
Were blistered with repeated tears, -
And this was not the work of days,
But had gone on for years and years!

Alas, that love was not too strong
For maiden shame and manly pride!
Alas, that they delayed so long
The goal of mutual bliss beside!

Yet what no chance could then reveal,
And neither would be first to own,
Let fate and courage now conceal,
When truth could bring remorse alone.

Richard Monckton Milnes [1809-1885]

SORROWS OF WERTHER

Werther had a love for Charlotte
Such as words could never utter;
Would you know how first he met her?
She was cutting bread and butter.

Charlotte was a married lady,
And a moral man was Werther,
And, for all the wealth of Indies,
Would do nothing for to hurt her.

So he sighed and pined and ogled,
And his passion boiled and bubbled,
Till he blew his silly brains out,
And no more was by it troubled.

Charlotte, having seen his body
Borne before her on a shutter,
Like a well-conducted person,
Went on cutting bread and butter.

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811-1863]

THE AGE OF WISDOM

Ho, pretty page, with the dimpled chin,
That never has known the barber's shear,
All your wish is woman to win,
This is the way that boys begin, -
Wait till you come to Forty Year.

Curly gold locks cover foolish brains,
Billing and cooing is all your cheer;
Sighing, and singing of midnight strains,
Under Bonnybell's window-panes, -
Wait till you come to Forty Year.

Forty times over let Michaelmas pass,
Grizzling hair the brain does clear -
Then you know a boy is an ass,
Then you know the worth of a lass,
Once you have come to Forty Year.

Pledge me round; I bid ye declare,
All good fellows whose beards are gray,
Did not the fairest of the fair
Common grow and wearisome ere
Ever a month was passed away?

The reddest lips that ever have kissed,
The brightest eyes that ever have shone,
May pray and whisper, and we not list,
Or look away and never be missed,
Ere yet ever a month is gone.

Gillian's dead, God rest her bier,
How I loved her twenty years syne!
Marian's married, but I sit here,
Alone and merry at Forty Year,
Dipping my nose in the Gascon wine.

William Makepeace Thackeray [1811-1863]

ANDREA DEL SARTO
Called "The Faultless Painter"

But do not let us quarrel any more,
No, my Lucrezia; bear with me for once:
Sit down and all shall happen as you wish.
You turn your face, but does it bring your heart?
I'll work then for your friend's friend, never fear,
Treat his own subject after his own way,
Fix his own time, accept too his own price,
And shut the money into this small hand
When next it takes mine. Will it? tenderly?
Oh, I'll content him, - but to-morrow, Love!
I often am much wearier than you think,
This evening more than usual, and it seems
As if - forgive now - should you let me sit
Here by the window, with your hand in mine,

And look a half-hour forth on Fiesole,
Both of one mind, as married people use,
Quietly, quietly the evening through,
I might get up to-morrow to my work
Cheerful and fresh as ever. Let us try.
To-morrow how you shall be glad for this!
Your soft hand is a woman of itself,
And mine the man's bared breast she curls inside.
Don't count the time lost neither; you must serve
For each of the five pictures we require;
It saves a model. So! keep looking so
My serpentining beauty, rounds on rounds!
- How could you ever prick those perfect ears,
Even to put the pearl there! oh, so sweet -
My face, my moon, my everybody's moon,
Which everybody looks on and calls his,
And, I suppose, is looked on by in turn,
While she looks - no one's: very dear, no less.
You smile? why, there's my picture ready made,
There's what we painters call our harmony!
A common grayness silvers everything, -
All in a twilight, you and I alike
- You, at the point of your first pride in me
(That's gone you know), - but I, at every point;
My youth, my hope, my art, being all toned down
To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole.
There's the bell clinking from the chapel-top;
That length of convent wall across the way
Holds the trees safer, huddled more inside;
The last monk leaves the garden; days decrease,
And autumn grows, autumn in everything.
Eh? the whole seems to fall into a shape
As if I saw alike my work and self
And all that I was born to be and do,
A twilight-piece. Love, we are in God's hand.
How strange now looks the life he makes us lead;
So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!
I feel he laid the fetter; let it lie!
This chamber for example - turn your head -
All that's behind us! You don't understand
Nor care to understand about my art,
But you can hear at least when people speak:
And that cartoon, the second from the door
- It is the thing, Love! so such thing should be -
Behold Madonna! - I am bold to say.
I can do with my pencil what I know,
What I see, what at bottom of my heart
I wish for, if I ever wish so deep -
Do easily, too - when I say, perfectly,
I do not boast, perhaps: yourself are judge,
Who listened to the Legate's talk last week,
And just as much they used to say in France.
At any rate 'tis easy, all of it!
No sketches first, no studies, that's long past;
I do what many dream of all their lives,
- Dream? strive to do, and agonize to do,
And fail in doing. I could count twenty such
On twice your fingers, and not leave this town,

Who strive - you don't know how the others strive
To paint a little thing like that you smeared
Carelessly passing with your robes afloat, -
Yet do much less, so much less, Someone says,
(I know his name, no matter) - so much less!
Well, less is more, Lucrezia: I am judged.
There burns a truer light of God in them,
In their vexed beating stuffed and stopped-up brain,
Heart, or whate'er else, than goes on to prompt
This low-pulsed forthright craftsman's hand of mine.
Their works drop groundward, but themselves, I know,
Reach many a time a heaven that's shut to me,
Enter and take their place there sure enough,
Though they come back and cannot tell the world.
My works are nearer heaven, but I sit here.
The sudden blood of these men! at a word -
Praise them, it boils, or blame them, it boils too.
I, painting from myself and to myself,
Know what I do, am unmoved by men's blame
Or their praise either. Somebody remarks
Morello's outline there is wrongly traced,
His hue mistaken; what of that? or else,
Rightly traced and well ordered; what of that?
Speak as they please, what does the mountain care?
Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for? All is silver-gray;
Placid and perfect with my art; the worse!
I know both what I want and what might gain;
And yet how profitless to know, to sigh
"Had I been two, another and myself,
Our head would have o'erlooked the world!" No doubt.
Yonder's a work now, of that famous youth
The Urbinate who died five years ago.
('Tis copied, George Vasari sent it me.)
Well, I can fancy how he did it all,
Pouring his soul, with kings and popes to see,
Reaching, that heaven might so replenish him,
Above and through his art - for it gives way;
That arm is wrongly put - and there again -
A fault to pardon in the drawing's lines,
Its body, so to speak: its soul is right,
He means right, - that, a child may understand.
Still, what an arm! and I could alter it:
But all the play, the insight and the stretch -
Out of me, out of me! And wherefore out?
Had you enjoined them on me, given me soul,
We might have risen to Rafael, I and you!
Nay, Love, you did give all I asked, I think -
More than I merit, yes, by many times.
But had you - oh, with the same perfect brow,
And perfect eyes, and more than perfect mouth,
And the low voice my soul hears, as a bird
The fowler's pipe, and follows to the snare -
Had you, with these the same, but brought a mind!
Some women do so. Had the mouth there urged,
"God and the glory! never care for gain.
The present by the future, what is that?
Live for fame, side by side with Agnolo!

Rafael is waiting: up to God, all three!"
I might have done it for you. So it seems:
Perhaps not. All is as God overrules.
Beside, incentives come from the soul's self;
The rest avail not. Why do I need you?
What wife had Rafael, or has Agnolo?
In this world, who can do a thing, will not;
And who would do it, cannot, I perceive:
Yet the will's somewhat - somewhat, too, the power -
And thus we half-men struggle. At the end,
God I conclude, compensates, punishes.
'Tis safer for me, if the award be strict,
That I am something underrated here,
Poor this long while, despised, to speak the truth.
I dared not, do you know, leave home all day,
For fear of chancing on the Paris lords.
The best is when they pass and look aside;
But they speak sometimes; I must bear it all.
Well may they speak! That Francis, that first time,
And that long festal year at Fontainebleau!
I surely then could sometimes leave the ground,
Put on the glory, Rafael's daily wear,
In that humane great monarch's golden look, -
One finger in his beard or twisted curl
Over his mouth's good mark that made the smile,
One arm about my shoulder, round my neck,
The jingle of his gold chain in my ear,
I painting proudly with his breath on me,
All his court round him, seeing with his eyes,
Such frank French eyes, and such a fire of souls
Profuse, my hand kept plying by those hearts, -
And, best of all, this, this, this face beyond,
This in the background, waiting on my work;
To crown the issue with a last reward!
A good time, was it not, my kingly days?
And had you not grown restless . . . but I know -
'Tis done and past; 'twas right, my instinct said;
Too live the life grew, golden and not gray,
And I'm the weak-eyed bat no sun should tempt
Out of the grange whose four walls make his world.
How could it end in any other way?
You called me, and I came home to your heart.
The triumph was, - to reach and stay there; since
I reached it ere the triumph, what is lost?
Let my hands frame your face in your hair's gold,
You beautiful Lucrezia that are mine!
"Rafael did this, Andrea painted that;
The Roman's is the better when you pray,
But still the other's Virgin was his wife -
Men will excuse me. I am glad to judge
Both pictures in your presence; clearer grows
My better fortune, I resolve to think.
For do you know, Lucrezia, as God lives,
Said one day Agnolo, his very self
To Rafael . . . I have known it all these years . . .
(When the young man was flaming out his thoughts
Upon a palace-wall for Rome to see,
Too lifted up in heart because of it)

Friend, there's a certain sorry little scrub
Goes up and down our Florence, none cares how,
Who, were he set to plan and execute
As you are, pricked on by your popes and kings,
Would bring the sweat into that brow of yours!"
To Rafael's! And indeed the arm is wrong.
I hardly dare . . . yet, only you to see,
Give the chalk here - quick, thus the line should go!
Ay, but the soul! he's Rafael! rub it out!
Still, all I care for, if he spoke the truth,
(What he? why, who but Michel Agnolo?
Do you forget already words like those?)
If really there was such a chance, so lost, -
Is, whether you're - not grateful - but more pleased.
Well, let me think so. And you smile indeed!
This hour has been an hour! Another smile?
If you would sit thus by me every night
I should work better, do you comprehend?
I mean that I should earn more, give you more.
See, it is settled dusk now; there's a star;
Morello's gone, the watch-lights show the wall,
The cue-owls speak the name we call them by.
Come from the window, love, - come in, at last,
Inside the melancholy little house
We built to be so gay with. God is just.
King Francis may forgive me: oft at nights
When I look up from painting, eyes tired out,
The walls become illumined, brick from brick
Distinct, instead of mortar, fierce bright gold,
That gold of his I did cement them with!
Let us but love each other. Must you go?
That Cousin here again? he waits outside?
Must see you - you, and not with me? Those loans?
More gaming debts to pay? you smiled for that?
Well, let smiles buy me! have you more to spend?
While hand and eye and something of a heart
Are left me, work's my ware, and what's it worth?
I'll pay my fancy. Only let me sit
The gray remainder of the evening out,
Idle, you call it, and muse perfectly
How I could paint, were I but back in France,
One picture, just one more, - the Virgin's face,
Not yours this time! I want you at my side
To hear them - that is Michel Agnolo -
Judge all I do and tell you of its worth.
Will you? To-morrow, satisfy your friend.
I take the subjects for his corridor,
Finish the portrait out of hand - there, there,
And throw him in another thing or two
If he demurs; the whole should prove enough
To pay for this same Cousin's freak. Beside,
What's better and what's all I care about,
Get you the thirteen scudi for the ruff!
Love, does that please you? Ah, but what does he,
The Cousin! what does he to please you more?

I am grown peaceful as old age to-night.
I regret little, I would change still less.

Since there my past life lies, why alter it?
The very wrong to Francis! - it is true
I took his coin, was tempted and complied,
And built this house and sinned, and all is said.
My father and my mother died of want.
Well, had I riches of my own? you see
How one gets rich! Let each one bear his lot.
They were born poor, lived poor, and poor they died:
And I have labored somewhat in my time
And not been paid profusely. Some good son
Paint my two hundred pictures - let him try!
No doubt, there's something strikes a balance. Yes,
You loved me quite enough, it seems to-night.
This must suffice me here. What would one have?
In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one more chance -
Four great walls in the New Jerusalem,
Meted on each side by the angel's reed,
For Leonard, Rafael, Agnolo, and me
To cover, - the three first without a wife,
While I have mine! So - still they overcome
Because there's still Lucrezia, - as I choose.

Again the Cousin's whistle! Go, my love.

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

MY LAST DUCHESS
Ferrara

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now: Fra Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said
"Fra Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps
Fra Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat": such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart - how shall I say? - too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed: she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule

She rode with round the terrace - all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men, - good! but thanked
Somehow - I know not how - as if she ranked
My gift of a nine hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech - (which I have not) - to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark" - and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
- E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet
The company below, then. I repeat,
The Count your master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretense
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

ADAM, LILITH, AND EVE

One day, it thundered and lightened.
Two women, fairly frightened,
Sank to their knees, transformed, transfixed,
At the feet of the man who sat betwixt;
And "Mercy!" cried each - "if I tell the truth
Of a passage in my youth!"

Said This: "Do you mind the morning
I met your love with scorning?
As the worst of the venom left my lips,
I thought, 'If, despite this lie, he strips
The mask from my soul with a kiss - I crawl
His slave, - soul, body, and all!'"

Said That: "We stood to be married;
The priest, or some one, tarried;
'If Paradise-door prove locked?' smiled you.
I thought, as I nodded, smiling too,
'Did one, that's away, arrive - nor late
Nor soon should unlock Hell's gate!'"

It ceased to lighten and thunder.
Up started both in wonder,
Looked around and saw that the sky was clear,

Then laughed "Confess you believed us, Dear!"
"I saw through the joke!" the man replied
They re-seated themselves beside.

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

THE LOST MISTRESS

All's over, then: does truth sound bitter
As one at first believes?
Hark, 'tis the sparrows' good-night twitter
About your cottage eaves!

And the leaf-buds on the vine are woolly,
I noticed that, to-day;
One day more bursts them open fully
- You know the red turns gray.

To-morrow we meet the same then, dearest?
May I take your hand in mine?
Mere friends are we, - well, friends the merest
Keep much that I resign:

For each glance of the eye so bright and black,
Though I keep with heart's endeavor, -
Your voice, when you wish the snowdrops back,
Though it stay in my soul forever! -

Yet I will but say what mere friends say,
Or only a thought stronger;
I will hold your hand but as long as all may,
Or so very little longer!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

FRIEND AND LOVER

When Psyche's friend becomes her lover,
How sweetly these conditions blend!
But, oh, what anguish to discover
Her lover has become - her friend!

Mary Ainge de Vere [1844-1920]

LOST LOVE

Who wins his Love shall lose her,
Who loses her shall gain,
For still the spirit wooes her,
A soul without a stain;
And Memory still pursues her
With longings not in vain!

He loses her who gains her,
Who watches day by day

The dust of time that stains her,
The griefs that leave her gray,
The flesh that yet enchains her
Whose grace hath passed away!

Oh, happier he who gains not
The Love some seem to gain:
The joy that custom stains not
Shall still with him remain,
The loveliness that wanes not,
The Love that ne'er can wane.

In dreams she grows not older
The lands of Dream among,
Though all the world wax colder,
Though all the songs be sung,
In dreams doth he behold her
Still fair and kind and young.

Andrew Lang [1844-1912]

VOBISCUM EST IOPE

When thou must home to shades of underground,
And there arrived, a new admired guest,
The beauteous spirits do engirt thee round,
White Iope, blithe Helen, and the rest,
To hear the stories of thy finished love
From that smooth tongue whose music hell can move;

Then wilt thou speak of banqueting delights,
Of masques and revels which sweet youth did make,
Of tourneys and great challenges of knights,
And all these triumphs for thy beauty's sake:
When thou hast told these honors done to thee,
Then tell, O tell, how thou didst murder me!

Thomas Campion [? -1619]

FOUR WINDS

"Four winds blowing through the sky,
You have seen poor maidens die,
Tell me then what I shall do
That my lover may be true."
Said the wind from out the south,
"Lay no kiss upon his mouth,"
And the wind from out the west,
"Wound the heart within his breast,"
And the wind from out the east,
"Send him empty from the feast,"
And the wind from out the north,
"In the tempest thrust him forth;
When thou art more cruel than he,
Then will Love be kind to thee."

Sara Teasdale [1884-1933]

TO MANON
As To His Choice Of Her

If I had chosen thee, thou shouldst have been
A virgin proud, untamed, immaculate,
Chaste as the morning star, a saint, a queen,
Scarred by no wars, no violence of hate.
Thou shouldst have been of soul commensurate
With thy fair body, brave and virtuous
And kind and just; and if of poor estate,
At least an honest woman for my house.
I would have had thee come of honored blood
And honorable nurture. Thou shouldst bear
Sons to my pride and daughters to my heart,
And men should hold thee happy, wise, and good.
Lo, thou art none of this, but only fair,
Yet must I love thee, dear, and as thou art.

Wilfrid Scawen Blunt [1840-1922]

CROWNED

You came to me bearing bright roses,
Red like the wine of your heart;
You twisted them into a garland
To set me aside from the mart.
Red roses to crown me your lover,
And I walked aureoled and apart.

Enslaved and encircled, I bore it,
Proud token of my gift to you.
The petals waned paler, and shriveled,
And dropped; and the thorns started through.
Bitter thorns to proclaim me your lover,
A diadem woven with rue.

Amy Lowell [1874-1925]

HEBE

I saw the twinkle of white feet,
I saw the flash of robes descending;
Before her ran an influence fleet,
That bowed my heart like barley bending.

As, in bare fields, the searching bees
Pilot to blooms beyond our finding,
It led me on, by sweet degrees
Joy's simple honey-cells unbinding.

Those Graces were that seemed grim Fates;
With nearer love the sky leaned o'er me;
The long-sought Secret's golden gates

On musical hinges swung before me.

I saw the brimmed bowl in her grasp
Thrilling with godhood; like a lover
I sprang the proffered life to clasp; -
The beaker fell; the luck was over.

The Earth has drunk the vintage up;
What boots it patch the goblet's splinters?
Can Summer fill the icy cup
Whose treacherous crystal is but Winter's?

O spendthrift haste! await the Gods;
Their nectar crowns the lips of Patience;
Haste scatters on unthankful sods
The immortal gift in vain libations.

Coy Hebe flies from those that woo,
And shuns the hands would seize upon her;
Follow thy life, and she will sue
To pour for thee the cup of honor.

James Russell Lowell [1819-1891]

"JUSTINE, YOU LOVE ME NOT!"
"Helas! vous ne m'aimez pas." - Piron

I know, Justine, you speak me fair
As often as we meet;
And 'tis a luxury, I swear,
To hear a voice so sweet;
And yet it does not please me quite,
The civil way you've got;
For me you're something too polite -
Justine, you love me not!

I know Justine, you never scold
At aught that I may do:
If I am passionate or cold,
'Tis all the same to you.
"A charming temper," say the men,
"To smooth a husband's lot":
I wish 'twere ruffled now and then -
Justine you love me not!

I know, Justine, you wear a smile
As beaming as the sun;
But who supposes all the while
It shines for only one?
Though azure skies are fair to see,
A transient cloudy spot
In yours would promise more to me -
Justine, you love me not!

I know, Justine, you make my name
Your eulogistic theme,
And say - if any chance to blame -

You hold me in esteem.
Such words, for all their kindly scope,
Delight me not a jot;
Just as you would have praised the Pope -
Justine, you love me not!

I know, Justine - for I have heard
What friendly voices tell -
You do not blush to say the word,
"You like me passing well";
And thus the fatal sound I hear
That seals my lonely lot:
There's nothing now to hope or fear -
Justine, you love me not!

John Godfrey Saxe [1816-1887]

SNOWDROP

When, full of warm and eager love,
I clasp you in my fond embrace,
You gently push me back and say,
"Take care, my dear, you'll spoil my lace."

You kiss me just as you would kiss
Some woman friend you chanced to see;
You call me "dearest." - All love's forms
Are yours, not its reality.

Oh, Annie! cry, and storm, and rave!
Do anything with passion in it!
Hate me an hour, and then turn round
And love me truly, just one minute.

William Wetmore Story [1819-1895]

WHEN THE SULTAN GOES TO ISPAHAN

When the Sultan Shah-Zaman
Goes to the city Ispahan,
Even before he gets so far
As the place where the clustered palm-trees are,
At the last of the thirty palace-gates,
The flower of the harem, Rose-in-Bloom,
Orders a feast in his favorite room -
Glittering squares of colored ice,
Sweetened with syrop, tinctured with spice,
Creams, and cordials, and sugared dates,
Syrian apples, Othmanee quinces,
Limes, and citrons, and apricots,
And wines that are known to Eastern princes;
And Nubian slaves, with smoking pots
Of spiced meats and costliest fish
And all that the curious palate could wish,
Pass in and out of the cedarn doors;
Scattered over mosaic floors

Are anemones, myrtles, and violets,
And a musical fountain throws its jets
Of a hundred colors into the air.
The dusk Sultana loosens her hair,
And stains with the henna-plant the tips
Of her pointed nails, and bites her lips
Till they bloom again; but, alas, that rose
Not for the Sultan buds and blows,
Not for the Sultan Shah-Zaman
When he goes to the city Ispahan.

Then at a wave of her sunny hand
The dancing-girls of Samarcand
Glide in like shapes from fairy-land,
Making a sudden mist in air
Of fleecy veils and floating hair
And white arms lifted. Orient blood
Runs in their veins, shines in their eyes.
And there, in this Eastern Paradise,
Filled with the breath of sandal-wood,
And Khoten musk, and aloes and myrrh,
Sits Rose-in-Bloom on a silk divan,
Sipping the wines of Astrakhan;
And her Arab lover sits with her.
That's when the Sultan Shah-Zaman
Goes to the city Ispahan.

Now, when I see an extra light,
Flaming, flickering on the night
From my neighbor's casement opposite,
I know as well as I know to pray,
I know as well as a tongue can say,
That the innocent Sultan Shah-Zaman
Has gone to the city Ispahan.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1837-1907]

THE SHADOW DANCE

She sees her image in the glass, -
How fair a thing to gaze upon!
She lingers while the moments run,
With happy thoughts that come and pass,

Like winds across the meadow grass
When the young June is just begun:
She sees her image in the glass, -
How fair a thing to gaze upon!

What wealth of gold the skies amass!
How glad are all things 'neath the sun!
How true the love her love has won!
She recks not that this hour will pass, -
She sees her image in the glass.

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835-1908]

"ALONG THE FIELD AS WE CAME BY"

Along the field as we came by
A year ago, my love and I,
The aspen over stile and stone
Was talking to itself alone.
"Oh, who are these that kiss and pass?
A country lover and his lass;
Two lovers looking to be wed;
And time shall put them both to bed,
But she shall lie with earth above,
And he beside another love."

And sure enough beneath the tree
There walks another love with me,
And overhead the aspen heaves
Its rainy-sounding silver leaves;
And I spell nothing in their stir,
But now perhaps they speak to her,
And plain for her to understand
They talk about a time at hand
When I shall sleep with clover clad,
And she beside another lad.

Alfred Edward Housman [1859-1936]

"WHEN I WAS ONE-AND-TWENTY"

When I was one-and-twenty
I heard a wise man say,
"Give crowns and pounds and guineas
But not your heart away;
Give pearls away and rubies
But keep your fancy free."
But I was one-and-twenty,
No use to talk to me.

When I was one-and-twenty
I heard him say again,
"The heart out of the bosom
Was never given in vain;
'Tis paid with sighs a plenty
And sold for endless rue."
And I am two-and-twenty,
And oh, 'tis true, 'tis true.

Alfred Edward Housman [1859-1936]

"GRIEVE NOT, LADIES"

Oh, grieve not, Ladies, if at night
Ye wake to feel your beauty going;
It was a web of frail delight,
Inconstant as an April snowing.

In other eyes, in other lands,
In deep fair pools new beauty lingers;
But like spent water in your hands
It runs from your reluctant fingers.

You shall not keep the singing lark
That owes to earlier skies its duty.
Weep not to hear along the dark
The sound of your departing beauty.

The fine and anguished ear of night
Is tuned to hear the smallest sorrow:
Oh, wait until the morning light!
It may not seem so gone to-morrow.

But honey-pale and rosy-red!
Brief lights that make a little shining!
Beautiful looks about us shed -
They leave us to the old repining.

Think not the watchful, dim despair
Has come to you the first, sweet-hearted!
For oh, the gold in Helen's hair!
And how she cried when that departed!

Perhaps that one that took the most,
The swiftest borrower, wildest spender,
May count, as we would not, the cost -
And grow more true to us and tender.

Happy are we if in his eyes
We see no shadow of forgetting.
Nay - if our star sinks in those skies
We shall not wholly see its setting.

Then let us laugh as do the brooks,
That such immortal youth is ours,
If memory keeps for them our looks
As fresh as are the springtime flowers.

So grieve not, Ladies, if at night
Ye wake to feel the cold December!
Rather recall the early light,
And in your loved one's arms, remember.

Anna Hempstead Branch [18

SUBURB

Dull and hard the low wind creaks
Among the rustling pampas plumes.
Drearily the year consumes
Its fifty-two insipid weeks.

Most of the gray-green meadow land
Was sold in parsimonious lots;
The dingy houses stand

Pressed by some stout contractor's hand
Tightly together in their plots.

Through builded banks the sullen river
Gropes, where its houses crouch and shiver.
Over the bridge the tyrant train
Shrieks, and emerges on the plain.

In all the better gardens you may pass,
(Product of many careful Saturdays),
Large red geraniums and tall pampas grass
Adorn the plots and mark the gravelled ways.

Sometimes in the background may be seen
A private summer-house in white or green.
Here on warm nights the daughter brings
Her vacillating clerk,
To talk of small exciting things
And touch his fingers through the dark.

He, in the uncomfortable breach
Between her trilling laughters,
Promises, in halting speech,
Hopeless immense Hereafters.

She trembles like the pampas plumes.
Her strained lips haggle. He assumes
The serious quest. . . .

Now as the train is whistling past
He takes her in his arms at last.

It's done. She blushes at his side
Across the lawn - a bride, a bride.

. . . . . .

The stout contractor will design,
The lazy laborers will prepare,
Another villa on the line;
In the little garden-square
Pampas grass will rustle there.

Harold Monro [1879-1932]

THE BETROTHED
"You must choose between me and your cigar" -
Breach of Promise case, circa 1885.

Open the old cigar-box, get me a Cuba stout,
For things are running crossways, and Maggie and I are out.

We quarreled about Havanas - we fought o'er a good cheroot -
And I know she is exacting, and she says I am a brute.

Open the old cigar-box - let me consider a space,
In the soft blue veil of the vapor, musing on Maggie's face.

Maggie is pretty to look at - Maggie's a loving lass.
But the prettiest cheeks must wrinkle, the truest of loves must pass.

There's peace in a Laranaga, there's calm in a Henry Clay,
But the best cigar in an hour is finished and thrown away -

Thrown away for another as perfect and ripe and brown -
But I never could throw away Maggie for fear o' the talk o' the town!

Maggie, my wife at fifty - gray and dour and old -
With never another Maggie to purchase for love or gold.

And the light of Days that have Been, the dark of the Days that Are,
And Love's torch stinking and stale, like the butt of a dead cigar -

The butt of a dead cigar you are bound to keep in your pocket -
With never a new one to light, though it's charred and black to the socket.

Open the old cigar-box - let me consider awhile;
Here is a mild Manilla - there is a wifely smile.

Which is the better portion - bondage bought with a ring,
Or a harem of dusky beauties, fifty tied in a string?

Counselors cunning and silent - comforters true and tried,
And never a one of the fifty to sneer at a rival bride.

Thought in the early morning, solace in time of woes,
Peace in the hush of the twilight, balm ere my eyelids close.

This will the fifty give me, asking naught in return,
With only a Suttee's passion - to do their duty and burn.

This will the fifty give me. When they are spent and dead,
Five times other fifties shall be my servants instead.

The furrows of far-off Java, the isles of the Spanish Main,
When they hear that my harem is empty, will send me my brides again.

I will take no heed to their raiment, nor food for their mouths withal,
So long as the gulls are nesting, so long as the showers fall.

I will scent'em with best vanilla, with tea will I temper their hides,
And the Moor and the Mormon shall envy who read of the tale of my brides.

For Maggie has written a letter to give me my choice between
The wee little whimpering Love and the great god Nick o' Teen.

And I have been servant of Love for barely a twelvemonth clear,
But I have been Priest of Partagas a matter of seven year;

And the gloom of my bachelor days is flecked with the cheery light
Of stumps that I burned to Friendship, and Pleasure, and Work, and Fight.

And I turn my eyes to the future that Maggie and I must prove,
But the only light on the marshes is the Will-o'-the-Wisp of Love.

Will it see me safe through my journey, or leave me bogged in the mire?
Since a puff of tobacco can cloud it, shall I follow the fitful fire?

Open the old cigar-box - let me consider anew -
Old friends, and who is Maggie, that I should abandon you?

A million surplus Maggies are willing to bear the yoke;
And a woman is only a woman, but a good cigar is a Smoke.

Light me another Cuba - I hold to my first-sworn vows,
If Maggie will have no rival, I'll have no Maggie for spouse!

Rudyard Kipling [1865-1936]

LOVE'S SADNESS

"THE NIGHT HAS A THOUSAND EYES"

The night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one;
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.

Francis William Bourdillon [1852-1921]

"I SAW MY LADY WEEP"

I saw my Lady weep,
And Sorrow proud to be advanced so
In those fair eyes where all perfections keep.
Her face was full of Woe,
But such a Woe (believe me) as wins more hearts
Than Mirth can do with her enticing parts.

Sorrow was there made fair,
And Passion, wise; Tears, a delightful thing;
Silence, beyond all speech, a wisdom rare:
She made her sighs to sing,
And all things with so sweet a sadness move
As made my heart at once both grieve and love.

O fairer than aught else
The world can show, leave off in time to grieve!
Enough, enough: your joyful look excels:
Tears kill the heart, believe.
O strive not to be excellent in Woe,
Which only breeds your beauty's overthrow.

Unknown

LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM

Oh! the days are gone, when Beauty bright
My heart's chain wove;
When my dream of life, from morn till night,
Was love, still love.
New hope may bloom,
And days may come,
Of milder, calmer beam,
But there's nothing half so sweet in life
As love's young dream;
No, there's nothing half so sweet in life
As love's young dream.

Though the bard to purer fame may soar,
When wild youth's past;
Though he win the wise, who frowned before,
To smile at last;
He'll never meet
A joy so sweet,
In all his noon of fame,
As when first he sung to woman's ear
His soul-felt flame,
And, at every close, she blushed to hear
The one loved name.

No, - that hallowed form is ne'er forgot
Which first love traced;
Still it lingering haunts the greenest spot
On memory's waste.
'Twas odor fled
As soon as shed;
'Twas morning's winged dream;
'Twas a light that ne'er can shine again
On life's dull stream;
Oh! 'twas light that ne'er can shine again
On life's dull stream.

Thomas Moore [1779-1852]

"NOT OURS THE VOWS"

Not ours the vows of such as plight
Their troth in sunny weather,
While leaves are green, and skies are bright,
To walk on flowers together.

But we have loved as those who tread
The thorny path of sorrow,
With clouds above, and cause to dread
Yet deeper gloom to-morrow.

That thorny path, those stormy skies,
Have drawn our spirits nearer;
And rendered us, by sorrow's ties,
Each to the other dearer.

Love, born in hours of joy and mirth,
With mirth and joy may perish;
That to which darker hours gave birth
Still more and more we cherish.

It looks beyond the clouds of time,
And through death's shadowy portal;
Made by adversity sublime,
By faith and hope immortal.

Bernard Barton [1784-1849]

THE GRAVE OF LOVE

I dug, beneath the cypress shade,
What well might seem an elfin's grave;
And every pledge in earth I laid,
That erst thy false affection gave.

I pressed them down the sod beneath;
I placed one mossy stone above;
And twined the rose's fading wreath
Around the sepulcher of love.

Frail as thy love, the flowers were dead
Ere yet the evening sun was set:
But years shall see the cypress spread,
Immutable as my regret.

Thomas Love Peacock [1785-1866]

"WE'LL GO NO MORE A ROVING"

So, we'll go no more a roving
So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving,
And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And Love itself have rest.

Though the night was made for loving,
And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a roving

By the light of the moon.

George Gordon Byron [1788-1824]

SONG

Sing the old song, amid the sounds dispersing
That burden treasured in your hearts too long;
Sing it, with voice low-breathed, but never name her:
She will not hear you, in her turrets nursing
High thoughts, too high to mate with mortal song -
Bend o'er her, gentle Heaven, but do not claim her!

In twilight caves, and secret lonelinesses,
She shades the bloom of her unearthly days;
And the soft winds alone have power to woo her:
Far off we catch the dark gleam of her tresses;
And wild birds haunt the wood-walks where she strays,
Intelligible music warbling to her.

That Spirit charged to follow and defend her, -
He also, doubtless, suffers this love-pain;
And she, perhaps, is sad, hearing his sighing:
And yet that face is not so sad as tender;
Like some sweet singer's, when her sweetest strain
From the heaved heart is gradually dying!

Aubrey Thomas De Vere [1814-1902]

THE QUESTION

I dreamed that, as I wandered by the way,
Bare Winter suddenly was changed to Spring;
And gentle odors led my steps astray,
Mixed with a sound of waters murmuring
Along a shelving bank of turf, which lay
Under a copse, and hardly dared to fling
Its green arms round the bosom of the stream,
But kissed it and then fled, as thou mightest in dream.

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets;
Daisies, those pearled Arcturi of the earth,
The constellated flower that never sets;
Faint oxlips; tender bluebells, at whose birth
The sod scarce heaved; and that tall flower that wets -
Like a child, half in tenderness and mirth -
Its mother's face with heaven-collected tears
When the low wind, its playmate's voice, it hears.

And in the warm hedge grew lush eglantine,
Green cowbind and the moonlight-colored may,
And cherry-blossoms, and white cups whose wine
Was the bright dew yet drained not by the day;
And wild roses, and ivy serpentine,
With its dark buds and leaves wandering astray;
And flowers, azure, black, and streaked with gold,

Fairer than any wakened eyes behold.

And nearer to the river's trembling edge
There grew broad flag-flowers, purple pranked with white,
And starry river-buds among the sedge,
And floating water-lilies, broad and bright,
Which lit the oak that overhung the hedge
With moonlight beams of their own watery light;
And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep green
As soothed the dazzled eye with sober sheen.

Methought that of these visionary flowers
I made a nosegay, bound in such a way
That the same hues which in their natural bowers
Were mingled or opposed, the like array
Kept these imprisoned children of the Hours
Within my hand; - and then, elate and gay,
I hastened to the spot whence I had come,
That I might there present it - O! to whom?

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792-1822]

THE WANDERER

Love comes back to his vacant dwelling, -
The old, old Love that we knew of yore!
We see him stand by the open door,
With his great eyes sad, and his bosom swelling.

He makes as though in our arms repelling,
He fain would lie as he lay before; -
Love comes back to his vacant dwelling, -
The old, old Love that we knew of yore!

Ah, who shall keep us from over-spelling
That sweet forgotten, forbidden lore!
E'en as we doubt in our hearts once more,
With a rush of tears to our eyelids welling,
Love comes back to his vacant dwelling.

Austin Dobson [1840-1921]

EGYPTIAN SERENADE

Sing again the song you sung
When we were together young -
When there were but you and I
Underneath the summer sky.

Sing the song, and o'er and o'er
Though I know that nevermore
Will it seem the song you sung
When we were together young.

George William Curtis [1824-1892]

THE WATER LADY

Alas, the moon should ever beam
To show what man should never see!
I saw a maiden on a stream,
And fair was she!

I stayed awhile, to see her throw
Her tresses back, that all beset
The fair horizon of her brow
With clouds of jet.

I stayed a little while to view
Her cheek, that wore, in place of red,
The bloom of water, tender blue,
Daintily spread.

I stayed to watch, a little space,
Her parted lips if she would sing;
The waters closed above her face
With many a ring.

And still I stayed a little more:
Alas, she never comes again!
I throw my flowers from the shore,
And watch in vain.

I know my life will fade away,
I know that I must vainly pine,
For I am made of mortal clay,
But she's divine!

Thomas Hood [1799-1845]

"TRIPPING DOWN THE FIELD-PATH"

Tripping down the field-path,
Early in the morn,
There I met my own love
'Midst the golden corn;
Autumn winds were blowing,
As in frolic chase,
All her silken ringlets
Backward from her face;
Little time for speaking
Had she, for the wind,
Bonnet, scarf, or ribbon,
Ever swept behind.

Still some sweet improvement
In her beauty shone;
Every graceful movement
Won me, - one by one!
As the breath of Venus
Seemed the breeze of morn,
Blowing thus between us,

'Midst the golden corn.
Little time for wooing
Had we, for the wind
Still kept on undoing
What we sought to bind.

Oh! that autumn morning
In my heart it beams,
Love's last look adorning
With its dream of dreams:
Still, like waters flowing
In the ocean shell,
Sounds of breezes blowing
In my spirit dwell;
Still I see the field-path; -
Would that I could see
Her whose graceful beauty
Lost is now to me!

Charles Swain [1801-1874]

LOVE NOT

Love not, love not, ye hapless sons of clay!
Hope's gayest wreaths are made of earthly flowers -
Things that are made to fade and fall away,
When they have blossomed but a few short hours.
Love not, love not!

Love not, love not! The thing you love may die -
May perish from the gay and gladsome earth;
The silent stars, the blue and smiling sky,
Beam on its grave as once upon its birth.
Love not, love not!

Love not, love not! The thing you love may change,
The rosy lip may cease to smile on you;
The kindly beaming eye grow cold and strange;
The heart still warmly beat, yet not be true.
Love not, love not!

Love not, love not! O warning vainly said
In present years, as in the years gone by!
Love flings a halo round the dear one's head,
Faultless, immortal - till they change or die!
Love not, love not!

Caroline Elizabeth Sarah Norton [1808-1877]

"A PLACE IN THY MEMORY"

A place in thy memory, Dearest!
Is all that I claim:
To pause and look back when thou hearest
The sound of my name.
Another may woo thee, nearer;

Another may win and wear:
I care not though he be dearer,
If I am remembered there.

Remember me, not as a lover
Whose hope was crossed,
Whose bosom can never recover
The light it hath lost!
As the young bride remembers the mother
She loves, though she never may see,
As a sister remembers a brother,
O Dearest, remember me!

Could I be thy true lover, Dearest!
Couldst thou smile on me,
I would be the fondest and nearest
That ever loved thee:
But a cloud on my pathway is glooming
That never must burst upon thine;
And heaven, that made thee all blooming,
Ne'er made thee to wither on mine.

Remember me then! O remember
My calm light love!
Though bleak as the blasts of November
My life may prove.
That life will, though lonely, be sweet
If its brightest enjoyment should be
A smile and kind word when we meet,
And a place in thy memory.

Gerald Griffin [1803-1840]

INCLUSIONS

Oh, wilt thou have my hand, Dear, to lie along in thine?
As a little stone in a running stream, it seems to lie and pine.
Now drop the poor pale hand, Dear, unfit to plight with thine.

Oh, wilt thou have my cheek, Dear, drawn closer to thine own?
My cheek is white, my check is worn, by many a tear run down.
Now leave a little space, Dear, lest it should wet thine own.

Oh, must thou have my soul, Dear, commingled with thy soul? -
Red grows the cheek, and warm the hand; the part is in the whole;
Nor hands nor cheeks keep separate, when soul is joined to soul.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806-1861]

MARIANA
Mariana in the moated grange. - Measure For Measure

With blackest moss the flower-plots
Were thickly crusted, one and all:
The rusted nails fell from the knots

That held the pear to the gable-wall.
The broken sheds looked sad and strange:
Unlifted was the clinking latch;
Weeded and worn the ancient thatch
Upon the lonely moated grange.
She only said, "My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

Her tears fell with the dews at even;
Her tears fell ere the dews were dried;
She could not look on the sweet heaven,
Either at morn or eventide.
After the flitting of the bats,
When thickest dark did trance the sky,
She drew her casement-curtain by,
And glanced athwart the glooming flats.
She only said, "The night is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

Upon the middle of the night,
Waking she heard the night-fowl crow:
The cock sung out an hour ere light:
From the dark fen the oxen's low
Came to her: without hope of change,
In sleep she seemed to walk forlorn,
Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed morn
About the lonely moated grange.
She only said, "The day is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

About a stone-cast from the wall
A sluice with blackened waters slept,
And o'er it many, round and small,
The clustered marish-mosses crept.
Hard by a poplar shook alway,
All silver-green with gnarled bark:
For leagues no other tree did mark
The level waste, the rounding gray.
She only said, "My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

And ever when the moon was low,
And the shrill winds were up and away,
In the white curtain, to and fro,
She saw the gusty shadow sway.
But when the moon was very low,
And wild winds bound within their cell,
The shadow of the poplar fell
Upon her bed, across her brow.
She only said, "The night is dreary

He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

All day within the dreamy house,
The doors upon their hinges creaked;
The blue fly sung in the pane; the mouse
Behind the moldering wainscot shrieked,
Or from the crevice peered about.
Old faces glimmered through the doors,
Old footsteps trod the upper floors,
Old voices called her from without.
She only said, "My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

The sparrow's chirrup on the roof,
The slow clock ticking, and the sound
Which to the wooing wind aloof
The poplar made, did all confound
Her sense; but most she loathed the hour
When the thick-moted sunbeam lay
Athwart the chambers, and the day
Was sloping toward his western bower.
Then, said she, "I am very dreary,
He will not come," she said;
She wept, "I am aweary, aweary,
O God, that I were dead!"

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

"ASK ME NO MORE"
From "The Princess"

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape,
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;
But O too fond, when have I answered thee?
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I give?
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are sealed;
I strove against the stream and all in vain;
Let the great river take me to the main.
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;
Ask me no more.

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

A WOMAN'S LAST WORD

Let's contend no more, Love,
Strive nor weep:
All be as before, Love,
- Only sleep!

What so wild as words are?
I and thou
In debate, as birds are,
Hawk on bough!

See the creature stalking
While we speak!
Hush and hide the talking,
Cheek on cheek!

What so false as truth is,
False to thee?
Where the serpent's tooth is
Shun the tree -

Where the apple reddens
Never pry -
Lest we lose our Edens,
Eve and I!

Be a god and hold me
With a charm!
Be a man and fold me
With thine arm!

Teach me, only teach, Love!
As I ought
I will speak thy speech, Love,
Think thy thought -

Meet, if thou require it,
Both demands,
Laying flesh and spirit
In thy hands.

That shall be to-morrow
Not to-night:
I must bury sorrow
Out of sight:

- Must a little weep, Love.
(Foolish me!)
And so fall asleep, Love
Loved by thee.

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

THE LAST RIDE TOGETHER

I said - Then, dearest, since 'tis so,
Since now at length my fate I know,

Since nothing all my love avails,
Since all, my life seemed meant for, fails,
Since this was written and needs must be -
My whole heart rises up to bless
Your name in pride and thankfulness!
Take back the hope you gave, - I claim
Only a memory of the same,
- And this beside, if you will not blame;
Your leave for one more last ride with me.

My mistress bent that brow of hers;
Those deep dark eyes where pride demurs
When pity would be softening through,
Fixed me a breathing-while or two
With life or death in the balance: right!
The blood replenished me again;
My last thought was at least not vain:
I and my mistress, side by side
Shall be together, breathe and ride,
So, one day more am I deified.
Who knows but the world may end to-night?

Hush! if you saw some western cloud
All billowy-bosomed, over-bowed
By many benedictions - sun's
And moon's and evening-star's at once -
And so, you, looking and loving best,
Conscious grew, your passion drew
Cloud, sunset, moonrise, star-shine too,
Down on you, near and yet more near,
Till flesh must fade for heaven was here! -
Thus leant she and lingered-joy and fear!
Thus lay she a moment on my breast.

Then we began to ride. My soul
Smoothed itself out, a long-cramped scroll
Freshening and fluttering in the wind.
Past hopes already lay behind.
What need to strive with a life awry?
Had I said that, had I done this,
So might I gain, so might I miss.
Might she have loved me? just as well
She might have hated, who can tell!
Where had I been now if the worst befell?
And here we are riding, she and I.

Fail I alone, in words and deeds?
Why, all men strive, and who succeeds?
We rode; it seemed my spirit flew,
Saw other regions, cities new,
As the world rushed by on either side.
I thought, - All labor, yet no less
Bear up beneath their unsuccess.
Look at the end of work, contrast
The petty done, the undone vast,
This present of theirs with the hopeful past!
I hoped she would love me; here we ride.

What hand and brain went ever paired?
What heart alike conceived and dared?
What act proved all its thought had been?
What will but felt the fleshly screen?
We ride and I see her bosom heave.
There's many a crown for who can reach.
Ten lines, a statesman's life in each!
The flag stuck on a heap of bones,
A soldier's doing! what atones?
They scratch his name on the Abbey-stones.
My riding is better, by their leave.

What does it all mean, poet? Well,
Your brains beat into rhythm, you tell
What we felt only; you expressed
You hold things beautiful the best,
And place them in rhyme so, side by side.
'Tis something, nay 'tis much: but then,
Have you yourself what's best for men?
Are you - poor, sick, old ere your time -
Nearer one whit your own sublime
Than we who never have turned a rhyme?
Sing, riding's a joy! For me, I ride.

And you, great sculptor - so, you gave
A score of years to Art, her slave,
And that's your Venus, whence we turn
To yonder girl that fords the burn!
You acquiesce, and shall I repine?
What, man of music, you grown gray
With notes and nothing else to say,
Is this your sole praise from a friend,
"Greatly his opera's strains intend,
But in music we know how fashions end!"
I gave my youth: but we ride, in fine.

Who knows what's fit for us? Had fate
Proposed bliss here should sublimate
My being - had I signed the bond -
Still one must lead some life beyond,
Have a bliss to die with, dim-descried.
This foot once planted on the goal,
This glory-garland round my soul,
Could I descry such? Try and test!
I sink back shuddering from the quest.
Earth being so good, would heaven seem best?
Now, heaven and she are beyond this ride.

And yet - she has not spoke so long!
What if heaven be that, fair and strong
At life's best, with our eyes upturned
Whither life's flower is first discerned,
We, fixed so, ever should so abide?
What if we still ride on, we two,
With life forever old yet new,
Changed not in kind but in degree,
The instant made eternity, -
And heaven just prove that I and she

Ride, ride together, forever ride?

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

YOUTH AND ART

It once might have been, once only:
We lodged in a street together,
You, a sparrow on the housetop lonely,
I, a lone she-bird of his feather.

Your trade was with sticks and clay,
You thumbed, thrust, patted, and polished,
Then laughed, "They will see some day
Smith made, and Gibson demolished."

My business was song, song, song;
I chirped, cheeped, trilled, and twittered,
"Kate Brown's on the boards ere long,
And Grisi's existence embittered!"

I earned no more by a warble
Than you by a sketch in plaster;
You wanted a piece of marble,
I needed a music-master.

We studied hard in our styles,
Chipped each at a crust like Hindoos,
For air, looked out on the tiles,
For fun, watched each other's windows.

You lounged, like a boy of the South,
Cap and blouse - nay, a bit of beard too;
Or you got it, rubbing your mouth
With fingers the clay adhered to.

And I - soon managed to find
Weak points in the flower-fence facing,
Was forced to put up a blind,
And be safe in my corset-lacing.

No harm! It was not my fault
If you never turned your eye's tail up,
As I shook upon E in alt.,
Or ran the chromatic scale up:

For spring bade the sparrows pair,
And the boys and girls gave guesses,
And stalls in our street looked rare
With bulrush and water-cresses.

Why did not you pinch a flower
In a pellet of clay and fling it?
Why did not I put a power
Of thanks in a look, or sing it?

I did look; sharp as a lynx

(And yet the memory rankles),
When models arrived, some minx
Tripped up-stairs, she and her ankles.

But I think I gave you as good!
"That foreign fellow, - who can know
How she pays, in a playful mood,
For his tuning her that piano?"

Could you say so, and never say,
"Suppose we join hands and fortunes,
And I fetch her from over the way,
Her, piano, and long tunes and short tunes"?

No, no: you would not be rash,
Nor I rasher and something over:
You've to settle yet Gibson's hash,
And Grisi yet lives in clover.

But you meet the Prince at the Board,
I'm queen myself at bals-pare,
I've married a rich old lord,
And you're dubbed knight and an R. A.

Each life unfulfilled, you see;
It hangs still, patchy and scrappy:
We have not sighed deep, laughed free,
Starved, feasted, despaired, - been happy.

And nobody calls you a dunce,
And people suppose me clever:
This could but have happened once,
And we missed it, lost it forever.

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

TWO IN THE CAMPAGNA

I wonder do you feel to-day
As I have felt since, hand in hand,
We sat down on the grass, to stray
In spirit better through the land,
This morn of Rome and May?

For me, I touched a thought, I know,
Has tantalized me many times,
(Like turns of thread the spiders throw
Mocking across our path) for rhymes
To catch at and let go.

Help me to hold it! First it left
The yellowing fennel, run to seed
There, branching from the brickwork's cleft,
Some old tomb's ruin: yonder weed
Took up the floating weft,

Where one small orange cup amassed

Five beetles, - blind and green they grope
Among the honey-meal: and last,
Everywhere on the grassy slope
I traced it. Hold it fast!

The champaign with its endless fleece
Of feathery grasses everywhere!
Silence and passion, joy and peace,
And everlasting wash of air -
Rome's ghost since her decease.

Such life here, through such lengths of hours,
Such miracles performed in play,
Such primal naked forms of flowers,
Such letting Nature have her way
While Heaven looks from its towers!

How say you? Let us, O my dove,
Let us be unashamed of soul,
As earth lies bare to heaven above!
How is it under our control
To love or not to love?

I would that you were all to me,
You that are just so much, no more.
Nor yours, nor mine - nor slave nor free!
Where does the fault lie? What the core
Of the wound, since wound must be?

I would I could adopt your will,
See with your eyes, and set my heart
Beating by yours, and drink my fill
At your soul's springs, - your part, my part
In life, for good and ill.

No. I yearn upward, touch you close,
Then stand away. I kiss your cheek,
Catch your soul's warmth, - I pluck the rose
And love it more than tongue can speak -
Then the good minute goes.

Already how am I so far
Out of that minute? Must I go
Still like the thistle-ball, no bar,
Onward, whenever light winds blow,
Fixed by no friendly star?

Just when I seemed about to learn!
Where is the thread now? Off again!
The old trick! Only I discern -
Infinite passion, and the pain
Of finite hearts that yearn.

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

ONE WAY OF LOVE

All June I bound the rose in sheaves.
Now, rose by rose, I strip the leaves
And strew them where Pauline may pass.
She will not turn aside? Alas!
Let them lie. Suppose they die?
The chance was they might take her eye.

How many a month I strove to suit
These stubborn fingers to the lute!
To-day I venture all I know.
She will not hear my music? So!
Break the string; fold music's wing:
Suppose Pauline had bade me sing!

My whole life long I learned to love.
This hour my utmost art I prove
And speak my passion - heaven or hell?
She will not give me heaven? 'Tis well!
Lose who may - I still can say,
Those who win heaven, blest are they!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

"NEVER THE TIME AND THE PLACE"

Never the time and the place
And the loved one all together!
This path - how soft to pace!
This May - what magic weather!
Where is the loved one's face?
In a dream that loved one's face meets mine,
But the house is narrow, the place is bleak
Where, outside, rain and wind combine
With a furtive ear, if I strive to speak,
With a hostile eye at my flushing cheek,
With a malice that marks each word, each sign!
O enemy sly and serpentine,
Uncoil thee from the waking man!
Do I hold the Past
Thus firm and fast
Yet doubt if the Future hold I can?
This path so soft to pace shall lead
Through the magic of May to herself indeed!
Or narrow if needs the house must be,
Outside are the storms and strangers: we -
Oh, close, safe, warm sleep I and she,
- I and she!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

SONG
From "The Saint's Tragedy"

Oh! that we two were Maying
Down the stream of the soft spring breeze;
Like children with violets playing

In the shade of the whispering trees.

Oh! that we two sat dreaming
On the sward of some sheep-trimmed down,
Watching the white mist steaming
Over river and mead and town.

Oh! that we two lay sleeping
In our nest in the churchyard sod,
With our limbs at rest on the quiet earth's breast,
And our souls at home with God!

Charles Kingsley [1819-1875]

FOR HE HAD GREAT POSSESSIONS

Ah! marvel not if when I come to die
And follow Death the way my fancies went
Year after fading year, the last mad sky
Finds me impenitent;
For though my heart went doubting through the night,
With many a backward glance at heaven's face,
Yet found I many treasures of delight
Within this pleasant place.

I shall not grieve because the girls were fair
And kinder than the world, nor shall I weep
Because with crying lips and clinging hair
They stole away my sleep.
For lacking this I might not yet have known
How high the heart could climb, or waking seen
The mountains bare their silver breasts of stone
From their chaste robes of green.

Though it were all a sin, within the mirth
And pain of life I found a song above
Our songs, in her who scattered on the earth
Her glad largesse of love;
And though she held some dream that was not ours
In some far place that was not for our feet,
Where blew across the gladder, madder flowers
A wind more bitter-sweet.

Ah! who shall hearten when the music stops,
For joy of silence? While they dreamed above
She showed me love upon the mountain tops
And in the valleys, love.
And while the wise found heaven with their charts
And lore of souls, she made an earth for me
More sweet than all, and from our beating hearts
She called the pulsing sea.

So marvel not if in the days when death
Shall make my body mine, I do not cry
For hours and treasure lost, but with my breath
Praise my mortality.
For lo! this place is fair, and losing all

That I have won and dreamed beneath her kiss,
I would not see the light of morning fall
On any world but this.

Richard Middleton [1882-1911]

WINDLE-STRAWS

She kissed me on the forehead,
She spoke not any word,
The silence flowed between us,
And I nor spoke nor stirred.

So hopeless for my sake it was,
So full of ruth, so sweet,
My whole heart rose and blessed her,
- Then died before her feet.

Edward Dowden [1843-1913]

JESSIE

When Jessie comes with her soft breast,
And yields the golden keys,
Then is it as if God caressed
Twin babes upon His knees -
Twin babes that, each to other pressed,
Just feel the Father's arms, wherewith they both are blessed,

But when I think if we must part,
And all this personal dream be fled -
O then my heart! O then my useless heart!
Would God that thou wert dead -
A clod insensible to joys and ills -
A stone remote in some bleak gully of the hills!

Thomas Edward Brown [1830-1897]

THE CHESS-BOARD

My little love, do you remember,
Ere we were grown so sadly wise,
Those evenings in the bleak December,
Curtained warm from the snowy weather,
When you and I played chess together,
Checkmated by each other's eyes?

Ah! still I see your soft white hand
Hovering warm o'er Queen and Knight;
Brave Pawns in valiant battle stand;
The double Castles guard the wings;
The Bishop, bent on distant things,
Moves, sliding, through the fight.

Our fingers touch; our glances meet,

And falter; falls your golden hair
Against my cheek; your bosom sweet
Is heaving. Down the field, your Queen
Rides slow, her soldiery all between,
And checks me unaware.

Ah me! the little battle's done:
Dispersed is all its chivalry.
Full many a move, since then, have we
'Mid Life's perplexing chequers made,
And many a game with Fortune played; -
What is it we have won?
This, this at least, - if this alone:

That never, never, never more,
As in those old still nights of yore
(Ere we were grown so sadly wise),
Can you and I shut out the skies,
Shut out the world and wintry weather,
And, eyes exchanging warmth with eyes,
Play chess, as then we played together!

Edward Robert Bulwer Lytton [1831-1891]

AUX ITALIENS

At Paris it was, at the Opera there; -
And she looked like a queen in a book that night,
With the wreath of pearl in her raven hair,
And the brooch on her breast, so bright.

Of all the operas that Verdi wrote,
The best, to my taste, is the Trovatore;
And Mario can soothe with a tenor note
The souls in Purgatory.

The moon on the tower slept soft as snow:
And who was not thrilled in the strangest way,
As we heard him sing, while the gas burned low,
"Non ti scordar di me"?

The Emperor there, in his box of state,
Looked grave, as if he had just then seen
The red flag wave from the city-gate
Where his eagles in bronze had been.

The Empress, too, had a tear in her eye.
You'd have said that her fancy had gone back again,
For one moment, under the old blue sky,
To the old glad life in Spain.

Well! there in our front-row box we sat,
Together, my bride-betrothed and I;
My gaze was fixed on my opera-hat,
And hers on the stage hard by.

And both were silent, and both were sad.

Like a queen she leaned on her full white arm,
With that regal, indolent air she had;
So confident of her charm!

I have not a doubt she was thinking then
Of her former lord, good soul that he was!
Who died the richest and roundest of men,
The Marquis of Carabas.

I hope that, to get to the kingdom of heaven,
Through a needle's eye he had not to pass.
I wish him well, for the jointure given
To my lady of Carabas.

Meanwhile, I was thinking of my first love,
As I had not been thinking of aught for years,
Till over my eyes there began to move
Something that felt like tears.

I thought of the dress that she wore last time,
When we stood, 'neath the cypress-trees, together,
In that lost land, in that soft clime,
In the crimson evening weather;

Of that muslin dress (for the eve was hot),
And her warm white neck in its golden chain,
And her full, soft hair, just tied in a knot,
And falling loose again;

And the jasmine-flower in her fair young breast,
(O the faint, sweet smell of that jasmine-flower!)
And the one bird singing alone to his nest,
And the one star over the tower.

I thought of our little quarrels and strife,
And the letter that brought me back my ring.
And it all seemed then, in the waste of life,
Such a very little thing!

For I thought of her grave below the hill,
Which the sentinel cypress-tree stands over;
And I thought . . . "were she only living still,
How I could forgive her, and love her!"

And I swear, as I thought of her thus, in that hour,
And of how, after all, old things were best,
That I smelt the smell of that jasmine-flower
Which she used to wear in her breast.

It smelt so faint, and it smelt so sweet,
It made me creep, and it made me cold!
Like the scent that steals from the crumbling sheet
Where a mummy is half unrolled.

And I turned, and looked. She was sitting there
In a dim box, over the stage; and dressed
In that muslin dress with that full soft hair,
And that jasmine in her breast!

I was here; and she was there;
And the glittering horseshoe curved between: -
From my bride-betrothed, with her raven hair,
And her sumptuous scornful mien,

To my early love, with her eyes downcast,
And over her primrose face the shade
(In short from the Future back to the Past).
There was but a step to be made.

To my early love from my future bride
One moment I looked. Then I stole to the door,
I traversed the passage; and down at her side
I was sitting, a moment more.

My thinking of her, or the music's strain,
Or something which never will be expressed,
Had brought her back from the grave again,
With the jasmine in her breast.

She is not dead, and she is not wed!
But she loves me now, and she loved me then!
And the very first word that her sweet lips said,
My heart grew youthful again.

The Marchioness there, of Carabas,
She is wealthy, and young, and handsome still,
And but for her . . . well, we'll let that pass,
She may marry whomever she will.

But I will marry my own first love,
With her primrose face: for old things are best,
And the flower in her bosom, I prize it above
The brooch in my lady's breast.

The world is filled with folly and sin,
And Love must cling where it can, I say:
For Beauty is easy enough to win;
But one isn't loved every day.

And I think, in the lives of most women and men,
There's a moment when all would go smooth and even,
If only the dead could find out when
To come back, and be forgiven.

But O the smell of that jasmine-flower!
And O that music! and O the way
That voice rang out from the donjon tower,
Non ti scordar di me,
Non ti scordar di me!

Edward Robert Bulwer Lytton [1831-1891]

SONG

I saw the day's white rapture

Die in the sunset's flame,
But all her shining beauty
Lives like a deathless name.

Our lamps of joy are wasted,
Gone is Love's hallowed light;
But you and I remember
Through every starlit night.

Charles Hanson Towne [1877-

THE LONELY ROAD

I think thou waitest, Love, beyond the Gate -
Eager, with wind-stirred ripples in thy hair;
I have not found thee, and the hour is late,
And harsh the weight I bear.

Far have I sought, and flung my wealth of years
Like a young traveler, gay at careless inns -
See how the wine-stain whitens 'neath the tears
My burden wins!

And wilt thou know me, Love, with bended back,
Or wilt thou scorn me, in so drear a guise?
I have a wealth of sorrows in my pack,
One lonely prize -

Thy dream - and dross of sin. . . . O, dim the fields -
I may not find thee in so dark a land -
Yet I await what hope the turning yields
And beg with empty hand.

Kenneth Rand [1891-

EVENSONG

Beauty calls and gives no warning,
Shadows rise and wander on the day.
In the twilight, in the quiet evening,
We shall rise and smile and go away.
Over the flaming leaves
Freezes the sky.
It is the season grieves,
Not you, not I.
All our spring-times, all our summers,
We have kept the longing warm within.
Now we leave the after-comers
To attain the dreams we did not win.
Oh, we have wakened, Sweet, and had our birth,
And that's the end of earth;
And we have toiled and smiled and kept the light,
And that's the end of night.

Ridgely Torrence [1875-

THE NYMPH'S SONG TO HYLAS
From "The Life and Death of Jason"

I know a little garden-close
Set thick with lily and red rose,
Where I would wander if I might
From dewy dawn to dewy night,
And have one with me wandering.

And though within it no birds sing,
And though no pillared house is there,
And though the apple boughs are bare
Of fruit and blossom, would to God,
Her feet upon the green grass trod,
And I beheld them as before!

There comes a murmur from the shore,
And in the close two fair streams are,
Drawn from the purple hills afar,
Drawn down unto the restless sea;
Dark hills whose heath-bloom feeds no bee,
Dark shore no ship has ever seen,
Tormented by the billows green,
Whose murmur comes unceasingly
Unto the place for which I cry.

For which I cry both day and night,
For which I let slip all delight,
Whereby I grow both deaf and blind,
Careless to win, unskilled to find,
And quick to lose what all men seek.

Yet tottering as I am, and weak,
Still have I left a little breath
To seek within the jaws of death
An entrance to that happy place;
To seek the unforgotten face
Once seen, once kissed, once reft from me
Anigh the murmuring of the sea.

William Morris [1834-1896]

NO AND YES

If I could choose my paradise,
And please myself with choice of bliss,
Then I would have your soft blue eyes
And rosy little mouth to kiss!
Your lips, as smooth and tender, child,
As rose-leaves in a coppice wild.

If fate bade choose some sweet unrest,
To weave my troubled life a snare,
Then I would say "her maiden breast
And golden ripple of her hair";
And weep amid those tresses, child,

Contented to be thus beguiled.

Thomas Ashe [1836-1889]

LOVE IN DREAMS

Love hath his poppy-wreath,
Not Night alone.
I laid my head beneath
Love's lilied throne:
Then to my sleep he brought
This anodyne -
The flower of many a thought
And fancy fine:
A form, a face, no more;
Fairer than truth;
A dream from death's pale shore;
The soul of youth:
A dream so dear, so deep,
All dreams above,
That still I pray to sleep -
Bring Love back, Love!

John Addington Symonds [1840-1893]

"A LITTLE WHILE I FAIN WOULD LINGER YET"

A little while (my life is almost set!)
I fain would pause along the downward way,
Musing an hour in this sad sunset-ray,
While, Sweet! our eyes with tender tears are wet:
A little hour I fain would linger yet.

A little while I fain would linger yet,
All for love's sake, for love that cannot tire;
Though fervid youth be dead, with youth's desire,
And hope has faded to a vague regret,
A little while I fain would linger yet.

A little while I fain would linger here:
Behold! who knows what strange, mysterious bars
'Twixt souls that love may rise in other stars?
Nor can love deem the face of death is fair:
A little while I still would linger here.

A little while I yearn to hold thee fast,
Hand locked in hand, and loyal heart to heart;
(O pitying Christ! those woeful words, "We part!")
So, ere the darkness fall, the light be past,
A little while I fain would hold thee fast.

A little while, when light and twilight meet, -
Behind, our broken years; before, the deep
Weird wonder of the last unfathomed sleep, -
A little while I still would clasp thee, Sweet,
A little while, when night and twilight meet.

A little while I fain would linger here;
Behold! who knows what soul-dividing bars
Earth's faithful loves may part in other stars?
Nor can love deem the face of death is fair:
A little while I still would linger here.

Paul Hamilton Hayne [1830-1886]

SONG

I made another garden, yea,
For my new Love:
I left the dead rose where it lay
And set the new above.
Why did my Summer not begin?
Why did my heart not haste?
My old Love came and walked therein,
And laid the garden waste.

She entered with her weary smile,
Just as of old;
She looked around a little while
And shivered with the cold:
Her passing touch was death to all,
Her passing look a blight;
She made the white rose-petals fall,
And turned the red rose white.

Her pale robe clinging to the grass
Seemed like a snake
That bit the grass and ground, alas!
And a sad trail did make.
She went up slowly to the gate,
And there, just as of yore,
She turned back at the last to wait
And say farewell once more.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy [1844-1881]

SONG

Has summer come without the rose,
Or left the bird behind?
Is the blue changed above thee,
O world! or am I blind?
Will you change every flower that grows,
Or only change this spot,
Where she who said, I love thee,
Now says, I love thee not?

The skies seemed true above thee,
The rose true on the tree;
The bird seemed true the summer through,
But all proved false to me.
World! is there one good thing in you,

Life, love, or death - or what?
Since lips that sang, I love thee,
Have said, I love thee not?

I think the sun's kiss will scarce fall
Into one flower's gold cup;
I think the bird will miss me,
And give the summer up.
O sweet place! desolate in tall
Wild grass, have you forgot
How her lips loved to kiss me,
Now that they kiss me not?

Be false or fair above me,
Come back with any face,
Summer! - do I care what you do?
You cannot change one place -
The grass, the leaves, the earth, the dew,
The grave I make the spot -
Here, where she used to love me,
Here, where she loves me not.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy [1844-1881]

AFTER

A little time for laughter,
A little time to sing,
A little time to kiss and cling,
And no more kissing after.

A little while for scheming
Love's unperfected schemes;
A little time for golden dreams,
Then no more any dreaming.

A little while 'twas given
To me to have thy love;
Now, like a ghost, alone I move
About a ruined heaven.

A little time for speaking
Things sweet to say and hear;
A time to seek, and find thee near,
Then no more any seeking.

A little time for saying
Words the heart breaks to say;
A short sharp time wherein to pray,
Then no more need of praying;

But long, long years to weep in,
And comprehend the whole
Great grief that desolates the soul,
And eternity to sleep in.

Philip Bourke Marston [1850-1887]

AFTER SUMMER

We'll not weep for summer over, -
No, not we:
Strew above his head the clover, -
Let him be!

Other eyes may weep his dying,
Shed their tears
There upon him, where he's lying
With his peers.

Unto some of them he proffered
Gifts most sweet;
For our hearts a grave he offered, -
Was this meet?

All our fond hopes, praying, perished
In his wrath, -
All the lovely dreams we cherished
Strewed his path.

Shall we in our tombs, I wonder,
Far apart,
Sundered wide as seas can sunder
Heart from heart,

Dream at all of all the sorrows
That were ours, -
Bitter nights, more bitter morrows;
Poison-flowers

Summer gathered, as in madness,
Saying, "See,
These are yours, in place of gladness, -
Gifts from me"?

Nay, the rest that will be ours
Is supreme, -
And below the poppy flowers
Steals no dream.

Philip Bourke Marston [1850-1887]

ROCOCO

Take hand and part with laughter;
Touch lips and part with tears;
Once more and no more after,
Whatever comes with years.
We twain shall not remeasure
The ways that left us twain;
Nor crush the lees of pleasure
From sanguine grapes of pain.

We twain once well in sunder,
What will the mad gods do
For hate with me, I wonder,
Or what for love with you?
Forget them till November,
And dream there's April yet,
Forget that I remember,
And dream that I forget.

Time found our tired love sleeping,
And kissed away his breath;
But what should we do weeping,
Though light love sleep to death?
We have drained his lips at leisure,
Till there's not left to drain
A single sob of pleasure,
A single pulse of pain.

Dream that the lips once breathless
Might quicken if they would;
Say that the soul is deathless;
Dream that the gods are good;
Say March may wed September,
And time divorce regret;
But not that you remember,
And not that I forget.

We have heard from hidden places
What love scarce lives and hears:
We have seen on fervent faces
The pallor of strange tears:
We have trod the wine-vat's treasure,
Whence, ripe to steam and stain,
Foams round the feet of pleasure
The blood-red must of pain.

Remembrance may recover
And time bring back to time
The name of your first lover,
The ring of my first rhyme:
But rose-leaves of December
The frosts of June shall fret,
The day that you remember,
The day that I forget.

The snake that hides and hisses
In heaven we twain have known;
The grief of cruel kisses,
The joy whose mouth makes moan;
The pulses' pause and measure,
Where in one furtive vein
Throbs through the heart of pleasure
The purpler blood of pain.

We have done with tears and treasons
And love for treason's sake;
Room for the swift new seasons,
The years that burn and break,

Dismantle and dismember
Men's days and dreams, Juliette;
For love may not remember,
But time will not forget.

Life treads down love in flying,
Time withers him at root;
Bring all dead things and dying,
Reaped sheaf and ruined fruit,
Where, crushed by three days' pressure
Our three days' love lies slain;
And earlier leaf of pleasure,
And latter flower of pain.

Breathe close upon the ashes,
It may be flame will leap;
Unclose the soft close lashes,
Lift up the lids and weep.
Light love's extinguished ember,
Let one tear leave it wet
For one that you remember
And ten that you forget.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

RONDEL

These many years since we began to be,
What have the Gods done with us? what with me,
What with my love? They have shown me fates and fears,
Harsh springs, and fountains bitterer than the sea,
Grief a fixed star, and joy a vane that veers,
These many years.

With her, my Love, - with her have they done well?
But who shall answer for her? who shall tell
Sweet things or sad, such things as no man hears?
May no tears fall, if no tears ever fell,
From eyes more dear to me than starriest spheres,
These many years!

But if tears ever touched, for any grief,
Those eyelids folded like a white-rose leaf,
Deep double shells where through the eye-flower peers,
Let them weep once more only, sweet and brief,
Brief tears and bright, for one who gave her tears
These many years!

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

THE OBLATION

Ask nothing more of me, sweet;
All I can give you I give.
Heart of my heart, were it more,
More would be laid at your feet:

Love that should help you to live,
Song that should spur you to soar.

All things were nothing to give
Once to have sense of you more,
Touch you and taste of you, sweet,
Think you and breathe you and live,
Swept of your wings as they soar,
Trodden by chance of your feet.

I that have love and no more
Give you but love of you, sweet:
He that hath more, let him give;
He that hath wings, let him soar;
Mine is the heart at your feet
Here, that must love you to live.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

THE SONG OF THE BOWER
From "The House of Life"

Say, is it day, is it dusk in thy bower,
Thou whom I long for, who longest for me?
Oh! be it light, be it night, 'tis Love's hour,
Love's that is fettered as Love's that is free.
Free Love has leaped to that innermost chamber,
Oh! the last time, and the hundred before:
Fettered Love, motionless, can but remember,
Yet something that sighs from him passes the door.

Nay, but my heart when it flies to thy bower,
What does it find there that knows it again?
There it must droop like a shower-beaten flower,
Red at the rent core and dark with the rain.
Ah! yet what shelter is still shed above it, -
What waters still image its leaves torn apart?
Thy soul is the shade that clings round it to love it,
And tears are its mirror deep down in thy heart.

What were my prize, could I enter thy bower,
This day, to-morrow, at eve or at morn?
Large lovely arms and a neck like a tower,
Bosom then heaving that now lies forlorn.
Kindled with love-breath, (the sun's kiss is colder!)
Thy sweetness all near me, so distant to-day;
My hand round thy neck and thy hand on my shoulder,
My mouth to thy mouth as the world melts away.

What is it keeps me afar from thy bower, -
My spirit, my body, so fain to be there?
Waters engulfing or fires that devour? -
Earth heaped against me or death in the air?
Nay, but in day-dreams, for terror, for pity,
The trees wave their heads with an omen to tell;
Nay, but in night-dreams, throughout the dark city,
The hours, clashed together, lose count in the bell.

Shall I not one day remember thy bower,
One day when all days are one day to me? -
Thinking, "I stirred not, and yet had the power,"
Yearning, "Ah God, if again it might be!"
Peace, peace! such a small lamp illumes, on this highway,
So dimly so few steps in front of my feet, -
Yet shows me that her way is parted from my way. . . .
Out of sight, beyond light, at what goal may we meet?

Dante Gabriel Rossetti [1828-1882]

SONG

We break the glass, whose sacred wine
To some beloved health we drain,
Lest future pledges, less divine,
Should e'er the hallowed toy profane;
And thus I broke a heart that poured
Its tide of feelings out for thee,
In draughts, by after-times deplored,
Yet dear to memory.

But still the old, impassioned ways
And habits of my mind remain,
And still unhappy light displays
Thine image chambered in my brain,
And still it looks as when the hours
Went by like flights of singing birds,
Or that soft chain of spoken flowers
And airy gems, - thy words.

Edward Coote Pinkney [1802-1828]

MAUD MULLER

Maud Muller on a summer's day
Raked the meadow sweet with hay.

Beneath her torn hat glowed the wealth
Of simple beauty and rustic health.

Singing, she wrought, and her merry glee
The mock-bird echoed from his tree.

But when she glanced to the far-off town,
White from its hill-slope looking down,

The sweet song died, and a vague unrest
And a nameless longing filled her breast, -

A wish that she hardly dared to own,
For something better than she had known.

The Judge rode slowly down the lane,
Smoothing his horse's chestnut mane.

He drew his bridle in the shade
Of the apple-trees, to greet the maid,

And asked a draught from the spring that flowed
Through the meadow across the road.

She stooped where the cool spring bubbled up,
And filled for him her small tin cup,

And blushed as she gave it, looking down
On her feet so bare, and her tattered gown.

"Thanks!" said the Judge; "a sweeter draught
From a fairer hand was never quaffed."

He spoke of the grass and flowers and trees,
Of the singing birds and the humming bees;

Then talked of the haying, and wondered whether
The cloud in the west would bring foul weather.

And Maud forgot her brier-torn gown,
And her graceful ankles bare and brown;

And listened, while a pleased surprise
Looked from her long-lashed hazel eyes.

At last, like one who for delay
Seeks a vain excuse, he rode away.

Maud Muller looked and sighed: "Ah me!
That I the Judge's bride might be!

"He would dress me up in silks so fine,
And praise and toast me at his wine.

"My father should wear a broadcloth coat;
My brother should sail a painted boat.

"I'd dress my mother so grand and gay,
And the baby should have a new toy each day.

"And I'd feed the hungry and clothe the poor,
And all should bless me who left our door."

The Judge looked back as he climbed the hill,
And saw Maud Muller standing still.

"A form more fair, a face more sweet,
Ne'er hath it been my lot to meet.

"And her modest answer and graceful air
Show her wise and good as she is fair.

"Would she were mine, and I to-day,
Like her, a harvester of hay;

"No doubtful balance of rights and wrongs,
Nor weary lawyers with endless tongues,

"But low of cattle and song of birds,
And health and quiet and loving words."

But he thought of his sisters, proud and cold,
And his mother, vain of her rank and gold.

So, closing his heart, the Judge rode on,
And Maud was left in the field alone.

But the lawyers smiled that afternoon,
When he hummed in court an old love-tune;

And the young girl mused beside the well
Till the rain on the unraked clover fell.

He wedded a wife of richest dower,
Who lived for fashion, as he for power.

Yet oft, in his marble hearth's bright glow,
He watched a picture come and go;

And sweet Maud Muller's hazel eyes
Looked out in their innocent surprise.

Oft, when the wine in his glass was red,
He longed for the wayside well instead;

And closed his eyes on his garnished rooms
To dream of meadows and clover-blooms.

And the proud man sighed, with a secret pain,
"Ah, that I were free again!

"Free as when I rode that day,
Where the barefoot maiden raked her hay."

She wedded a man unlearned and poor,
And many children played round her door.

But care and sorrow, and childbirth pain,
Left their traces on heart and brain.

And oft, when the summer sun shone hot
On the new-mown hay in the meadow lot,

And she heard the little spring brook fall
Over the roadside, through the wall,

In the shade of the apple-tree again
She saw a rider draw his rein;

And, gazing down with timid grace,
She felt his pleased eyes read her face.

Sometimes her narrow kitchen walls

Stretched away into stately halls;

The weary wheel to a spinet turned,
The tallow candle an astral burned,

And for him who sat by the chimney lug,
Dozing and grumbling o'er pipe and mug,

A manly form at her side she saw,
And joy was duty and love was law.

Then she took up her burden of life again,
Saying only, "It might have been."

Alas for maiden, alas for Judge,
For rich repiner and household drudge!

God pity them both! and pity us all,
Who vainly the dreams of youth recall.

For all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these: "It might have been!"

Ah, well! for us all some sweet hope lies
Deeply buried from human eyes;

And, in the hereafter, angels may
Roll the stone from its grave away!

John Greenleaf Whittier [1807-1892]

LA GRISETTE

Ah, Clemence! when I saw thee last
Trip down the Rue de Seine,
And turning, when thy form had passed,
I said, "We meet again, -
I dreamed not in that idle glance
Thy latest image came,
And only left to memory's trance
A shadow and a name.

The few strange words my lips had taught
Thy timid voice to speak,
Their gentler signs, which often brought
Fresh roses to thy cheek,
The trailing of thy long loose hair
Bent o'er my couch of pain,
All, all returned, more sweet, more fair;
Oh, had we met again!

I walked where saint and virgin keep
The vigil lights of Heaven,
I knew that thou hadst woes to weep,
And sins to be forgiven;
I watched where Genevieve was laid,
I knelt by Mary's shrine,

Beside me low, soft voices prayed;
Alas! but where was thine?

And when the morning sun was bright,
When wind and wave were calm,
And flamed, in thousand-tinted light,
The rose of Notre Dame,
I wandered through the haunts of men,
From Boulevard to Quai,
Till, frowning o'er Saint Etienne,
The Pantheon's shadow lay.

In vain, in vain; we meet no more,
Nor dream what fates befall;
And long upon the stranger's shore
My voice on thee may call,
When years have clothed the line in moss
That tells thy name and days,
And withered, on thy simple cross,
The wreaths of Pere-la-Chaise!

Oliver Wendell Holmes [1809-1894]

THE DARK MAN

Rose o' the World, she came to my bed
And changed the dreams of my heart and head;
For joy of mine she left grief of hers,
And garlanded me with a crown of furze.

Rose o' the World, they go out and in,
And watch me dream and my mother spin;
And they pity the tears on my sleeping face
While my soul's away in a fairy place.

Rose o' the World, they have words galore,
And wide's the swing of my mother's door:
And soft they speak of my darkened eyes -
But what do they know, who are all so wise?

Rose o' the World, the pain you give
Is worth all days that a man may live -
Worth all shy prayers that the colleens say
On the night that darkens the wedding-day.

Rose o' the World, what man would wed
When he might dream of your face instead?
Might go to the grave with the blessed pain
Of hungering after your face again?

Rose o' the World, they may talk their fill,
For dreams are good, and my life stands still
While their lives' red ashes the gossips stir;
But my fiddle knows - and I talk to her.

Nora Hopper [1871-1906]

EURYDICE

He came to call me back from death
To the bright world above.
I hear him yet with trembling breath
Low calling, "O sweet love!
Come back! The earth is just as fair;
The flowers, the open skies are there;
Come back to life and love!"

Oh! all my heart went out to him,
And the sweet air above.
With happy tears my eyes were dim;
I called him, "O sweet love!
I come, for thou art all to me.
Go forth, and I will follow thee,
Right back to life and love!

I followed through the cavern black;
I saw the blue above.
Some terror turned me to look back:
I heard him wail, "O love!
What hast thou done! What hast thou done!"
And then I saw no more the sun,
And lost were life and love.

Francis William Bourdillon [1852-1921]

A WOMAN'S THOUGHT

I am a woman - therefore I may not
Call to him, cry to him,
Fly to him,
Bid him delay not!

Then when he comes to me, I must sit quiet:
Still as a stone -
All silent and cold.
If my heart riot -
Crush and defy it!
Should I grow bold,
Say one dear thing to him,
All my life fling to him,
Cling to him -
What to atone
Is enough for my sinning!
This were the cost to me,
This were my winning -
That he were lost to me.

Not as a lover
At last if he part from me,
Tearing my heart from me,
Hurt beyond cure, -
Calm and demure
Then must I hold me,

In myself fold me,
Lest he discover;
Showing no sign to him
By look of mine to him
What he has been to me -
How my heart turns to him,
Follows him, yearns to him,
Prays him to love me.

Pity me, lean to me,
Thou God above me!

Richard Watson Gilder [1844-1900]

LAUS VENERIS
A Picture By Burne-Jones

Pallid with too much longing,
White with passion and prayer,
Goddess of love and beauty,
She sits in the picture there, -

Sits with her dark eyes seeking
Something more subtle still
Than the old delights of loving
Her measureless days to fill.

She has loved and been loved so often
In her long, immortal years,
That she tires of the worn-out rapture,
Sickens of hopes and fears.

No joys or sorrows move her,
Done with her ancient pride;
For her head she found too heavy
The crown she has cast aside.

Clothed in her scarlet splendor,
Bright with her glory of hair
Sad that she is not mortal, -
Eternally sad and fair,

Longing for joys she knows not,
Athirst with a vain desire,
There she sits in the picture,
Daughter of foam and fire.

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835-1908]

ADONAIS

Shall we meet no more, my love, at the binding of the sheaves,
In the happy harvest-fields, as the sun sinks low,
When the orchard paths are dim with the drift of fallen leaves,
And the reapers sing together, in the mellow, misty eves:
O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!

Love met us in the orchard, ere the corn had gathered plume, -
O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!
Sweet as summer days that die when the months are in the bloom,
And the peaks are ripe with sunset, like the tassels of the broom,
In the happy harvest-fields as the sun sinks low.

Sweet as summer days that die, leafing sweeter each to each, -
O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!
All the heart was full of feeling: love had ripened into speech,
Like the sap that turns to nectar in the velvet of the peach,
In the happy harvest-fields as the sun sinks low.

Sweet as summer days that die at the ripening of the corn, -
O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!
Sweet as lovers' fickle oaths, sworn to faithless maids forsworn,
When the musty orchard breathes like a mellow drinking-horn,
Over happy harvest-fields as the sun sinks low.

Love left us at the dying of the mellow autumn eves, -
O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!
When the skies are ripe and fading, like the colors of the leaves,
And the reapers kiss and part, at the binding of the sheaves,
In the happy harvest-fields as the sun sinks low.

Then the reapers gather home, from the gray and misty meres; -
O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!
Then the reapers gather home, and they bear upon their spears,
One whose face is like the moon, fallen gray among the spheres,
With the daylight's curse upon it, as the sun sinks low.

Faint as far-off bugles blowing, soft and low the reapers sung; -
O, happy are the apples when the south winds blow!
Sweet as summer in the blood, when the heart is ripe and young,
Love is sweetest in the dying, like the sheaves he lies among,
In the happy harvest-fields as the sun sinks low.

William Wallace Harney [1831-1912]

FACE TO FACE

If my face could only promise that its color would remain;
If my heart were only certain it would hide the moment's pain;
I would meet you and would greet you in the old familiar tone,
And naught should ever show you the wrong that you have done.

If my trembling hand were steady, if my smiles had not all fled;
If my eyes spoke not so plainly of the tears they often shed;
I would meet you and would greet you at the old trysting place,
And perchance you'd deem me happy if you met me face to face.

If the melody of Springtime awoke no wild refrain,
If the Autumn's gold burthen awoke no living pain,
I would meet you and would greet you, as years ago we met,
Before our hearts were shipwrecked on the ocean of regret.

If my woman's soul were stronger, if my heart were not so true,

I should long have ceased remembering the love I had for you;
But I dare not meet or greet you, in the old familiar way,
Until we meet in Heaven, where all tears have passed away.

Frances Cochrane [18 -

ASHORE

Out I came from the dancing-place,
The night-wind met me face to face, -

A wind off the harbor, cold and keen,
"I know," it whistled, "where thou hast been."

A faint voice fell from the stars above -
"Thou? whom we lighted to shrines of Love!"

I found when I reached my lonely room
A faint sweet scent in the unlit gloom.

And this was the worst of all to bear,
For some one had left white lilac there.

The flower you loved, in times that were.

Laurence Hope [1865-1904]

KHRISTNA AND HIS FLUTE

Be still, my heart, and listen,
For sweet and yet acute
I hear the wistful music
Of Khristna and his flute.
Across the cool, blue evenings,
Throughout the burning days,
Persuasive and beguiling,
He plays and plays and plays.

Ah, none may hear such music
Resistant to its charms,
The household work grows weary,
And cold the husband's arms.
I must arise and follow,
To seek, in vain pursuit,
The blueness and the distance,
The sweetness of that flute!

In linked and liquid sequence,
The plaintive notes dissolve
Divinely tender secrets
That none but he can solve.
O Khristna, I am coming,
I can no more delay.
"My heart has flown to join thee,"
How shall my footsteps stay?

Beloved, such thoughts have peril;
The wish is in my mind
That I had fired the jungle,
And left no leaf behind, -
Burnt all bamboos to ashes,
And made their music mute, -
To save thee from the magic
Of Khristna and his flute.

Laurence Hope [1865-1904]

IMPENITENTIA ULTIMA

Before my light goes out forever, if God should give me choice of graces,
I would not reck of length of days, nor crave for things to be;
But cry: "One day of the great lost days, one face of all the faces,
Grant me to see and touch once more and nothing more to see!

"For, Lord, I was free of all Thy flowers, but I chose the world's sad roses,
And that is why my feet are torn and mine eyes are blind with sweat,
But at Thy terrible judgment seat, when this my tired life closes,
I am ready to reap whereof I sowed, and pay my righteous debt.

"But once, before the sand is run and the silver thread is broken,
Give me a grace and cast aside the veil of dolorous years,
Grant me one hour of all mine hours, and let me see for a token
Her pure and pitiful eyes shine out, and bathe her feet with tears."

Her pitiful hands should calm and her hair stream down and blind me,
Out of the sight of night, and out of the reach of fear,
And her eyes should be my light whilst the sun went out behind me,
And the viols in her voice be the last sound in mine ear.

Before the ruining waters fall and my life be carried under,
And Thine anger cleave me through, as a child cuts down a flower,
I will praise Thee, Lord, in hell, while my limbs are racked asunder,
For the last sad sight of her face and the little grace of an hour.

Ernest Dowson [1867-1900]

NON SUM QUALIS ERAM BONAE SUB REGNO CYNARAE

Last night, ah, yesternight, betwixt her lips and mine
There fell thy shadow, Cynara! thy breath was shed
Upon my soul between the kisses and the wine;
And I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, I was desolate and bowed my head.
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

All night upon mine heart I felt her warm heart beat,
Night-long within mine arms in love and sleep she lay;
Surely the kisses of her bought red mouth were sweet;
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
When I awoke and found the dawn was gray:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

I have forgot much, Cynara! gone with the wind,
Flung roses, roses riotously with the throng,
Dancing, to put thy pale, lost lilies out of mind;
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, all the time, because the dance was long:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

I cried for madder music and for stronger wine,
But when the feast is finished and the lamps expire,
Then falls thy shadow, Cynara! the night is thine;
And I am desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, hungry for the lips of my desire:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

Ernest Dowson [1867-1900]

QUID NON SPEREMUS, AMANTES?

Why is there in the least touch of her hands
More grace than other women's lips bestow,
If love is but a slave to fleshly bands
Of flesh to flesh, wherever love may go?

Why choose vain grief and heavy-hearted hours
For her lost voice, and dear remembered hair,
If love may cull his honey from all flowers,
And girls grow thick as violets, everywhere?

Nay! She is gone, and all things fall apart;
Or she is cold, and vainly have we prayed;
And broken is the summer's splendid heart,
And hope within a deep, dark grave is laid.

As man aspires and falls, yet a soul springs
Out of his agony of flesh at last,
So love that flesh enthralls, shall rise on wings
Soul-centered, when the rule of flesh is past.

Then, most High Love, or wreathed with myrtle sprays,
Or crownless and forlorn, nor less a star,
Thee may I serve and follow all my days,
Whose thorns are sweet as never roses are!

Ernest Dowson [1867-1900]

"SO SWEET LOVE SEEMED"

So sweet love seemed that April morn,
When first we kissed beside the thorn,
So strangely sweet, it was not strange
We thought that love could never change.

But I can tell - let truth be told -
That love will change in growing old;
Though day by day is naught to see,
So delicate his motions be.

And in the end 'twill come to pass
Quite to forget what once he was,
Nor even in fancy to recall
The pleasure that was all in all.

His little spring, that sweet we found,
So deep in summer floods is drowned,
I wonder, bathed in joy complete,
How love so young could be so sweet.

Robert Bridges [1844-1930]

AN OLD TUNE
After Gerard De Nerval

There is an air for which I would disown
Mozart's, Rossini's, Weber's melodies, -
A sweet sad air that languishes and sighs,
And keeps its secret charm for me alone.

Whene'er I hear that music vague and old,
Two hundred years are mist that rolls away;
The thirteenth Louis reigns, and I behold
A green land golden in the dying day.

An old red castle, strong with stony towers,
And windows gay with many-colored glass;
Wide plains, and rivers flowing among flowers,
That bathe the castle basement as they pass.

In antique weed, with dark eyes and gold hair,
A lady looks forth from her window high;
It may be that I knew and found her fair,
In some forgotten life, long time gone by.

Andrew Lang [1844-1912]

REFUGE

Set your face to the sea, fond lover, -
Cold in darkness the sea-winds blow!
Waves and clouds and the night will cover
All your passion and all your woe:
Sobbing waves, and the death within them,
Sweet as the lips that once you pressed -
Pray that your hopeless heart may win them!
Pray that your weary life may rest!

Set your face to the stars, fond lover, -
Calm, and silent, and bright, and true! -
They will pity you, they will hover
Softly over the deep for you.
Winds of heaven will sigh your dirges,
Tears of heaven for you be spent,
And sweet for you will the murmuring surges

Pour the wail of their low lament.

Set your face to the lonely spaces,
Vast and gaunt, of the midnight sky!
There, with the drifting cloud, your place is,
There with the griefs that cannot die.
Love is a mocking fiend's derision,
Peace a phantom, and faith a snare!
Make the hope of your heart a vision -
Look to heaven, and find it there!

William Winter [1836-

MIDSUMMER

After the May time and after the June time
Rare with blossoms and perfume sweet,
Cometh the round world's royal noon time,
The red midsummer of blazing heat,
When the sun, like an eye that never closes,
Bends on the earth its fervid gaze,
And the winds are still, and the crimson roses
Droop and wither and die in its rays.

Unto my heart has come this season,
O, my lady, my worshiped one,
When, over the stars of Pride and Reason,
Sails Love's cloudless, noonday sun.
Like a great red ball in my bosom burning
With fires that nothing can quench or tame,
It glows till my heart itself seems turning
Into a liquid lake of flame.

The hopes half shy and the sighs all tender,
The dreams and fears of an earlier day,
Under the noontide's royal splendor,
Droop like roses, and wither away.
From the hills of Doubt no winds are blowing,
From the isles of Pain no breeze is sent, -
Only the sun in a white heat glowing
Over an ocean of great content.

Sink, O my soul, in this golden glory!
Die, O my heart, in thy rapture-swoon!
For the Autumn must come with its mournful story.
And Love's midsummer will fade too soon.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox [1850-1919]

ASHES OF ROSES

Soft on the sunset sky
Bright daylight closes,
Leaving when light doth die,
Pale hues that mingling lie -
Ashes of roses.

When love's warm sun is set,
Love's brightness closes;
Eyes with hot tears are wet,
In hearts there linger yet
Ashes of roses.

Elaine Goodale Eastman [1863-

SYMPATHY

The color gladdens all your heart;
You call it Heaven, dear, but I -
Now Hope and I are far apart -
Call it the sky.

I know that Nature's tears have wet
The world with sympathy; but you,
Who know not any sorrow yet,
Call it the dew.

Althea Gyles [?]

THE LOOK

Strephon kissed me in the spring,
Robin in the fall,
But Colin only looked at me
And never kissed at all.

Strephon's kiss was lost in jest,
Robin's lost in play,
But the kiss in Colin's eyes
Haunts me night and day.

Sara Teasdale [1884-1933]

"WHEN MY BELOVED SLEEPING LIES"

When my beloved sleeping lies
I cannot look at him for tears,
Such mournful peace is on his eyes.

A look of lonely death he wears,
And graven very calm and deep
Lie all the sorrows of old years.

He is so passionless in sleep,
With all his strength relaxed to rest;
I cannot see him and not weep.

For weakness life has not confessed
And shadowed scars of old mistakes,
I take his head upon my breast,
And hold my dearest till he wakes.

Irene Rutherford McLeod [1891-

LOVE AND LIFE

"Give me a fillet, Love," quoth I,
"To bind my Sweeting's heart to me,
So ne'er a chance of earth or sky
Shall part us ruthlessly:
A fillet, Love, but not to chafe
My Sweeting's soul, to cause her pain;
But just to bind her close and safe
Through snow and blossom and sun and rain:
A fillet, boy!"
Love said, "Here's joy."

"Give me a fetter, Life," quoth I,
"To bind to mine my Sweeting's heart,
So Death himself must fail to pry
With Time the two apart:
A fetter, Life, that each shall wear,
Whose precious bondage each shall know.
I prithee, Life, no more forbear -
Why dost thou wait and falter so?
Haste, Life - be brief!"
Said Life: - "Here's grief."

Julie Mathilde Lippman [1864-

LOVE'S PRISONER

Sweet love has twined his fingers in my hair,
And laid his hand across my wondering eyes.
I cannot move save in the narrow space
Of his strong arms' embrace,
Nor see but only in my own heart where
His image lies.
How can I tell,
Emprisoned so well,
If in the outer world be sunset or sunrise?
Sweet Love has laid his hand across my eyes.

Sweet Love has loosed his fingers from my hair,
His lifted hand has left my eyelids wet.
I cannot move save to pursue his fleet
And unreturning feet,
Nor see but in my ruined heart, and there
His face lies yet.
How should I know,
Distraught and blinded so,
If in the outer world be sunrise or sunset?
Sweet Love has freed my eyes, but they are wet.

Mariana Griswold Van Rensselaer [1851-1934]

ROSIES

There's a rosie-show in Derry,
An' a rosie-show in Down;
An' 'tis like there's wan, I'm thinkin',
'll be held in Randalstown;
But if I had the choosin'
Av a rosie-prize the day,
'Twould be a pink wee rosie
Like he plucked whin rakin' hay:
Yon pink wee rosie in my hair -
He fixed it troth - an' kissed it there!
White gulls wor wheelin' roun' the sky
Down by - down by.

Ay, there's rosies sure in Derry,
An' there's famous wans in Down;
Och there's rosies all a-hawkin'
Through the heart av London town!
But if I had the liftin'
Or the buyin' av a few,
I'd choose jist pink wee rosies
That's all drenchin' wid the dew -
Yon pink wee rosies wid the tears!
Och wet, wet tears! - ay, troth, 'tis years
Since we kep' rakin' in the hay
Thon day - thon day!

Agnes I. Hanrahan [18

AT THE COMEDY

Last night, in snowy gown and glove,
I saw you watch the play
Where each mock hero won his love
In the old unlifelike way.

(And, oh, were life their little scene
Where love so smoothly ran,
How different, Dear, this world had been
Since this old world began!)

For you, who saw them gayly win
Both hand and heart away,
Knew well where dwelt the mockery in
That foolish little play.

("If love were all - if love were all,"
The viols sobbed and cried,
"Then love were best whate'er befall!"
Low, low, the flutes replied.)

And you, last night, did you forget,
So far from me, so near?
For watching there your eyes were wet
With just an idle tear!

(And down the great dark curtain fell
Upon their foolish play:
But you and I knew - Oh, too well! -
Life went another way!)

Arthur Stringer [1874-

"SOMETIME IT MAY BE"

Sometime it may be you and I
In that deserted yard shall lie
Where memories fade away;
Caring no more for our old dreams,
Busy with new and alien themes,
The saints and sages say.

But let our graves be side by side,
So passers-by at even-tide
May pause a moment's space:
"Ah, they were lovers who lie here!
Else why these low graves laid so near,
In this forgotten place?"

Arthur Colton [1868-

"I HEARD A SOLDIER"

I heard a soldier sing some trifle
Out in the sun-dried veldt alone:
He lay and cleaned his grimy rifle
Idly, behind a stone.

"If after death, love, comes a waking,
And in their camp so dark and still
The men of dust hear bugles, breaking
Their halt upon the hill.

"To me the slow and silver pealing
That then the last high trumpet pours
Shall softer than the dawn come stealing,
For, with its call, comes yours!"

What grief of love had he to stifle,
Basking so idly by his stone,
That grimy soldier with his rifle
Out in the veldt, alone?

Herbert Trench [1865-1923]

THE LAST MEMORY

When I am old, and think of the old days,
And warm my hands before a little blaze,
Having forgotten love, hope, fear, desire,
I shall see, smiling out of the pale fire,

One face, mysterious and exquisite;
And I shall gaze, and ponder over it,
Wondering, was it Leonardo wrought
That stealthy ardency, where passionate thought
Burns inward, a revealing flame, and glows
To the last ecstasy, which is repose?
Was it Bronzino, those Borghese eyes?
And, musing thus among my memories,
O unforgotten! you will come to seem,
As pictures do, remembered, some old dream.
And I shall think of you as something strange,
And beautiful, and full of helpless change,
Which I beheld and carried in my heart;
But you, I loved, will have become a part
Of the eternal mystery, and love
Like a dim pain; and I shall bend above
My little fire, and shiver, being cold,
When you are no more young, and I am old.

Arthur Symons [1865-

"DOWN BY THE SALLEY GARDENS"

Down by the salley gardens my love and I did meet;
She passed the salley gardens with little snow-white feet.
She bid me take love easy, as the leaves grow on the tree;
But I, being young and foolish, with her would not agree.
In a field by the river my love and I did stand,
And on my leaning shoulder she laid her snow-white hand.
She bid me take life easy, as the grass grows on the weirs;
But I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears.

William Butler Yeats [1865-

ASHES OF LIFE

Love has gone and left me, and the days are all alike.
Eat I must, and sleep I will - and would that night were here!
But ah, to lie awake and hear the slow hours strike!
Would that it were day again, with twilight near!

Love has gone and left me, and I don't know what to do;
This or that or what you will is all the same to me;
But all the things that I begin I leave before I'm through -
There's little use in anything as far as I can see.

Love has gone and left me, and the neighbors knock and borrow,
And life goes on forever like the gnawing of a mouse.
And to-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow
There's this little street and this little house.

Edna St. Vincent Millay [1892-

A FAREWELL

Thou wilt not look on me?
Ah, well! the world is wide;
The rivers still are rolling free,
Song and the sword abide;
And who sets forth to sail the sea
Shall follow with the tide.

Thrall of my darkling day,
I vassalage fulfil:
Seeking the myrtle and the bay,
(They thrive when hearts are chill!)
The straitness of the narrowing way,
The house where all is still.

Alice Brown [1857-

THE PARTED LOVERS

SONG
From "Twelfth Night"

O mistress mine, where are you roaming?
O, stay and hear; your true Love's coming,
That can sing both high and low:
Trip no further, pretty Sweeting;
Journeys end in lovers meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 'tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure:
In delay there lies no plenty:
Then come kiss me, Sweet-and-twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not endure.

William Shakespeare [1564-1616]

"GO, LOVELY ROSE"

Go, lovely Rose -
Tell her that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young,

And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung
In deserts, where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired:
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die - that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee;
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair!

Edmund Waller [1606-1687]

TO THE ROSE: A SONG

Go, happy Rose, and, interwove
With other flowers, bind my love.
Tell her, too, she must not be
Longer flowing, longer free,
That so oft fettered me.

Say, if she's fretful, I have bands
Of pearl and gold to bind her hands;
Tell her, if she struggle still,
I have myrtle rods at will
For to tame, though not to kill.

Take thou my blessing thus, and go
And tell her this, - but do not so! -
Lest a handsome anger fly
Like a lightning from her eye,
And burn thee up, as well as I!

Robert Herrick [1591-1674]

MEMORY
From "Britannia's Pastorals"

Marina's gone, and now sit I,
As Philomela (on a thorn,
Turned out of nature's livery),
Mirthless, alone, and all forlorn:
Only she sings not, while my sorrows can
Breathe forth such notes as fit a dying swan.

So shuts the marigold her leaves
At the departure of the sun;
So from the honeysuckle sheaves
The bee goes when the day is done;
So sits the turtle when she is but one,

And so all woe, as I since she is gone.

To some few birds, kind Nature hath
Made all the summer as one day:
Which once enjoyed, cold winter's wrath
As night, they sleeping pass away.
Those happy creatures are, that know not yet
The pain to be deprived or to forget.

I oft have heard men say there be
Some that with confidence profess
The helpful Art of Memory:
But could they teach Forgetfulness,
I'd learn; and try what further art could do
To make me love her and forget her too.

Sad melancholy, that persuades
Men from themselves, to think they be
Headless, or other bodies' shades,
Hath long and bootless dwelt with me;
For could I think she some idea were,
I still might love, forget, and have her here.

But such she is not: nor would I,
For twice as many torments more,
As her bereaved company
Hath brought to those I felt before,
For then no future time might hap to know
That she deserved; or I did love her so.

Ye hours, then, but as minutes be!
(Though so I shall be sooner old)
Till I those lovely graces see,
Which, but in her, can none behold;
Then be an age! that we may never try
More grief in parting, but grow old and die.

William Browne [1591-1643?]

TO LUCASTA, GOING TO THE WARS

Tell me not, Sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As thou too shalt adore;
I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
Loved I not Honor more.

Richard Lovelace [1618-1658]

TO LUCASTA, GOING BEYOND THE SEAS

If to be absent were to be
Away from thee;
Or that when I am gone
You or I were alone;
Then, my Lucasta, might I crave
Pity from blustering wind or swallowing wave.

But I'll not sigh one blast or gale
To swell my sail,
Or pay a tear to 'suage
The foaming blue god's rage;
For whether he will let me pass
Or no, I'm still as happy as I was.

Though seas and land be twixt us both,
Our faith and troth,
Like separated souls,
All time and space controls:
Above the highest sphere we meet
Unseen, unknown; and greet as Angels greet.

So then we do anticipate
Our after-fate,
And are alive in the skies,
If thus our lips and eyes
Can speak like spirits unconfined
In Heaven, their earthy bodies left behind.

Richard Lovelace [1618-1658]

SONG TO A FAIR YOUNG LADY, GOING OUT OF THE TOWN IN THE SPRING

Ask not the cause why sullen Spring
So long delays her flowers to bear;
Why warbling birds forget to sing,
And winter storms invert the year:
Chloris is gone; and fate provides
To make it Spring where she resides.

Chloris is gone, the cruel fair;
She cast not back a pitying eye:
But left her lover in despair
To sigh, to languish, and to die:
Ah! how can those fair eyes endure
To give the wounds they will not cure?

Great God of Love, why hast thou made
A face that can all hearts command,
That all religions can invade,
And change the laws of every land?
Where thou hadst placed such power before,
Thou shouldst have made her mercy more.

When Chloris to the temple comes,
Adoring crowds before her fall;
She can restore the dead from tombs
And every life but mine recall,
I only am by Love designed
To be the victim for mankind.

John Dryden [1631-1700]

SONG
Written At Sea, In The First Dutch War (1665),
The Night Before An Engagement

To all you ladies now at land
We men at sea indite;
But first would have you understand
How hard it is to write:
The Muses now, and Neptune too,
We must implore to write to you -
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

For though the Muses should prove kind,
And fill our empty brain,
Yet if rough Neptune rouse the wind
To wave the azure main,
Our paper, pen, and ink, and we,
Roll up and down our ships at sea -
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

Then if we write not by each post,
Think not we are unkind;
Nor yet conclude our ships are lost
By Dutchmen or by wind:
Our tears we'll send a speedier way,
The tide shall bring them twice a day -
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

The King with wonder and surprise
Will swear the seas grow bold,
Because the tides will higher rise
Than e'er they did of old:
But let him know it is our tears
Bring floods of grief to Whitehall stairs -
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

Should foggy Opdam chance to know
Our sad and dismal story,
The Dutch would scorn so weak a foe,
And quit their fort at Goree:
For what resistance can they find
From men who've left their hearts behind? -
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

Let wind and weather do its worst,
Be you to us but kind;
Let Dutchmen vapor, Spaniards curse,
No sorrow we shall find:

'Tis then no matter how things go,
Or who's our friend, or who's our foe -
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

To pass our tedious hours away
We throw a merry main,
Or else at serious ombre play:
But why should we in vain
Each other's ruin thus pursue?
We were undone when we left you -
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

But now our fears tempestuous grow
And cast our hopes away;
Whilst you, regardless of our woe,
Sit careless at a play:
Perhaps permit some happier man
To kiss your hand, or flirt your fan -
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

When any mournful tune you hear,
That dies in every note
As if it sighed with each man's care
For being so remote,
Think then how often love we've made
To you, when all those tunes were played -
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

In justice you cannot refuse
To think of our distress,
When we for hopes of honor lose
Our certain happiness:
All those designs are but to prove
Ourselves more worthy of your love -
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

And now we've told you all our loves,
And likewise all our fears,
In hopes this declaration moves
Some pity for our tears:
Let's hear of no inconstancy -
We have too much of that at sea -
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

Charles Sackville [1638-1706]

SONG

In vain you tell your parting lover,
You wish fair winds may waft him over.
Alas! what winds can happy prove
That bear me far from what I love?
Alas! what dangers on the main
Can equal those that I sustain
From slighted vows, and cold disdain?

Be gentle, and in pity choose

To wish the wildest tempests loose:
That, thrown again upon the coast,
Where first my shipwrecked heart was lost,
I may once more repeat my pain;
Once more in dying notes complain
Of slighted vows and cold disdain.

Matthew Prior [1664-1721]

BLACK-EYED SUSAN

All in the Downs the fleet was moored,
The streamers waving in the wind,
When black-eyed Susan came aboard;
"O! where shall I my true-love find?
Tell me, ye jovial sailors, tell me true
If my sweet William sails among the crew."

William, who high upon the yard
Rocked with the billow to and fro,
Soon as her well-known voice he heard
He sighed, and cast his eyes below:
The cord slides swiftly through his glowing hands,
And, quick as lightning, on the deck he stands.

So the sweet lark, high poised in air,
Shuts close his pinions to his breast
If chance his mate's shrill call he hear,
And drops at once into her nest: -
The noblest captain in the British fleet
Might envy William's lip those kisses sweet.

"O Susan, Susan, lovely dear,
My vows shall ever true remain;
Let me kiss off that falling tear;
We only part to meet again.
Change as ye list, ye winds; my heart shall be
The faithful compass that still points to thee.

"Believe not what the landmen say
Who tempt with doubts thy constant mind:
They'll tell thee, sailors, when away,
In every port a mistress find:
Yes, yes, believe them when they tell thee so,
For Thou art present wheresoe'er I go.

"If to far India's coast we sail,
Thy eyes are seen in diamonds bright,
Thy breath is Afric's spicy gale,
Thy skin is ivory so white.
Thus every beauteous object that I view
Wakes in my soul some charm of lovely Sue.

"Though battle call me from thy arms
Let not my pretty Susan mourn;
Though cannons roar, yet, safe from harms,
William shall to his Dear return.

Love turns aside the balls that round me fly,
Lest precious tears should drop from Susan's eye."

The boatswain gave the dreadful word,
The sails their swelling bosom spread,
No longer must she stay aboard;
They kissed, she sighed, he hung his head.
Her lessening boat unwilling rows to land;
"Adieu!" she cries; and waved her lily hand.

John Gay [1685-1732]

IRISH MOLLY O

Oh! who is that poor foreigner that lately came to town,
And like a ghost that cannot rest still wanders up and down?
A poor, unhappy Scottish youth; - if more you wish to know.
His heart is breaking all for love of Irish Molly O!

She's modest, mild, and beautiful, the fairest I have known -
The primrose of Ireland - all blooming here alone -
The primrose of Ireland, for wheresoe'er I go,
The only one entices me is Irish Molly O!

When Molly's father heard of it, a solemn oath he swore,
That if she'd wed a foreigner he'd never see her more.
He sent for young MacDonald and he plainly told him so -
"I'll never give to such as you my Irish Molly O!"

MacDonald heard the heavy news, and grievously did say -
"Farewell, my lovely Molly, since I'm banished far away,
A poor forlorn pilgrim I must wander to and fro,
And all for the sake of my Irish Molly O!

"There is a rose in Ireland, I thought it would be mine:
But now that she is lost to me, I must for ever pine,
Till death shall come to comfort me, for to the grave I'll go,
And all for the sake of my Irish Molly O!

"And now that I am dying, this one request I crave,
To place a marble tombstone above my humble grave!
And on the stone these simple words I'd have engraven so -
"'MacDonald lost his life for love of Irish Molly O!'"

Unknown

SONG

At setting day and rising morn,
Wi' soul that still shall love thee,
I'll ask o' Heaven thy safe return,
Wi' a' that can improve thee.
I'll visit aft the birken bush
Where first thou kindly tauld me
Sweet tales o' love, and hid my blush,
Whilst round thou didst infauld me.

To a' our haunts I will repair,
By greenwood, shaw, or fountain,
Or where the summer day I'd share
Wi' thee upon yon mountain:
There will I tell the trees an' flooers,
From thoughts unfeigned an' tender;
By vows you're mine, by love is yours
A heart that cannot wander.

Allan Ramsay [1686-1758]

LOCHABER NO MORE

Farewell to Lochaber, an' farewell my Jean,
Where heartsome wi' thee I hae mony day been;
For Lochaber no more, Lochaber no more!
We'll maybe return to Lochaber no more!
These tears that I shed, they are a' for my dear,
An' no for the dangers attending on weir,
Though borne on rough seas to a far bloody shore,
Maybe to return to Lochaber no more.

Though hurricanes rise, an' rise every wind,
They'll ne'er mak' a tempest like that in my mind;
Though loudest o' thunders on louder waves roar,
That's naething like leaving my love on the shore.
To leave thee behind me my heart is sair pained;
By ease that's inglorious no fame can be gained;
An' beauty an' love's the reward o' the brave,
An' I must deserve it before I can crave.

Then glory, my Jeanie, maun plead my excuse;
Since honor commands me, how can I refuse?
Without it I ne'er can have merit for thee,
An' without thy favor I'd better not be,
I gae, then, my lass, to win honor an' fame,
An' if I should luck to come gloriously hame,
I'll bring a heart to thee wi' love running o'er,
An' then I'll leave thee an' Lochaber no more.

Allan Ramsay [1686-1758]

WILLIE AND HELEN

"Wharefore sou'd ye talk o' love,
Unless it be to pain us?
Wharefore sou'd ye talk o' love
Whan ye say the sea maun twain us?"

"It's no because my love is light,
Nor for your angry deddy;
It's a' to buy ye pearlins bright,
An' to busk ye like a leddy."

"O Willy, I can caird an' spin,

Sae ne'er can want for cleedin';
An' gin I hae my Willy's heart,
I hae a' the pearls I'm heedin'.

"Will it be time to praise this cheek
Whan years an' tears hae blenched it?
Will it be time to talk o' love
Whan cauld an' care hae quenched it?"

He's laid ae han' about her waist -
The ither's held to heaven;
An' his luik was like the luik o' man
Wha's heart in twa is riven.

Hew Ainslie [1792-1878]

ABSENCE

With leaden foot Time creeps along
While Delia is away:
With her, nor plaintive was the song,
Nor tedious was the day.

Ah, envious Power! reverse my doom;
Now double thy career,
Strain every nerve, stretch every plume,
And rest them when she's here!

Richard Jago [1715-1781]

"MY MOTHER BIDS ME BIND MY HAIR"

My mother bids me bind my hair
With bands of rosy hue;
Tie up my sleeves with ribbons rare,
And lace my bodice blue!

"For why," she cries, "sit still and weep,
While others dance and play?"
Alas! I scarce can go, or creep,
While Lubin is away!

'Tis sad to think the days are gone
When those we love were near!
I sit upon this mossy stone,
And sigh when none can hear:

And while I spin my flaxen thread,
And sing my simple lay,
The village seems asleep, or dead,
Now Lubin is away!

Anne Hunter [1742-1821]

"BLOW HIGH! BLOW LOW!"

Blow high, blow low! let tempest tear
The mainmast by the board!
My heart (with thoughts of thee, my dear!
And love well stored)
Shall brave all danger, scorn all fear,
The roaring wind, the raging sea,
In hopes, on shore,
To be once more
Safe moored with thee.

Aloft, while mountain-high we go,
The whistling winds that scud along,
And the surge roaring from below,
Shall my signal be
To think on thee.
And this shall be my Song,
Blow high, blow low! let tempest tear. . . .

And on that night (when all the crew
The memory of their former lives,
O'er flowing cans of flip renew,
And drink their sweethearts and their wives),
I'll heave a sigh,
And think of thee.
And, as the ship toils through the sea,
The burden of my Song shall be,
Blow high, blow low! let tempest tear. . . .

Charles Dibdin [1745-1814]

THE SILLER CROUN

"And ye sall walk in silk attire,
And siller ha'e to spare,
Gin ye'll consent to be his bride,
Nor think o' Donald mair."

Oh, wha wad buy a silken goun
Wi' a puir broken heart?
Or what's to me a siller croun,
Gin' frae my luve I part?

The mind wha's every wish is pure
Far dearer is to me;
And ere I'm forced to break my faith,
I'll lay me doun and dee.

For I ha'e pledged my virgin troth
Brave Donald's fate to share;
And he has gi'en to me his heart,
Wi' a' its virtues rare.

His gentle manners wan my heart,
He gratefu' took the gift;
Could I but think to tak' it back,
It wad be waur than theft.

For langest life can ne'er repay
The love he bears to me;
And ere I'm forced to break my troth
I'll lay me doun and dee.

Susanna Blamire [1747-1794]

"MY NANNIE'S AWA'"

Now in her green mantle blithe Nature arrays,
An' listens the lambkins that bleat o'er the braes,
While birds warble welcome in ilka green shaw;
But to me it's delightless - my Nannie's awa'.

The snaw-drap an' primrose our woodlands adorn,
An' violets bathe in the weet o' the morn;
They pain my sad bosom, sae sweetly they blaw,
They mind me o' Nannie - an' Nannie's awa'.

Thou laverock that springs frae the dews of the lawn,
The shepherd to warn o' the gray-breaking dawn,
An' thou mellow mavis that hails the night-fa',
Give over for pity - my Nannie's awa'.

Come, autumn, sae pensive, in yellow an' gray,
An' soothe me wi' tidings o' Nature's decay;
The dark, dreary winter, an' wild-driving snaw
Alane can delight me - now Nannie's awa'.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

"AE FOND KISS"

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee!

Who shall say that Fortune grieves him
While the star of Hope she leaves him?
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me,
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy;
Naething could resist my Nancy;
But to see her was to love her,
Love but her, and love for ever.

Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met, or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest!

Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure!

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever!
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee!

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

"THE DAY RETURNS"

The day returns, my bosom burns,
The blissful day we twa did meet;
Though winter wild in tempest toiled,
Ne'er summer sun was half sae sweet.
Than a' the pride that loads the tide,
And crosses o'er the sultry line, -
Than kingly robes, and crowns and globes,
Heaven gave me more, - it made thee mine.

While day and night can bring delight.
Or Nature aught of pleasure give, -
While joys above my mind can move,
For thee, and thee alone, I live.
When that grim foe of life below
Comes in between to make us part,
The iron hand that breaks our band,
It breaks my bliss, - it breaks my heart.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

MY BONNIE MARY

Go fetch to me a pint o' wine,
And fill it in a silver tassie,
That I may drink, before I go,
A service to my bonnie lassie.
The boat rocks at the pier o' Leith,
Fu' loud the wind blaws frae the ferry,
The ship rides by the Berwick-law,
And I maun leave my bonnie Mary.

The trumpets sound, the banners fly,
The glittering spears are ranked ready;
The shouts o' war are heard afar,
The battle closes thick and bloody;
But it's no the roar o' sea or shore
Wad mak me langer wish to tarry;
Nor shout o' war that's heard afar -
It's leaving thee, my bonnie Mary!

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

A RED, RED ROSE

O, my luve's like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June;
O, my luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly played in tune.

As fair thou art, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun;
I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare-thee-weel, my only luve!
And fare-thee-weel a while!
And I will come again, my luve,
Though it were ten thousand mile.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

I LOVE MY JEAN

Of a' the airts the wind can blaw
I dearly like the west,
For there the bonnie lassie lives,
The lassie I lo'e best:
There's wild woods grow, and rivers row,
And monie a hill between;
But day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
I see her sweet and fair:
I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
I hear her charm the air:
There's not a bonnie flower that springs
By fountain, shaw, or green,
There's not a bonnie bird that sings
But minds me o' my Jean.

O blaw ye westlin winds, blaw saft
Amang the leafy trees;
Wi' balmy gale, frae hill and dale
Bring hame the laden bees;
And bring the lassie back to me
That's aye sae neat and clean;
Ae smile o' her wad banish care,
Sae charming is my Jean.

What sighs and vows amang the knowes
Hae passed atween us twa!
How fond to meet, how wae to part
That night she gaed awa!
The Powers aboon can only ken

To whom the heart is seen,
That nane can be sae dear to me
As my sweet lovely Jean!

The first two stanzas by Robert Burns [1759-1796]
The last two by John Hamilton [1761-1814]

THE ROVER'S ADIEU
From "Rokeby"

"A weary lot is thine, fair maid,
A weary lot is thine!
To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,
And press the rue for wine.
A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien,
A feather of the blue,
A doublet of the Lincoln green -
No more of me ye knew,
My Love!
No more of me ye knew.

"This morn is merry June, I trow,
The rose is budding fain;
But she shall bloom in winter snow
Ere we two meet again."
- He turned his charger as he spake
Upon the river shore,
He gave the bridle-reins a shake,
Said "Adieu for evermore,
My Love!
And adieu for evermore."

Walter Scott [1771-1832]

"LOUDOUN'S BONNIE WOODS AND BRAES"

"Loudoun's bonnie woods and braes,
I maun lea' them a', lassie;
Wha can thole when Britain's faes
Wad gi'e Britons law, lassie?
Wha wad shun the field o' danger?
Wha frae fame wad live a stranger?
Now when freedom bids avenge her,
Wha wad shun her ca', lassie?
Loudoun's bonnie woods and braes
Hae seen our happy bridal days,
And gentle Hope shall soothe thy waes
When I am far awa', lassie."

"Hark! the swelling bugle sings,
Yielding joy to thee, laddie,
But the dolefu' bugle brings
Waefu' thoughts to me, laddie.
Lanely I maun climb the mountain,
Lanely stray beside the fountain,
Still the weary moments countin',

Far frae love and thee, laddie.
O'er the gory fields of war,
When Vengeance drives his crimson car,
Thou'lt maybe fa', frae me afar,
And nane to close thy e'e, laddie."

"O! resume thy wonted smile!
O! suppress thy fears, lassie!
Glorious honor crowns the toil
That the soldier shares, lassie;
Heaven will shield thy faithful lover
Till the vengeful strife is over;
Then we'll meet nae mair to sever;
Till the day we dee, lassie.
'Midst our bonnie woods and braes
We'll spend our peaceful, happy days,
As blithe's yon lightsome lamb that plays
On Loudoun's flowery lea, lassie."

Robert Tannahill [1774-1810]

"FARE THEE WELL"

Fare thee well and if for ever,
Still for ever, fare thee well:
Even though unforgiving, never
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

Would that breast were bared before thee
Where thy head so oft hath lain,
While that placid sleep came o'er thee
Which thou ne'er canst know again:

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,
Every inmost thought could show!
Then thou wouldst at last discover
'Twas not well to spurn it so.

Though the world for this commend thee, -
Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe:

Though my many faults defaced me,
Could no other arm be found
Than the one which once embraced me,
To inflict a cureless wound?

Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not;
Love may sink by slow decay,
But by sudden wrench, believe not
Hearts can thus be torn away:

Still thine own its life retaineth; -
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat;
And the undying thought which paineth
Is - that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow
Than the wail above the dead;
Both shall live, but every morrow
Wake us from a widowed bed.

And when thou wouldst solace gather,
When our child's first accents flow,
Wilt thou teach her to say "Father!"
Though his care she must forego?

When her little hands shall press thee,
When her lip to thine is pressed,
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee,
Think of him thy love had blessed!

Should her lineaments resemble
Those thou nevermore may'st see,
Then thy heart will softly tremble
With a pulse yet true to me.

All my faults perchance thou knowest,
All my madness none can know;
All my hopes, where'er thou goest,
Whither, yet with thee they go.

Every feeling hath been shaken;
Pride, which not a world could bow,
Bows to thee, - by thee forsaken,
Even my soul forsakes me now:

But 'tis done, - all words are idle, -
Words from me are vainer still;
But the thoughts we cannot bridle
Force their way without the will.

Fare thee well! - thus disunited,
Torn from every nearer tie,
Seared in heart, and lone, and blighted,
More than this I scarce can die.

George Gordon Byron [1788-1824]

"MAID OF ATHENS, ERE WE PART"

Maid of Athens, ere we part,
Give, oh, give me back my heart!
Or, since that has left my breast,
Keep it now, and take the rest!
Hear my vow before I go,
Zoe mou, sas agapo. (My life, I love you.)

By those tresses unconfined,
Wooed by each Aegean wind;
By those lids whose jetty fringe
Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge;
By those wild eyes like the roe,

Zoe mou, sas agapo. (My life, I love you.)

By that lip I long to taste;
By that zone-encircled waist;
By all the token-flowers that tell
What words can never speak so well;
By love's alternate joy and woe,
Zoe mou, sas agapo. (My life, I love you.)

Maid of Athens! I am gone:
Think of me, sweet! when alone.
Though I fly to Istambol,
Athens holds my heart and soul:
Can I cease to love thee? No!
Zoe mou, sas agapo. (My life, I love you.)

George Gordon Byron [1788-1824]

"WHEN WE TWO PARTED"

When we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted,
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this!

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow;
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame:
I hear thy name spoken
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me -
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee
Who knew thee too well:
Long, long shall I rue thee
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met:
In silence I grieve
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee? -
With silence and tears.

George Gordon Byron [1788-1824]

"GO, FORGET ME"

Go, forget me! Why should sorrow
O'er that brow a shadow fling?
Go, forget me, - and to-morrow
Brightly smile and sweetly sing.
Smile - though I shall not be near thee.
Sing - though I shall never hear thee.
May thy soul with pleasure shine,
Lasting as the gloom of mine.

Like the sun, thy presence glowing
Clothes the meanest things in light;
And when thou, like him, art going,
Loveliest objects fade in night.
All things looked so bright about thee,
That they nothing seem without thee;
By that pure and lucid mind
Earthly things are too refined.

Go, thou vision, wildly gleaming,
Softly on my soul that fell;
Go, for me no longer beaming -
Hope and Beauty, fare ye well!
Go, and all that once delighted
Take - and leave me, all benighted,
Glory's burning, generous swell,
Fancy, and the poet's shell.

Charles Wolfe [1791-1823]

LAST NIGHT

I sat with one I love last night,
She sang to me an olden strain;
In former times it woke delight,
Last night - but pain.

Last night we saw the stars arise,
But clouds soon dimmed the ether blue:
And when we sought each other's eyes
Tears dimmed them too!

We paced along our favorite walk,
But paced in silence broken-hearted:
Of old we used to smile and talk;
Last night - we parted.

George Darley [1795-1846]

ADIEU

Let time and chance combine, combine,
Let time and chance combine;

The fairest love from heaven above,
That love of yours was mine,
My dear,
That love of yours was mine.

The past is fled and gone, and gone,
The past is fled and gone;
If naught but pain to me remain,
I'll fare in memory on,
My dear,
I'll fare in memory on.

The saddest tears must fall, must fall,
The saddest tears must fall;
In weal or woe, in this world below,
I love you ever and all,
My dear,
I love you ever and all.

A long road full of pain, of pain,
A long road full of pain;
One soul, one heart, sworn ne'er to part, -
We ne'er can meet again,
My dear,
We ne'er can meet again.

Hard fate will not allow, allow,
Hard fate will not allow;
We blessed were as the angels are, -
Adieu forever now,
My dear,
Adieu forever now.

Thomas Carlyle [1795-1881]

JEANIE MORRISON

I've wandered east, I've wandered west,
Through mony a weary way;
But never, never can forget
The luve o' life's young day!
The fire that's blawn on Beltane e'en,
May weel be black gin Yule;
But blacker fa' awaits the heart
Where first fond luve grows cule.

O dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
The thochts o' bygane years
Still fling their shadows owre my path,
And blind my een wi' tears:
They blind my een wi' saut, saut tears;
And sair and sick I pine,
As Memory idly summons up
The blithe blinks o' langsyne.

'Twas then we luvit ilk ither weel,
'Twas then we twa did part;

Sweet time, sad time! - twa bairns at schule,
Twa bairns, and but ae heart!
'Twas then we sat on ae laigh bink,
To leir ilk ither lear;
And tones, and looks, and smiles were shed,
Remembered evermair.

I wonder, Jeanie, aften yet,
When sitting on that bink,
Cheek touchin' cheek, loof locked in loof,
What our wee heads could think!
When baith bent doun owre ae braid page,
Wi' ae buik on our knee,
Thy lips were on thy lesson, but
My lesson was in thee.

Oh, mind ye how we hung our heads,
How cheeks brent red wi' shame,
Whene'er the schule-weans, laughin', said,
We cleek'd thegither hame?
And mind ye o' the Saturdays
(The schule then skail't at noon),
When we ran aff to speel the braes -
The broomy braes o' June?

My head rins round and round about,
My heart flows like a sea,
As, ane by ane, the thochts rush back
O' schule-time and o' thee.
Oh, mornin' life! Oh, mornin' luve!
Oh, lichtsome days and lang,
When hinnied hopes around our hearts,
Like simmer blossoms, sprang!

Oh, mind ye, luve, how aft we left
The deavin' dinsome toun,
To wander by the green burnside,
And hear its waters croon?
The simmer leaves hung owre our heads,
The flowers burst round our feet,
And in the gloamin' o' the wud
The throssil whusslit sweet.

The throssil whusslit in the wud,
The burn sung to the trees,
And we, with Nature's heart in tune,
Concerted harmonies;
And on the knowe abune the burn
For hours thegither sat
In the silentness o' joy, till baith
Wi' very gladness grat.

Ay, ay, dear Jeanie Morrison,
Tears trinkled doun your cheek,
Like dew-beads on a rose, yet nane
Had ony power to speak!
That was a time, a blessed time,
When hearts were fresh and young,

When freely gushed all feelings forth,
Unsyllabled - unsung!

I marvel, Jeanie Morrison,
Gin I hae been to thee
As closely twined wi' earliest thochts
As ye hae been to me?
Oh! tell me gin their music fills
Thine ear as it does mine;
Oh! say gin e'er your heart grows great
Wi' dreamings o' langsyne?

I've wandered east, I've wandered west,
I've borne a weary lot;
But in my wanderings, far or near,
Ye never were forgot.
The fount that first burst frae this heart,
Still travels on its way;
And channels deeper as it rins
The luve o' life's young day.

O dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
Since we were sindered young,
I've never seen your face, nor heard
The music o' your tongue;
But I could hug all wretchedness,
And happy could I dee,
Did I but ken your heart still dreamed
O' bygane days and me!

William Motherwell [1797-1835]

THE SEA-LANDS

Would I were on the sea-lands,
Where winds know how to sting;
And in the rocks at midnight
The lost long murmurs sing.

Would I were with my first love
To hear the rush and roar
Of spume below the doorstep
And winds upon the door.

My first love was a fair girl
With ways forever new;
And hair a sunlight yellow,
And eyes a morning blue.

The roses, have they tarried
Or are they dun and frayed?
If we had stayed together,
Would love, indeed, have stayed?

Ah, years are filled with learning,
And days are leaves of change!
And I have met so many

I knew . . . and found them strange.

But on the sea-lands tumbled
By winds that sting and blind,
The nights we watched, so silent,
Come back, come back to mind . . .

I mind about my first love,
And hear the rush and roar
Of spume below the doorstep
And winds upon the door.

Orrick Johns [1887-

FAIR INES

O saw ye not fair Ines?
She's gone into the West,
To dazzle when the sun is down,
And rob the world of rest:
She took our daylight with her,
The smiles that we love best,
With morning blushes on her cheek,
And pearls upon her breast.

O turn again, fair Ines,
Before the fall of night,
For fear the Moon should shine alone,
And stars unrivaled bright;
And blessed will the lover be
That walks beneath their light,
And breathes the love against thy cheek
I dare not even write!

Would I had been, fair Ines,
That gallant cavalier,
Who rode so gaily by thy side,
And whispered thee so near!
Were there no bonny dames at home,
Or no true lovers here,
That he should cross the seas to win
The dearest of the dear?

I saw thee, lovely Ines,
Descend along the shore,
With bands of noble gentlemen,
And banners waved before;
And gentle youth and maidens gay,
And snowy plumes they wore:
It would have been a beauteous dream, -
If it had been no more!

Alas, alas! fair Ines,
She went away with song,
With Music waiting on her steps,
And shoutings of the throng;
But some were sad, and felt no mirth,

But only Music's wrong,
In sounds that sang Farewell, farewell,
To her you've loved so long.

Farewell, farewell, fair Ines!
That vessel never bore
So fair a lady on its deck,
Nor danced so light before, -
Alas for pleasure on the sea,
And sorrow on the shore!
The smile that blessed one lover's heart
Has broken many more!

Thomas Hood [1799-1845]

A VALEDICTION

God be with thee, my beloved, - God be with thee!
Else alone thou goest forth,
Thy face unto the north,
Moor and pleasance all around thee and beneath thee
Looking equal in one snow;
While I, who try to reach thee,
Vainly follow, vainly follow
With the farewell and the hollo,
And cannot reach thee so.
Alas, I can but teach thee!
God be with thee, my beloved, - God be with thee!

Can I teach thee, my beloved, - can I teach thee?
If I said, "Go left or right,"
The counsel would be light,
The wisdom, poor of all that could enrich thee;
My right would show like left;
My raising would depress thee,
My choice of light would blind thee,
Of way - would leave behind thee,
Of end - would leave bereft.
Alas, I can but bless thee!
May God teach thee, my beloved, - may God teach thee!

Can I bless thee, my beloved, - can I bless thee?
What blessing word can I
From mine own tears keep dry?
What flowers grow in my field wherewith to dress thee?
My good reverts to ill;
My calmnesses would move thee,
My softnesses would prick thee,
My bindings up would break thee,
My crownings curse and kill.
Alas, I can but love thee!
May God bless thee, my beloved, - may God bless thee!

Can I love thee, my beloved, - can I love thee?
And is this like love, to stand
With no help in my hand,
When strong as death I fain would watch above thee?

My love-kiss can deny
No tear that falls beneath it;
Mine oath of love can swear thee
From no ill that comes near thee,
And thou diest while I breathe it,
And I - I can but die!
May God love thee, my beloved, - may God love thee!

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806-1861]

FAREWELL

Thou goest; to what distant place
Wilt thou thy sunlight carry?
I stay with cold and clouded face:
How long am I to tarry?
Where'er thou goest, morn will be;
Thou leavest night and gloom to me.

The night and gloom I can but take;
I do not grudge thy splendor:
Bid souls of eager men awake;
Be kind and bright and tender.
Give day to other worlds; for me
It must suffice to dream of thee.

John Addington Symonds [1840-1893]

"I DO NOT LOVE THEE"

I do not love thee! - no! I do not love thee!
And yet when thou art absent I am sad;
And envy even the bright blue sky above thee,
Whose quiet stars may see thee and be glad.

I do not love thee! - yet, I know not why,
Whate'er thou dost seems still well done, to me:
And often in my solitude I sigh
That those I do love are not more like thee!

I do not love thee! - yet, when thou art gone,
I hate the sound (though those who speak be near)
Which breaks the lingering echo of the tone
Thy voice of music leaves upon my ear.

I do not love thee! - yet thy speaking eyes,
With their deep, bright, and most expressive blue,
Between me and the midnight heaven arise,
Oftener than any eyes I ever knew.

I know I do not love thee! - yet, alas!
Others will scarcely trust my candid heart;
And oft I catch them smiling as they pass,
Because they see me gazing where thou art.

Caroline Elizabeth Sarah Norton [1808-1870]

THE PALM-TREE AND THE PINE

Beneath an Indian palm a girl
Of other blood reposes,
Her cheek is clear and pale as pearl,
Amid that wild of roses.

Beside a northern pine a boy
Is leaning fancy-bound,
Nor listens where with noisy joy
Awaits the impatient hound.

Cool grows the sick and feverish calm, -
Relaxed the frosty twine, -
The pine-tree dreameth of the palm,
The palm-tree of the pine.

As soon shall nature interlace
Those dimly-visioned boughs,
As these young lovers face to face
Renew their early vows!

Richard Monckton Milnes [1809-1885]

"O SWALLOW, SWALLOW, FLYING SOUTH"
From "The Princess"

O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying South,
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,
And tell her, tell her what I tell to thee.

O, tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest each,
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,
And dark and true and tender is the North.

O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow, and light
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,
And cheep and twitter twenty million loves.

O, were I thou that she might take me in,
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died!

Why lingereth she to clothe her heart with love,
Delaying as the tender ash delays
To clothe herself, when all the woods are green?

O, tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is flown;
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,
But in the North long since my nest is made.

O, tell her, brief is life but love is long,
And brief the sun of summer in the North,
And brief the moon of beauty in the South.

O Swallow, flying from the golden woods,
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and make her mine,
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

THE FLOWER'S NAME

Here's the garden she walked across,
Arm in my arm, such a short while since:
Hark, now I push its wicket, the moss
Hinders the hinges and makes them wince!
She must have reached this shrub ere she turned,
As back with that murmur the wicket swung;
For she laid the poor snail, my chance foot spurned,
To feed and forget it the leaves among.

Down this side of the gravel-walk
She went while her robe's edge brushed the box:
And here she paused in her gracious talk
To point me a moth on the milk-white phlox.
Roses, ranged in valiant row,
I will never think that she passed you by!
She loves you, noble roses, I know;
But yonder see where the rock-plants lie!

This flower she stopped at, finger on lip,
Stooped over, in doubt, as settling its claim;
Till she gave me, with pride to make no slip,
Its soft meandering Spanish name:
What a name! Was it love or praise?
Speech half-asleep, or song half-awake?
I must learn Spanish, one of these days,
Only for that slow sweet name's sake.

Roses, if I live and do well,
I may bring her, one of these days,
To fix you fast with as fine a spell,
Fit you each with his Spanish phrase:
But do not detain me now; for she lingers
There, like sunshine over the ground,
And ever I see her soft white fingers
Searching after the bud she found.

Flower, you Spaniard, look that you grow not,
Stay as you are and be loved forever!
Bud, if I kiss you, 'tis that you blow not,
Mind, the shut pink mouth opens never!
For while it pouts, her fingers wrestle,
Twinkling the audacious leaves between,
Till round they turn, and down they nestle -
Is not the dear mark still to be seen?

Where I find her not, beauties vanish;
Whither I follow her, beauties flee;
Is there no method to tell her in Spanish
June's twice June since she breathed it with me?

Come, bud, show me the least of her traces,
Treasure my lady's lightest footfall!
- Ah, you may flout and turn up your faces, -
Roses, you are not so fair after all!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

TO MARGUERITE

Yes: in the sea of life enisled,
With echoing straits between us thrown,
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
We mortal millions live alone.
The islands feel the enclasping flow,
And then their endless bounds they know.

But when the moon their hollows lights,
And they are swept by balms of spring,
And in their glens, on starry nights,
The nightingales divinely sing;
And lovely notes, from shore to shore,
Across the sounds and channels pour;

O then a longing like despair
Is to their farthest caverns sent!
For surely once, they feel, we were
Parts of a single continent.
Now round us spreads the watery plain -
O might our marges meet again!

Who ordered that their longing's fire
Should be, as soon as kindled, cooled?
Who renders vain their deep desire? -
A God, a God their severance ruled;
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumbed, salt, estranging sea.

Matthew Arnold [1822-1888]

SEPARATION

Stop! - not to me, at this bitter departing,
Speak of the sure consolations of time!
Fresh be the wound, still-renewed be its smarting,
So but thy image endure in its prime.

But, if the steadfast commandment of Nature
Wills that remembrance should always decay -
If the loved form and the deep-cherished feature
Must, when unseen, from the soul fade away -

Me let no half-effaced memories cumber!
Fled, fled at once, be all vestige of thee!
Deep be the darkness and still be the slumber -
Dead be the past and its phantoms to me!

Then, when we meet, and thy look strays towards me,
Scanning my face and the changes wrought there:
Who, let me say, is this stranger regards me,
With the gray eyes, and the lovely brown hair?

Matthew Arnold [1822-1888]

LONGING

Come to me in my dreams, and then
By day I shall be well again!
For then the night will more than pay
The hopeless longing of the day.

Come, as thou cam'st a thousand times,
A messenger from radiant climes,
And smile on thy new world, and be
As kind to others as to me!

Or, as thou never cam'st in sooth,
Come now, and let me dream it truth;
And part my hair, and kiss my brow,
And say: My love! why sufferest thou?

Come to me in my dreams, and then
By day I shall be well again!
For then the night will more than pay
The hopeless longing of the day

Matthew Arnold [1822-1888]

DIVIDED

I
An empty sky, a world of heather,
Purple of foxglove, yellow of broom;
We two among them wading together,
Shaking out honey, treading perfume.

Crowds of bees are giddy with clover,
Crowds of grasshoppers skip at our feet,
Crowds of larks at their matins hang over,
Thanking the Lord for a life so sweet.

Flusheth the rise with her purple favor,
Gloweth the cleft with her golden ring,
'Twixt the two brown butterflies waver,
Lightly settle, and sleepily swing.

We two walk till the purple dieth,
And short dry grass under foot is brown,
But one little streak at a distance lieth
Green like a ribbon to prank the down.

II
Over the grass we stepped unto it,

And God He knoweth how blithe we were!
Never a voice to bid us eschew it:
Hey the green ribbon that showed so fair!

Hey the green ribbon! we kneeled beside it,
We parted the grasses dewy and sheen:
Drop over drop there filtered and slided
A tiny bright beck that trickled between.

Tinkle, tinkle, sweetly it sung to us,
Light was our talk as of fairy bells; -
Fairy wedding-bells faintly rung to us
Down in their fortunate parallels.

Hand in hand, while the sun peered over,
We lapped the grass on that youngling spring;
Swept back its rushes, smoothed its clover,
And said, "Let us follow it westering."

III
A dappled sky, a world of meadows,
Circling above us the black rooks fly
Forward, backward; lo their dark shadows
Flit on the blossoming tapestry; -

Flit on the beck; for her long grass parteth
As hair from a maid's bright eyes blown back:
And, lo, the sun like a lover darteth
His flattering smile on her wayward track.

Sing on! we sing in the glorious weather
Till one steps over the tiny strand,
So narrow, in sooth, that still together
On either brink we go hand in hand.

The beck grows wider, the hands must sever.
On either margin, our songs all done,
We move apart, while she singeth ever,
Taking the course of the stooping sun.

He prays, "Come over," - I may not follow;
I cry, "Return," - but he cannot come:
We speak, we laugh, but with voices hollow;
Our hands are hanging, our hearts are numb.

IV
A breathing sigh, a sigh for answer,
A little talking of outward things:
The careless beck is a merry dancer,
Keeping sweet time to the air she sings.

A little pain when the beck grows wider;
"Cross to me now; for her wavelets swell";
"I may not cross," - and the voice beside her
Faintly reacheth, though heeded well.

No backward path; ah! no returning;
No second crossing that ripple's flow:

"Come to me now, for the west is burning;
Come ere it darkens. - Ah, no! ah, no!"

Then cries of pain, and arms outreaching, -
The beck grows wider and swift and deep:
Passionate words as of one beseeching:
The loud beck drowns them: we walk, and weep.

V
A yellow moon in splendor drooping,
A tired queen with her state oppressed,
Low by rushes and swordgrass stooping,
Lies she soft on the waves at rest.

The desert heavens have felt her sadness;
Her earth will weep her some dewy tears;
The wild beck ends her tune of gladness,
And goeth stilly as soul that fears.

We two walk on in our grassy places
On either marge of the moonlit flood,
With the moon's own sadness in our faces,
Where joy is withered, blossom and bud.

VI
A shady freshness, chafers whirring;
A little piping of leaf-hid birds;
A flutter of wings, a fitful stirring;
A cloud to the eastward snowy as curds.

Bare grassy slopes, where kids are tethered,
Round valleys like nests all ferny-lined,
Round hills, with fluttering tree-tops feathered,
Swell high in their freckled robes behind.

A rose-flush tender, a thrill, a quiver,
When golden gleams to the tree-tops glide;
A flashing edge for the milk-white river,
The beck, a river - with still sleek tide.

Broad and white, and polished as silver,
On she goes under fruit-laden trees:
Sunk in leafage cooeth the culver,
And 'plaineth of love's disloyalties.

Glitters the dew, and shines the river,
Up comes the lily and dries her bell;
But two are walking apart forever,
And wave their hands for a mute farewell.

VII
A braver swell, a swifter sliding;
The river hasteth, her banks recede.
Wing-like sails on her bosom gliding
Bear down the lily, and drown the reed.

Stately prows are rising and bowing
(Shouts of mariners winnow the air),

And level sands for banks endowing
The tiny green ribbon that showed so fair.

While, O my heart! as white sails shiver,
And clouds are passing, and banks stretch wide,
How hard to follow, with lips that quiver,
That moving speck on the far-off side.

Farther, farther; I see it, know it -
My eyes brim over, it melts away:
Only my heart to my heart shall show it
As I walk desolate day by day.

VIII
And yet I know past all doubting, truly, -
A knowledge greater than grief can dim, -
I know, as he loved, he will love me duly, -
Yea, better, e'en better than I love him.

And as I walk by the vast calm river,
The awful river so dread to see,
I say, "Thy breadth and thy depth forever
Are bridged by his thoughts that cross to me."

Jean Ingelow [1820-1897]

MY PLAYMATE

The pines were dark on Ramoth hill,
Their song was soft and low;
The blossoms in the sweet May wind
Were falling like the snow.

The blossoms drifted at our feet,
The orchard birds sang clear;
The sweetest and the saddest day
It seemed of all the year.

For, more to me than birds or flowers,
My playmate left her home,
And took with her the laughing spring,
The music and the bloom.

She kissed the lips of kith and kin,
She laid her hand in mine:
What more could ask the bashful boy
Who fed her father's kine?

She left us in the bloom of May:
The constant years told o'er
Their seasons with as sweet May morns,
But she came back no more.

I walk, with noiseless feet, the round
Of uneventful years;
Still o'er and o'er I sow the spring
And reap the autumn ears.

She lives where all the golden year
Her summer roses blow;
The dusky children of the sun
Before her come and go.

There haply with her jeweled hands
She smooths her silken gown, -
No more the homespun lap wherein
I shook the walnuts down.

The wild grapes wait us by the brook,
The brown nuts on the hill,
And still the May-day flowers make sweet
The woods of Follymill.

The lilies blossom in the pond,
The bird builds in the tree,
The dark pines sing on Ramoth hill
The slow song of the sea.

I wonder if she thinks of them,
And how the old time seems, -
If ever the pines of Ramoth wood
Are sounding in her dreams.

I see her face, I hear her voice:
Does she remember mine?
And what to her is now the boy
Who fed her father's kine?

What cares she that the orioles build
For other eyes than ours, -
That other laps with nuts are filled,
And other hands with flowers?

O playmate in the golden time!
Our mossy seat is green,
Its fringing violets blossom yet,
The old trees o'er it lean.

The winds so sweet with birch and fern
A sweeter memory blow;
And there in spring the veeries sing
The song of long ago.

And still the pines of Ramoth wood
Are moaning like the sea, -
The moaning of the sea of change
Between myself and thee!

John Greenleaf Whittier [1807-1892]

A FAREWELL

With all my will, but much against my heart,
We two now part.

My Very Dear,
Our solace is, the sad road lies so clear.
It needs no art,
With faint, averted feet
And many a tear,
In our opposed paths to persevere.
Go thou to East, I West.
We will not say
There's any hope, it is so far away.
But, O, my Best,
When the one darling of our widowhead,
The nursling Grief
Is dead,
And no dews blur our eyes
To see the peach-bloom come in evening skies,
Perchance we may,
Where now this night is day,
And even through faith of still averted feet,
Making full circle of our banishment,
Amazed meet;
The bitter journey to the bourne so sweet
Seasoning the termless feast of our content
With tears of recognition never dry.

Coventry Patmore [1823-1896]

DEPARTURE

It was not like your great and gracious ways!
Do you, that have naught other to lament,
Never, my Love, repent
Of how, that July afternoon,
You went,
With sudden, unintelligible phrase,
And frightened eye,
Upon your journey of so many days
Without a single kiss, or a good-bye?
I knew, indeed, that you were parting soon;
And so we sate, within the low sun's rays,
You whispering to me, for your voice was weak,
Your harrowing praise.
Well, it was well
To hear you such things speak,
And I could tell
What made your eyes a glowing gloom of love,
As a warm South-wind sombers a March grove.

And it was like your great and gracious ways
To turn your talk on daily things, my Dear,
Lifting the luminous, pathetic lash
To let the laughter flash,
Whilst I drew near,
Because you spoke so low that I could scarcely hear.
But all at once to leave me at the last,
More at the wonder than the loss aghast,
With huddled, unintelligible phrase,
And frightened eye,

And go your journey of all days
With not one kiss, or a good-bye,
And the only loveless look the look with which you passed:
'Twas all unlike your great and gracious ways.

Coventry Patmore [1823-1896]

A SONG OF PARTING

My dear, the time has come to say
Farewell to London town,
Farewell to each familiar street,
The room where we looked down
Upon the people going by,
The river flowing fast:
The innumerable shine of lamps,
The bridges and - our past.

Our past of London days and nights,
When every night we dreamed
Of Love and Art and Happiness,
And every day it seemed
Ah! little room, you held my life,
In you I found my all;
A white hand on the mantelpiece,
A shadow on the wall.

My dear, what dinners we have had,
What cigarettes and wine
In faded corners of Soho,
Your fingers touching mine!
And now the time has come to say
Farewell to London town;
The prologue of our play is done,
So ring the curtain down.

There lies a crowded life ahead
In field and sleepy lane,
A fairer picture than we saw
Framed in our window-pane.
There'll be the stars on summer nights,
The white moon through the trees,
Moths, and the song of nightingales
To float along the breeze.

And in the morning we shall see
The swallows in the sun,
And hear the cuckoo on the hill
Welcome a day begun.
And life will open with the rose
For me, sweet, and for you,
And on our life and on the rose
How soft the falling dew!

So let us take this tranquil path,
But drop a parting tear
For town, whose greatest gift to us

Was to be lovers here.

H. C. Compton Mackenzie [1833-

SONG
From "The Earthly Paradise"

Fair is the night, and fair the day,
Now April is forgot of May,
Now into June May falls away:
Fair day! fair night! O give me back
The tide that all fair things did lack
Except my Love, except my Sweet!

Blow back, O wind! thou art not kind,
Though thou art sweet: thou hast no mind
Her hair about my Sweet to bind.
O flowery sward! though thou art bright,
I praise thee not for thy delight, -
Thou hast not kissed her silver feet.

Thou know'st her not, O rustling tree!
What dost thou then to shadow me,
Whose shade her breast did never see?
O flowers! in vain ye bow adown:
Ye have not felt her odorous gown
Brush past your heads my lips to meet.

Flow on, great river! thou mayst deem
That far away, a summer stream,
Thou saw'st her limbs amidst the gleam,
And kissed her foot, and kissed her knee:
Yet get thee swift unto the sea!
With naught of true thou wilt me greet.

And Thou that men call by my name!
O helpless One! hast thou no shame
That thou must even look the same
As while agone, as while agone
When Thou and She were left alone,
And hands and lips and tears did meet?

Grow weak and pine, lie down to die,
O body! in thy misery,
Because short time and sweet goes by.
O foolish heart! how weak thou art:
Break, break, because thou needs must part
From thine own Love, from thine own Sweet!

William Morris [1834-1896]

AT PARTING

For a day and a night Love sang to us, played with us,
Folded us round from the dark and the light;
And our hearts were fulfilled of the music he made with us,

Made with our hearts and our lips while he stayed with us,
Stayed in mid passage his pinions from flight
For a day and a night.

From his foes that kept watch with his wings had he hidden us,
Covered us close from the eyes that would smite,
From the feet that had tracked and the tongues that had chidden us
Sheltering in shade of the myrtles forbidden us
Spirit and flesh growing one with delight
For a day and a night.

But his wings will not rest and his feet will not stay for us:
Morning is here in the joy of its might;
With his breath has he sweetened a night and a day for us:
Now let him pass, and the myrtles make way for us;
Love can but last in us here at his height
For a day and a night.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

"IF SHE BUT KNEW"

If she but knew that I am weeping
Still for her sake,
That love and sorrow grow with keeping
Till they must break,
My heart that breaking will adore her,
Be hers and die;
If she might hear me once implore her,
Would she not sigh?

If she but knew that it would save me
Her voice to hear,
Saying she pitied me, forgave me,
Must she forbear?
If she were told that I was dying,
Would she be dumb?
Could she content herself with sighing?
Would she not come?

Arthur O'Shaughnessy [1844-1881]

KATHLEEN MAVOURNEEN

Kathleen Mavourneen! the gray dawn is breaking,
The horn of the hunter is heard on the hill;
The lark from her light wing the bright dew is shaking, -
Kathleen Mavourneen! what, slumbering still?
Oh, hast thou forgotten how soon we must sever?
Oh! hast thou forgotten this day we must part?
It may be for years, and it may be forever!
Oh, why art thou silent, thou voice of my heart?
Oh! why art thou silent, Kathleen Mavourneen?

Kathleen Mavourneen, awake from thy slumbers!
The blue mountains glow in the sun's golden light;

Ah, where is the spell that once hung on my numbers?
Arise in thy beauty, thou star of my night!
Mavourneen, Mavourneen, my sad tears are falling,
To think that from Erin and thee I must part!
It may be for years, and it may be forever!
Then why art thou silent, thou voice of my heart?
Then why art thou silent, Kathleen Mavourneen?

Louisa Macartney Crawford [1790-1858]

ROBIN ADAIR

What's this dull town to me?
Robin's not near, -
He whom I wished to see,
Wished for to hear;
Where's all the joy and mirth
Made life a heaven on earth?
O, they're all fled with thee,
Robin Adair!

What made the assembly shine?
Robin Adair:
What made the ball so fine?
Robin was there:
What, when the play was o'er,
What made my heart so sore?
O, it was parting with
Robin Adair!

But now thou art far from me,
Robin Adair;
But now I never see
Robin Adair;
Yet him I loved so well
Still in my heart shall dwell;
O, I can ne'er forget
Robin Adair!

Welcome on shore again,
Robin Adair!
Welcome once more again,
Robin Adair!
I feel thy trembling hand;
Tears in thy eyelids stand,
To greet thy native land,
Robin Adair!

Long I ne'er saw thee, love,
Robin Adair;
Still I prayed for thee, love,
Robin Adair;
When thou wert far at sea,
Many made love to me,
But still I thought on thee,
Robin Adair!

Come to my heart again,
Robin Adair;
Never to part again,
Robin Adair;
And if thou still art true,
I will be constant too,
And will wed none but you,
Robin Adair!

Caroline Keppel [1735- ?]

"IF YOU WERE HERE"
A Song In Winter

O love, if you were here
This dreary, weary day, -
If your lips, warm and dear,
Found some sweet word to say, -
Then hardly would seem drear
These skies of wintry gray.

But you are far away, -
How far from me, my dear!
What cheer can warm the day?
My heart is chill with fear,
Pierced through with swift dismay;
A thought has turned Life sere:

If you, from far away,
Should come not back, my dear;
If I no more might lay
My hand on yours, nor hear
That voice, now sad, now gay,
Caress my listening ear;

If you, from far away,
Should come no more, my dear, -
Then with what dire dismay
Year joined to hostile year
Would frown, if I should stay
Where memories mock and jeer!

But I would come away
To dwell with you, my dear;
Through unknown worlds to stray, -
Or sleep; nor hope, nor fear,
Nor dream beneath the clay
Of all our days that were.

Philip Bourke Marston [1850-1887]

"COME TO ME, DEAREST"

Come to me, dearest, I'm lonely without thee;
Daytime and night-time, I'm thinking about thee;
Night-time and daytime in dreams I behold thee;

Unwelcome the waking which ceases to fold thee.
Come to me, darling, my sorrows to lighten,
Come in thy beauty to bless and to brighten;
Come in thy womanhood, meekly and lowly,
Come in thy lovingness, queenly and holy.

Swallows will flit round the desolate ruin,
Telling of spring and its joyous renewing;
And thoughts of thy love and its manifold treasure,
Are circling my heart with a promise of pleasure.
O Spring of my spirit, O May of my bosom,
Shine out on my soul, till it bourgeon and blossom;
The waste of my life has a rose-root within it,
And thy fondness alone to the sunshine can win it.

Figure that moves like a song through the even;
Features lit up by a reflex of heaven;
Eyes like the skies of poor Erin, our mother,
Where shadow and sunshine are chasing each other;
Smiles coming seldom, but childlike and simple,
Planting in each rosy cheek a sweet dimple; -
O, thanks to the Saviour, that even thy seeming
Is left to the exile to brighten his dreaming.

You have been glad when you knew I was gladdened;
Dear, are you sad now to hear I am saddened?
Our hearts ever answer in tune and in time, love,
As octave to octave, and rhyme unto rhyme, love:
I cannot weep but your tears will be flowing,
You cannot smile but my cheek will be glowing;
I would not die without you at my side, love,
You will not linger when I shall have died, love.

Come to me, dear, ere I die of my sorrow,
Rise on my gloom like the sun of to-morrow;
Strong, swift, and fond are the words which I speak, love,
With a song on your lip and a smile on your cheek, love.
Come, for my heart in your absence is weary, -
Haste, for my spirit is sickened and dreary, -
Come to my arms which alone should caress thee,
Come to the heart which is throbbing to press thee!

Joseph Brenan [1829-1857]

SONG

'Tis said that absence conquers love!
But, oh! believe it not;
I've tried, alas! its power to prove,
But thou art not forgot.
Lady, though fate has bid us part,
Yet still thou art as dear,
As fixed in this devoted heart,
As when I clasped thee here.

I plunge into the busy crowd,
And smile to hear thy name;

And yet, as if I thought aloud,
They know me still the same;
And when the wine-cup passes round,
I toast some other fair, -
But when I ask my heart the sound,
Thy name is echoed there.

And when some other name I learn,
And try to whisper love,
Still will my heart to thee return
Like the returning dove.
In vain! I never can forget,
And would not be forgot;
For I must bear the same regret,
Whate'er may be my lot.

E'en as the wounded bird will seek
Its favorite bower to die,
So, lady! I would hear thee speak,
And yield my parting sigh.
'Tis said that absence conquers love!
But, oh! believe it not;
I've tried, alas! its power to prove,
But thou art not forgot.

Frederick William Thomas [1811-1864]

PARTING

Too fair, I may not call thee mine:
Too dear, I may not see
Those eyes with bridal beacons shine;
Yet, Darling, keep for me -
Empty and hushed, and safe apart, -
One little corner of thy heart.

Thou wilt be happy, dear! and bless
Thee: happy mayst thou be.
I would not make thy pleasure less;
Yet, Darling, keep for me -
My life to light, my lot to leaven, -
One little corner of thy Heaven.

Good-by, dear heart! I go to dwell
A weary way from thee;
Our first kiss is our last farewell;
Yet, Darling, keep for me -
Who wander outside in the night, -
One little corner of thy light.

Gerald Massey [1828-1907]

THE PARTING HOUR

Not yet, dear love, not yet: the sun is high;
You said last night, "At sunset I will go."

Come to the garden, where when blossoms die
No word is spoken; it is better so:
Ah! bitter word "Farewell."

Hark! how the birds sing sunny songs of spring!
Soon they will build, and work will silence them;
So we grow less light-hearted as years bring
Life's grave responsibilities - and then
The bitter word "Farewell."

The violets fret to fragrance 'neath your feet,
Heaven's gold sunlight dreams aslant your hair:
No flower for me! your mouth is far more sweet.
O, let my lips forget, while lingering there,
Love's bitter word "Farewell."

Sunset already! have we sat so long?
The parting hour, and so much left unsaid!
The garden has grown silent - void of song,
Our sorrow shakes us with a sudden dread!
Ah! bitter word "Farewell."

Olive Custance [1874-

A SONG OF AUTUMN

All through the golden weather
Until the autumn fell,
Our lives went by together
So wildly and so well.

But autumn's wind uncloses
The heart of all your flowers;
I think, as with the roses,
So hath it been with ours.

Like some divided river
Your ways and mine will be,
To drift apart for ever,
For ever till the sea.

And yet for one word spoken,
One whisper of regret,
The dream had not been broken,
And love were with us yet.

Rennell Rodd [1858-

THE GIRL I LEFT BEHIND ME

The dames of France are fond and free,
And Flemish lips are willing,
And soft the maids of Italy,
And Spanish eyes are thrilling;
Still, though I bask beneath their smile,
Their charms fail to bind me,

And my heart falls back to Erin's Isle,
To the girl I left behind me.

For she's as fair as Shannon's side,
And purer than its water,
But she refused to be my bride
Though many a year I sought her;
Yet, since to France I sailed away,
Her letters oft remind me
That I promised never to gainsay
The girl I left behind me.

She says, "My own dear love, come home,
My friends are rich and many,
Or else abroad with you I'll roam,
A soldier stout as any;
If you'll not come, nor let me go,
I'll think you have resigned me," -
My heart nigh broke when I answered "No,"
To the girl I left behind me.

For never shall my true love brave
A life of war and toiling,
And never as a skulking slave
I'll tread my native soil on;
But, were it free or to be freed,
The battle's close would find me
To Ireland bound, nor message need
From the girl I left behind me.

Unknown

"WHEN WE ARE PARTED"

When we are parted let me lie
In some far corner of thy heart,
Silent, and from the world apart,
Like a forgotten melody:
Forgotten of the world beside,
Cherished by one, and one alone,
For some loved memory of its own;
So let me in thy heart abide
When we are parted.

When we are parted, keep for me
The sacred stillness of the night;
That hour, sweet Love, is mine by right;
Let others claim the day of thee!
The cold world sleeping at our feet,
My spirit shall discourse with thine; -
When stars upon thy pillow shine,
At thy heart's door I stand and beat,
Though we are parted.

Hamilton Aide [1826-1906]

REMEMBER OR FORGET

I sat beside the streamlet,
I watched the water flow,
As we together watched it
One little year ago:
The soft rain pattered on the leaves,
The April grass was wet.
Ah! folly to remember;
'Tis wiser to forget.

The nightingales made vocal
June's palace paved with gold;
I watched the rose you gave me
Its warm red heart unfold;
But breath of rose and bird's song
Were fraught with wild regret.
'Tis madness to remember;
'Twere wisdom to forget.

I stood among the gold corn,
Alas! no more, I knew,
To gather gleaner's measure
Of the love that fell from you.
For me, no gracious harvest -
Would God we ne'er had met!
'Tis hard, Love, to remember,
But 'tis harder to forget.

The streamlet now is frozen,
The nightingales are fled,
The cornfields are deserted,
And every rose is dead.
I sit beside my lonely fire,
And pray for wisdom yet:
For calmness to remember,
Or courage to forget.

Hamilton Aide [1826-1906]

NANCY DAWSON

Nancy Dawson, Nancy Dawson,
Not so very long ago
Some one wronged you from sheer love, dear;
Little thinking it would crush, dear,
All I cherished in you so.
But now, what's the odds, my Nancy?
Where's the guinea, there's the fancy.
Are you Nancy, that old Nancy?
Nancy Dawson.

Nancy Dawson, Nancy Dawson,
I forget you, what you were;
Till I feel the sad hours creep, dear,
O'er my heart; as o'er my cheek, dear,
Once of old, that old, old hair:

And then, unawares, my Nancy,
I remember, and I fancy
You are Nancy, that old Nancy;
Nancy Dawson.

Herbert P. Horne [1864-

MY LITTLE LOVE

God keep you safe, my little love,
All through the night.
Rest close in His encircling arms
Until the light.
My heart is with you as I kneel to pray,
"Good night! God keep you in His care alway."

Thick shadows creep like silent ghosts
About my bed.
I lose myself in tender dreams
While overhead
The moon comes stealing through the window bars.
A silver sickle gleaming 'mid the stars.

For I, though I am far away,
Feel safe and strong,
To trust you thus, dear love, and yet
The night is long.
I say with sobbing breath the old fond prayer,
"Good night! Sweet dreams! God keep you everywhere!"

Charles B. Hawley [1858-

FOR EVER

Thrice with her lips she touched my lips,
Thrice with her hand my hand,
And three times thrice looked towards the sea,
But never to the land:
Then, "Sweet," she said, "no more delay,
For Heaven forbids a longer stay."

I, with my passion in my heart,
Could find no words to waste;
But striving often to depart,
I strained her to my breast:
Her wet tears washed my weary cheek;
I could have died, but could not speak.

The anchor swings, the sheet flies loose
And, bending to the breeze,
The tall ship, never to return,
Flies through the foaming seas:
Cheerily ho! the sailors cry; -
My sweet love lessening to my eye.

O Love, turn towards the land thy sight!

No more peruse the sea;
Our God, who severs thus our hearts,
Shall surely care for thee:
For me let waste-wide ocean swing,
I too lie safe beneath His wing.

William Caldwell Roscoe [1823-1859]

AUF WIEDERSEHEN

The little gate was reached at last,
Half hid in lilacs down the lane;
She pushed it wide, and, as she passed,
A wistful look she backward cast,
And said, - "Auf wiedersehen!"

With hand on latch, a vision white
Lingered reluctant, and again
Half doubting if she did aright,
Soft as the dews that fell that night,
She said, - "Auf wiedersehen!"

The lamp's clear gleam flits up the stair;
I linger in delicious pain;
Ah, in that chamber, whose rich air
To breathe in thought I scarcely dare,
Thinks she, - "Auf wiedersehen?" . . .

'Tis thirteen years; once more I press
The turf that silences the lane;
I hear the rustle of her dress,
I smell the lilacs, and - ah, yes,
I hear, - "Auf wiedersehen!"

Sweet piece of bashful maiden art!
The English words had seemed too fain,
But these - they drew us heart to heart,
Yet held us tenderly apart;
She said, - "Auf wiedersehen!"

James Russell Lowell [1819-1891]

"FOREVER AND A DAY"

I little know or care
If the blackbird on the bough
Is filling all the air
With his soft crescendo now;
For she is gone away,
And when she went she took
The springtime in her look,
The peachblow on her cheek,
The laughter from the brook,
The blue from out the May -
And what she calls a week
Is forever and a day!

It's little that I mind
How the blossoms, pink or white,
At every touch of wind
Fall a-trembling with delight;
For in the leafy lane,
Beneath the garden-boughs,
And through the silent house
One thing alone I seek.
Until she come again
The May is not the May,
And what she calls a week
Is forever and a day!

Thomas Bailey Aldrich [1837-1907]

OLD GARDENS

The white rose tree that spent its musk
For lovers' sweeter praise,
The stately walks we sought at dusk,
Have missed thee many days.

Again, with once-familiar feet,
I tread the old parterre -
But, ah, its bloom is now less sweet
Than when thy face was there.

I hear the birds of evening call;
I take the wild perfume;
I pluck a rose - to let it fall
And perish in the gloom.

Arthur Upson [1877-1908]

FERRY HINKSEY

Beyond the ferry water
That fast and silent flowed,
She turned, she gazed a moment,
Then took her onward road

Between the winding willows
To a city white with spires;
It seemed a path of pilgrims
To the home of earth's desires.

Blue shade of golden branches
Spread for her journeying,
Till he that lingered lost her
Among the leaves of Spring.

Laurence Binyon [1869 -

WEARYIN' FER YOU

Jest a-wearyin' fer you -
All the time a-feelin' blue;
Wishin' fer you - wonderin' when
You'll be comin' home again;
Restless - don't know what to do -
Jest a-wearyin' fer you!

Keep a-mopin' day by day:
Dull - in everybody's way;
Folks they smile an' pass along
Wonderin' what on earth is wrong;
'Twouldn't help 'em if they knew -
Jest a-wearyin' fer you.

Room's so lonesome, with your chair
Empty by the fireplace there,
Jest can't stand the sight o' it!
Go outdoors an' roam a bit:
But the woods is lonesome, too,
Jest a-wearyin' fer you.

Comes the wind with sounds that' jes'
Like the rustlin' o' your dress;
An' the dew on flower an' tree
Tinkles like your steps to me!
Violets, like your eyes so blue -
Jest a-wearyin' fer you!

Mornin' comes, the birds awake
(Them that sung so fer your sake!),
But there's sadness in the notes
That come thrillin' from their throats!
Seem to feel your absence, too -
Jest a-wearyin' fer you.

Evenin' comes: I miss you more
When the dark is in the door;
'Pears jest like you orter be
There to open fer me!
Latch goes tinklin' - thrills me through,
Sets me wearyin' fer you!

. . . . . .

Jest a-wearyin' fer you -
All the time a-feelin' blue!
Wishin' fer you - wonderin' when
You'll be comin' home again;
Restless - don't know what to do -
Jest a-wearyin' fer you!

Frank L. Stanton [1857-1927]

THE LOVERS OF MARCHAID

Dominic came riding down, sworded, straight and splendid,

Drave his hilt against her door, flung a golden chain.
Said: "I'll teach your lips a song sweet as his that's ended,
Ere the white rose call the bee, the almond flower again."

But he only saw her head bent within the gloom
Over heaps of bridal thread bright as apple-bloom,
Silver silk like rain that spread across the driving loom.

Dreaming Fanch, the cobbler's son, took his tools and laces,
Wrought her shoes of scarlet dye, shoes as pale as snow;
"They shall lead her wildrose feet all the fairy paces
Danced along the road of love, the road such feet should go" -

But he only saw her eyes turning from his gift
Out towards the silver skies where the white clouds drift,
Where the wild gerfalcon flies, where the last sails lift.

Bran has built his homestead high where the hills may shield her,
Where the young bird waits the spring, where the dawns are fair,
Said: "I'll name my trees for her, since I may not yield her
Stars of morning for her feet, of evening for her hair."

But he did not see them ride, seven dim sail and more,
All along the harbor-side, white from shore to shore,
Nor heard the voices of the tide crying at her door.

Jean-Marie has touched his pipe down beside the river
When the young fox bends the fern, when the folds are still,
Said: "I send her all the gifts that my love may give her, -
Golden notes like golden birds to seek her at my will."

But he only found the waves, heard the sea-gull's cry,
In and out the ocean caves, underneath the sky,
All above the wind-washed graves where dead seamen lie.

Marjorie L. C. Pickthall [1883-1922]

SONG

She's somewhere in the sunlight strong,
Her tears are in the falling rain,
She calls me in the wind's soft song,
And with the flowers she comes again.

Yon bird is but her messenger,
The moon is but her silver car;
Yea! sun and moon are sent by her,
And every wistful waiting star.

Richard Le Gallienne [1866-

THE LOVER THINKS OF HIS LADY IN THE NORTH

Now many are the stately ships that northward steam away,
And gray sails northward blow black hulls, and many more are they;
And myriads of viking gulls flap to the northern seas:

But Oh my thoughts that go to you are more than all of these!

The winds blow to the northward like a million eager wings,
The driven sea a million white-capped waves to northward flings:
I send you thoughts more many than the waves that fleck the sea,
More eager than tempestuous winds, O Love long leagues from me!

O Love, long leagues from me, I would I trod the drenched deck
Of some ship speeding to the North and staunch against all wreck,
I would I were a sea-gull strong of wing and void of fear:
Unfaltering and fleet I'd fly the long way to my Dear!

O if I were the sea, upon your northern land I'd beat
Until my waves flowed over all, and kissed your wandering feet;
And if I were the winds, I'd waft you perfumes from the South,
And give my pleadings to your ears, my kisses to your mouth.

Though many ships are sailing, never one will carry me,
I may not hurry northward with the gulls, the winds, the sea;
But fervid thoughts they say can flash across long leagues of blue -
Ah, so my love and longing must be known, Dear Heart, to you!

Shaemas O Sheel [1886-

CHANSON DE ROSEMONDE

The dawn is lonely for the sun,
And chill and drear;
The one lone star is pale and wan
As one in fear.

But when day strides across the hills,
The warm blood rushes through
The bared soft bosom of the blue
And all the glad east thrills.

Oh, come, my king! The hounds of joy
Are waiting for thy horn
To chase the doe of heart's desire
Across the heights of morn.

Oh, come, my Sun, and let me know
The rapture of the day!
Oh, come, my love! Oh, come, my love!
Thou art so long away!

Richard Hovey [1864-1900]

AD DOMNULAM SUAM

Little lady of my heart!
Just a little longer,
Love me: we will pass and part,
Ere this love grow stronger.

I have loved thee, Child! too well,

To do aught but leave thee:
Nay! my lips should never tell
Any tale to grieve thee.

Little lady of my heart!
Just a little longer
I may love thee: we will part
Ere my love grow stronger.

Soon thou leavest fairy-land;
Darker grow thy tresses:
Soon no more of hand in hand;
Soon no more caresses!

Little lady of my heart!
Just a little longer
Be a child; then we will part,
Ere this love grow stronger.

Ernest Dowson [1867-1900]

MARIAN DRURY

Marian Drury, Marian Drury,
How are the marshes full of the sea!
Acadie dreams of your coming home
All year through, and her heart gets free, -

Free on the trail of the wind to travel,
Search and course with the roving tide,
All year long where his hands unravel
Blossom and berry the marshes hide.

Marian Drury, Marian Drury,
How are the marshes full of the surge!
April over the Norland now
Walks in the quiet from verge to verge.

Burying, brimming, the building billows
Fret the long dikes with uneasy foam.
Drenched with gold weather, the idling willows
Kiss you a hand from the Norland home.

Marian Drury, Marian Drury,
How are the marshes full of the sun!
Blomidon waits for your coming home,
All day long where the white wings run.

All spring through they falter and follow,
Wander, and beckon the roving tide,
Wheel and float with the veering swallow,
Lift you a voice from the blue hillside.

Marian Drury, Marian Drury,
How are the marshes full of the rain!
April over the Norland now
Bugles for rapture, and rouses pain, -

Halts before the forsaken dwelling,
Where in the twilight, too spent to roam,
Love, whom the fingers of death are quelling,
Cries you a cheer from the Norland home.

Marian Drury, Marian Drury,
How are the marshes filled with you!
Grand Pre dreams of your coming home, -
Dreams while the rainbirds all night through,

Far in the uplands calling to win you,
Tease the brown dusk on the marshes wide;
And never the burning heart within you
Stirs in your sleep by the roving tide.

Bliss Carman [1861-1929]

LOVE'S ROSARY

All day I tell my rosary
For now my love's away:
To-morrow he shall come to me
About the break of day;
A rosary of twenty hours,
And then a rose of May;
A rosary of fettered flowers,
And then a holy-day.

All day I tell my rosary,
My rosary of hours:
And here's a flower of memory,
And here's a hope of flowers,
And here's an hour that yearns with pain
For old forgotten years,
An hour of loss, an hour of gain,
And then a shower of tears.

All day I tell my rosary,
Because my love's away;
And never a whisper comes to me,
And never a word to say;
But, if it's parting more endears,
God bring him back, I pray;
Or my heart will break in the darkness
Before the break of day.

All day I tell my rosary,
My rosary of hours,
Until an hour shall bring to me
The hope of all the flowers . . .
I tell my rosary of hours,
For O, my love's away;
And - a dream may bring him back to me
About the break of day.

Alfred Noyes [1880-

WHEN SHE COMES HOME

When she comes home again! A thousand ways
I fashion, to myself, the tenderness
Of my glad welcome: I shall tremble - yes;
And touch her, as when first in the old days
I touched her girlish hand, nor dared upraise
Mine eyes, such was my faint heart's sweet distress
Then silence: and the perfume of her dress:
The room will sway a little, and a haze
Cloy eyesight - soul-sight, even - for a space;
And tears - yes; and the ache here in the throat,
To know that I so ill deserve the place
Her arms make for me; and the sobbing note
I stay with kisses, ere the tearful face
Again is hidden in the old embrace.

James Whitcomb Riley [1849-1916]

THE TRAGEDY OF LOVE

SONG

My silks and fine array,
My smiles and languished air,
By Love are driven away;
And mournful lean Despair
Brings me yew to deck my grave:
Such end true lovers have.

His face is fair as heaven
When springing buds unfold:
O why to him was't given,
Whose heart is wintry cold?
His breast is Love's all-worshipped tomb,
Where all Love's pilgrims come.

Bring me an ax and spade,
Bring me a winding-sheet;
When I my grave have made,
Let winds and tempests beat:
Then down I'll lie, as cold as clay:
True love doth pass away!

William Blake [1757-1827]

THE FLIGHT OF LOVE

When the lamp is shattered
The light in the dust lies dead -
When the cloud is scattered,
The rainbow's glory is shed.
When the lute is broken,
Sweet tones are remembered not;
When the lips have spoken,
Loved accents are soon forgot.

As music and splendor
Survive not the lamp and the lute,
The heart's echoes render
No song when the spirit is mute -
No song but sad dirges,
Like the wind through a ruined cell,
Or the mournful surges
That ring the dead seaman's knell.

When hearts have once mingled,
Love first leaves the well-built nest;
The weak one is singled
To endure what it once possessed.
O Love! who bewailest
The frailty of all things here,
Why choose you the frailest
For your cradle, your home, and your bier?

Its passions will rock thee
As the storms rock the ravens on high;
Bright reason will mock thee,
Like the sun from a wintry sky.
From thy nest every rafter
Will rot, and thine eagle home
Leave thee naked to laughter,
When leaves fall and cold winds come.

Percy Bysshe Shelley [1792-1822]

"FAREWELL! IF EVER FONDEST PRAYER"

Farewell! if ever fondest prayer
For other's weal availed on high,
Mine will not all be lost in air,
But waft thy name beyond the sky.
'Twere vain to speak, to weep, to sigh:
Oh! more than tears of blood can tell,
When wrung from guilt's expiring eye,
Are in that word - Farewell! - Farewell!

These lips are mute, these eyes are dry:
But in my breast and in my brain
Awake the pangs that pass not by,
The thought that ne'er shall sleep again.

My soul nor deigns nor dares complain,
Though grief and passion there rebel:
I only know we loved in vain -
I only feel - Farewell! - Farewell!

George Gordon Byron [1788-1824]

PORPHYRIA'S LOVER

The rain set early in to-night,
The sullen wind was soon awake,
It tore the elm-tops down for spite,
And did its worst to vex the lake:
I listened with heart fit to break.
When glided in Porphyria; straight
She shut the cold out and the storm,
And kneeled and made the cheerless grate
Blaze up, and all the cottage warm;
Which done, she rose, and from her form
Withdrew the dripping cloak and shawl,
And laid her soiled gloves by, untied
Her hat and let the damp hair fall,
And, last, she sat down by my side
And called me. When no voice replied,
She put my arm about her waist,
And made her smooth white shoulder bare,
And all her yellow hair displaced,
And, stooping, made my cheek lie there,
And spread, o'er all, her yellow hair,
Murmuring how she loved me - she
Too weak, for all her heart's endeavor,
To set its struggling passion free
From pride, and vainer ties dissever,
And give herself to me for ever.
But passion sometimes would prevail,
Nor could to-night's gay feast restrain
A sudden thought of one so pale
For love of her, and all in vain:
So, she was come through wind and rain.
Be sure I looked up at her eyes
Happy and proud; at last I knew
Porphyria worshipped me; surprise
Made my heart swell, and still it grew
While I debated what to do.
That moment she was mine, mine, fair,
Perfectly pure and good: I found
A thing to do, and all her hair
In one long yellow string I wound
Three times her little throat around,
And strangled her. No pain felt she;
I am quite sure she felt no pain.
As a shut bud that holds a bee,
I warily oped her lids: again
Laughed the blue eyes without a stain.
And I untightened next the tress
About her neck; her cheek once more
Blushed bright beneath my burning kiss:

I propped her head up as before,
Only, this time my shoulder bore
Her head, which droops upon it still:
The smiling rosy little head,
So glad it has its utmost will,
That all it scorned at once is fled,
And I, its love, am gained instead!
Porphyria's love: she guessed not how
Her darling one wish would he heard.
And thus we sit together now,
And all night long we have not stirred,
And yet God has not said a word!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

MODERN BEAUTY

I am the torch, she saith, and what to me
If the moth die of me? I am the flame
Of Beauty, and I burn that all may see
Beauty, and I have neither joy nor shame.
But live with that clear light of perfect fire
Which is to men the death of their desire.

I am Yseult and Helen, I have seen
Troy burn, and the most loving knight lies dead.
The world has been my mirror, time has been
My breath upon the glass; and men have said,
Age after age, in rapture and despair,
Love's poor few words, before my image there.

I live, and am immortal; in my eyes
The sorrow of the world, and on my lips
The joy of life, mingle to make me wise;
Yet now the day is darkened with eclipse:
Who is there lives for beauty? Still am I
The torch, but where's the moth that still dares die?

Arthur Symons [1865-

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever-dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful - a fairy's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

I set her on my pacing steed
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A fairy's song.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild and manna-dew,
And sure in language strange she said,
"I love thee true."

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sighed full sore;
And there I shut her wild, wild eyes
With kisses four.

And there she lulled me asleep,
And there I dreamed - Ah! woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dreamed
On the cold hill's side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all:
They cried - "La belle dame sans merci
Hath thee in thrall!"

I saw their starved lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gaped wide,
And I awoke and found me here
On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

John Keats [1795-1821]

TANTALUS - TEXAS

"If I may trust your love," she cried,
"And you would have me for a bride,
Ride over yonder plain, and bring
Your flask full from the Mustang spring;
Fly, fast as western eagle's wing,
O'er the Llano Estacado!"

He heard, and bowed without a word,
His gallant steed he lightly spurred!
He turned his face, and rode away
Toward the grave of dying day,
And vanished with its parting ray
On the Llano Estacado.

Night came, and found him riding on,
Day came, and still he rode alone.
He spared not spur, he drew not rein,
Across that broad, unchanging plain,
Till he the Mustang spring might gain,
On the Llano Estacado.

A little rest, a little draught,
Hot from his hand, and quickly quaffed,
His flask was filled, and then he turned.
Once more his steed the maguey spurned,
Once more the sky above him burned,
On the Llano Estacado.

How hot the quivering landscape glowed!
His brain seemed boiling as he rode -
Was it a dream, a drunken one,
Or was he really riding on?
Was that a skull that gleamed and shone
On the Llano Estacado?

"Brave steed of mine, brave steed!" he cried,
"So often true, so often tried,
Bear up a little longer yet!"
His mouth was black with blood and sweat -
Heaven! how he longed his lips to wet
On the Llano Estacado.

And still, within his breast, he held
The precious flask so lately filled.
Oh, for a drink! But well he knew
If empty it should meet her view,
Her scorn - but still his longing grew
On the Llano Estacado.

His horse went down. He wandered on,
Giddy, blind, beaten, and alone.
While upon cushioned couch you lie,
Oh, think how hard it is to die,
Beneath the cruel, cloudless sky
On the Llano Estacado.

At last he staggered, stumbled, fell,
His day was done, he knew full well,
And raising to his lips the flask,
The end, the object of his task,
Drank to her - more she could not ask.
Ah, the Llano Estacado!

That night in the Presidio,
Beneath the torchlight's wavy glow,

She danced - and never thought of him,
The victim of a woman's whim,
Lying, with face upturned and grim,
On the Llano Estacado.

Joaquin Miller [1839-1913]

ENCHAINMENT

I went to her who loveth me no more,
And prayed her bear with me, if so she might;
For I had found day after day too sore,
And tears that would not cease night after night.
And so I prayed her, weeping, that she bore
To let me be with her a little; yea,
To soothe myself a little with her sight,
Who loved me once, ah many a night and day.

Then she who loveth me no more, maybe
She pitied somewhat: and I took a chain
To bind myself to her, and her to me;
Yea, so that I might call her mine again.
Lo! she forbade me not; but I and she
Fettered her fair limbs, and her neck more fair,
Chained the fair wasted white of love's domain.
And put gold fetters on her golden hair.

Oh! the vain joy it is to see her lie
Beside me once again; beyond release,
Her hair, her hand, her body, till she die,
All mine, for me to do with what I please!
For, after all, I find no chain whereby
To chain her heart to love me as before,
Nor fetter for her lips, to make them cease
From saying still she loveth me no more.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy [1844-1881]

AULD ROBIN GRAY

When the sheep are in the fauld, and the kye at hame,
And a' the warld to rest are gane,
The waes o' my heart fa' in showers frae my e'e,
While my gudeman lies sound by me.

Young Jamie lo'ed me weel, and sought me for his bride;
But saving a croun he had naething else beside:
To make the croun a pund, young Jamie gaed to sea;
And the croun and the pund were baith for me.

He hadna been awa' a week but only twa,
When my father brak his arm, and the kye was stown awa';
My mother she fell sick, - and my Jamie at the sea -
And auld Robin Gray came a-courtin' me.

My father couldna work, and my mother couldna spin;

I toiled day and night, but their bread I couldna win;
Auld Rob maintained them baith, and wi' tears in his e'e
Said, "Jennie, for their sakes, O, marry me!"

My heart it said nay; I looked for Jamie back;
But the wind it blew high, and the ship it was a wrack;
His ship it was a wrack - Why didna Jamie dee?
Or why do I live to cry, Wae's me!

My father urged me sair: my mother didna speak;
But she looked in my face till my heart was like to break:
They gi'ed him my hand, though my heart was in the sea;
Sae auld Robin Gray he was gudeman to me.

I hadna been a wife a week but only four,
When mournfu' as I sat on the stane at the door,
I saw my Jamie's wraith, - for I couldna think it he,
Till he said, "I'm come hame to marry thee."

O, sair, sair did we greet, and muckle did we say;
We took but ae kiss, and we tore ourselves away:
I wish that I were dead, but I'm no like to dee;
And why was I born to say, Wae's me!

I gang like a ghaist, and I carena to spin;
I daurna think on Jamie, for that wad be a sin;
But I'll do my best a gude wife aye to be,
For auld Robin Gray he is kind unto me.

Anne Barnard [1750-1825]

LOST LIGHT

My heart is chilled and my pulse is slow,
But often and often will memory go,
Like a blind child lost in a waste of snow,
Back to the days when I loved you so -
The beautiful long ago.

I sit here dreaming them through and through,
The blissful moments I shared with you -
The sweet, sweet days when our love was new,
When I was trustful and you were true -
Beautiful days, but few!

Blest or wretched, fettered or free,
Why should I care how your life may be,
Or whether you wander by land or sea?
I only know you are dead to me,
Ever and hopelessly.

Oh, how often at day's decline
I pushed from my window the curtaining vine,
To see from your lattice the lamp-light shine -
Type of a message that, half divine,
Flashed from your heart to mine.

Once more the starlight is silvering all;
The roses sleep by the garden wall;
The night bird warbles his madrigal,
And I hear again through the sweet air fall
The evening bugle-call.

But summers will vanish and years will wane,
And bring no light to your window pane;
Nor gracious sunshine nor patient rain
Can bring dead love back to life again:
I call up the past in vain.

My heart is heavy, my heart is old,
And that proves dross which I counted gold;
I watch no longer your curtain's fold;
The window is dark and the night is cold,
And the story forever told.

Elizabeth Akers [1832-1911]

A SIGH

It was nothing but a rose I gave her, -
Nothing but a rose
Any wind might rob of half its savor,
Any wind that blows.

When she took it from my trembling fingers
With a hand as chill -
Ah, the flying touch upon them lingers,
Stays, and thrills them still!

Withered, faded, pressed between the pages,
Crumpled fold on fold, -
Once it lay upon her breast, and ages
Cannot make it old!

Harriet Prescott Spofford [1835-1921]

HEREAFTER

Love, when all the years are silent, vanished quite and laid to rest,
When you and I are sleeping, folded breathless breast to breast,
When no morrow is before us, and the long grass tosses o'er us,
And our grave remains forgotten, or by alien footsteps pressed -

Still that love of ours will linger, that great love enrich the earth,
Sunshine in the heavenly azure, breezes blowing joyous mirth;
Fragrance fanning off from flowers, melody of summer showers,
Sparkle of the spicy wood-fires round the happy autumn hearth.

That's our love. But you and I, dear - shall we linger with it yet,
Mingled in one dew-drop, tangled in one sunbeam's golden net -
On the violet's purple bosom, I the sheen, but you the blossom,
Stream on sunset winds, and be the haze with which some hill is wet?

Or, beloved - if ascending - when we have endowed the world
With the best bloom of our being, whither will our way be whirled,
Through what vast and starry spaces, toward what awful, holy places,
With a white light on our faces, spirit over spirit furled?

Only this our yearning answers: wheresoe'er that way defile,
Not a film shall part us through the eons of that mighty while,
In the fair eternal weather, even as phantoms still together,
Floating, floating, one forever, in the light of God's great smile.

Harriet Prescott Spofford [1835-1921]

ENDYMION

The apple trees are hung with gold,
And birds are loud in Arcady,
The sheep lie bleating in the fold,
The wild goat runs across the wold,
But yesterday his love he told,
I know he will come back to me.
O rising moon! O Lady moon!
Be you my lover's sentinel,
You cannot choose but know him well,
For he is shod with purple shoon,
You cannot choose but know my love,
For he a shepherd's crook doth bear,
And he is soft as any dove,
And brown and curly is his hair.

The turtle now has ceased to call
Upon her crimson-footed groom,
The gray wolf prowls about the stall,
The lily's singing seneschal
Sleeps in the lily-bell, and all
The violet hills are lost in gloom.
O risen moon! O holy moon!
Stand on the top of Helice,
And if my own true love you see,
Ah! if you see the purple shoon,
The hazel crook, the lad's brown hair,
The goat-skin wrapped about his arm,
Tell him that I am waiting where
The rushlight glimmers in the Farm.

The falling dew is cold and chill,
And no bird sings in Arcady,
The little fauns have left the hill,
Even the tired daffodil
Has closed its gilded doors, and still
My lover comes not back to me.
False moon! False moon! O waning moon!
Where is my own true lover gone,
Where are the lips vermilion,
The shepherd's crook, the purple shoon?
Why spread that silver pavilion,
Why wear that veil of drifting mist?
Ah! thou hast young Endymion,

Thou hast the lips that should be kissed!

Oscar Wilde [1856-1900]

"LOVE IS A TERRIBLE THING"

I went out to the farthest meadow,
I lay down in the deepest shadow;

And I said unto the earth, "Hold me,"
And unto the night, "O enfold me!"

And unto the wind petulantly
I cried, "You know not for you are free!"

And I begged the little leaves to lean
Low and together for a safe screen;

Then to the stars I told my tale:
"That is my home-light, there in the vale,

"And O, I know that I shall return,
But let me lie first mid the unfeeling fern;

"For there is a flame that has blown too near,
And there is a name that has grown too dear,
And there is a fear" . . . .

And to the still hills and cool earth and far sky I made moan,
"The heart in my bosom is not my own!

"O would I were free as the wind on wing;
Love is a terrible thing!"

Grace Fallow Norton [1876-

THE BALLAD OF THE ANGEL

"Who is it knocking in the night,
That fain would enter in?"
"The ghost of Lost Delight am I,
The sin you would not sin,
Who comes to look in your two eyes
And see what might have been."

"Oh, long ago and long ago
I cast you forth," he said,
"For that your eyes were all too blue,
Your laughing mouth too red,
And my torn soul was tangled in
The tresses of your head."

"Now mind you with what bitter words
You cast me forth from you?"
"I bade you back to that fair Hell
From whence your breath you drew,

And with great blows I broke my heart
Lest it might follow too.

"Yea, from the grasp of your white hands
I freed my hands that day,
And have I not climbed near to God
As these His henchmen may?"
"Ah, man, - ah, man! 'twas my two hands
That led you all the way."

"I hid my eyes from your two eyes
That they might see aright."
"Yet think you 'twas a star that led
Your feet from height to height?
It was the flame of my two eyes
That drew you through the night."

With trembling hands he threw the door,
Then fell upon his knee:
"O, Vision armed and cloaked in light,
Why do you honor me?"
"The Angel of your Strength am I
Who was your sin," quoth she.

"For that you slew me long ago
My hands have raised you high;
For that mine eyes you closed, mine eyes
Are lights to lead you by;
And 'tis my touch shall swing the gates
Of Heaven when you die!"

Theodosia Garrison [1874-

"LOVE CAME BACK AT FALL O' DEW"

Love came back at fall o' dew,
Playing his old part;
But I had a word or two,
That would break his heart.

"He who comes at candlelight,
That should come before,
Must betake him to the night
From a barred door."

This the word that made us part
In the fall o' dew;
This the word that brake his heart -
Yet it brake mine, too!

Lizette Woodworth Reese [1856-1935]

I SHALL NOT CARE

When I am dead and over me bright April
Shakes out her rain-drenched hair,

Though you should lean above me broken-hearted,
I shall not care.

I shall have peace, as leafy trees are peaceful
When rain bends down the bough,
And I shall be more silent and cold-hearted
Than you are now.

Sara Teasdale [1884-1933]

OUTGROWN

Nay, you wrong her, my friend, she's not fickle; her love
she has simply outgrown:
One can read the whole matter, translating her heart
by the light of one's own.

Can you bear me to talk with you frankly? There is much that
my heart would say;
And you know we were children together, have quarreled
and "made up" in play.

And so, for the sake of old friendship, I venture to tell you
the truth, -
As plainly, perhaps, and as bluntly, as I might in our
earlier youth.

Five summers ago, when you wooed her, you stood on the
selfsame plane,
Face to face, heart to heart, never dreaming your souls
should be parted again.

She loved you at that time entirely, in the bloom, of her life's
early May;
And it is not her fault, I repeat it, that she does not love you
to-day.

Nature never stands still, nor souls either: they ever go up
or go down;
And hers has been steadily soaring - but how has it been
with your own?

She has struggled and yearned and aspired, grown purer and wiser each year:
The stars are not farther above you in yon luminous atmosphere!

For she whom you crowned with fresh roses, down yonder, five summers ago,
Has learned that the first of our duties to God and ourselves is to grow.

Her eyes they are sweeter and calmer: but their vision is clearer as well;
Her voice has a tender cadence, but is pure as a silver bell.

Her face has the look worn by those who with God and his angels have talked:
The white robes she wears are less white than the spirits with whom she has walked.

And you? Have you aimed at the highest? Have you, too,
aspired and prayed?
Have you looked upon evil unsullied? Have you conquered it

undismayed?

Have you, too, grown purer and wiser, as the months
and the years have rolled on?
Did you meet her this morning rejoicing in the triumph
of victory won?

Nay, hear me! The truth cannot harm you. When to-day
in her presence you stood
Was the hand that you gave her as white and clean as that
of her womanhood?

Go measure yourself by her standard; look back on the years
that have fled:
Then ask, if you need, why she tells you that the love of her
girlhood is dead.

She cannot look down to her lover: her love, like her soul, aspires;
He must stand by her side, or above her, who would kindle its
holy fires.

Now farewell! For the sake of old friendship I have ventured
to tell you the truth,
As plainly, perhaps, and as bluntly as I might in our earlier youth.

Julia C. R. Dorr [1825-1913]

A TRAGEDY

Among his books he sits all day
To think and read and write;
He does not smell the new-mown hay,
The roses red and white.

I walk among them all alone,
His silly, stupid wife;
The world seems tasteless, dead and done -
An empty thing is life.

At night his window casts a square
Of light upon the lawn;
I sometimes walk and watch it there
Until the chill of dawn.

I have no brain to understand
The books he loves to read;
I only have a heart and hand
He does not seem to need.

He calls me "Child" - lays on my hair
Thin fingers, cold and mild;
Oh! God of Love, who answers prayer,
I wish I were a child!

And no one sees and no one knows
(He least would know or see),
That ere Love gathers next year's rose

Death will have gathered me.

Edith Nesbit [1858-1924]

LEFT BEHIND

It was the autumn of the year;
The strawberry-leaves were red and sere;
October's airs were fresh and chill,
When, pausing on the windy hill,
The hill that overlooks the sea,
You talked confidingly to me, -
Me whom your keen, artistic sight
Has not yet learned to read aright,
Since I have veiled my heart from you,
And loved you better than you knew.

You told me of your toilsome past;
The tardy honors won at last,
The trials borne, the conquests gained,
The longed-for boon of Fame attained;
I knew that every victory
But lifted you away from me,
That every step of high emprise
But left me lowlier in your eyes;
I watched the distance as it grew,
And loved you better than you knew.

You did not see the bitter trace
Of anguish sweep across my face;
You did not hear my proud heart beat,
Heavy and slow, beneath your feet;
You thought of triumphs still unwon,
Of glorious deeds as yet undone;
And I, the while you talked to me,
I watched the gulls float lonesomely,
Till lost amid the hungry blue,
And loved you better than you knew.

You walk the sunny side of fate;
The wise world smiles, and calls you great;
The golden fruitage of success
Drops at your feet in plenteousness;
And you have blessings manifold: -
Renown and power and friends and gold, -
They build a wall between us twain,
Which may not be thrown down again,
Alas! for I, the long years through,
Have loved you better than you knew.

Your life's proud aim, your art's high truth,
Have kept the promise of your youth;
And while you won the crown, which now
Breaks into bloom upon your brow,
My soul cried strongly out to you
Across the ocean's yearning blue,
While, unremembered and afar,

I watched you, as I watch a star
Through darkness struggling into view,
And loved you better than you knew.

I used to dream in all these years
Of patient faith and silent tears,
That Love's strong hand would put aside
The barriers of place and pride,
Would reach the pathless darkness through,
And draw me softly up to you;
But that is past. If you should stray
Beside my grave, some future day,
Perchance the violets o'er my dust
Will half betray their buried trust,
And say, their blue eyes full of dew,
"She loved you better than you knew."

Elizabeth Akers [1832-1911]

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

Come, dear children, let us away;
Down and away below!
Now my brothers call from the bay,
Now the great winds shoreward blow,
Now the salt tides seaward flow;
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away!
This way, this way!

Call her once before you go. -
Call once yet!
In a voice that she will know:
"Margaret! Margaret!"
Children's voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother's ear;
Children's voices, wild with pain, -
Surely she will come again!
Call her once and come away;
This way, this way!
"Mother dear, we cannot stay!
The wild white horses foam and fret."
Margaret! Margaret!

Come, dear children, come away down;
Call no more!
One last look at the white-walled town,
And the little gray church on the windy shore;
Then come down!
She will not come, though you call all day;
Come away, come away!

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,

The far-off sound of a silver bell?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,
Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye?
When did music come this way?
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away?
Once she sate with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She combed its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.
She sighed, she looked up through the clear green sea;
She said: "I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little gray church on the shore to-day.
'Twill he Easter-time in the world, - ah me!
And I lose my poor soul, Merman, here with thee."
I said: "Go up, dear heart, through the waves:
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves!"
She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay.
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, were we long alone?
"The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan;
Long prayers," I said, "in the world they say;
Come!" I said, and we rose through the surf in the bay.
We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-walled town,
Through the narrow paved streets, where all was still,
To the little gray church on the windy hill.
From the church came a murmur of folk at their prayers,
But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climbed on the graves, on the stones worn with rains,
And we gazed up the aisle through the small leaded panes.
She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:
"Margaret, hist! come quick, we are here!
Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone;
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
But, ah, she gave me never a look,
For her eyes were sealed to the holy book!
Loud prays the priest; shut stands the door.
Come away, children, call no more!
Come away, come down, call no more!

Down, down, down!
Down to the depths of the sea!
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.

Hark what she sings: "O joy, O joy,
From the humming street, and the child with its toy!
From the priest, and the bell, and the holy well;
From the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun!"
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully,
Till the spindle drops from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand,
And over the sand at the sea;
And her eyes are set in a stare,
And anon there breaks a sigh,
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh;
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaiden,
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children;
Come, children, come down!
The hoarse wind blows colder;
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl.
Singing: "Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she!
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow,
When clear falls the moonlight,
When spring-tides are low;
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starred with broom,
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanched sands a gloom;
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie;
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town;
At the church on the hillside -
And then come back down.
Singing: "There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she!
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea."

Matthew Arnold [1822-1888]

THE PORTRAIT

Midnight past! Not a sound of aught
Through the silent house, but the wind at his prayers.
I sat by the dying fire, and thought
Of the dear dead woman up-stairs.

A night of tears! for the gusty rain
Had ceased, but the eaves were dripping yet;
And the moon looked forth, as though in pain,
With her face all white and wet:

Nobody with me, my watch to keep,
But the friend of my bosom, the man I love:
And grief had sent him fast to sleep
In the chamber up above.

Nobody else, in the country place
All round, that knew of my loss beside,
But the good young Priest with the Raphael-face,
Who confessed her when she died.

That good young Priest is of gentle nerve,
And my grief had moved him beyond control;
For his lip grew white, as I could observe,
When he speeded her parting soul.

I sat by the dreary hearth alone:
I thought of the pleasant days of yore:
I said, "The staff of my life is gone:
The woman I loved is no more.

"On her cold dead bosom my portrait lies,
Which next to her heart she used to wear -
Haunting it o'er with her tender eyes
When my own face was not there.

"It is set all round with rubies red,
And pearls which a Pen might have kept.
For each ruby there my heart hath bled:
For each pearl my eyes have wept."

And I said - The thing is precious to me:
They will bury her soon in the churchyard clay;
It lies on her heart, and lost must be
If I do not take it away."

I lighted my lamp at the dying flame,
And crept up the stairs that creaked for fright,
Till into the chamber of death I came,
Where she lay all in white.

The moon shone over her winding-sheet,
There stark she lay on her carven bed:
Seven burning tapers about her feet,

And seven about her head.

As I stretched my hand, I held my breath;
I turned as I drew the curtains apart:
I dared not look on the face of death:
I knew where to find her heart.

I thought at first, as my touch fell there,
It had warmed that heart to life, with love;
For the thing I touched was warm, I swear,
And I could feel it move.

'Twas the hand of a man, that was moving slow
O'er the heart of the dead, - from the other side:
And at once the sweat broke over my brow:
"Who is robbing the corpse?" I cried.

Opposite me by the tapers' light,
The friend of my bosom, the man I loved,
Stood over the corpse, and all as white,
And neither of us moved.

"What do you here, my friend?". . .The man
Looked first at me, and then at the dead.
"There is a portrait here," he began:
"There is. It is mine," I said.

Said the friend of my bosom, "Yours, no doubt,
The portrait was, till a month ago,
When this suffering angel took that out,
And placed mine there, I know."

"This woman, she loved me well," said I.
"A month ago," said my friend to me:
"And in your throat," I groaned, "you lie!"
He answered, . . . "Let us see."

"Enough!" I returned, "let the dead decide:
And whosesoever the portrait prove,
His shall it be, when the cause is tried,
Where Death is arraigned by Love."

We found the portrait there, in its place:
We opened it by the tapers' shine:
The gems were all unchanged: the face
Was - neither his nor mine.

"One nail drives out another, at least!
The face of the portrait there," I cried,
"Is our friend's, the Raphael-faced young Priest,
Who confessed her when she died."

The setting is all of rubies red,
And pearls which a Peri might have kept.
For each ruby there my heart hath bled:
For each pearl my eyes have wept.

Edward Robert Bulwer Lytton [1831-1891]

THE ROSE AND THORN

She's loveliest of the festal throng
In delicate form and Grecian face, -
A beautiful, incarnate song,
A marvel of harmonious grace;
And yet I know the truth I speak:
From those gay groups she stands apart,
A rose upon her tender cheek,
A thorn within her heart.

Though bright her eyes' bewildering gleams,
Fair tremulous lips and shining hair,
A something born of mournful dreams
Breathes round her sad enchanted air;
No blithesome thoughts at hide and seek
From out her dimples smiling start;
If still the rose be on her cheek,
A thorn is in her heart.

Young lover, tossed 'twixt hope and fear,
Your whispered vow and yearning eyes
Yon marble Clytie pillared near
Could move as soon to soft replies:
Or, if she thrill at words you speak,
Love's memory prompts the sudden start;
The rose has paled upon her cheek,
The thorn has pierced her heart.

Paul Hamilton Hayne [1830-1886]

TO HER - UNSPOKEN

Go to him, ah, go to him, and lift your eyes aglow to him;
Fear not royally to give whatever he may claim;
All your spirit's treasury scruple not to show to him.
He is noble; meet him with a pride too high for shame.

Say to him, ah, say to him, that soul and body sway to him;
Cast away the cowardice that counsels you to flight,
Lest you turn at last to find that you have lost the way to him,
Lest you stretch your arms in vain across a starless night.

Be to him, ah, be to him, the key that sets joy free to him,
Teach him all the tenderness that only love can know,
And if ever there should come a memory of me to him,
Bid him judge me gently for the sake of long ago.

Amelia Josephine Burr [1878-

A LIGHT WOMAN

So far as our story approaches the end,
Which do you pity the most of us three? -

My friend, or the mistress of my friend
With her wanton eyes, or me?

My friend was already too good to lose,
And seemed in the way of improvement yet,
When she crossed his path with her hunting-noose,
And over him drew her net.

When I saw him tangled in her toils,
A shame, said I, if she adds just him
To her nine-and-ninety other spoils,
The hundredth for a whim!

And before my friend be wholly hers,
How easy to prove to him, I said,
An eagle's the game her pride prefers,
Though she snaps at a wren instead!

So, I gave her eyes my own eyes to take,
My hand sought hers as in earnest need,
And round she turned for my noble sake,
And gave me herself indeed.

The eagle am I, with my fame in the world,
The wren is he, with his maiden face.
- You look away and your lip is curled?
Patience, a moment's space!

For see, my friend goes shaking and white;
He eyes me as the basilisk:
I have turned, it appears, his day to night,
Eclipsing his sun's disk.

And I did it, he thinks, as a very thief:
"Though I love her - that, he comprehends -
One should master one's passions, (love, in chief)
And be loyal to one's friends!"

And she, - she lies in my hand as tame
As a pear late basking over a wall;
Just a touch to try and off it came;
'Tis mine, - can I let it fall?

With no mind to eat it, that's the worst!
Were it thrown in the road, would the case assist?
'Twas quenching a dozen blue-flies' thirst
When I gave its stalk a twist.

And I, - what I seem to my friend, you see:
What I soon shall seem to his love, you guess:
What I seem to myself, do you ask of me?
No hero I confess.

'Tis an awkward thing to play with souls,
And matter enough to save one's own:
Yet think of my friend, and the burning coals
He played with for bits of stone!

One likes to show the truth for the truth;
That the woman was light is very true:
But suppose she says, - Never mind that youth!
What wrong have I done to you?

Well, anyhow, here the story stays,
So far at least as I understand;
And, Robert Browning, you writer of plays,
Here's a subject made to your hand!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

FROM THE TURKISH

The chain I gave was fair to view,
The lute I added sweet in sound,
The heart that offered both was true,
And ill deserved the fate it found.

These gifts were charmed by secret spell
Thy truth in absence to divine;
And they have done their duty well,
Alas! they could not teach thee thine.

That chain was firm in every link,
But not to bear a stranger's touch;
That lute was sweet - till thou couldst think
In other hands its notes were such.

Let him, who from thy neck unbound
The chain which shivered in his grasp,
Who saw that lute refuse to sound,
Restring the chords, renew the clasp.

When thou wert changed, they altered too;
The chain is broke, the music mute:
'Tis past - to them and thee adieu -
False heart, frail chain, and silent lute.

George Gordon Byron [1788-1824]

A SUMMER WOOING

The wind went wooing the rose,
For the rose was fair.
How the rough wind won her, who knows?
But he left her there.
Far away from her grave he blows:
Does the free wind care?

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835-1908]

BUTTERFLIES

At sixteen years she knew no care;

How could she, sweet and pure as light?
And there pursued her everywhere
Butterflies all white.

A lover looked. She dropped her eyes
That glowed like pansies wet with dew;
And lo, there came from out the skies
Butterflies all blue.

Before she guessed her heart was gone;
The tale of love was swiftly told;
And all about her wheeled and shone
Butterflies all gold.

Then he forsook her one sad morn;
She wept and sobbed, "Oh, love, come back!"
There only came to her forlorn
Butterflies all black.

John Davidson [1857-1909]

UNSEEN SPIRITS

The shadows lay along Broadway,
'Twas near the twilight-tide,
And slowly there a lady fair
Was walking in her pride.
Alone walked she; but, viewlessly,
Walked spirits at her side.

Peace charmed the street beneath her feet,
And Honor charmed the air;
And all astir looked kind on her,
And called her good as fair, -
For all God ever gave to her
She kept with chary care.

She kept with care her beauties rare
From lovers warm and true,
For her heart was cold to all but gold,
And the rich came not to woo -
But honored well are charms to sell
If priests the selling do.

Now walking there was one more fair -
A slight girl, lily-pale;
And she had unseen company
To make the spirit quail:
'Twixt Want and Scorn she walked forlorn,
And nothing could avail.

No mercy now can clear her brow
For this world's peace to pray;
For, as love's wild prayer dissolved in air,
Her woman's heart gave way! -
But the sin forgiven by Christ in heaven
By man is cursed alway!

Nathaniel Parker Willis [1806-1867]

"GRANDMITHER, THINK NOT I FORGET"

Grandmither, think not I forget, when I come back to town,
An' wander the old ways again, an' tread them up and down.
I never smell the clover bloom, nor see the swallows pass,
Without I mind how good ye were unto a little lass.
I never hear the winter rain a-pelting all night through,
Without I think and mind me of how cold it falls on you.
And if I come not often to your bed beneath the thyme,
Mayhap 'tis that I'd change wi' ye, and gie my bed for thine,
Would like to sleep in thine.

I never hear the summer winds among the roses blow,
Without I wonder why it was ye loved the lassie so.
Ye gave me cakes and lollipops and pretty toys a store, -
I never thought I should come back and ask ye now for more.
Grandmither, gie me your still, white hands, that lie upon your breast,
For mine do beat the dark all night, and never find me rest;
They grope among the shadows, an' they beat the cold black air,
They go seekin' in the darkness, an' they never find him there,
They never find him there.

Grandmither, gie me your sightless eyes, that I may never see
His own a-burnin' full o' love that must not shine for me.
Grandmither, gie me your peaceful lips, white as the kirkyard snow,
For mine be tremblin' wi' the wish that he must never know.
Grandmither, gie me your clay-stopped ears, that I may never hear
My lad a-singin' in the night when I am sick wi' fear;
A-singin' when the moonlight over a' the land is white -
Ah, God! I'll up an' go to him a-singin' in the night,
A-callin' in the night.

Grandmither, gie me your clay-cold heart that has forgot to ache,
For mine be fire within my breast and yet it cannot break.
Wi' every beat it's callin' for things that must not be, -
An' can ye not let me creep in an' rest awhile by ye?
A little lass afeard o' dark slept by ye years agone -
Ah, she has found what night can hold 'twixt sundown an' the dawn!
So when I plant the rose an' rue above your grave for ye,
Ye'll know it's under rue an' rose that I would like to be,
That I would like to be.

Willa Sibert Cather [1875-

LITTLE WILD BABY

Through the fierce fever I nursed him, and then he said
I was the woman - I! - that he would wed;
He sent a boat with men for his own white priest,
And he gave my father horses, and made a feast.
I am his wife: if he has forgotten me,
I will not live for scorning eyes to see.
(Little wild baby, that knowest not where thou art going,

Lie still! lie still! Thy mother will do the rowing.)

Three moons ago - it was but three moons ago -
He took his gun, and started across the snow;
For the river was frozen, the river that still goes down
Every day, as I watch it, to find the town;
The town whose name I caught from his sleeping lips,
A place of many people and many ships.
(Little wild baby, that knowest not where thou art going,
Lie still! lie still! Thy mother will do the rowing.)

I to that town am going, to search the place,
With his little white son in my arms, till I see his face.
Only once shall I need to look in his eyes,
To see if his soul, as I knew it, lives or dies.
If it lives, we live, and if it is dead, we die,
And the soul of my baby will never ask me why.
(Little wild baby, that knowest not where thou art going,
Lie still! lie still! Thy mother will do the rowing.)

I have asked about the river: one answered me,
That after the town it goes to find the sea;
That great waves, able to break the stoutest bark,
Are there, and the sea is very deep and dark.
If he is happy without me, so best, so best;
I will take his baby and go away to my rest.
(Little wild baby, that knowest not where thou art going,
Lie still! lie still! Thy mother will do the rowing.
The river flows swiftly, the sea is dark and deep:
Little wild baby, lie still! Lie still and sleep.)

Margaret Thomson Janvier [1845-1913]

A CRADLE SONG

Come little babe, come silly soul,
Thy father's shame, thy mother's grief,
Born as I doubt to all our dole,
And to thyself unhappy chief:
Sing lullaby, and lap it warm,
Poor soul that thinks no creature harm.

Thou little think'st and less dost know
The cause of this thy mother's moan;
Thou want'st the wit to wail her woe,
And I myself am all alone:
Why dost thou weep? why dost thou wail?
And know'st not yet what thou dost ail.

Come, little wretch - ah, silly heart!
Mine only joy, what can I more?
If there be any wrong thy smart,
That may the destinies implore:
'Twas I, I say, against my will,
I wail the time, but be thou still.

And dost thou smile? O, thy sweet face!

Would God Himself He might thee see! -
No doubt thou wouldst soon purchase grace,
I know right well, for thee and me:
But come to mother, babe, and play,
For father false is fled away.

Sweet boy, if it by fortune chance
Thy father home again to send,
If death do strike me with his lance,
Yet may'st thou me to him commend:
If any ask thy mother's name,
Tell how by love she purchased blame.

Then will his gentle heart soon yield:
I know him of a noble mind:
Although a lion in the field,
A lamb in town thou shalt him find:
Ask blessing, babe, be not afraid,
His sugared words hath me betrayed.

Then may'st thou joy and be right glad;
Although in woe I seem to moan,
Thy father is no rascal lad,
A noble youth of blood and bone:
His glancing looks, if he once smile,
Right honest women may beguile.

Come, little boy, and rock asleep;
Sing lullaby and be thou still;
I, that can do naught else but weep,
Will sit by thee and wail my fill:
God bless my babe, and lullaby
From this thy father's quality.

Nicholas Breton [1545?-1626?]

LADY ANNE BOTHWELL'S LAMENT

Balow, my babe, lie still and sleep!
It grieves me sore to see thee weep.
Wouldst thou be quiet I'se be glad,
Thy mourning makes my sorrow sad:
Balow my boy, thy mother's joy,
Thy father breeds me great annoy -
Balow, la-low!

When he began to court my love,
And with his sugared words me move,
His feignings false and flattering cheer
To me that time did not appear:
But now I see most cruelly
He cares ne for my babe nor me -
Balow, la-low!

Lie still, my darling, sleep awhile,
And when thou wak'st thou'll sweetly smile:
But smile not as thy father did,

To cozen maids: nay, God forbid!
But yet I fear thou wilt go near
Thy father's heart and face to bear -
Balow, la-low!

I cannot choose but ever will
Be loving to thy father still;
Where'er he go, where'er he ride,
My love with him doth still abide;
In weal or woe, where'er he go,
My heart shall ne'er depart him fro -
Balow, la-low!

But do not, do not, pretty mine,
To feignings false thy heart incline!
Be loyal to thy lover true,
And never change her for a new:
If good or fair, of her have care
For women's banning's wondrous sair -
Balow, la-low!

Bairn, by thy face I will beware;
Like Sirens' words, I'll come not near;
My babe and I together will live;
He'll comfort me when cares do grieve.
My babe and I right soft will lie,
And ne'er respect man's cruelty -
Balow, la-low!

Farewell, farewell, the falsest youth
That ever kissed a woman's mouth!
I wish all maids be warned by me
Never to trust man's courtesy;
For if we do but chance to bow,
They'll use us then they care not how -
Balow, la-low!

Unknown

A WOMAN'S LOVE

A sentinel angel, sitting high in glory,
Heard this shrill wail ring out from Purgatory:
"Have mercy, mighty angel, hear my story!

"I loved, - and, blind with passionate love, I fell.
Love brought me down to death, and death to Hell;
For God is just, and death for sin is well.

"I do not rage against His high decree,
Nor for myself do ask that grace shall be;
But for my love on earth who mourns for me.

"Great Spirit! Let me see my love again
And comfort him one hour, and I were fain
To pay a thousand years of fire and pain."

Then said the pitying angel, "Nay, repent
That wild vow! Look, the dial-finger's bent
Down to the last hour of thy punishment!"

But still she wailed, "I pray thee, let me go!
I cannot rise to peace and leave him so.
O, let me soothe him in his bitter woe!"

The brazen gates ground sullenly ajar,
And upwards, joyous, like a rising star,
She rose and vanished in the ether far.

But soon adown the dying sunset sailing,
And like a wounded bird her pinions trailing,
She fluttered back, with broken-hearted wailing,

She sobbed, "I found him by the summer sea
Reclined, his head upon a maiden's knee, -
She curled his hair and kissed him. Woe is me!"

She wept, "Now let my punishment begin!
I have been fond and foolish. Let me in
To expiate my sorrow and my sin."

The angel answered, "Nay, sad soul, go higher!
To be deceived in your true heart's desire
Was bitterer than a thousand years of fire!"

John Hay [1838-1905]

A TRAGEDY

She was only a woman, famished for loving,
Mad with devotion, and such slight things;
And he was a very great musician,
And used to finger his fiddle-strings.

Her heart's sweet gamut is cracking and breaking
For a look, for a touch, - for such slight things;
But he's such a very great musician
Grimacing and fingering his fiddle-strings.

Theophile Marzials [1850-

"MOTHER, I CANNOT MIND MY WHEEL"

Mother, I cannot mind my wheel;
My fingers ache, my lips are dry:
O, if you felt the pain I feel!
But O, who ever felt as I?

No longer could I doubt him true -
All other men may use deceit;
He always said my eyes were blue,
And often swore my lips were sweet.

Walter Savage Lander [1775-1864]

AIRLY BEACON

Airly Beacon, Airly Beacon;
O the pleasant sight to see
Shires and towns from Airly Beacon,
While my love climbed up to me!

Airly Beacon, Airly Beacon;
O the happy hours we lay
Deep in fern on Airly Beacon,
Courting through the summer's day!

Airly Beacon, Airly Beacon;
O the weary haunt for me,
All alone on Airly Beacon,
With his baby on my knee!

Charles Kingsley [1819-1875]

A SEA CHILD

The lover of child Marjory
Had one white hour of life brim full;
Now the old nurse, the rocking sea,
Hath him to lull.

The daughter of child Marjory
Hath in her veins, to beat and run,
The glad indomitable sea,
The strong white sun.

Bliss Carmen [1861-1929]

FROM THE HARBOR HILL

"Is it a sail?" she asked.
"No," I said.
"Only a white sea-gull with its pinions spread."

"Is it a spar?" she asked.
"No," said I.
"Only the slender light-house tower against the sky."

"Flutters a pennant there?"
"No," I said.
"Only a shred of cloud in the sunset red."

"Surely a hull, a hull!"
"Where?" I cried.
"Only a rock half-bared by the ebbing tide."

"Wait you a ship?" I asked.
"Aye!" quoth she.

"The Harbor Belle; her mate comes home to marry me.

"Surely the good ship hath
Met no harm?"
Was it the west wind wailed or the babe on her arm?

"The Harbor Belle!" she urged.
Naught said I. -
For I knew o'er the grave o' the Harbor Belle the sea-gulls fly.

Gustav Kobbe [1857-1918]

ALLAN WATER

On the banks of Allan Water,
When the sweet spring-time did fall,
Was the miller's lovely daughter,
Fairest of them all.

For his bride a soldier sought her,
And a winning tongue had he,
On the banks of Allan Water,
None so gay as she.

On the banks of Allan Water,
When brown autumn spread his store,
There I saw the miller's daughter,
But she smiled no more.

For the summer grief had brought her,
And the soldier false was he,
On the banks of Allan Water,
None so sad as she.

On the banks of Allan Water,
When the winter snow fell fast,
Still was seen the miller's daughter,
Chilling blew the blast.

But the miller's lovely daughter,
Both from cold and care was free;
On the banks of Allan Water,
There a corse lay she.

Matthew Gregory Lewis [1775-1818]

FORSAKEN

O waly waly up the bank,
And waly waly down the brae,
And waly waly yon burn-side
Where I and my Love wont to gae!
I leaned my back unto an aik,
I thought it was a trusty tree;
But first it bowed, and syne it brak,
Sae my true Love did lichtly me.

O waly waly, but love be bonny
A little while when it is new;
But when 'tis auld, it waxeth cauld
And fades awa' like morning dew.
O wherefore should I busk my head?
Or wherefore should I kame my hair?
For my true Love has me forsook,
And says he'll never loe me mair.

Now Arthur-seat sall be my bed;
The sheets shall ne'er be pressed by me:
Saint Anton's well sall be my drink,
Since my true Love has forsaken me.
Martinmas wind, when wilt thou blaw
And shake the green leaves aff the tree?
O gentle Death, when wilt thou come?
For of my life I am wearie.

'Tis not the frost, that freezes fell,
Nor blawing snaw's inclemencie;
'Tis not sic cauld that makes me cry,
But my Love's heart grown cauld to me.
When we cam in by Glasgow town
We were a comely sight to see;
My Love was clad in black velvet.
And I mysel in cramasie.

But had I wist, before I kissed,
That love had been sae ill to win;
I had locked my heart in a case of gowd
And pinned it with a siller pin.
And, O! if my young babe were born,
And sat upon the nurse's knee,
And I mysel were dead and gane,
And the green grass growing over me!

Unknown

BONNIE DOON

Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fair!
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care!

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird
That sings upon the bough;
Thou minds me o' the happy days
When my fause Luve was true.

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate.

Aft hae I roved by bonnie Doon

To see the woodbine twine,
And ilka bird sang o' its love;
And sae did I o' mine.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Frae aff its thorny tree;
And my fause luver staw the rose,
But left the thorn wi' me.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

THE TWO LOVERS

The lover of her body said:
"She is more beautiful than night, -
But like the kisses of the dead
Is my despair and my delight."

The lover of her soul replied:
"She is more wonderful than death, -
But bitter as the aching tide
Is all the speech of love she saith."

The lover of her body said:
"To know one secret of her heart,
For all the joy that I have had,
Is past the reach of all my art."

The lover of her soul replied:
"The secrets of her heart are mine, -
Save how she lives, a riven bride,
Between the dust and the divine."

The lover of her body sware:
"Though she should hate me, wit you well,
Rather than yield one kiss of her
I give my soul to burn in hell."

The lover of her soul cried out:
"Rather than leave her to your greed,
I would that I were walled about
With death, - and death were death indeed!"

The lover of her body wept,
And got no good of all his gain,
Knowing that in her heart she kept
The penance of the other's pain.

The lover of her soul went mad,
But when he did himself to death,
Despite of all the woe he had,
He smiled as one who vanquisheth.

Richard Hovey [1864-1900]

THE VAMPIRE

As suggested By The Painting By Philip Burne-Jones

A fool there was and he made his prayer
(Even as you and I!)
To a rag and a bone and a hank of hair
(We called her the woman who did not care),
But the fool he called her his lady fair
(Even as you and I!)

Oh the years we waste and the tears we waste,
And the work of our head and hand,
Belong to the woman who did not know
(And now we know that she never could know)
And did not understand.

A fool there was and his goods he spent
(Even as you and I!)
Honor and faith and a sure intent
(And it wasn't the least what the lady meant),
But a fool must follow his natural bent
(Even as you and I!)

Oh the toil we lost and the spoil we lost,
And the excellent things we planned,
Belong to the woman who didn't know why
(And now we know she never knew why)
And did not understand.

The fool was stripped to his foolish hide
(Even as you and I!)
Which she might have seen when she threw him aside, -
(But it isn't on record the lady tried)
So some of him lived but the most of him died -
(Even as you and I!)

And it isn't the shame and it isn't the blame
That stings like a white-hot brand.
It's coming to know that she never knew why
(Seeing at last she could never know why)
And never could understand.

Rudyard Kipling [1865-1936]

AGATHA

She wanders in the April woods,
That glisten with the fallen shower;
She leans her face against the buds,
She stops, she stoops, she plucks a flower.
She feels the ferment of the hour:
She broodeth when the ringdove broods;
The sun and flying clouds have power
Upon her cheek and changing moods.
She cannot think she is alone,
As o'er her senses warmly steal
Floods of unrest she fears to own.
And almost dreads to feel.

Along the summer woodlands wide
Anew she roams, no more alone;
The joy she feared is at her side,
Spring's blushing secret now is known.
The thrush's ringing note hath died;
But glancing eye and glowing tone
Fall on her from her god, her guide.
She knows not, asks not, what the goal,
She only feels she moves towards bliss,
And yields her pure unquestioning soul
To touch and fondling kiss.

And still she haunts those woodland ways,
Though all fond fancy finds there now
To mind of spring or summer days,
Are sodden trunk and songless bough.
The past sits widowed on her brow,
Homeward she wends with wintry gaze,
To walls that house a hollow vow,
To hearth where love hath ceased to blaze:
Watches the clammy twilight wane,
With grief too fixed for woe or tear;
And, with her forehead 'gainst the pane,
Envies the dying year.

Alfred Austin [1835-1913]

"A ROSE WILL FADE"

You were always a dreamer, Rose - red Rose,
As you swung on your perfumed spray,
Swinging, and all the world was true,
Swaying, what did it trouble you?
A rose will fade in a day.

Why did you smile to his face, red Rose,
As he whistled across your way?
And all the world went mad for you,
All the world it knelt to woo.
A rose will bloom in a day.

I gather your petals, Rose - red Rose,
The petals he threw away.
And all the world derided you;
Ah! the world, how well it knew
A rose will fade in a day!

Dora Sigerson Shorter [1862-1918]

AFFAIRE D'AMOUR

One pale November day
Flying Summer paused,
They say:
And growing bolder,

O'er rosy shoulder
Threw her lover such a glance
That Autumn's heart began to dance.
(O happy lover!)

A leafless peach-tree bold
Thought for him she smiled,
I'm told;
And, stirred by love,
His sleeping sap did move,
Decking each naked branch with green
To show her that her look was seen!
(Alas, poor lover!)

But Summer, laughing fled,
Nor knew he loved her!
'Tis said
The peach-tree sighed,
And soon he gladly died:
And Autumn, weary of the chase,
Came on at Winter's sober pace
(O careless lover!)

Margaret Deland [1857-

A CASUAL SONG

She sang of lovers met to play
"Under the may bloom, under the may,"
But when I sought her face so fair,
I found the set face of Despair.

She sang of woodland leaves in spring,
And joy of young love dallying;
But her young eyes were all one moan,
And Death weighed on her heart like stone.

I could not ask, I know not now,
The story of that mournful brow;
It haunts me as it haunted then,
A flash from fire of hellbound men.

Roden Noel [1834-1894]

THE WAY OF IT

The wind is awake, pretty leaves, pretty leaves,
Heed not what he says; he deceives, he deceives:
Over and over
To the lowly clover
He has lisped the same love (and forgotten it, too)
He will soon be lisping and pledging to you.

The boy is abroad, pretty maid, pretty maid,
Beware his soft words; I'm afraid, I'm afraid:
He has said them before

Times many a score,
Ay, he died for a dozen ere his beard pricked through,
And the very same death he will die for you.

The way of the boy is the way of the wind,
As light as the leaves is dainty maid-kind;
One to deceive,
And one to believe -
That is the way of it, year to year;
But I know you will learn it too late, my dear.

John Vance Cheney [1848-1922]

"WHEN LOVELY WOMAN STOOPS TO FOLLY"
From "The Vicar of Wakefield"

When lovely woman stoops to folly
And finds too late that men betray, -
What charm can soothe her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover
And wring his bosom, is - to die.

Oliver Goldsmith [1728-1774]

FOLK-SONG

Back she came through the trembling dusk;
And her mother spoke and said:
"What is it makes you late to-day,
And why do you smile and sing as gay
As though you just were wed?"
"Oh mother, my hen that never had chicks
Has hatched out six!"

Back she came through the flaming dusk;
And her mother spoke and said:
"What gives your eyes that dancing light,
What makes your lips so strangely bright,
And why are your cheeks so red?"
"Oh mother, the berries I ate in the lane
Have left a stain."

Back she came through the faltering dusk;
And her mother spoke and said:
"You are weeping; your footstep is heavy with care -
What makes you totter and cling to the stair,
And why do you hang your head?"
"Oh mother - oh mother - you never can know -
I loved him so!"

Louis Untermeyer [1885-

A VERY OLD SONG

"Daughter, thou art come to die:
Sound be thy sleeping, lass."
"Well: without lament or cry,
Mother, let me pass."

"What things on mould were best of all?
(Soft be thy sleeping, lass.)"
"The apples reddening till they fall
In the sun beside the convent wall.
Let me pass."

"Whom on earth hast thou loved best?
(Sound be thy sleeping, lass.)"
"Him that shared with me thy breast;
Thee and a knight last year our guest.
He hath an heron to his crest.
Let me pass."

"What leavest thou of fame or hoard?
(Soft be thy sleeping, lass.)"
"My far-blown shame for thy reward;
To my brother, gold to get him a sword.
Let me pass."

"But what wilt leave thy lover, Grim?
(Sound be thy sleeping, lass.)"
"The hair he kissed to strangle him.
Mother, let me pass."

William Laird [1888-

"SHE WAS YOUNG AND BLITHE AND FAIR"

She was young and blithe and fair,
Firm of purpose, sweet and strong;
Perfect was her crown of hair,
Perfect most of all her song.

Yesterday beneath an oak,
She was chanting in the wood:
Wandering harmonies awoke;
Sleeping echoes understood.

To-day without a song, without a word,
She seems to drag one piteous fallen wing
Along the ground, and, like a wounded bird,
Move silent, having lost the heart to sing.

She was young and blithe and fair,
Firm of purpose, sweet and strong;
Perfect was her crown of hair,
Perfect most of all her song.

Harold Monro [1879-1932]

THE LASS THAT DIED OF LOVE

Life is not dear or gay
Till lovers kiss it,
Love stole my life away
Ere I might miss it.
In sober March I vowed
I'd have no lover,
Love laid me in my shroud
Ere June was over.

I felt his body take
My body to it,
And knew my heart would break
Ere I should rue it;
June roses are not sad
When dew-drops steep them,
My moments were so glad
I could not keep them.

Proud was I love had made
Desire to fill me,
I shut my eyes and prayed
That he might kill me.
I saw new wonders wreathe
The stars above him.
And oh, I could not breathe
For kissing of him.

Is love too sweet to last,
Too fierce to cherish,
Can kisses fall too fast
And lovers perish?
Who heeds since love disarms
Death, ere we near him?
Within my lover's arms
I did not fear him!

But since I died in sin
And all unshriven,
They would not let me win
Into their heaven;
They would not let my bier
Into God's garden,
But bade me tarry here
And pray for pardon.

I lie and wait for grace
That shall surround me,
His kisses on my face,
His arms around me;
And sinless maids draw near
To drop above me
A virginal sad tear
For envy of me.

Richard Middleton [1882-1911]

THE PASSION-FLOWER

My love gave me a passion-flower.
I nursed it well - so brief its hour!
My eyelids ache, my throat is dry:
He told me that it would not die.

My love and I are one, and yet
Full oft my cheeks with tears are wet -
So sweet the night is and the bower!
My love gave me a passion-flower.

So sweet! Hold fast my hands. Can God
Make all this joy revert to sod,
And leave to me but this for dower -
My love gave me a passion-flower.

Margaret Fuller [1871-

NORAH

I knew his house by the poplar-trees,
Green and silvery in the breeze;

"A heaven-high hedge," were the words he said,
"And holly-hocks, pink and white and red. . . ."

It seemed so far from McChesney's Hall -
Where first he told me about it all.

A long path runs inside from the gate, -
He still can take it, early or late;

But where in the world is the path for me
Except the river that runs to the sea!

Zoe Akins [1886-

OF JOAN'S YOUTH

I would unto my fair restore
A simple thing:
The flushing cheek she had before!
Out-velveting
No more, no more,
On our sad shore,
The carmine grape, the moth's auroral wing.

Ah, say how winds in flooding grass
Unmoor the rose;
Or guileful ways the salmon pass
To sea, disclose;
For so, alas,

With Love, alas,
With fatal, fatal Love a girlhood goes.

Louise Imogen Guiney [1861-1920]

THERE'S WISDOM IN WOMEN

"On love is fair, and love is rare;" my dear one she said,
"But love goes lightly over." I bowed her foolish head,
And kissed her hair and laughed at her. Such a child was she;
So new to love, so true to love, and she spoke so bitterly.

But there's wisdom in women, of more than they have known,
And thoughts go blowing through them, are wiser than their own,
Or how should my dear one, being ignorant and young,
Have cried on love so bitterly, with so true a tongue?

Rupert Brooke [1887-1915]

GOETHE AND FREDERIKA

Wander, oh, wander, maiden sweet,
In the fairy bower, while yet you may;
See in rapture he lies at your feet;
Rest on the truth of the glorious youth,
Rest - for a summer day.
That great clear spirit of flickering fire
You have lulled awhile in magic sleep,
But you cannot fill his wide desire.
His heart is tender, his eyes are deep,
His words divinely flow;
But his voice and his glance are not for you;
He never can be to a maiden true;
Soon will he wake and go.
Well, well, 'twere a piteous thing
To chain forever that strong young wing.
Let the butterfly break for his own sweet sake
The gossamer threads that have bound him;
Let him shed in free flight his rainbow light,
And gladden the world around him.
Short is the struggle and slight is the strain;
Such a web was made to be broken,
And she that wove it may weave again
Or, if no power of love to bless
Can heal the wound in her bosom true,
It is but a lorn heart more or less,
And hearts are many and poets few,
So his pardon is lightly spoken.

Henry Sidgwick [1838-1901]

THE SONG OF THE KING'S MINSTREL

I sing no longer of the skies,
And the swift clouds like driven ships,

For there is earth upon my eyes
And earth between my singing lips.
Because the King loved not my song
That he had found so sweet before,
I lie at peace the whole night long,
And sing no more.
The King liked well my song that night;
Upon the palace roof he lay
With his fair Queen, and as I might
I sang, until the morning's gray
Crept o'er their faces, and the King,
Mocked by the breaking dawn above,
Clutched at his youth and bade me sing
A song of love.

Well it might be - the King was old,
And though his Queen was passing fair,
His dull eyes might not catch the gold
That tangled in her wayward hair,
It had been much to see her smile,
But with my song I made her weep.
Our heavens last but a little while,
So now I sleep.

More than the pleasures that I had
I would have flung away to know
My song of love could make her sad,
Her sweet eyes fill and tremble so.
What were my paltry store of years,
My body's wretched life to stake,
Against the treasure of her tears,
For my love's sake?

Not lightly is a King made wise;
My body ached beneath his whips,
And there is earth upon my eyes,
And earth between my singing lips.
But I sang once - and for that grace
I am content to lie and store
The vision of her dear, wet face,
And sing no more.

Richard Middleton [1882-1911]

ANNIE SHORE AND JOHNNIE DOON

Annie Shore, 'twas, sang last night
Down in South End saloon;
A tawdry creature in the light,
Painted cheeks, eyes over bright,
Singing a dance-hall tune.

I'd be forgetting Annie's singing -
I'd not have thought again -
But for the thing that cried and fluttered
Through all the shrill refrain:
Youth crying above foul words, cheap music,

And innocence in pain.

They sentenced Johnnie Doon today
For murder, stark and grim:
Death's none too dear a price, they say,
For such-like men as him to pay:
No need to pity him!

And Johnnie Doon I'd not be pitying -
I could forget him now -
But for the childish look of trouble
That fell across his brow,
For the twisting hands he looked at dumbly
As if they'd sinned, he knew not how.

Patrick Orr [18

EMMY

Emmy's exquisite youth and her virginal air,
Eyes and teeth in the flash of a musical smile,
Come to me out of the past, and I see her there
As I saw her once for a while.

Emmy's laughter rings in my ears, as bright,
Fresh and sweet as the voice of a mountain brook,
And still I hear her telling us tales that night,
Out of Boccaccio's book.

There, in the midst of the villainous dancing-hall,
Leaning across the table, over the beer,
While the music maddened the whirling skirts of the ball,
As the midnight hour drew near,

There with the women, haggard, painted and old,
One fresh bud in a garland withered and stale,
She, with her innocent voice and her clear eyes, told
Tale after shameless tale.

And ever the witching smile, to her face beguiled,
Paused and broadened, and broke in a ripple of fun,
And the soul of a child looked out of the eyes of a child,
Or ever the tale was done.

O my child, who wronged you first, and began
First the dance of death that you dance so well?
Soul for soul: and I think the soul of a man
Shall answer for yours in hell.

Arthur Symons [1865-

THE BALLAD OF CAMDEN TOWN

I walked with Maisie long years back
The streets of Camden Town,
I splendid in my suit of black,

And she divine in brown.

Hers was a proud and noble face,
A secret heart, and eyes
Like water in a lonely place
Beneath unclouded skies.

A bed, a chest, a faded mat,
And broken chairs a few,
Were all we had to grace our flat
In Hazel Avenue.

But I could walk to Hampstead Heath,
And crown her head with daisies,
And watch the streaming world beneath,
And men with other Maisies.

When I was ill and she was pale
And empty stood our store,
She left the latchkey on its nail,
And saw me nevermore.

Perhaps she cast herself away
Lest both of us should drown:
Perhaps she feared to die, as they
Who die in Camden Town.

What came of her? The bitter nights
Destroy the rose and lily,
And souls are lost among the lights
Of painted Piccadilly.

What came of her? The river flows
So deep and wide and stilly,
And waits to catch the fallen rose
And clasp the broken lily.

I dream she dwells in London still
And breathes the evening air,
And often walk to Primrose Hill,
And hope to meet her there.

Once more together we will live,
For I will find her yet:
I have so little to forgive;
So much, I can't forget.

James Elroy Flecker [1884-1915]

LOVE AND DEATH

HELEN OF KIRCONNELL

I wish I were where Helen lies,
Night and day on me she cries;
O that I were where Helen lies,
On fair Kirconnell lea!

Cursed be the heart that thought the thought,
And cursed the hand that fired the shot,
When in my arms burd Helen dropped,
And died to succor me!

O think na ye my heart was sair,
When my Love dropped and spak nae mair!
There did she swoon wi' meikle care,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

As I went down the water side,
None but my foe to be my guide,
None but my foe to be my guide,
On fair Kirconnell lea;

I lighted down my sword to draw,
I hacked him in pieces sma',
I hacked him in pieces sma',
For her sake that died for me.

O Helen fair, beyond compare!
I'll mak a garland o' thy hair,
Shall bind my heart for evermair,
Until the day I dee!

O that I were where Helen lies
Night and day on me she cries;
Out of my bed she bids me rise,
Says, Haste, and come to me!"

O Helen fair! O Helen chaste!
If I were with thee, I'd be blest,
Where thou lies low and taks thy rest,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish my grave were growing green,
A winding-sheet drawn owre my e'en,
And I in Helen's arms lying,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
And I am weary of the skies,
For her sake that died for me.

Unknown

WILLY DROWNED IN YARROW

"Willy's rare, and Willy's fair,
And Willy's wondrous bonny;
And Willy hecht to marry me,
Gin e'er he married ony.

"Yestreen I made my bed fu' braid,
This night I'll make it narrow;
Fpr a' the livelang winter night
I lie twined of my marrow.

"Oh came you by yon water-side?
Pu'd you the rose or lily?
Or came you by yon meadow green?
Or saw you my sweet Willy?"

She sought him east, she sought him west,
She sought him braid and narrow;
Syne in the cleaving of a craig,
She found him drowned in Yarrow.

Unknown

ANNAN WATER

"Annan Water's wading deep,
And my Love Annie's wondrous bonny;
And I am laith she should wet her feet,
Because I love her best of ony."

He's loupen on his bonny gray,
He rade the right gate and the ready;
For all the storm he wadna stay,
For seeking of his bonny lady.

And he has ridden o'er field and fell,
Through moor, and moss, and many a mire;
His spurs of steel were sair to bide,
And from her four feet flew the fire.

"My bonny gray, now play your part!
If ye be the steed that wins my dearie,
With corn and hay ye'll be fed for aye,
And never spur shall make you wearie."

The gray was a mare, and a right gude mare;
But when she wan the Annan Water,
She could not have ridden the ford that night
Had a thousand merks been wadded at her.

"O boatman, boatman, put off your boat,
Put off your boat for golden money!"
But for all the gold in fair Scotland,
He dared not take him through to Annie.

"Oh, I was sworn so late yestreen,
Not by a single oath, but mony!
I'll cross the drumly stream tonight,
Or never could I face my honey."

The side was stey, and the bottom deep,
From bank to brae the water pouring;
The bonny gray mare she swat for fear,
For she heard the water-kelpy roaring.

He spurred her forth into the flood,
I wot she swam both strong and steady;
But the stream was broad, and her strength did fail,
And he never saw his bonny lady!

Unknown

THE LAMENT OF THE BORDER WIDOW

My love he built me a bonnie bower,
And clad it a' wi' lily flower;
A brawer bower ye ne'er did see,
Than my true-love he built for me.

There came a man, by middle day,
He spied his sport, and went away;
And brought the king that very night,
Who brake my bower, and slew my knight.

He slew my knight, to me sae dear;
He slew my knight, and poin'd his gear:
My servants all for life did flee,
And left me in extremitie.

I sewed his sheet, making my mane;
I watched the corpse, mysel alane;
I watched his body night and day;
No living creature came that way.

I took his body on my back,
And whiles I gaed, and whiles I sat;
I digged a grave, and laid him in,
And happed him with the sod sae green.

But think na ye my heart was sair,
When I laid the moul' on his yellow hair?
O, think na ye my heart was wae,
When I turned about, away to gae?

Nae living man I'll love again,
Since that my lovely knight is slain;
Wi' ae lock o' his yellow hair
I'll chain my heart for evermair.

Unknown

ASPATIA'S SONG
From "The Maid's Tragedy"

Lay a garland on my hearse
Of the dismal yew;
Maidens, willow branches bear;
Say, I died true.

My love was false, but I was firm
From my hour of birth.
Upon my buried body lie
Lightly, gentle earth!

John Fletcher [1579-1625]

A BALLAD
From the "What-d'ye-call-it"

'Twas when the seas were roaring
With hollow blasts of wind,
A damsel lay deploring,
All on a rock reclined.
Wide o'er the foaming billows
She cast a wistful look;
Her head was crowned with willows,
That trembled o'er the brook.

"Twelve months are gone and over,
And nine long tedious days;
Why didst thou, venturous lover,
Why didst thou trust the seas?
Cease, cease thou cruel ocean,
And let my lover rest;
Ah! what's thy troubled motion
To that within my breast?

"The merchant robbed of pleasure,
Sees tempests in despair;
But what's the loss of treasure,
To losing of my dear?
Should you some coast be laid on,
Where gold and diamonds grow,
You'd find a richer maiden,
But none that loves you so.

"How can they say that nature
Has nothing made in vain;
Why then, beneath the water,
Should hideous rocks remain?
No eyes the rocks discover
That lurk beneath the deep,
To wreck the wandering lover,
And leave the maid to weep."

All melancholy lying,
Thus wailed she for her dear;
Repaid each blast with sighing,

Each billow with a tear.
When, o'er the white wave stooping,
His floating corpse she spied,
Then, like a lily drooping,
She bowed her head, and died.

John Gay [1685-1732]

THE BRAES OF YARROW

Thy braes were bonnie, Yarrow stream,
When first on them I met my lover:
Thy braes how dreary, Yarrow stream,
When now thy waves his body cover!
Forever now, O Yarrow stream!
Thou art to me a stream of sorrow;
For never on thy banks shall I
Behold my love, the flower of Yarrow.

He promised me a milk-white steed,
To bear me to his father's bowers;
He promised me a little page,
To squire me to his father's towers;
He promised me a wedding-ring, -
The wedding-day was fixed to-morrow;
Now he is wedded to his grave,
Alas! his watery grave, in Yarrow.

Sweet were his words when last we met:
My passion I as freely told him:
Clasped in his arms, I little thought
That I should never more behold him!
Scarce was he gone, I saw his ghost;
It vanished with a shriek of sorrow;
Thrice did the water-wraith ascend,
And gave a doleful groan through Yarrow.

His mother from the window looked,
With all the longing of a mother;
His little sister weeping walked
The greenwood path to meet her brother.
They sought him east, they sought him west,
They sought him all the forest thorough;
They only saw the cloud of night,
They only heard the roar of Yarrow!

No longer from thy window look, -
Thou hast no son, thou tender mother!
No longer walk, thou little maid;
Alas! thou hast no more a brother.
No longer seek him east or west,
And search no more the forest thorough;
For, wandering in the night so dark,
He fell a lifeless corse in Yarrow.

The tear shall never leave my cheek,
No other youth shall be my marrow:

I'll seek thy body in the stream,
And then with thee I'll sleep in Yarrow.
The tear did never leave her cheek,
No other youth became her marrow;
She found his body in the stream,
And now with him she sleeps in Yarrow.

John Logan [1748-1788]

THE CHURCHYARD ON THE SANDS

My love lies in the gates of foam,
The last dear wreck of shore;
The naked sea-marsh binds her home,
The sand her chamber door.

The gray gull flaps the written stones,
The ox-birds chase the tide;
And near that narrow field of bones
Great ships at anchor ride.

Black piers with crust of dripping green,
One foreland, like a hand,
O'er intervals of grass between
Dim lonely dunes of sand.

A church of silent weathered looks,
A breezy reddish tower,
A yard whose mounded resting-nooks
Are tinged with sorrel flower.

In peace the swallow's eggs are laid
Along the belfry walls;
The tempest does not reach her shade,
The rain her silent halls.

But sails are sweet in summer sky,
The lark throws down a lay;
The long salt levels steam and dry,
The cloud-heart melts away.

But patches of the sea-pink shine,
The pied crows poise and come;
The mallow hangs, the bind-weeds twine,
Where her sweet lips are dumb.

The passion of the wave is mute;
No sound or ocean shock;
No music save the trilling flute
That marks the curlew flock.

But yonder when the wind is keen,
And rainy air is clear,
The merchant city's spires are seen,
The toil of men grows near.

Along the coast-way grind the wheels

Of endless carts of coal;
And on the sides of giant keels
The shipyard hammers roll.

The world creeps here upon the shout,
And stirs my heart to pain;
The mist descends and blots it out,
And I am strong again.

Strong and alone, my dove, with thee;
And though mine eyes be wet,
There's nothing in the world to me
So dear as my regret.

I would not change my sorrow sweet
For others' nuptial hours;
I love the daisies at thy feet
More than their orange flowers.

My hand alone shall tend thy tomb
From leaf-bud to leaf-fall,
And wreathe around each season's bloom
Till autumn ruins all.

Let snowdrops early in the year
Droop o'er her silent breast;
And bid the later cowslip rear
The amber of its crest.

Come hither, linnets tufted-red;
Drift by, O wailing tern;
Set pure vale lilies at her head,
At her feet lady-fern.

Grow, samphire, at the tidal brink,
Wave pansies of the shore,
To whisper how alone I think
Of her for evermore.

Bring blue sea-hollies thorny, keen,
Long lavender in flower;
Gray wormwood like a hoary queen,
Stanch mullein like a tower.

O sea-wall, mounded long and low,
Let iron bounds be thine;
Nor let the salt wave overflow
That breast I held divine.

Nor float its sea-weed to her hair,
Nor dim her eyes with sands;
No fluted cockle burrow where
Sleep folds her patient hands.

Though thy crest feel the wild sea's breath,
Though tide-weight tear thy root,
Oh, guard the treasure-house, where death
Has bound my Darling mute.

Though cold her pale lips to reward
With love's own mysteries,
Ah, rob no daisy from her swand,
Rough gale of eastern seas!

Ah, render sere no silken bent
That by her head-stone waves;
Let noon and golden summer blent
Pervade these ocean graves.

And, ah, dear heart, in thy still nest,
Resign this earth of woes,
Forget the ardors of the west,
Neglect the morning glows.

Sleep and forget all things but one,
Heard in each wave of sea, -
How lonely all the years will run
Until I rest by thee.

John Byrne Leicester Warren [1835-1895]

THE MINSTREL'S SONG
From "Aella"

Oh sing unto my roundelay;
Oh drop the briny tear with me;
Dance no more at holiday;
Like a running river be!
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow tree!

Black his hair as the winter night,
White his throat as the summer snow,
Red his cheek as the morning light,
Cold he lies in the grave below.

Sweet his tongue as the throstle's note;
Quick in dance as thought can be;
Deft his tabor, cudgel stout,
Oh, he lies by the willow tree.

Hark! the raven flaps his wing
In the briery dell below;
Hark! the death-owl loud doth sing,
To the night-mares as they go.

See! the white moon shines on high;
Whiter is my true love's shroud;
Whiter than the morning sky,
Whiter than the evening cloud.

Here, upon my true love's grave,
Shall the barren, flowers be laid;
Not one holy saint to save

All the coldness of a maid.

With my hands I'll twist the briers
Round his holy corpse to gre;
Elfin fairy, light your fires,
Here my body still shall be.

Come, with acorn-cup and thorn,
Drain my heartes blood away;
Life and all its good I scorn,
Dance by night, or feast by day.

Water-witches, crowned with reeds,
Bear me to your deadly tide.
I die! I come! my true love waits!
Thus the damsel spake, and died.

Thomas Chatterton [1752-1770]

HIGHLAND MARY

Ye banks and braes and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie!
There simmer first unfauld her robes,
And there the langest tarry;
For there I took the last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloomed the gay green birk,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As underneath their fragrant shade
I clasped her to my bosom!
The golden hours on angel's wings
Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me as light and life
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow and locked embrace
Our parting was fu' tender;
And, pledging aft to meet again,
We tore oursels asunder;
But, O! fell Death's untimely frost,
That nipped my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
That wraps my Highland Mary!

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips,
I aft hae kissed sae fondly!
And closed for aye the sparkling glance
That dwelt on me sae kindly;
And moldering now in silent dust
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

TO MARY IN HEAVEN

Thou lingering star, with lessening ray,
That lov'st to greet the early morn,
Again thou usher'st in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn.
O Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

That sacred hour can I forget,
Can I forget the hallowed grove,
Where by the winding Ayr we met,
To live one day of parting love!
Eternity will not efface
Those records dear of transports past;
Thy image at our last embrace, -
Ah! little thought we 'twas our last!

Ayr, gurgling, kissed his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods, thickening green;
The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar,
Twined amorous round the raptured scene;
The flowers sprang wanton to be pressed,
The birds sang love on every spray, -
Till soon, too soon, the glowing west
Proclaimed the speed of winged day.

Still o'er these scenes my memory wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care!
Time but the impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.
My Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

LUCY

I
Strange fits of passion have I known:
And I will dare to tell,
But in the lover's ear alone,
What once to me befell.

When she I loved looked every day
Fresh as a rose in June,
I to her cottage bent my way,
Beneath an evening moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,

All over the wide lea;
With quickening pace my horse drew nigh
Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard-plot;
And, as we climbed the hill,
The sinking moon to Lucy's cot
Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
Kind Nature's gentlest boon!
And all the while my eyes I kept
On the descending moon.

My horse moved on; hoof after hoof
He raised, and never stopped:
When down behind the cottage roof,
At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide
Into a lover's head!
"O mercy!" to myself I cried,
"If Lucy should be dead!"

II
She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and oh,
The difference to me!

III
I traveled among unknown men,
In lands beyond the sea;
Nor, England! did I know till then
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream!
Nor will I quit thy shore
A second time; for still I seem
To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel
The joy of my desire;
And she I cherished turned her wheel
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed,
The bowers where Lucy played;

And thine too is the last green field
That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

IV
Three years she grew in sun and shower;
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown;
This child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A lady of my own.

"Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse: and with me
The girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

"She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mold the maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

"The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

"And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake - The work was done -
How soon my Lucy's race was run!
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm and quiet scene;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.

V
A slumber did my spirit seal;
I had no human fears:
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, or force;
She neither hears nor sees;
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

William Wordsworth [1770-1850]

PROUD MAISIE
From "The Heart of Midlothian"

Proud Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.

"Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me?"
- "When six braw gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye."

Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly?"
- "The gray-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.

"The glow-worm o'er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady;
The owl from the steeple sing
Welcome, proud lady!"

Walter Scott [1771-1832]

SONG

Earl March looked on his dying child,
And, smit with grief to view her -
The youth, he cried, whom I exiled
Shall be restored to woo her.

She's at the window many an hour
His coming to discover;
And he looked up to Ellen's bower
And she looked on her lover -

But ah! so pale, he knew her not,
Though her smile on him was dwelling!
And I am then forgot - forgot?
It broke the heart of Ellen.

In vain he weeps, in vain he sighs,
Her cheek is cold as ashes;
Nor love's own kiss shall wake those eyes
To lift their silken lashes.

Thomas Campbell [1777-1844]

THE MAID'S LAMENT
From "The Examination of Shakespeare"

I loved him not; and yet now he is gone
I feel I am alone.
I checked him while he spoke; yet could he speak,
Alas! I would not check.
For reasons not to love him once I sought,
And wearied all my thought
To vex myself and him: I now would give
My love, could he but live
Who lately lived for me, and when he found
'Twas vain, in holy ground
He hid his face amid the shades of death.
I waste for him my breath
Who wasted his for me; but mine returns,
And this lorn bosom burns
With stifling heat, heaving it up in sleep,
And waking me to weep
Tears that had melted his soft heart: for years
Wept he as bitter tears.
Merciful God! Such was his latest prayer,
These may she never share!
Quieter is his breath, his breast more cold,
Than daisies in the mold,
Where children spell, athwart the churchyard gate,
His name and life's brief date.
Pray for him, gentle souls, whoe'er you be,
And, oh! pray too for me!

Walter Savage Landor [1775-1864]

"SHE IS FAR FROM THE LAND"

She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps,
And lovers are round her, sighing:
But coldly she turns from their gaze, and weeps,
For her heart in his grave is lying.

She sings the wild songs of her dear native plains,
Every note which he loved awaking; -
Ah! little they think, who delight in her strains,
How the heart of the minstrel is breaking.

He had lived for his love, for his country he died,
They were all that to life had entwined him;
Nor soon shall the tears of his country be dried,
Nor long will his love stay behind him.

Oh! make her a grave where the sunbeams rest,
When they promise a glorious morrow;
They'll shine o'er her sleep, like a smile from the West,
From her own loved island of sorrow.

Thomas Moore [1779-1852]

"AT THE MID HOUR OF NIGHT"

At the mid hour of night, when stars are weeping, I fly
To the lone vale we loved, when life shone warm in thine eye;
And I think oft, if spirits can steal from the regions of air
To revisit past scenes of delight, thou wilt come to me there,
And tell me our love is remembered even in the sky.

Then I sing the wild song 'twas once such rapture to hear,
When our voices commingling breathed like one on the ear;
And, as Echo far off through the vale my sad orison rolls,
I think, O my love! 'tis thy voice from the Kingdom of Souls
Faintly answering still the notes that once were so dear.

Thomas Moore [1779-1852]

ON A PICTURE BY POUSSIN REPRESENTING SHEPHERDS IN ARCADIA

Ah, happy youths, ah, happy maid,
Snatch present pleasure while ye may;
Laugh, dance, and sing in sunny glade,
Your limbs are light, your hearts are gay;
Ye little think there comes a day
('Twill come to you, it came to me)
When love and life shall pass away:
I, too, once dwelt in Arcady.

Or listless lie by yonder stream,
And muse and watch the ripples play,
Or note their noiseless flow, and deem
That life thus gently glides away -
That love is but a sunny ray
To make our years go smiling by.
I knew that stream, I too could dream,
I, too, once dwelt in Arcady.

Sing, shepherds, sing; sweet lady, listen;
Sing to the music of the rill,
With happy tears her bright eyes glisten,
For, as each pause the echoes fill,
They waft her name from hill to hill -
So listened my lost love to me,
The voice she loved has long been still;
I, too, once dwelt in Arcady.

John Addington Symonds [1840-1893]

THRENODY

There's a grass-grown road from the valley -
A winding road and steep -
That leads to the quiet hill-top,
Where lies your love asleep. . . .

While mine is lying, God knows where,
A hundred fathoms deep.

I saw you kneel at a grave-side -
How still a grave can be,
Wrapped in the tender starlight,
Far from the moaning sea!
But through all dreams and starlight,
The breakers call to me.

Oh, steep is your way to Silence -
But steeper the ways I roam,
For never a road can take me
Beyond the wind and foam,
And never a road can reach him
Who lies so far from home.

Ruth Guthrie Harding [1882-

STRONG AS DEATH

O death, when thou shalt come to me
From out thy dark, where she is now,
Come not with graveyard smell on thee,
Or withered roses on thy brow.

Come not, O Death, with hollow tone,
And soundless step, and clammy hand -
Lo, I am now no less alone
Than in thy desolate, doubtful land;

But with that sweet arid subtle scent
That ever clung about her (such
As with all things she brushed was blent);
And with her quick and tender touch.

With the dim gold that lit her hair,
Crown thyself, Death; let fall thy tread
So light that I may dream her there,
And turn upon my dying bed.

And through my chilling veins shall flame
My love, as though beneath her breath;
And in her voice but call my name,
And I will follow thee, O Death.

Henry Cuyler Bunner [1855-1896]

"I SHALL NOT CRY RETURN"

I shall not cry Return! Return!
Nor weep my years away;
But just as long as sunsets burn,
And dawns make no delay,
I shall be lonesome - I shall miss
Your hand, your voice, your smile, your kiss.

Not often shall I speak your name,
For what would strangers care
That once a sudden tempest came
And swept my gardens bare,
And then you passed, and in your place
Stood Silence with her lifted face.

Not always shall this parting be,
For though I travel slow,
I, too, may claim eternity
And find the way you go;
And so I do my task and wait
The opening of the outer gate.

Ellen M. H. Gates [1835-1920]

"OH! SNATCHED AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM"

Oh! snatched away in beauty's bloom,
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year;
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom:

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
And feed deep thought with many a dream,
And lingering pause and lightly tread;
Fond wretch! as if her step disturbed the dead!

Away! we know that tears are vain,
That Death nor heeds nor hears distress:
Will this unteach us to complain?
Or make one mourner weep the less?
And thou, - who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

George Gordon Byron [1788-1824]

TO MARY

If I had thought thou couldst have died,
I might not weep for thee;
But I forgot, when by thy side,
That thou couldst mortal be:
It never through my mind had passed
The time would e'er be o'er,
And I on thee should look my last,
And thou shouldst smile no more!

And still upon that face I look,
And think 'twill smile again;
And still the thought I will not brook,
That I must look in vain.
But when I speak - thou dost not say

What thou ne'er left'st unsaid;
And now I feel, as well I may,
Sweet Mary, thou art dead!

If thou wouldst stay, e'en as thou art,
All cold and all serene,
I still might press thy silent heart,
And where thy smiles have been.
While e'en thy chill, bleak corse I have,
Thou seemest still mine own;
But there I lay thee in thy grave, -
And I am now alone!

I do not think, where'er thou art,
Thou hast forgotten me;
And I, perhaps, may soothe this heart
In thinking, too, of thee;
Yet there was round thee such a dawn
Of light ne'er seen before,
As fancy never could have drawn,
And never can restore!

Charles Wolfe [1791-1823]

MY HEART AND I

Enough! we're tired, my heart and I.
We sit beside the headstone thus,
And wish that name were carved for us.
The moss reprints more tenderly
The hard types of the mason's knife,
As Heaven's sweet life renews earth's life
With which we're tired, my heart and I.

You see we're tired, my heart and I.
We dealt with books, we trusted men,
And in our own blood drenched the pen,
As if such colors could not fly.
We walked too straight for fortune's end,
We loved too true to keep a friend;
At last we're tired, my heart and I.

How tired we feel, my heart and I
We seem of no use in the world;
Our fancies hang gray and uncurled
About men's eyes indifferently;
Our voice which thrilled you so, will let
You sleep; our tears are only wet:
What do we here, my heart and I?

So tired, so tired, my heart and I!
It was not thus in that old time
When Ralph sat with me 'neath the lime
To watch the sunset from the sky.
"Dear love, you're looking tired," he said:
I, smiling at him, shook my head.
'Tis now we're tired, my heart and I.

So tired, so tired, my heart and I!
Though now none takes me on his arm
To fold me close and kiss me warm
Till each quick breath end in a sigh
Of happy languor. Now, alone,
We lean upon this graveyard stone,
Uncheered, unkissed, my heart and I.

Tired out we are, my heart and I.
Suppose the world brought diadems
To tempt us, crusted with loose gems
Of powers and pleasures? Let it try.
We scarcely care to look at even
A pretty child, or God's blue heaven,
We feel so tired, my heart and I.

Yet who complains? My heart and I?
In this abundant earth no doubt
Is little room for things worn out:
Disdain them, break them, throw them by!
And if before the days grew rough
We once were loved, used, - well enough,
I think, we've fared, my heart and I.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806-1861]

ROSALIND'S SCROLL
From "The Poet's Vow"

I left thee last, a child at heart,
A woman scarce in years:
I come to thee, a solemn corpse
Which neither feels nor fears.
I have no breath to use in sighs;
They laid the dead-weights on mine eyes
To seal them safe from tears.

Look on me with thine own calm look:
I meet it calm as thou.
No look of thine can change this smile,
Or break thy sinful vow:
I tell thee that my poor scorned heart
Is of thine earth - thine earth, a part:
It cannot vex thee now.

But out, alas! these words are writ
By a living, loving one,
Adown whose cheeks the proofs of life,
The warm quick tears do run:
Ah, let the unloving corpse control
Thy scorn back from the loving soul
Whose place of rest is won.

I have prayed for thee with bursting sob
When passion's course was free;
I have prayed for thee with silent lips

In the anguish none could see;
They whispered oft, "She sleepeth soft" -
But I only prayed for thee.

Go to! I pray for thee no more:
The corpse's tongue is still;
Its folded fingers point to heaven,
But point there stiff and chill:
No farther wrong, no farther woe
Hath license from the sin below
Its tranquil heart to thrill.

I charge thee, by the living's prayer,
And the dead's silentness,
To wring from out thy soul a cry
Which God shall hear and bless!
Lest Heaven's own palm droop in my hand,
And pale among the saints I stand,
A saint companionless.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806-1861]

LAMENT OF THE IRISH EMIGRANT

I'm sittin' on the stile, Mary,
Where we sat side by side
On a bright May mornin' long ago,
When first you were my bride.
The corn was springin' fresh and green,
And the lark sang loud and high,
And the red was on your lip, Mary,
And the love-light in your eye.

The place is little changed, Mary,
The day is bright as then,
The lark's loud song is in my ear,
And the corn is green again;
But I miss the soft clasp of your hand,
And your breath, warm on my cheek:
And I still keep list'nin' for the words
You never more will speak.

'Tis but a step down yonder lane,
And the little church stands near -
The church where we were wed, Mary;
I see the spire from here.
But the graveyard lies between, Mary,
And my step might break your rest -
For I've laid you, darling, down to sleep,
With your baby on your breast.

I'm very lonely now, Mary,
For the poor make no new friends;
But, oh! they love the better still
The few our Father sends.
And you were all I had, Mary,
My blessin' and my pride:

There's nothin' left to care for now,
Since my poor Mary died.

Yours was the good, brave heart, Mary,
That still kept hoping on,
When the trust in God had left my soul,
And my arm's young strength was gone;
There was comfort ever on your lip,
And the kind look on your brow -
I bless you, Mary, for that same,
Though you cannot hear me now.

I thank you for the patient smile
When your heart was fit to break,
When the hunger pain was gnawin' there,
And you hid it for my sake;
I bless you for the pleasant word,
When your heart was sad and sore -
Oh! I'm thankful you are gone, Mary,
Where grief can't reach you more!

I'm biddin' you a long farewell,
My Mary - kind and true!
But I'll not forget you, darling,
In the land I'm goin' to:
They say there's bread and work for all,
And the sun shines always there,
But I'll not forget old Ireland,
Were it fifty times as fair!

And often in those grand old woods
I'll sit, and shut my eyes,
And my heart will travel back again
To the place where Mary lies;
And I'll think I see the little stile
Where we sat side by side,
And the springin' corn, and the bright May morn,
When first you were my bride.

Helen Selina Sheridan [1807-1867]

THE KING OF DENMARK'S RIDE

Word was brought to the Danish king
(Hurry!)
That the love of his heart lay suffering,
And pined for the comfort his voice would bring;
(O, ride as though you were flying!)
Better he loves each golden curl
On the brow of that Scandinavian girl
Than his rich crown jewels of ruby and pearl:
And his rose of the isles is dying!

Thirty nobles saddled with speed;
(Hurry!)
Each one mounting a gallant steed
Which he kept for battle and days of need;

(O, ride as though you were flying!)
Spurs were struck in the foaming flank;
Worn-out chargers staggered and sank;
Bridles were slackened, and girths were burst;
But ride as they would, the king rode first,
For his rose of the isles lay dying!

His nobles are beaten, one by one;
(Hurry!)
They have fainted, and faltered, and homeward gone;
His little fair page now follows alone,
For strength and for courage trying!
The king looked back at that faithful child;
Wan was the face that answering smiled;
They passed the drawbridge with clattering din,
Then he dropped; and only the king rode in
Where his rose of the isles lay dying!

The king blew a blast on his bugle horn;
(Silence!)
No answer came; but faint and forlorn
An echo returned on the cold gray morn,
Like the breath of a spirit sighing.
The castle portal stood grimly wide;
None welcomed the king from that weary ride;
For dead, in the light of the dawning day,
The pale sweet form of the welcomer lay,
Who had yearned for his voice while dying!

The panting steed, with a drooping crest,
Stood weary.
The king returned from her chamber of rest,
The thick sobs choking in his breast;
And, that dumb companion eyeing,
The tears gushed forth which he strove to check;
He bowed his head on his charger's neck:
"O steed, that every nerve didst strain,
Dear steed, our ride hath been in vain
To the halls where my love lay dying!"

Caroline Elizabeth Sarah Norton [1808-1870]

THE WATCHER

A rose for a young head,
A ring for a bride,
Joy for the homestead
Clean and wide -
Who's that waiting
In the rain outside?

A heart for an old friend,
A hand for the new:
Love can to earth lend
Heaven's hue -
Who's that standing
In the silver dew?

A smile for the parting,
A tear as they go,
God's sweethearting
Ends just so -
Who's that watching
Where the black winds blow?

He who is waiting
In the rain outside,
He who is standing
Where the dew drops wide,
He who is watching
In the wind must ride
(Though the pale hands cling)
With the rose
And the ring
And the bride,
Must ride
With the red of the rose,
And the gold of the ring,
And the lips and the hair of the bride.

James Stephens [1882-

THE THREE SISTERS

Gone are those three, those sisters rare
With wonder-lips and eyes ashine.
One was wise and one was fair,
And one was mine.

Ye mourners, weave for the sleeping hair
Of only two your ivy vine.
For one was wise and one was fair,
But one was mine.

Arthur Davison Ficke [1883-

BALLAD

He said: "The shadows darken down,
The night is near at hand.
Now who's the friend will follow me
Into the sunless land?

"For I have vassals leal and true,
And I have comrades kind,
And wheresoe'er my soul shall speed,
They will not stay behind."

He sought the brother young and blithe
Who bore his spear and shield:
"In the long chase you've followed me,
And in the battle-field.

"Few vows you make; but true's your heart,
And you with me will win."
He said: "God speed you, brother mine,
But I am next of kin."

He sought the friar, the gray old priest
Who loved his father's board.
The friar he turned him to the east
And reverently adored.

He said: "A godless name you bear,
A godless life you've led,
And whoso wins along with you,
His spirit shall have dread.

"Oh, hasten, get your guilty soul
From every burden shriven;
Yet you are bound for flame and dole,
But I am bound for heaven."

He sought the lady bright and proud,
Who sate at his right hand:
"Make haste, O Love, to follow me
Into the sunless land."

She said: "And pass you in your prime?
Heaven give me days of cheer!
And keep me from the sunless clime
Many and many a year."

All heavily the sun sank down
Among black clouds of fate.
There came a woman fair and wan
Unto the castle gate.

Through gazing vassals, idle serfs,
So silently she sped!
The winding staircase echoed not
Unto her light, light tread.

His lady eyed her scornfully.
She stood at his right hand;
She said: "And I will follow you
Into the sunless land.

"There is no expiation, none.
A bitter load I bore:
Now I shall love you nevermore,
Never and nevermore.

"There is no touch or tone of yours
Can make the old love wake."
She said: "But I will follow you,
Even for the old love's sake."

Oh, he has kissed her on the brow,
He took her by the hand:
Into the sunless land they went,

Into the starless land.

May Kendall [1861-

"O THAT 'TWERE POSSIBLE"
From "Maud"

O that 'twere possible
After long grief and pain
To find the arms of my true love
Round me once again!

When I was wont to meet her
In the silent moody places
Of the land that gave me birth,
We stood tranced in long embraces
Mixed with kisses sweeter, sweeter
Than anything on earth.

A shadow flits before me,
Not thou, but like to thee.
Ah, Christ, that it were possible
For one short hour to see
The souls we loved, that they might tell us
What and where they be!

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

"HOME THEY BROUGHT HER WARRIOR DEAD"
From "The Princess"

Home they brought her warrior dead;
She nor swooned, nor uttered cry.
All her maidens, watching, said,
"She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,
Called him worthy to be loved,
Truest friend and noblest foe;
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
Lightly to the warrior stepped,
Took the face-cloth from the face;
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
Set his child upon her knee, -
Like summer tempest came her tears,
"Sweet my child, I live for thee."

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

EVELYN HOPE

Beautiful Evelyn Hope is dead!
Sit and watch by her side an hour.
That is her book-shelf, this her bed;
She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,
Beginning to die too, in the glass.
Little has yet been changed, I think:
The shutters are shut, no light may pass
Save two long rays through the hinge's chink.

Sixteen years old when she died!
Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name;
It was not her time to love; beside,
Her life had many a hope and aim,
Duties enough and little cares,
And now was quiet, now astir,
Till God's hand beckoned unawares, -
And the sweet white brow is all of her.

Is it too late, then, Evelyn Hope?
What, your soul was pure and true,
The good stars met in your horoscope,
Made you of spirit, fire, and dew -
And, just because I was thrice as old,
And our paths in the world diverged so wide,
Each was naught to each, must I be told?
We were fellow mortals, naught beside?

No, indeed! for God above
Is great to grant, as mighty to make,
And creates the love to reward the love:
I claim you still, for my own love's sake!
Delayed, it may be, for more lives yet,
Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few:
Much is to learn, much to forget
Ere the time be come for taking you.

But the time will come, - at last it will,
When, Evelyn Hope, what meant (I shall say)
In the lower earth, in the years long still,
That body and soul so pure and gay?
Why your hair was amber, I shall divine,
And your mouth of your own geranium's red, -
And what you would do with me, in fine,
In the new life come in the old one's stead.

I have lived (I shall say) so much since then,
Given up myself so many times,
Gained me the gains of various men,
Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes;
Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full scope,
Either I missed or itself missed me:
And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope!
What is the issue? let us see!

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while!
My heart seemed full as it could hold;
There was place and to spare for the frank young smile,
And the red young mouth, and the hair's young gold.

So, hush, - I will give you this leaf to keep:
See, I shut it inside the sweet, cold hand!
There, that is our secret: go to sleep!
You will wake, and remember, and understand.

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

REMEMBRANCE

Cold in the earth - and the deep snow piled above thee,
Far, far removed, cold in the dreary grave!
Have I forgot, my only Love, to love thee,
Severed at last by Time's all-severing wave?

Now, when alone, do my thoughts no longer hover
Over the mountains, on that northern shore,
Resting their wings where heath and fern-leaves cover
Thy noble heart for ever, ever more?

Cold in the earth - and fifteen wild Decembers,
From those brown hills, have melted into spring:
Faithful, indeed, is the spirit that remembers
After such years of change and suffering!

Sweet Love of youth, forgive, if I forget thee,
While the world's tide is bearing me along;
Other desires and other hopes beset me,
Hopes which obscure, but cannot do thee wrong!

No later light has lightened up my heaven,
No second morn has ever shone for me;
All my life's bliss from thy dear life was given,
All my life's bliss is in the grave with thee.

But, when the days of golden dreams had perished,
And even Despair was powerless to destroy;
Then did I learn how existence could be cherished,
Strengthened, and fed without the aid of joy.

Then did I check the tears of useless passion -
Weaned my young soul from yearning after thine;
Sternly denied its burning wish to hasten
Down to that tomb already more than mine.

And, even yet, I dare not let it languish,
Dare not indulge in memory's rapturous pain;
Once drinking deep of that divinest anguish,
How could I seek the empty world again?

Emily Bronte [1818-1848]

SONG

The linnet in the rocky dells,
The moor-lark in the air,
The bee among the heather bells

That hide my lady fair:

The wild deer browse above her breast;
The wild birds raise their brood;
And they, her smiles of love caressed,
Have left her solitude.

I ween that, when the grave's dark wall
Did first her form retain,
They thought their hearts could ne'er recall
The light of joy again.

They thought the tide of grief would flow
Unchecked through future years;
But where is all their anguish now,
And where are all their tears?

Well, let them fight for honor's breath,
Or pleasure's shade pursue:
The dweller in the land of death
Is changed and careless too.

And, if their eyes should watch and weep
Till sorrow's source were dry,
She would not, in her tranquil sleep,
Return a single sigh.

Blow, west-wind, by the lonely mound,
And murmur, summer streams!
There is no need of other sound
To soothe my lady's dreams.

Emily Bronte [1818-1848]

SONG OF THE OLD LOVE
From "Supper at the Mill"

When sparrows build, and the leaves break forth,
My old sorrow wakes and cries,
For I know there is dawn in the far, far north,
And a scarlet sun doth rise;
Like a scarlet fleece the snow-field spreads,
And the icy founts run free,
And the bergs begin to bow their heads,
And plunge, and sail in the sea.

O my lost love, and my own, own love,
And my love that loved me so!
Is there never a chink in the world above
Where they listen for words from below?
Nay, I spoke once, and I grieved thee sore,
I remember all that I said,
And now thou wilt hear me no more - no more
Till the sea gives up her dead.

Thou didst set thy foot on the ship, and sail
To the ice-fields and the snow;

Thou wert sad, for thy love did naught avail,
And the end I could not know;
How could I tell I should love thee to-day,
Whom that day I held not dear?
How could I know I should love thee away
When I did not love thee anear?

We shall walk no more through the sodden plain
With the faded bents o'erspread,
We shall stand no more by the seething main
While the dark wrack drives o'erhead;
We shall part no more in the wind and the rain,
Where thy last farewell was said;
But perhaps I shall meet thee and know thee again
When the sea gives up her dead.

Jean Ingelow [1820-1897]

REQUIESCAT

Strew on her roses, roses,
And never a spray of yew!
In quiet she reposes:
Ah! would that I did too.

Her mirth the world required:
She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
In mazes of heat and sound.
But for peace her soul was yearning,
And now peace laps her round.

Her cabined, ample Spirit,
It fluttered and failed for breath.
To-night it doth inherit
The vasty hall of Death.

Matthew Arnold [1822-1888]

TOO LATE
"DOWGLAS, DOWGLAS, TENDIR AND TREU"

Could ye come back to me, Douglas, Douglas,
In the old likeness that I knew,
I would be so faithful, so loving, Douglas,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true.

Never a scornful word should grieve ye,
I'd smile on ye sweet as the angels do:
Sweet as your smile on me shone ever,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true.

Oh, to call back the days that are not!

My eyes were blinded, your words were few:
Do you know the truth now, up in heaven,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true?

I never was worthy of you, Douglas;
Not half worthy the like of you:
Now all men beside seem to me like shadows -
I love you, Douglas, tender and true.

Stretch out your hand to me, Douglas, Douglas,
Drop forgiveness from heaven like dew;
As I lay my heart on your dead heart, Douglas,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true!

Dinah Maria Mulock Craik [1826-1887]

FOUR YEARS

At the Midsummer, when the hay was down,
Said I mournful - Though my life be in its prime,
Bare lie my meadows all shorn before their time,
O'er my sere woodlands the leaves are turning brown;
It is the hot Midsummer, when the hay is down.

At the Midsummer, when the hay was down,
Stood she by the brooklet, young and very fair,
With the first white bindweed twisted in her hair -
Hair that drooped like birch-boughs, all in her simple gown -
That eve in high Midsummer, when the hay was down.

At the Midsummer, when the hay was down,
Crept she a willing bride close into my breast;
Low-piled the thunder-clouds had sunk into the west,
Red-eyed the sun out-glared like knight from leaguered town;
It was the high Midsummer, and the sun was down.

It is Midsummer - all the hay is down,
Close to her forehead press I dying eyes,
Praying God shield her till we meet in Paradise,
Bless her in love's name who was my joy and crown,
And I go at Midsummer, when the hay is down.

Dinah Maria Mulock Craik [1826-1887]

BARBARA

On the Sabbath-day,
Through the churchyard old and gray,
Over the crisp and yellow leaves, I held my rustling way;
And amid the words of mercy, falling on my soul like balms;
'Mid the gorgeous storms of music - in the mellow organ calms,
'Mid the upward streaming prayers, and the rich and solemn psalms,
I stood careless, Barbara.

My heart was otherwhere
While the organ shook the air,

And the priest, with outspread hands, blessed the people with a prayer;
But, when rising to go homeward, with a mild and saint-like shine
Gleamed a face of airy beauty with its heavenly eyes on mine -
Gleamed and vanished in a moment - O that face was surely thine
Out of heaven, Barbara!

O pallid, pallid face!
O earnest eyes of grace!
When last I saw thee, dearest, it was in another place.
You came running forth to meet me with my love-gift on your wrist:
The flutter of a long white dress, then all was lost in mist -
A purple stain of agony was on the mouth I kissed,
That wild morning, Barbara!

I searched in my despair,
Sunny noon and midnight air;
I could not drive away the thought that you were lingering there.
O many and many a winter night I sat when you were gone,
My worn face buried in my hands, beside the fire alone.
Within the dripping churchyard, the rain plashing on your stone,
You were sleeping, Barbara.

'Mong angels, do you think
Of the precious golden link
I clasped around your happy arm while sitting by yon brink?
Or when that night of gliding dance, of laughter and guitars,
Was emptied of its music, and we watched, through lattice-bars,
The silent midnight heaven creeping o'er us with its stars,
Till the day broke, Barbara?

In the years I've changed;
Wild and far my heart has ranged,
And many sins and errors now have been on me avenged;
But to you I have been faithful, whatsoever good I lacked:
I loved you, and above my life still hangs that love intact -
Your love the trembling rainbow, I the reckless cataract.
Still I love you, Barbara!

Yet, love, I am unblest;
With many doubts oppressed,
I wander like a desert wind, without a place of rest.
Could I but win you for an hour from off that starry shore,
The hunger of my soul were stilled, for Death hath told you more
Than the melancholy world doth know; things deeper than all lore
Will you teach me, Barbara?

In vain, in vain, in vain!
You will never come again.
There droops upon the dreary hills a mournful fringe of rain;
The gloaming closes slowly round, loud winds are in the tree,
Round selfish shores for ever moans the hurt and wounded sea,
There is no rest upon the earth, peace is with Death and thee,
Barbara!

Alexander Smith [1830-1867]

SONG

When I am dead, my dearest.
Sing no sad songs for me;
Plant thou no roses at my head,
Nor shady cypress-tree:
Be the green grass above me
With showers and dewdrops wet;
And if thou wilt, remember,
And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,
I shall not feel the rain;
I shall not hear the nightingale
Sing on, as if in pain:
And dreaming through the twilight
That doth not rise nor set,
Haply I may remember
And haply may forget.

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830-1894]

SARRAZINE'S SONG TO HER DEAD LOVER
From "Chaitivel"

Hath any loved you well, down there,
Summer or winter through?
Down there, have you found any fair
Laid in the grave with you?
Is death's long kiss a richer kiss
Than mine was wont to be -
Or have you gone to some far bliss
And quite forgotten me?

What soft enamoring of sleep
Hath you in some soft way?
What charmed death holdeth you with deep
Strange lure by night and day?
- A little space below the grass,
Out of the sun and shade;
But worlds away from me, alas,
Down there where you are laid?

My bright hair's waved and wasted gold,
What is it now to thee -
Whether the rose-red life I hold
Or white death holdeth me?
Down there you love the grave's own green,
And evermore you rave
Of some sweet seraph you have seen
Or dreamt of in the grave.

There you shall lie as you have lain,
Though in the world above,
Another life you live again,
Loving again your love:
Is it not sweet beneath the palm?
Is not the warm day rife

With some long mystic golden calm
Better than love and life?

The broad quaint odorous leaves like hands
Weaving the fair day through,
Weave sleep no burnished bird withstands,
While death weaves sleep for you;
And many a strange rich breathing sound
Ravishes morn and noon:
And in that place you must have found
Death a delicious swoon.

Hold me no longer for a word
I used to say or sing:
Ah, long ago you must have heard
So many a sweeter thing:
For rich earth must have reached your heart
And turned the faith to flowers;
And warm wind stolen, part by part,
Your soul through faithless hours.

And many a soft seed must have won
Soil of some yielding thought,
To bring a bloom up to the sun
That else had ne'er been brought;
And, doubtless, many a passionate hue
Hath made that place more fair,
Making some passionate part of you
Faithless to me down there.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy [1844-1884]

LOVE AND DEATH

In the wild autumn weather, when the rain was on the sea,
And the boughs sobbed together, Death came and spake to me:
"Those red drops of thy heart I have come to take from thee;
As the storm sheds the rose, so thy love shall broken be,"
Said Death to me.

Then I stood straight and fearless while the rain was in the wave,
And I spake low and tearless: "When thou hast made my grave,
Those red drops from my heart then thou shalt surely have;
But the rose keeps its bloom, as I my love will save
All for my grave."

In the wild autumn weather a dread sword slipped from its sheath;
While the boughs sobbed together, I fought a fight with Death,
And I vanquished him with prayer, and I vanquished him by faith:
Now the summer air is sweet with the rose's fragrant breath
That conquered Death.

Rosa Mulholland [18 -1921]

TO ONE IN PARADISE

Thou wast all that to me, love,
For which my soul did pine:
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain and a shrine
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!
Ah, starry Hope, that didst arise
But to be overcast!
A voice from out of the Future cries,
"On! on!" - but o'er the Past
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies
Mute, motionless, aghast.

For, alas! alas! with me
The light of Life is o'er!
No more - no more - no more -
(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar.

And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy dark eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams -
In what ethereal dances,
By what eternal streams.

Edgar Allan Poe [1809-1849]

ANNABEL LEE

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and she was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more than love,
I and my Annabel Lee;
With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her highborn kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulcher
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me;
Yes! that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we,
Of many far wiser than we;
And neither the angels in heaven above,
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:

For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling - my darling - my life and my bride,
In the sepulcher there by the sea,
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

Edgar Allan Poe [1809-1849]

FOR ANNIE

Thank Heaven! the crisis -
The danger is past,
And the lingering illness
Is over at last -
And the fever called "Living"
Is conquered at last.

Sadly, I know
I am shorn of my strength,
And no muscle I move
As I lie at full length:
But no matter - I feel
I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly
Now, in my bed,
That any beholder
Might fancy me dead -
Might start at beholding me,
Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,
The sighing and sobbing,
Are quieted now,
With that horrible throbbing
At heart - ah, that horrible,
Horrible throbbing!

The sickness - the nausea -

The pitiless pain -
Have ceased, with the fever
That maddened my brain -
With the fever called "Living"
That burned in my brain.

And O! of all tortures
That torture the worst
Has abated - the terrible
Torture of thirst
For the naphthaline river
Of Passion accurst -
I have drunk of a water
That quenches all thirst,

- Of a water that flows,
With a lullaby sound,
From a spring but a very few
Feet under ground -
From a cavern not very far
Down under ground.

And ah! let it never
Be foolishly said
That my room it is gloomy,
And narrow my bed;
For man never slept
In a different bed -
And, to sleep, you must slumber
In just such a bed.

My tantalized spirit
Here blandly reposes,
Forgetting, or never
Regretting, its roses -
Its old agitations
Of myrtles and roses:

For now, while so quietly
Lying, it fancies
A holier odor
About it, of pansies -
A rosemary odor,
Commingled with pansies -
With rue and the beautiful
Puritan pansies.

And so it lies happily,
Bathing in many
A dream of the truth
And the beauty of Annie -
Drowned in a bath
Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,
She fondly caressed,
And then I fell gently
To sleep on her breast -

Deeply to sleep
From the heaven of her breast.

When the light was extinguished,
She covered me warm,
And she prayed to the angels
To keep me from harm -
To the queen of the angels
To shield me from harm.

And I lie so composedly,
Now, in my bed
(Knowing her love),
That you fancy me dead -
And I rest so contentedly,
Now, in my bed
(With her love at my breast),
That you fancy me dead -
That you shudder to look at me,
Thinking me dead.

But my heart it is brighter
Than all of the many
Stars in the sky,
For it sparkles with Annie -
It glows with the light
Of the love of my Annie -
With the thought, of the light
Of the eyes of my Annie.

Edgar Allan Poe [1809-1849]

TELLING THE BEES

Here is the place; right over the hill
Runs the path I took;
You can see the gap in the old wall still,
And the stepping-stones in the shallow brook.

There is the house, with the gate red-barred,
And the poplars tall;
And the barn's brown length, and the cattle-yard,
And the white horns tossing above the wall.

There are the beehives ranged in the sun;
And down by the brink
Of the brook are her poor flowers, weed-o'errun,
Pansy and daffodil, rose and pink.

A year has gone, as the tortoise goes,
Heavy and slow;
And the same rose blows, and the same sun glows,
And the same brook sings of a year ago.

There's the same sweet clover-smell in the breeze;
And the June sun warm
Tangles his wings of fire in the trees,

Setting, as then, over Fernside farm.

I mind me how with a lover's care
From my Sunday coat
I brushed off the burrs, and smoothed my hair,
And cooled at the brookside my brow and throat.

Since we parted, a month had passed, -
To love, a year;
Down through the beeches I looked at last
On the little red gate and the well-sweep near.

I can see it all now, - the slantwise rain
Of light through the leaves,
The sundown's blaze on her window-pane,
The bloom of her roses under the eaves.

Just the same as a month before, -
The house and the trees,
The barn's brown gable, the vine by the door, -
Nothing changed but the hives of bees.

Before them, under the garden wall,
Forward and back,
Went drearily singing the chore-girl small,
Draping each hive with a shred of black.

Trembling, I listened: the summer sun
Had the chill of snow;
For I knew she was telling the bees of one
Gone on the journey we all must go!

Then I said to myself, "My Mary weeps
For the dead to-day:
Haply her blind old grandsire sleeps
The fret and the pain of his age away."

But her dog whined low; on the doorway sill
With his cane to his chin,
The old man sat; and the chore-girl still
Sung to the bees stealing out and in.

And the song she was singing ever since
In my ears sounds on: -
"Stay at home, pretty bees, fly not hence!
Mistress Mary is dead and gone!"

John Greenleaf Whittier [1807-1892]

A TRYST

I will not break the tryst, my dear,
That we have kept so long,
Though winter and its snows are here,
And I've no heart for song.

You went into the voiceless night;

Your path led far away.
Did you forget me, Heart's Delight,
As night forgets the day?

Sometimes I think that you would speak
If still you held me dear;
But space is vast, and I am weak -
Perchance I do not hear.

Surely, howe'er remote the star
Your wandering feet may tread,
When I shall pass the sundering bar
Our souls must still be wed.

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835-1908]

LOVE'S RESURRECTION DAY

Round among the quiet graves,
When the sun was low,
Love went grieving, - Love who saves:
Did the sleepers know?

At his touch the flowers awoke,
At his tender call
Birds into sweet singing broke,
And it did befall

From the blooming, bursting sod
All Love's dead arose,
And went flying up to God
By a way Love knows.

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835-1908]

HEAVEN

Only to find Forever, blest
By thine encircling arm;
Only to lie beyond unrest
In passion's dreamy calm!

Only to meet and never part,
To sleep and never wake, -
Heart unto heart and soul to soul,
Dead for each other's sake.

Martha Gilbert Dickinson [18 -

JANETTE'S HAIR

Oh, loosen the snood that you wear, Janette,
Let me tangle a hand in your hair - my pet;
For the world to me had no daintier sight
Than your brown hair veiling your shoulders white;

Your beautiful dark brown hair - my pet.

It was brown with a golden gloss, Janette,
It was finer than silk of the floss - my pet;
'Twas a beautiful mist falling down to your wrist,
'Twas a thing to be braided, and jewelled, and kissed -
'Twas the loveliest hair in the world - my pet.

My arm was the arm of a clown, Janette,
It was sinewy, bristled, and brown - my pet;
But warmly and softly it loved to caress
Your round white neck and your wealth of tress,
Your beautiful plenty of hair - my pet.

Your eyes had a swimming glory, Janette.
Revealing the old, dear story - my pet;
They were gray with that chastened tinge of the sky
When the trout leaps quickest to snap the fly,
And they matched with your golden hair - my pet.

Your lips - but I have no words, Janette -
They were fresh as the twitter of birds - my pet,
When the spring is young, and the roses are wet,
With the dewdrops in each red bosom set,
And they suited your gold brown hair - my pet.

Oh, you tangled my life in your hair, Janette,
'Twas a silken and golden snare - my pet;
But, so gentle the bondage, my soul did implore
The right to continue your slave evermore,
With my fingers enmeshed in your hair - my pet.

Thus ever I dream what you were, Janette,
With your lips, and your eyes, and your hair - my pet,
In the darkness of desolate years I moan,
And my tears fall bitterly over the stone
That covers your golden hair - my pet.

Charles Graham Halpine [1829-1868]

THE DYING LOVER

The grass that is under me now
Will soon be over me, Sweet;
When you walk this way again
I shall not hear your feet.

You may walk this way again,
And shed your tears like dew;
They will be no more to me then
Than mine are now to you!

Richard Henry Stoddard [1825-1903]

"WHEN THE GRASS SHALL COVER ME"

When the grass shall cover me,
Head to foot where I am lying;
When not any wind that blows,
Summer blooms nor winter snows,
Shall awake me to your sighing:
Close above me as you pass,
You will say, "How kind she was,"
You will say, "How true she was,"
When the grass grows over me.

When the grass shall cover me,
Holden close to earth's warm bosom, -
While I laugh, or weep, or sing,
Nevermore, for anything,
You will find in blade and blossom,
Sweet small voices, odorous,
Tender pleaders in my cause,
That shall speak me as I was -
When the grass grows over me.

When the grass shall cover me!
Ah, beloved, in my sorrow
Very patient, I can wait,
Knowing that, or soon or late,
There will dawn a clearer morrow:
When your heart will moan "Alas!
Now I know how true she was;
Now I know how dear she was" -
When the grass grows over me!

Ina Donna Coolbrith [1842-1928]

GIVE LOVE TO-DAY

When the lean, gray grasses
Cover me, bury me deep,
No sea wind that passes
Shall break my sleep.

When you come, my lover,
Sorrowful-eyed to me,
Earth mine eyes will cover;
I shall not see.

Though with sad words splendid,
Praising, you call me dear,
It will be all ended;
I shall not hear.

You may live love's riot
Laughingly over my head,
But I shall lie quiet
With the gray dead.

Love, you will not wake me
With all your singing carouse.
Nor your dancing shake me

In my dark house.

Though you should go weeping,
Sorrowful for my sake,
Fain to break my sleeping,
I could not wake.

Now, ere time destroy us -
Shadows beneath and above;
Death has no song joyous,
Nor dead men love -

Now, while deep-eyed, golden,
Love on the mountain sings,
Let him be close holden;
Fetter his wings.

Love, nor joy nor sorrow
Troubles the end of day.
Leave the Fates to-morrow;
Give Love to-day.

Ethel Talbot [18 -

UNTIL DEATH

Make me no vows of constancy, dear friend,
To love me, though I die, thy whole life long,
And love no other till thy days shall end -
Nay, it were rash and wrong.

If thou canst love another, be it so;
I would not reach out of my quiet grave
To bind thy heart, if it should choose to go -
Love should not be a slave.

My placid ghost, I trust, will walk serene
In clearer light than gilds those earthly morns,
Above the jealousies and envies keen,
Which sow this life with thorns.

Thou wouldst not feel my shadowy caress;
If, after death, my soul should linger here;
Men's hearts crave tangible, close tenderness,
Love's presence, warm and near.

It would not make me sleep more peacefully
That thou wert wasting all thy life in woe
For my poor sake; what love thou hast for me,
Bestow it ere I go.

Carve not upon a stone when I am dead
The praises which remorseful mourners give
To women's graves - a tardy recompense -
But speak them while I live.

Heap not the heavy marble o'er my head

To shut away the sunshine and the dew;
Let small blooms grow there, and let grasses wave,
And raindrops filter through.

Thou wilt meet many fairer and more gay
Than I; but, trust me, thou canst never find
One who will love and serve thee night and day
With a more single mind.

Forget me when I die! The violets
Above my breast will blossom just as blue,
Nor miss thy tears; e'en nature's self forgets;
But while I live, be true.

Elizabeth Akers [1832-1911]

FLORENCE VANE

I loved thee long and dearly,
Florence Vane;
My life's bright dream and early
Hath come again;
I renew in my fond vision,
My heart's dear pain -
My hopes, and thy derision,
Florence Vane.

The ruin, lone and hoary,
The ruin old,
Where thou didst hark my story,
At even told -
That spot - the hues Elysian
Of sky and plain -
I treasure in my vision,
Florence Vane.

Thou wast lovelier than the roses
In their prime;
Thy voice excelled the closes
Of sweetest rhyme;
Thy heart was as a river
Without a main.
Would I had loved thee never,
Florence Vane!

But, fairest, coldest wonder!
Thy glorious clay
Lieth the green sod under -
Alas, the day!
And it boots not to remember
Thy disdain,
To quicken love's pale ember,
Florence Vane.

The lilies of the valley
By young graves weep;
The daisies love to dally

Where maidens sleep.
May their bloom, in beauty vying,
Never wane
Where thine earthly part is lying,
Florence Vane!

Philip Pendleton Cooke [1816-1850]

"IF SPIRITS WALK"

If spirits walk, love, when the night climbs slow
The slant footpath where we were wont to go,
Be sure that I shall take the selfsame way
To the hill-crest, and shoreward, down the gray,
Sheer, graveled slope, where vetches straggling grow.
Look for me not when gusts of winter blow,
When at thy pane beat hands of sleet and snow;
I would not come thy dear eyes to affray,
If spirits walk.

But when, in June, the pines are whispering low,
And when their breath plays with thy bright hair so
As some one's fingers once were used to play -
That hour when birds leave song, and children pray,
Keep the old tryst, sweetheart, and thou shalt know
If spirits walk.

Sophie Jewett [1861-1909]

REQUIESCAT

Tread lightly, she is near,
Under the snow;
Speak gently, she can hear
The daisies grow.

All her bright golden hair
Tarnished with rust,
She that was young and fair
Fallen to dust.

Lily-like, white as snow,
She hardly knew
She was a woman, so
Sweetly she grew.

Coffin-board, heavy stone,
Lie on her breast;
I vex my heart alone,
She is at rest.

Peace, peace; she cannot hear
Lyre or sonnet;
All my life's buried here -
Heap earth upon it.

Oscar Wilde [1856-1900]

LYRIC
Ah, dans ces mornes sejours
Les jamais sont les toujours. - Paul Verlaine

You would have understood me, had you waited;
I could have loved you, dear! as well as he;
Had we not been impatient, dear! and fated
Always to disagree.

What is the use of speech? Silence were fitter:
Lest we should still be wishing things unsaid.
Though all the words we ever spake were bitter,
Shall I reproach you dead?

Nay, let this earth, your portion, likewise cover
All the old anger, setting us apart:
Always, in all, in truth was I your lover;
Always, I held your heart.

I have met other women who were tender,
As you were cold, dear! with a grace as rare.
Think you I turned to them, or made surrender,
I who had found you fair?

Had we been patient, dear! ah, had you waited,
I had fought death for you, better than he:
But from the very first, dear! we, were fated
Always to disagree.

Late, late, I come to you, now death discloses
Love that in life was not to be our part:
On your low-lying mound between the roses,
Sadly I cast my heart.

I would not waken you: nay! this is fitter;
Death and the darkness give you unto me;
Here we who loved so, were so cold and bitter,
Hardly can disagree.

Ernest Dowson [1867-1900]

ROMANCE

My Love dwelt in a Northern land.
A gray tower in a forest green
Was hers, and far on either hand
The long wash of the waves was seen,
And leagues and leagues of yellow sand,
The woven forest boughs between!

And through the silver Northern night
The sunset slowly died away,
And herds of strange deer, lily-white,
Stole forth among the branches gray;

About the coming of the light,
They fled like ghosts before the day!

I know not if the forest green
Still girdles round that castle gray;
I know not if the boughs between
The white deer vanish ere the day;
Above my Love the grass is green,
My heart is colder than the clay!

Andrew Lang [1844-1912]

GOOD-NIGHT

Good-night, dear friend! I say good-night to thee
Across the moonbeams, tremulous and white,
Bridging all space between us, it may be.
Lean low, sweet friend; it is the last good-night.

For, lying low upon my couch, and still,
The fever flush evanished from my face,
I heard them whisper softly, "'Tis His will;
Angels will give her happier resting-place!"

And so from sight of tears that fell like rain,
And sounds of sobbing smothered close and low,
I turned my white face to the window-pane,
To say good-night to thee before I go.

Good-night! good-night! I do not fear the end,
The conflict with the billows dark and high;
And yet, if I could touch thy hand, my friend,
I think it would be easier to die;

If I could feel through all the quiet waves
Of my deep hair thy tender breath a-thrill,
I could go downward to the place of graves
With eyes a-shine and pale lips smiling still;

Or it may be that, if through all the strife
And pain of parting I should hear thy call,
I would come singing back to sweet, sweet life,
And know no mystery of death at all.

It may not be. Good-night, dear friend, good-night!
And when you see the violets again,
And hear, through boughs with swollen buds a-white,
The gentle falling of the April rain,

Remember her whose young life held thy name
With all things holy, in its outward flight,
And turn sometimes from busy haunts of men
To hear again her low good-night! good-night!

Hester A. Benedict [18 -

REQUIESCAT

Bury me deep when I am dead,
Far from the woods where sweet birds sing;
Lap me in sullen stone and lead,
Lest my poor dust should feel the Spring.

Never a flower be near me set,
Nor starry cup nor slender stem,
Anemone nor violet,
Lest my poor dust remember them.

And you - wherever you may fare -
Dearer than birds, or flowers, or dew -
Never, ah me, pass never there,
Lest my poor dust should dream of you.

Rosamund Marriott Watson [1863-1911]

THE FOUR WINDS

Wind of the North,
Wind of the Norland snows,
Wind of the winnowed skies and sharp, clear stars -
Blow cold and keen across the naked hills,
And crisp the lowland pools with crystal films,
And blur the casement-squares with glittering ice,
But go not near my love.

Wind of the West,
Wind of the few, far clouds,
Wind of the gold and crimson sunset lands -
Blow fresh and pure across the peaks and plains,
And broaden the blue spaces of the heavens,
And sway the grasses and the mountain pines,
But let my dear one rest.

Wind of the East,
Wind of the sunrise seas,
Wind of the clinging mists and gray, harsh rains -
Blow moist and chill across the wastes of brine,
And shut the sun out, and the moon and stars,
And lash the boughs against the dripping eaves,
Yet keep thou from my love.

But thou, sweet wind!
Wind of the fragrant South,
Wind from the bowers of jasmine and of rose! -
Over magnolia glooms and lilied lakes
And flowering forests come with dewy wings,
And stir the petals at her feet, and kiss
The low mound where she lies.

Charles Henry Luders [1858-1891]

THE KING'S BALLAD

Good my King, in your garden close,
(Hark to the thrush's trilling)
Why so sad when the maiden rose
Love at your feet is spilling?
Golden the air and honey-sweet,
Sapphire the sky, it is not meet
Sorrowful faces should flowers greet,
(Hark to the thrush's trilling).

All alone walks the King to-day.
(Hark to the thrush's trilling)
Far from his throne he steals away
Loneness and quiet willing.
Roses and tulips and lilies fair
Smile for his pleasure everywhere,
Yet of their joyance he takes no share,
(Hark to the thrush's trilling).

Ladies wait in the palace, Sire,
(Hark to the thrush's trilling)
Red and white for the king's desire,
Love-warm and sweet and thrilling;
Breasts of moonshine and hair of night,
Glances amorous, soft and bright,
Nothing is lacking for your delight,
(Hark to the thrush's trilling).

Kneels the King in a grassy place,
(Hark to the thrush's trilling)
Little flowers under his face
With his warm tears are filling.
Says the King, "Here my heart lies dead
Where my fair love is buried,
Would I were lying here instead!"
(Hark to the thrush's trilling).

Joyce Kilmer [1886-1918]

HELIOTROPE

Amid the chapel's chequered gloom
She laughed with Dora and with Flora,
And chattered in the lecture-room, -
That saucy little sophomora!
Yet while, as in her other schools,
She was a privileged transgressor,
She never broke the simple rules
Of one particular professor.

But when he spoke of varied lore,
Paroxytones and modes potential,
She listened with a face that wore
A look half fond, half reverential.
To her, that earnest voice was sweet,
And, though her love had no confessor,
Her girlish heart lay at the feet

Of that particular professor.

And he had learned, among his books
That held the lore of ages olden,
To watch those ever-changing looks,
The wistful eyes, the tresses golden,
That stirred his pulse with passion's pain
And thrilled his soul with soft desire,
And bade fond youth return again,
Crowned with its coronet of fire.

Her sunny smile, her winsome ways,
Were more to him than all his knowledge,
And she preferred his words of praise
To all the honors of the college.
Yet "What am foolish I to him?"
She whispered to her heart's confessor.
"She thinks me old and gray and grim,"
In silence pondered the professor.

Yet once when Christmas bells were rung
Above ten thousand solemn churches,
And swelling anthems grandly sung
Pealed through the dim cathedral arches, -
Ere home returning, filled with hope,
Softly she stole by gate and gable,
And a sweet spray of heliotrope
Left on his littered study-table.

Nor came she more from day to day
Like sunshine through the shadows rifting:
Above her grave, far, far away,
The ever-silent snows were drifting;
And those who mourned her winsome face
Found in its stead a swift successor
And loved another in her place -
All, save the silent old professor.

But, in the tender twilight gray,
Shut from the sight of carping critic,
His lonely thoughts would often stray
From Vedic verse and tongues Semitic,
Bidding the ghost of vanished hope
Mock with its past the sad possessor
Of the dead spray of heliotrope
That once she gave the old professor.

Harry Thurston Peck [1856-1914]

"LYDIA IS GONE THIS MANY A YEAR"

Lydia is gone this many a year,
Yet when the lilacs stir,
In the old gardens far or near,
This house is full of her.

They climb the twisted chamber stair;

Her picture haunts the room;
On the carved shelf beneath it there,
They heap the purple bloom.

A ghost so long has Lydia been,
Her cloak upon the wall,
Broidered, and gilt, and faded green,
Seems not her cloak at all.

The book, the box on mantle laid,
The shells in a pale row,
Are those of some dim little maid,
A thousand years ago.

And yet the house is full of her;
She goes and comes again;
And longings thrill, and memories stir,
Like lilacs in the rain.

Out in their yards the neighbors walk,
Among the blossoms tall;
Of Anne, of Phyllis do they talk,
Of Lydia not at all.

Lizette Woodworth Reese [1856-1935]

AFTER

Oh, the littles that remain!
Scent of mint out in the lane;
Flare of window, sound of bees; -
These, but these.

Three times sitting down to bread;
One time climbing up to bed;
Table-setting o'er and o'er;
Drying herbs for winter's store;
This thing; that thing; - nothing more.

But just now out in the lane,
Oh, the scent of mint was plain!

Lizette Woodworth Reese [1856-1935]

MEMORIES

Of my ould loves, of their ould ways,
I sit an' think, these bitther days.

(I've kissed - 'gainst rason an' 'gainst rhyme -
More mouths than one in my mad time!)

Of their soft ways an' words I dream,
But far off now, in faith, they seem.

Wid betther lives, wid betther men,

They've all long taken up again!

For me an' mine they're past an' done -
Aye, all but one - yes, all but one!

Since I kissed her 'neath Tullagh Hill
That one gerrl stays close wid me still.

Och! up to mine her face still lifts,
An' round us still the white May drifts;

An' her soft arm, in some ould way,
Is here beside me, night an' day;

But, faith, 'twas her they buried deep,
Wid all that love she couldn't keep,

Aye, deep an' cold, in Killinkere,
This many a year - this many a year!

Arthur Stringer [1874-

TO DIANE

The ruddy poppies bend and bow,
Diane! do you remember?
The sun you knew shines proudly now,
The lake still lists the breezes vow,
Your towers are fairer for their stains,
Each stone you smiled upon remains.
Sing low - where is Diane?
Diane! do you remember?

I come to find you through the years,
Diane! do you remember?
For none may rule my love's soft fears.
The ladies now are not your peers,
I seek you through your tarnished halls,
Pale sorrow on my spirit falls,
High, low - where is Diane?
Diane! do you remember?

I crush the poppies where I tread,
Diane! do you remember?
Your flower of life, so bright, so red -
She does not hear - Diane is dead.
I pace the sunny bowers alone
Where naught of her remains but stone.
Sing low - where is Diane?
Diane does not remember.

Helen Hay Whitney [18 -

"MUSIC I HEARD"

Music I heard with you was more than music,

And bread I broke with you was more than bread.
Now that I am without you, all is desolate,
All that was once so beautiful is dead.

Your hands once touched this table and this silver,
And I have seen your fingers hold this glass.
These things do not remember you, beloved:
And yet your touch upon them will not pass.

For it was in my heart you moved among them,
And blessed them with your hands and with your eyes.
And in my heart they will remember always:
They knew you once, O beautiful and wise!

Conrad Aiken [1889-

HER DWELLING-PLACE

Amid the fairest things that grow
My lady hath her dwelling-place;
Where runnels flow, and frail buds blow
As shy and pallid as her face.

The wild, bright creatures of the wood
About her fearless flit and spring;
To light her dusky solitude
Comes April's earliest offering.

The calm Night from her urn of rest
Pours downward an unbroken stream;
All day upon her mother's breast
My lady lieth in a dream.

Love could not chill her low, soft bed
With any sad memorial stone;
He put a red rose at her head -
A flame as fragrant as his own.

Ada Foster Murray [1857-1936]

THE WIFE FROM FAIRYLAND

Her talk was all of woodland things,
Of little lives that pass
Away in one green afternoon,
Deep in the haunted grass;

For she had come from fairyland,
The morning of a day
When the world that still was April
Was turning into May.

Green leaves and silence and two eyes -
'Twas so she seemed to me,
A silver shadow of the woods,
Whisper and mystery.

I looked into her woodland eyes,
And all my heart was hers,
And then I led her by the hand
Home up my marble stairs;

And all my granite and my gold
Was hers for her green eyes,
And all my sinful heart was hers
From sunset to sunrise;

I gave her all delight and ease
That God had given to me,
I listened to fulfil her dreams,
Rapt with expectancy.

But all I gave, and all I did,
Brought but a weary smile
Of gratitude upon her face;
As though a little while,

She loitered in magnificence
Of marble and of gold,
And waited to be home again
When the dull tale was told.

Sometimes, in the chill galleries,
Unseen, she deemed, unheard,
I found her dancing like a leaf
And singing like a bird.

So lone a thing I never saw
In lonely earth or sky,
So merry and so sad a thing,
One sad, one laughing, eye.

There came a day when on her heart
A wildwood blossom lay,
And the world that still was April
Was turning into May.

In the green eyes I saw a smile
That turned my heart to stone:
My wife that came from fairyland
No longer was alone.

For there had come a little hand
To show the green way home,
Home through the leaves, home through the dew,
Home through the greenwood - home.

Richard Le Gallienne [1866-

IN THE FALL O' YEAR

I went back an old-time lane
In the fall o' year,

There was wind and bitter rain
And the leaves were sere.

Once the birds were lilting high
In a far-off May -
I remember, you and I
Were as glad as they.

But the branches now are bare
And the lad you knew,
Long ago was buried there -
Long ago, with you!

Thomas S. Jones, Jr. [1882-1932]

THE INVISIBLE BRIDE

The low-voiced girls that go
In gardens of the Lord,
Like flowers of the field they grow
In sisterly accord.

Their whispering feet are white
Along the leafy ways;
They go in whirls of light
Too beautiful for praise.

And in their band forsooth
Is one to set me free -
The one that touched my youth -
The one God gave to me.

She kindles the desire
Whereby the gods survive -
The white ideal fire
That keeps my soul alive.

Now at the wondrous hour,
She leaves her star supreme,
And comes in the night's still power,
To touch me with a dream.

Sibyl of mystery
On roads beyond our ken,
Softly she comes to me,
And goes to God again.

Edwin Markham [1852-

RAIN ON A GRAVE

Clouds spout upon her
Their waters amain
In ruthless disdain, -
Her who but lately
Had shivered with pain

As at touch of dishonor
If there had lit on her
So coldly, so straightly
Such arrows of rain.

She who to shelter
Her delicate head
Would quicken and quicken
Each tentative tread
If drops chanced to pelt her
That summertime spills
In dust-paven rills
When thunder-clouds thicken
And birds close their bills.

Would that I lay there
And she were housed here!
Or better, together
Were folded away there
Exposed to one weather
We both, - who would stray there
When sunny the day there,
Or evening was clear
At the prime of the year.

Soon will be growing
Green blades from her mound,
And daisies be showing
Like stars on the ground,
Till she form part of them -
Ay - the sweet heart of them,
Loved beyond measure
With a child's pleasure
All her life's round.

Thomas Hardy [1840-1928]

PATTERNS

I walk down the garden paths,
And all the daffodils
Are blowing, and the bright blue squills.
I walk down the patterned garden-paths
In my stiff, brocaded gown.
With my powdered hair and jewelled fan,
I too am a rare
Pattern. As I wander down
The garden paths.

My dress is richly figured,
And the train
Makes a pink and silver stain
On the gravel, and the thrift
Of the borders.
Just a plate of current fashion,
Tripping by in high-heeled, ribboned shoes.
Not a softness anywhere about me,

Only whale-bone and brocade.
And I sink on a seat in the shade
Of a lime-tree. For my passion
Wars against the stiff brocade.
The daffodils and squills
Flutter in the breeze
As they please.
And I weep;
For the lime-tree is in blossom
And one small flower has dropped upon my bosom.

And the plashing of waterdrops
In the marble fountain
Comes down the garden-paths.
The dripping never stops.
Underneath my stiffened gown
Is the softness of a woman bathing in a marble basin,
A basin in the midst of hedges grown
So thick, she cannot see her lover hiding.
But she guesses he is near,
And the sliding of the water
Seems the stroking of a dear
Hand upon her.
What is Summer in a fine brocaded gown!
I should like to see it lying in a heap upon the ground.
All the pink and silver crumpled upon the ground.

I would be the pink and silver as I ran along the paths,
And he would stumble after,
Bewildered by my laughter.
I should see the sun flashing from his sword-hilt and the buckles on his shoes.
I would choose
To lead him in a maze along the patterned paths,
A bright and laughing maze for my heavy-booted lover,
Till he caught me in the shade,
And the buttons of his waistcoat bruised my body as he clasped me,
Aching, melting, unafraid.
With the shadows of the leaves and the sundrops,
And the plopping of the waterdrops,
All about us in the open afternoon -
I am very like to swoon
With the weight of this brocade,
For the sun sifts through the shade.

Underneath the fallen blossom
In my bosom,
Is a letter I have hid.
It was brought to me this morning by a rider from the Duke.
"Madam, we regret to inform you that Lord Hartwell
Died in action Thursday se'nnight."
As I read it in the white, morning sunlight,
The letters squirmed like snakes.
"Any answer, Madam?" said my footman.
"No," I told him.
"See that the messenger takes some refreshment.
No, no answer."
And I walked into the garden,
Up and down the patterned paths,

In my stiff, correct brocade.
The blue and yellow flowers stood up proudly in the sun,
Each one.
I stood upright too,
Held rigid to the pattern
By the stiffness of my gown.
Up and down I walked,
Up and down.

In a month he would have been my husband.
In a month, here, underneath this lime,
We would have broke the pattern;
He for me, and I for him,
He as Colonel, I as Lady,
On this shady seat.
He had a whim
That sunlight carried blessing.
And I answered, "It shall be as you have said."
Now he is dead.

In Summer and in Winter I shall walk
Up and down
The patterned garden-paths
In my stiff, brocaded gown.
The squills and daffodils
Will give place to pillared roses, and to asters, and to snow.
I shall go
Up and down,
In my gown.
Gorgeously arrayed,
Boned and stayed.
And the softness of my body will be guarded from embrace
By each button, hook, and lace.
For the man who should loose me is dead,
Fighting with the Duke in Flanders,
In a pattern called a war.
Christ! What are patterns for?

Amy Lowell [1874-1925]

DUST

When the white flame in us is gone,
And we that lost the world's delight
Stiffen in darkness, left alone
To crumble in our separate night;

When your swift hair is quiet in death,
And through the lips corruption thrust
Has stilled the labor of my breath -
When we are dust, when we are dust! -

Not dead, not undesirous yet,
Still sentient, still unsatisfied,
We'll ride the air, and shine, and flit,
Around the places where we died,

And dance as dust before the sun,
And light of foot, and unconfined,
Hurry from road to road, and run
About the errands of the wind.

And every mote, on earth or air,
Will speed and gleam, down later days,
And like a secret pilgrim fare
By eager and invisible ways,

Nor ever rest, nor ever lie,
Till, beyond thinking, out of view,
One mote of all the dust that's I
Shall meet one atom that was you.

Then in some garden hushed from wind,
Warm in a sunset's afterglow,
The lovers in the flowers will find
A sweet and strange unquiet grow

Upon the peace; and, past desiring,
So high a beauty in the air,
And such a light, and such a quiring,
And such a radiant ecstasy there,

They'll know not if it's fire, or dew,
Or out of earth, or in the height,
Singing, or flame, or scent, or hue,
Or two that pass, in light, to light,

Out of the garden, higher, higher. . . .
But in that instant they shall learn
The shattering ecstasy of our fire,
And the weak passionless hearts will burn

And faint in that amazing glow,
Until the darkness close above;
And they will know - poor fools, they'll know! -
One moment, what it is to love.

Rupert Brooke [1887-1915]

BALLAD

The roses in my garden
Were white in the noonday sun,
But they were dyed with crimson
Before the day was done.

All clad in golden armor,
To fight the Saladin,
He left me in my garden,
To weep, to sing, and spin.

When fell the dewy twilight
I heard the wicket grate,
There came a ghost who shivered

Beside my garden gate.

All clad in golden armor,
But dabbled with red dew;
He did not lift his vizor,
And yet his face I knew.

And when he left my garden
The roses all were red
And dyed in a fresh crimson;
Only my heart was dead.

The roses in my garden
Were white in the noonday sun;
But they were dyed with crimson
Before the day was done.

Maurice Baring [1874-

"THE LITTLE ROSE IS DUST, MY DEAR"

The little rose is dust, my dear;
The elfin wind is gone
That sang a song of silver words
And cooled our hearts with dawn.

And what is left to hope, my dear,
Or what is left to say?
The rose, the little wind and you
Have gone so far away.

Grace Hazard Conkling [18

DIRGE

Never the nightingale,
Oh, my dear,
Never again the lark
Thou wilt hear;
Though dusk and the morning still
Tap at thy window-sill,
Though ever love call and call
Thou wilt not hear at all,
My dear, my dear.

Adelaide Crapsey [1878-1914]

THE LITTLE RED RIBBON

The little red ribbon, the ring and the rose!
The summertime comes, and the summertime goes -
And never a blossom in all of the land
As white as the gleam of her beckoning hand!

The long winter months, and the glare of the snows;

The little red ribbon, the ring and the rose!
And never a glimmer of sun in the skies
As bright as the light of her glorious eyes!

Dreams only are true: but they fade and are gone -
For her face is not here when I waken at dawn;
The little red ribbon, the ring and the rose
Mine only; hers only the dream and repose.

I am weary of waiting, and weary of tears,
And my heart wearies, too, all these desolate years,
Moaning over the one only song that it knows, -
The little red ribbon, the ring and the rose!

James Whitcomb Riley [1849-1916]

THE ROSARY

The hours I spent with thee, dear heart,
Are as a string of pearls to me;
I count them over, every one apart,
My rosary.

Each hour a pearl, each pearl a prayer,
To still a heart in absence wrung;
I tell each bead unto the end and there
A cross is hung.

Oh memories that bless - and burn!
Oh barren gain - and bitter loss!
I kiss each bead, and strive at last to learn
To kiss the cross,
Sweetheart,
To kiss the cross.

Robert Cameron Rogers [1862-1912]

LOVE'S FULFILMENT

"MY TRUE-LOVE HATH MY HEART"
From the "Arcadia"

My true-love hath my heart, and I have his,
By just exchange one for the other given:
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss;
There never was a better bargain driven;

His heart in me keeps him and me in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides:
He loves my heart, for once it was his own,
I cherish his, because in me it bides.

His heart his wound received from my sight;
My heart was wounded from his wounded heart;
For as from me, on him his hurt did light,
So still me thought in me his heart did smart:
Both equal hurt, in this change sought our bliss,
My true love hath my heart, and I have his.

Philip Sidney [1554-1586]

SONG

O sweet delight, O more than human bliss,
With her to live that ever loving is!
To hear her speak whose words are so well placed
That she by them, as they in her are graced:
Those looks to view that feast the viewer's eye,
How blest is he that may so live and die!

Such love as this the Golden Times did know,
When all did reap, yet none took care to sow;
Such love as this an endless summer makes,
And all distaste from frail affection takes.
So loved, so blest, in my beloved am I:
Which till their eyes ache, let iron men envy!

Thomas Campion [? -1619]

THE GOOD-MORROW

I wonder, by my troth, what thou and I
Did, till we loved? were we not weaned till then?
But sucked on country pleasures, childishly?
Or snored we in the Seven Sleepers' den?
'Twas so; but this, all pleasures fancies be;
If ever any beauty I did see,
Which I desired, and got, 'twas but a dream of thee.

And now good-morrow to our waking souls,
Which watch not one another out of fear;
For love all love of other sights controls,
And makes one little room an everywhere.
Let sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone;
Let maps to other, worlds on worlds have shown,
Let us possess one world; each hath one, and is one.

My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears,
And true plain hearts do in the faces rest;
Where can we find two fitter hemispheres
Without sharp north, without declining west?
Whatever dies, was not mixed equally;
If our two loves be one, or thou and I

Love just alike in all, none of these loves can die.

John Donne [1573-1631]

"THERE'S GOWD IN THE BREAST"

There's gowd in the breast of the primrose pale,
An' siller in every blossom;
There's riches galore in the breeze of the vale,
And health in the wild wood's bosom.
Then come, my love, at the hour of joy,
When warbling birds sing o'er us;
Sweet nature for us has no alloy,
And the world is all before us.

The courtier joys in hustle and power,
The soldier in war-steeds bounding,
The miser in hoards of treasured ore,
The proud in their pomp surrounding:
But we hae yon heaven sae bonnie and blue,
And laverocks skimming o'er us;
The breezes of health, and the valleys of dew -
Oh, the world is all before us!

James Hogg [1770-1835]

THE BEGGAR MAID

Her arms across her breast she laid;
She was more fair than words can say:
Bare footed came the beggar maid
Before the king Cophetua.
In robe and crown the king stepped down,
To meet and greet her on her way;
"It is no wonder," said the lords,
"She is more beautiful than day."

As shines the moon in clouded skies,
She in her poor attire was seen:
One praised her ankles, one her eyes,
One her dark hair and lovesome mien.
So sweet a face, such angel grace,
In all that land had never been:
Cophetua sware a royal oath:
"This beggar maid shall be my queen!"

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

REFUGE

Twilight, a timid fawn, went glimmering by,
And Night, the dark-blue hunter, followed fast,
Ceaseless pursuit and flight were in the sky,
But the long chase had ceased for us at last.

We watched together while the driven fawn
Hid in the golden thicket of the day.
We, from whose hearts pursuit and flight were gone,
Knew on the hunter's breast her refuge lay.

A. E. (George William Russell) [1867-1935]

AT SUNSET

Clasp her and hold her and love her,
Here in the arching green
Of boughs that bend above her
With belts of blue between.

Clasp her and hold her and love her,
Swift! Ere the splendor dies;
The blue grows black above her,
The earth in shadow lies.

Flowers of dream enfold her.
Soft! Let me bend above,
Clasp her and love her and hold her,
Clasp her and hold and love.

Louis V. Ledoux [1880-

"ONE MORNING, OH! SO EARLY"

One morning, oh! so early, my beloved, my beloved,
All the birds were singing blithely, as if never they would cease;
'Twas a thrush sang in my garden, "Hear the story, hear the story!"
And the lark sang, "Give us glory!"
And the dove said, "Give us peace!"

Then I hearkened, oh! so early, my beloved, my beloved,
To that murmur from the woodland of the dove, my dear, the dove;
When the nightingale came after, "Give us fame to sweeten duty!"
When the wren sang, "Give us beauty!"
She made answer, "Give us love!"

Sweet is spring, and sweet the morning, my beloved, my beloved;
Now for us doth spring, doth morning, wait upon the year's increase,
And my prayer goes up, "Oh, give us, crowned in youth with marriage glory,
Give for all our life's dear story,
Give us love, and give us peace!"

Jean Ingelow [1820-1897]

ACROSS THE DOOR

The fiddles were playing and playing,
The couples were out on the floor;
From converse and dancing he drew me,
And across the door.

Ah! strange were the dim, wide meadows,
And strange was the cloud-strewn sky,
And strange in the meadows the corncrakes,
And they making cry!

The hawthorn bloom was by us,
Around us the breath of the south.
White hawthorn, strange in the night-time -
His kiss on my mouth!

Padraic Colum [1881-

MAY MARGARET

If you be that May Margaret
That lived on Kendal Green,
Then where's that sunny hair of yours
That crowned you like a queen?
That sunny hair is dim, lad,
They said was like a crown -
The red gold turned to gray, lad,
The night a ship went down.

If you be yet May Margaret,
May Margaret now as then,
Then where's that bonny smile of yours
That broke the hearts of men?
The bonny smile is wan, lad,
That once was glad as day -
And oh! 'tis weary smiling
To keep the tears away.

If you be that May Margaret,
As yet you swear to me,
Then where's that proud, cold heart of yours
That sent your love to sea?
Ah, me! that heart is broken,
The proud, cold heart has bled
For one light word outspoken,
For all the love unsaid.

Then Margaret, my Margaret,
If all you say be true,
Your hair is yet the sunniest gold,
Your eyes the sweetest blue.
And dearer yet and fairer yet
For all the coming years -
The fairer for the waiting,
The dearer for the tears!

Theophile Marzials [1850-

RONDEL

Kissing her hair, I sat against her feet,
Wove and unwove it, wound and found it sweet;

Made fast therewith her hands, drew down her eyes,
Deep as deep flowers and dreamy like dim skies;
With her own tresses bound and found her fair,
Kissing her hair.

Sleep were no sweeter than her face to me,
Sleep of cold sea-bloom under the cold sea;
What pain could get between my face and hers?
What new sweet thing would love not relish worse?
Unless, perhaps, white death had kissed me there,
Kissing her hair.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

A SPRING JOURNEY

We journeyed through broad woodland ways,
My Love and I.
The maples set the shining fields ablaze.
The blue May sky
Brought to us its great Spring surprise;
While we saw all things through each other's eyes.

And sometimes from a steep hillside
Shone fair and bright
The shadhush, like a young June bride,
Fresh clothed in white.
Sometimes came glimpses glad of the blue sea;
But I smiled only on my Love; he smiled on me.

The violets made a field one mass of blue -
Even bluer than the sky;
The little brook took on that color too,
And sang more merrily.
"Your dress is blue," he laughing said. "Your eyes,"
My heart sang, "sweeter than the bending skies."

We spoke of poets dead so long ago,
And their wise words;
We glanced at apple-trees, like drifted snow;
We watched the nesting birds, -
Only a moment! Ah, how short the day!
Yet all the winters cannot blow its sweetness quite away.

Alice Freeman Palmer [1855-1902]

THE BROOKSIDE

I wandered by the brookside,
I wandered by the mill;
I could not hear the brook flow, -
The noisy wheel was still;
There was no burr of grasshopper,
No chirp of any bird,
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.

I sat beneath the elm-tree;
I watched the long, long shade,
And, as it grew still longer,
I did not feel afraid;
For I listened, for a footfall,
I listened for a word, -
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.

He came not, - no, he came not, -
The night came on alone, -
The little stars sat, one by one,
Each on his golden throne;
The evening wind passed by my cheek,
The leaves above were stirred, -
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.

Fast silent tears were flowing,
When something stood behind;
A hand was on my shoulder, -
I knew its touch was kind:
It drew me nearer, - nearer, -
We did not speak one word,
For the beating of our own hearts
Was all the sound we heard.

Richard Monckton Milnes [1809-1885]

SONG

For me the jasmine buds unfold
And silver daisies star the lea,
The crocus hoards the sunset gold,
And the wild rose breathes for me.
I feel the sap through the bough returning,
I share the skylark's transport fine,
I know the fountain's wayward yearning;
I love, and the world is mine!

I love, and thoughts that sometime grieved,
Still well remembered, grieve not me;
From all that darkened and deceived
Upsoars my spirit free.
For soft the hours repeat one story,
Sings the sea one strain divine,
My clouds arise all flushed with glory;
I love, and the world is mine!

Florence Earle Coates [1850-1927]

WHAT MY LOVER SAID

By the merest chance, in the twilight gloom,
In the orchard path he met me;

In the tall, wet grass, with its faint perfume,
And I tried to pass, but he made no room,
Oh, I tried, but he would not let me.
So I stood and blushed till the grass grew red,
With my face bent down above it,
While he took my hand as he whispering said -
(How the clover lifted each pink, sweet head,
To listen to all that my lover said;
Oh, the clover in bloom, I love it!)

In the high, wet grass went the path to hide,
And the low, wet leaves hung over;
But I could not pass upon either side,
For I found myself, when I vainly tried,
In the arms of my steadfast lover.
And he held me there and he raised my head,
While he closed the path before me,
And he looked down into my eyes and said -
(How the leaves bent down from the boughs o'erhead
To listen to all that my lover said,
Oh, the leaves hanging lowly o'er me!)

Had he moved aside but a little way,
I could surely then have passed him;
And he knew I never could wish to stay,
And would not have heard what he had to say,
Could I only aside have cast him.
It was almost dark, and the moments sped,
And the searching night wind found us,
But he drew me nearer and softly said -
(How the pure, sweet wind grew still, instead,
To listen to all that my lover said;
Oh, the whispering wind around us!)

I am sure he knew when he held me fast,
That I must be all unwilling;
For I tried to go, and I would have passed,
As the night was come with its dew, at last,
And the sky with its stars was filling.
But he clasped me close when I would have fled,
And he made me hear his story,
And his soul came out from his lips and said -
(How the stars crept out where the white moon led,
To listen to all that my lover said;
Oh, the moon and the stars in glory!)

I know that the grass and the leaves will not tell,
And I'm sure that the wind, precious rover,
Will carry my secret so safely and well
That no being shall ever discover
One word of the many that rapidly fell
From the soul-speaking lips of my lover;
And the moon and the stars that looked over
Shall never reveal what a fairy-like spell
They wove round about us that night in the dell,
In the path through the dew-laden clover,
Nor echo the whispers that made my heart swell
As they fell from the lips of my lover.

Homer Greene [1853-

MAY-MUSIC

Oh! lose the winter from thine heart, the darkness from thine eyes,
And from the low hearth-chair of dreams, my Love-o'-May, arise;
And let the maidens robe thee like a white white-lilac tree,
Oh! hear the call of Spring, fair Soul, - and wilt thou come with me?

Even so, and even so!
Whither thou goest, I will go.
I will follow thee.

Then wilt thou see the orange trees star-flowering over Spain,
Or arched and mounded Kaiser-towns that molder mid Almain,
Or through the cypress-gardens go of magic Italy?
Oh East or West or South or North, say, wilt thou come with me?

Even so, or even so!
Whither thou goest, I will go.
I will follow thee.

But wilt thou farther come with me through hawthorn red and white
Until we find the wall that hides the Land of Heart's Delight?
The gates all carved with olden things are strange and dread to see:
But I will lift thee through, fair Soul. Arise and come with me!

Even so, Love, even so!
Whither thou goest, I will go!
Lo, I follow thee.

Rachel Annand Taylor [18 -

SONG

Flame at the core of the world,
And flame in the red rose-tree;
The one is the fire of the ancient spheres,
The other is Junes to be;
And, oh, there's a flame that is both their flames
Here at the heart of me!

As strong as the fires of stars,
As the prophet rose-tree true,
The fire of my life is tender and wild,
Its beauty is old and new;
For out of the infinite past it came
With the love in the eyes of you!

Arthur Upson [1877-1908]

A MEMORY

The night walked down the sky

With the moon in her hand;
By the light of that yellow lantern
I saw you stand.

The hair that swept your shoulders
Was yellow, too,
Your feet as they touched the grasses
Shamed the dew.

The Night wore all her jewels,
And you wore none,
But your gown had the odor of lilies
Drenched with sun.

And never was Eve of the Garden
Or Mary the Maid
More pure than you as you stood there
Bold, yet afraid.

And the sleeping birds woke, trembling,
And the folded flowers were aware,
And my senses were faint with the fragrant
Gold of your hair.

And our lips found ways of speaking
What words cannot say,
Till a hundred nests gave music,
And the East was gray.

Frederic Lawrence Knowles [1869-1905]

LOVE TRIUMPHANT

Helen's lips are drifting dust;
Ilion is consumed with rust;
All the galleons of Greece
Drink the ocean's dreamless peace;
Lost was Solomon's purple show
Restless centuries ago;
Stately empires wax and wane -
Babylon, Barbary, and Spain; -
Only one thing, undefaced,
Lasts, though all the worlds lie waste
And the heavens are overturned.
- Dear, how long ago we learned!

There's a sight that blinds the sun,
Sound that lives when sounds are done,
Music that rebukes the birds,
Language lovelier than words,
Hue and scent that shame the rose,
Wine no earthly vineyard knows,
Silence stiller than the shore
Swept by Charon's stealthy oar,
Ocean more divinely free
Than Pacific's boundless sea, -
Ye who love have learned it true.

- Dear, how long ago we knew!

Frederic Lawrence Knowles [1869-1905]

LINES

Love within the lover's breast
Burns like Hesper in the West,
O'er the ashes of the sun,
Till the day and night are done;
Then, when dawn drives up his car -
Lo! it is the morning star.

Love! thy love pours down on mine,
As the sunlight on the vine,
As the snow rill on the vale,
As the salt breeze on the sail;
As the song unto the bird
On my lips thy name is heard.

As a dewdrop on the rose
In thy heart my passion glows;
As a skylark to the sky,
Up into thy breast I fly;
As a sea-shell of the sea
Ever shall I sing of thee.

George Meredith [1828-1909]

LOVE AMONG THE RUINS

Where the quiet-colored end of evening smiles
Miles and miles
On the solitary pastures where our sheep
Half-asleep
Tinkle homeward through the twilight, stray or stop
As they crop -
Was the site once of a city great and gay,
(So they say)
Of our country's very capital, its prince
Ages since
Held his court in, gathered councils, wielding far
Peace or war.

Now, - the country does not even boast a tree,
As you see,
To distinguish slopes of verdure, certain rills
From the hills
Intersect and give a name to (else they run Into one),
Where the domed and daring palace shot its spires
Up like fires
O'er the hundred-gated circuit of a wall
Bounding all,
Made of marble, men might march on nor be pressed,
Twelve abreast.

And such plenty and perfection, see, of grass
Never was!
Such a carpet as, this summer-time, o'erspreads
And embeds
Every vestige of the city, guessed alone,
Stock or stone -
Where a multitude of men breathed joy and woe
Long ago;
Lust of glory pricked their hearts up, dread of shame
Struck them tame;
And that glory and that shame alike, the gold
Bought and sold.

Now, - the single little turret that remains
On the plains,
By the caper overrooted, by the gourd
Overscored,
While the patching houseleek's head of blossom winks
Through the chinks -
Marks the basement whence a tower in ancient time
Sprang sublime,
And a burning ring, all round, the chariots traced
As they raced,
And the monarch and his minions and his dames
Viewed the games.

And I know, while thus the quiet-colored eve
Smiles to leave
To their folding, all our many-tinkling fleece
In such peace,
And the slopes and rills in undistinguished gray
Melt away -
That a girl with eager eyes and yellow hair
Waits me there
In the turret whence the charioteers caught soul
For the goal,
When the king looked, where she looks now, breathless, dumb,
Till I come.

But he looked upon the city, every side,
Far and wide,
All the mountains topped with temples, all the glades'
Colonnades,
All the causeys, bridges, aqueducts, - and then,
All the men!
When I do come, she will speak not, she will stand,
Either hand
On my shoulder, give her eyes the first embrace
Of my face,
Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and speech
Each on each.

In one year they sent a million fighters forth
South and North,
And they built their gods a brazen pillar high
As the sky,
Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full force -
Gold, of course.

Oh heart! oh blood that freezes, blood that burns!
Earth's returns
For whole centuries of folly, noise and sin!
Shut them in,
With their triumphs and their glories and the rest!
Love is best!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

EARL MERTOUN'S SONG
From "The Blot in the 'Scutcheon"

There's a woman like a dewdrop, she's so purer than the purest;
And her noble heart's the noblest, yes, and her sure faith's the surest:
And her eyes are dark and humid, like the depth on depth of luster
Hid i' the harebell, while her tresses, sunnier than the wild-grape cluster,
Gush in golden-tinted plenty down her neck's rose-misted marble:
Then her voice's music . . . call it the well's bubbling, the bird's warble!
And this woman says, "My days were sunless and my nights were moonless,
Parched the pleasant April herbage, and the lark's heart's outbreak tuneless,
If you loved me not!" And I who (ah, for words of flame!) adore her,
Who am mad to lay my spirit prostrate palpably before her -
I may enter at her portal soon, as now her lattice takes me,
And by noontide as by midnight make her mine, as hers she makes me!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

MEETING AT NIGHT

The gray sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed in the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spirt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, through its joys and fears,
Than the two hearts beating each to each!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

PARTING AT MORNING

Round the cape of a sudden came the sea,
And the sun looked over the mountain's rim:
And straight was a path of gold for him,
And the need of a world of men for me.

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

THE TURN OF THE ROAD

Soft, gray buds on the willow,
Warm, moist winds from the bay,
Sea-gulls out on the sandy beach,
And a road my eager feet would reach,
That leads to the Far-away.

Dust on the wayside flower,
The meadow-lark's luring tone
Is silent now, from the grasses tipped
With dew at the dawn, the pearls have slipped -
Far have I fared alone.

And then, by the alder thicket
The turn of the road - and you!
Though the earth lie white in the noonday heat,
Or the swift storm follow our hurrying feet
What do we care - we two!

Alice Rollit Coe [18 -

"MY DELIGHT AND THY DELIGHT"

My delight and thy delight
Walking, like two angels white,
In the gardens of the night:

My desire and thy desire
Twining to a tongue of fire,
Leaping live, and laughing higher;

Through the everlasting strife
In the mystery of life.

Love, from whom the world begun,
Hath the secret of the sun.

Love can tell, and love alone,
Whence the million stars were strown,
Why each atom knows its own,
How, in spite of woe and death,
Gay is life, and sweet is breath:

This he taught us, this we knew,
Happy in his science true,
Hand in hand as we stood
'Neath the shadows of the wood,
Heart to heart as we lay
In the dawning of the day.

Robert Bridges [1844-1930]

"O, SAW YE THE LASS"

O, saw ye the lass wi' the bonny blue een?

Her smile is the sweetest that ever was seen:
Her cheek like the rose is, but fresher, I ween;
She's the loveliest lassie that trips on the green.
The home of my love is below in the valley,
Where wild-flowers welcome the wandering bee;
But the sweetest of flowers in that spot that is seen
Is the maid that I love wi' the bonny blue een.

When night overshadows her cot in the glen,
She'll steal out to meet her loved Donald again;
And when the moon shines on the valley so green,
I'll welcome the lass wi' the bonny blue een.
As the dove that has wandered away from his nest
Returns to the mate his fond heart loves the best,
I'll fly from the world's false and vanishing scene,
To my dear one, the lass wi' the bonny blue een.

Richard Ryan [1796-1849]

LOVE AT SEA
Imitated From Theophile Gautier

We are in love's land to-day;
Where shall we go?
Love, shall we start or stay,
Or sail or row?
There's many a wind and way,
And never a May but May;
We are in love's hand to-day;
Where shall we go?

Our land-wind is the breath
Of sorrows kissed to death
And joys that were;
Our ballast is a rose;
Our way lies where God knows
And love knows where.
We are in love's hand to-day -

Our seamen are fledged Loves,
Our masts are bills of doves,
Our decks fine gold;
Our ropes are dead maids' hair,
Our stores are love-shafts fair
And manifold.
We are in love's land to-day -

Where shall we land you, sweet?
On fields of strange men's feet,
Or fields near home?
Or where the fire-flowers blow,
Or where the flowers of snow
Or flowers of foam?
We are in love's hand to-day -

Land me, she says, where love
Shows but one shaft, one dove,

One heart, one hand, -
A shore like that, my dear,
Lies where no man will steer,
No maiden land.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

MARY BEATON'S SONG
From "Chastelard"

Between the sunset and the sea
My love laid hands and lips on me;
Of sweet came sour, of day came night,
Of long desire came brief delight:
Ah love, and what thing came of thee
Between the sea-downs and the sea?

Between the sea-mark and the sea
Joy grew to grief, grief grew to me;
Love turned to tears, and tears to fire,
And dead delight to new desire;
Love's talk, love's touch there seemed to be
Between the sea-sand and the sea.

Between the sundown and the sea
Love watched one hour of love with me;
Then down the all-golden water-ways
His feet flew after yesterday's;
I saw them come and saw them flee
Between the sea-foam and the sea.

Between the sea-strand and the sea
Love fell on sleep, sleep fell on me;
The first star saw twain turn to one
Between the moonrise and the sun;
The next, that saw not love, saw me
Between the sea-banks and the sea.

Algernon Charles Swinburne [1837-1909]

PLIGHTED

Mine to the core of the heart, my beauty!
Mine, all mine, and for love, not duty:
Love given willingly, full and free,
Love for love's sake, - as mine to thee.
Duty's a slave that keeps the keys,
But Love, the master, goes in and out
Of his goodly chambers with song and shout,
Just as he please, - just as he please.

Mine, from the dear head's crown, brown-golden,
To the silken foot that's scarce beholden;
Give to a few friends hand or smile,
Like a generous lady, now and awhile,
But the sanctuary heart, that none dare win,

Keep holiest of holiest evermore;
The crowd in the aisles may watch the door,
The high-priest only enters in.

Mine, my own, without doubts or terrors,
With all thy goodnesses, all thy errors,
Unto me and to me alone revealed,
"A spring shut up, a fountain sealed."
Many may praise thee, - praise mine as thine,
Many may love thee, - I'll love them too;
But thy heart of hearts, pure, faithful, and true,
Must be mine, mine wholly, and only mine.

Mine! - God, I thank Thee that Thou hast given
Something all mine on this side heaven:
Something as much myself to be
As this my soul which I lift to Thee:
Flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone,
Life of my life, whom Thou dost make
Two to the world for the world's work's sake, -
But each unto each, as in Thy sight, one.

Dinah Maria Mulock Craik [1826-1887]

A WOMAN'S QUESTION

Before I trust my fate to thee,
Or place my hand in thine,
Before I let thy future give
Color and form to mine,
Before I peril all for thee, question thy soul to-night for me.

I break all slighter bonds, nor feel
A shadow of regret:
Is there one link within the past
That holds thy spirit yet?
Or is thy faith as clear and free as that which I can pledge to thee?

Does there within thy dimmest dreams
A possible future shine,
Wherein thy life could henceforth breathe,
Untouched, unshared by mine?
If so, at any pain or cost, O, tell me before all is lost.

Look deeper still. If thou canst feel,
Within thy inmost soul,
That thou hast kept a portion back,
While I have staked the whole,
Let no false pity spare the blow, but in true mercy tell me so.

Is there within thy heart a need
That mine cannot fulfil?
One chord that any other hand
Could better wake or still?
Speak now - lest at some future day my whole life wither and decay.

Lives there within thy nature hid

The demon-spirit change,
Shedding a passing glory still
On all things new and strange?
It may not be thy fault alone, - but shield my heart against thy own.

Couldst thou withdraw thy hand one day
And answer to my claim,
That Fate, and that to-day's mistake -
Not thou - had been to blame?
Some soothe their conscience thus; but thou wilt surely warn and save me now.

Nay, answer not, - I dare not hear,
The words would come too late;
Yet I would spare thee all remorse,
So, comfort thee, my Fate, -
Whatever on my heart may fall - remember, I would risk it all!

Adelaide Anne Procter [1825-1864]

"DINNA ASK ME"

O, dinna ask me gin I lo'e ye:
Troth, I daurna tell!
Dinna ask me gin I lo'e ye,-
Ask it o' yoursel'.

O, dinna look sae sair at me,
For weel ye ken me true;
O, gin ye look sae sair at me,
I daurna look at you.

When ye gang to yon braw, braw town,
And bonnier lassies see,
O, dinna, Jamie, look at them,
Lest ye should mind na me.

For I could never bide the lass
That ye'd lo'e mair than me;
And O, I'm sure my heart wad brak,
Gin ye'd prove fause to me!

John Dunlop [1755-1820]

A SONG

Sing me a sweet, low song of night
Before the moon is risen,
A song that tells of the stars' delight
Escaped from day's bright prison,
A song that croons with the cricket's voice,
That sleeps with the shadowed trees,
A song that shall bid my heart rejoice
At its tender mysteries!

And then when the song is ended, love,
Bend down your head unto me,

Whisper the word that was born above
Ere the moon had swayed the sea;
Ere the oldest star began to shine,
Or the farthest sun to burn, -
The oldest of words, O heart of mine,
Yet newest, and sweet to learn.

Hildegarde Hawthorne [18 -

THE REASON

Oh, hark the pulses of the night,
The crickets hidden in the field,
That beat out music of delight
Till summoned dawn stands half revealed!

Oh, mark above the bearded corn
And the green wheat and bending rye,
Tuned to the earth, and calling morn,
The stars vibrating in the sky!

And know, divided soul of me,
Here in the meadow, sweet in speech,
This perfect night could never be
Were we not mated each to each.

James Oppenheim [1882-1932]

"MY OWN CAILIN DONN"

The blush is on the flower, and the bloom is on the tree,
And the bonnie, bonnie sweet birds are caroling their glee;
And the dews upon the grass are made diamonds by the sun,
All to deck a path of glory for my own Cailin Donn!

Oh fair she is! Oh rare she is! Oh dearer still to me,
More welcome than the green leaf to winter-stricken tree!
More welcome than the blossom to the weary, dusty bee,
Is the coming of my true love - my own Cailin Donn!

O sycamore! O sycamore! wave, wave your banners green!
Let all your pennons flutter, O beech! before my queen!
Ye fleet and honeyed breezes, to kiss her hand ye run;
But my heart has passed before ye to my own Cailin Donn.

Ring out, ring out, O linden, your merry leafy bells!
Unveil your brilliant torches, O chestnut! to the dells;
Strew, strew the glade with splendor, for morn it cometh on!
Oh, the morn of all delight to me - my own Cailin Donn!

She is coming, where we parted, where she wanders every day;
There's a gay surprise before her who thinks me far away;
Oh, like hearing bugles triumph when the fight of freedom's won,
Is the joy around your footsteps, my own Cailin Donn!

George Sigerson [1839-1925]

NOCTURNE

All the earth a hush of white,
White with moonlight all the skies;
Wonder of a winter night -
And . . . your eyes.

Hues no palette dares to claim
Where the spoils of sunken ships
Leap to light in singing flame -
And . . . your lips.

Darkness as the shadows creep
Where the embers sigh to rest;
Silence of a world asleep -
And . . . your breast.

Amelia Josephine Burr [1878-

SURRENDER

As I look back upon your first embrace
I understand why from your sudden touch
Angered I sprang, and struck you in the face.
You asked at once too little and too much.
But now that of my spirit you require
Love's very soul that unto death endures,
Crown as you will the cup of your desire -
I am all yours.

Amelia Josephine Burr [1878-

"BY YON BURN SIDE"

We'll meet beside the dusky glen, on yon burn side,
Where the bushes form a cosie den, on yon burn side;
Though the broomy knowes be green,
And there we may be seen,
Yet we'll meet - we'll meet at e'en, down by yon burn side.

I'll lead thee to the birken bower, on yon burn side,
Sae sweetly wove wi' woodbine flower, on yon burn side;
There the busy prying eye,
Ne'er disturbs the lover's joy,
While in ither's arms they lie, down by yon burn side.

Awa', ye rude, unfeeling crew, frae yon burn side,
Those fairy scenes are no for you, by yon burn side;
There fancy smooths her theme,
By the sweetly murmuring stream,
And the rock-lodged echoes skim, down by yon burn side.

Now the plantin' taps are tinged wi' goud, on yon burn side,
And gloamin' draws her foggy shroud o'er yon burn side;

Far frae the noisy scene,
I'll through the fields alane,
There we'll meet, my ain dear Jean, down by yon burn side.

Robert Tannahill [1774-1810]

A PASTORAL

Flower of the medlar,
Crimson of the quince,
I saw her at the blossom-time,
And loved her ever since!
She swept the draughty pleasance,
The blooms had left the trees,
The whilst the birds sang canticles,
In cherry symphonies.

Whiteness of the white rose,
Redness of the red,
She went to cut the blush-rose buds
To tie at the altar-head;
And some she laid in her bosom,
And some around her brows,
And, as she passed, the lily-heads
All becked and made their bows.

Scarlet of the poppy,
Yellow of the corn,
The men were at the garnering,
A-shouting in the morn;
I chased her to a pippin-tree, -
The waking birds all whist, -
And oh! it was the sweetest kiss
That I have ever kissed.

Marjorie, mint, and violets
A-drying round us set,
'Twas all done in the faience-room
A-spicing marmalet;
On one tile was a satyr,
On one a nymph at bay,
Methinks the birds will scarce be home
To wake our wedding-day!

Theophile Marzials [1850-

"WHEN DEATH TO EITHER SHALL COME"

When Death to either shall come, -
I pray it be first to me, -
Be happy as ever at home,
If so, as I wish, it be.

Possess thy heart, my own;
And sing to thy child on thy knee,
Or read to thyself alone

The songs that I made for thee.

Robert Bridges [1844-1930]

THE RECONCILIATION
From "The Princess"

As through the land at eve we went,
And plucked the ripened ears,
We fell out, my wife and I,
O, we fell out, I know not why,
And kissed again with tears.

And blessings on the falling out
That all the more endears,
When we fall out with those we love
And kiss again with tears!

For when we came where lies the child
We lost in other years,
There above the little grave,
O, there above the little grave,
We kissed again with tears.

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

SONG

Wait but a little while -
The bird will bring
A heart in tune for melodies
Unto the spring,
Till he who's in the cedar there
Is moved to trill a song so rare,
And pipe her fair.

Wait but a little while -
The bud will break;
The inner rose will open and glow
For summer's sake:
Fond bees will lodge within her breast
Till she herself is plucked and pressed
Where I would rest.

Wait but a little while -
The maid will grow
Gracious with lips and hands to thee,
With breast of snow.
To-day Love's mute, but time hath sown
A soul in her to match thine own,
Though yet ungrown.

Norman Gale [1862-

CONTENT

Though singing but the shy and sweet
Untrod by multitudes of feet,
Songs bounded by the brook and wheat,
I have not failed in this,
The only lure my woodland note,
To win all England's whitest throat!
O bards in gold and fire who wrote,
Be yours all other bliss!

Norman Gale [1862-

CHE SARA SARA

Preach wisdom unto him who understands!
When there's such lovely longing in thine eyes,
And such a pulse in thy small clinging hands,
What is the good of being great or wise?

What is the good of beating up the dust
On the world's highway, vexed with droughty heat?
Oh, I grow fatalist - what must be must,
Seeing that thou, beloved, art so sweet!

Victor Plarr [1863-

"BID ADIEU TO GIRLISH DAYS"

Bid adieu, adieu, adieu,
Bid adieu to girlish days,
Happy Love is come to woo
Thee and woo thy girlish ways -
The zone that doth become thee fair,
The snood upon thy yellow hair.

When thou hast heard his name upon
The bugles of the cherubim,
Begin thou softly to unzone
Thy girlish bosom unto him,
And softly to undo the snood
That is the sign of maidenhood.

James Joyce [1882-

TO F. C.

Fast falls the snow, O lady mine,
Sprinkling the lawn with crystals fine,
But by the gods we won't repine
While we're together,
We'll chat and rhyme, and kiss and dine,
Defying weather.

So stir the fire and pour the wine,
And let those sea-green eyes divine

Pour their love-madness into mine:
I don't care whether
'Tis snow or sun or rain or shine
If we're together.

Mortimer Collins [1827-1876]

SPRING PASSION

Blue sky, green fields, and lazy yellow sun!
Why should I hunger for the burning South,
Where beauty needs no travail to be won,
Now I may kiss her pure impassioned mouth?

Winds rippling with the rich delight of spring!
Why should I yearn for myriad-colored skies,
Lit by auroral suns, when I may sing
The flame and rapture of her starry eyes?

Oh, song of birds, and flowers fair to see!
Why should I thirst for far-off Eden-isles,
When I may hear her discourse melody,
And bask, a dreamer, in her dreamy smiles?

Joel Elias Spingarn [1875-

ADVICE TO A LOVER

Oh, if you love her,
Show her the best of you;
So will you move her
To bear with the rest of you.
Coldness and jealousy
Cannot but seem to her
Signs that a tempest lurks
Where was sunbeam to her.
Patience, and tenderness
Still will awake in her
Hopes of new sunshine,
Though the storm break for her;
Love, she will know, for her,
Like the blue firmament,
Under the tempest lies
Gentle and permanent.
Nor will she ever
Gentleness find the less
When the storm overblown
Leaveth clear kindliness.
Deal with her tenderly,
Skylike above her,
Smile on her waywardness,
Oh, if you love her!

S. Charles Jellicoe [18 -

"YES"

They stood above the world,
In a world apart;
And she dropped her happy eyes,
And stilled the throbbing pulses
Of her happy heart.
And the moonlight fell above her,
Her secret to discover;
And the moonbeams kissed her hair,
As though no human lovers
Had laid his kisses there.

"Look up, brown eyes," he said,
"And answer mine;
Lift up those silken fringes
That hide a happy light
Almost divine."
The jealous moonlight drifted
To the finger half-uplifted,
Where shone the opal ring -
Where the colors danced and shifted
On the pretty, changeful thing.

Just the old, old story
Of light and shade,
Love like the opal tender,
Like it may be to vary -
May be to fade.
Just the old tender story,
Just a glimpse of morning glory
In an earthly Paradise,
With shadowy reflections
In a pair of sweet brown eyes.

Brown eyes a man might well
Be proud to win!
Open to hold his image,
Shut under silken lashes,
Only to shut him in.
O glad eyes, look together,
For life's dark, stormy weather
Grows to a fairer thing
When young eyes look upon it
Through a slender wedding ring.

Richard Doddridge Blackmore [1825-1900]

LOVE

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,

When midway on the mount I lay,
Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,
Had blended with the lights of eve;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve!

She leaned against the armed man,
The statue of the armed Knight;
She stood and listened to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!
She loves me best whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air;
I sang an old and moving story -
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;
For well she knew I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand;
And that for ten long years he wooed
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined: and ah!
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love,
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;
And she forgave me, that I gazed
Too fondly on her face!

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,
And that he crossed the mountain-woods,
Nor rested day nor night;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade -

There came and looked him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright;
And that he knew it was a Fiend,
This miserable Knight!

And that, unknowing what he did,
He leaped amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
The Lady of the Land; -

And how she wept and clasped his knees;
And how she tended him in vain -
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain; -

And that she nursed him in a cave;
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
A dying man he lay; -

His dying words - but when I reached
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturbed her soul with pity!

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve;
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherished long!

She wept with pity and delight,
She blushed with love and virgin-shame;
And like the murmur of a dream,
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved - she stepped aside,
As conscious of my look she stepped -
Then suddenly, with timorous eye
She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms,
She pressed me with a meek embrace;
And bending back her head, looked up,
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art,
That I might rather feel, than see,
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride;
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous Bride.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge [1772-1834]

NESTED
On The Sussex Downs

"Lured," little one? Nay, you've but heard
Love o'er your wild downs roaming;
Not lured, my bird, my light, swift bird,
But homing - homing.

"Caught," does she feel? Nay, no net stirred
To catch the heart fore-fated;
Not caught, my bird, my bright, wild bird,
But mated - mated.

And "caged," she fears? Nay, never that word
Of where your brown head rested;
Not caged, my bird, my shy, sweet bird,
But nested - nested!

Habberton Lulham [18 -

THE LETTERS

Still on the tower stood the vane,
A black yew gloomed the stagnant air;
I peered athwart the chancel pane,
And saw the altar cold and bare.
A clog of lead was round my feet,
A band of pain across my brow;
"Cold altar, heaven and earth shall meet
Before you hear my marriage vow."

I turned and hummed a bitter song
That mocked the wholesome human heart,
And then we met in wrath and wrong,
We met, but only meant to part.
Full cold my greeting was and dry;
She faintly smiled, she hardly moved;
I saw, with half-unconscious eye,
She wore the colors I approved.

She took the little ivory chest,
With half a sigh she turned the key,
Then raised her head with lips compressed,
And gave my letters back to me;
And gave the trinkets and the rings,
My gifts, when gifts of mine could please.
As looks a father on the things
Of his dead son, I looked on these.

She told me all her friends had said;
I raged against the public liar.
She talked as if her love were dead;
But in my words were seeds of fire.
"No more of love, your sex is known;
I never will be twice deceived.
Henceforth I trust the man alone;
The woman cannot be believed.

"Through slander, meanest spawn of hell, -
And woman's slander is the worst, -
And you, whom once I loved so well,
Through you my life will be accursed."
I spoke with heart and heat and force,
I shook her breast with vague alarms -
Like torrents from a mountain source
We rushed into each other's arms.

We parted; sweetly gleamed the stars,
And sweet the vapor-braided blue;
Low breezes fanned the belfry bars,
As homeward by the church I drew.
The very graves appeared to smile,
So fresh they rose in shadowed swells;
"Dark porch," I said, "and silent aisle,
There comes a sound of marriage bells."

Alfred Tennyson [1809-1892]

PROTHALAMION

Calm was the day, and through the trembling air
Sweet-breathing Zephyrus did softly play
A gentle spirit, that lightly did delay
Hot Titan's beams, which then did glister fair;
When I (whom sullen care,
Through discontent of my long fruitless stay
In Prince's Court, and expectation vain
Of idle hopes, which still do fly away,
Like empty shadows, did afflict my brain),
Walked forth to ease my pain
Along the shore of silver streaming Thames;
Whose rutty bank, the which his river hems,
Was painted all with variable flowers,
And all the meads adorned with dainty gems,
Fit to deck maidens' bowers,
And crown their paramours
Against the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

There, in a meadow, by the river's side,
A flock of nymphs I chanced to espy,
All lovely daughters of the flood thereby,
With goodly greenish locks, all loose untied,
As each had been a bride:
And each one had a little wicker basket,
Made of fine twigs, entrailed curiously,
In which they gathered flowers to fill their flasket,
And, with fine fingers, cropped full feateously
The tender stalks on high.
Of every sort, which in that meadow grew,
They gathered some; the violet, pallid blue,
The little daisy, that at evening closes,
The virgin lily, and the primrose true,
With store of vermeil roses,

To deck their bridegroom's posies
Against the bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

With that I saw two swans of goodly hue
Come softly swimming down along the Lee;
Two fairer birds I yet did never see;
The snow, which doth the top of Pindus strew,
Did never whiter shew,
Nor Jove himself, when he a swan would be
For love of Leda, whiter did appear;
Yet Leda was, they say, as white as he,
Yet not so white as these, nor nothing near;
So purely white they were,
That even the gentle stream, the which them bare,
Seemed foul to them, and bade his billows spare
To wet their silken feathers, lest they might
Soil their fair plumes with water not so fair,
And mar their beauties bright,
That shone as heaven's light,
Against their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Eftsoons the nymphs, which now had flowers their fill,
Ran all in haste to see that silver brood,
As they came floating on the crystal flood;
Whom when they saw, they stood amazed still,
Their wondering eyes to fill;
Them seemed they never saw a sight so fair
Of fowls so lovely, that they sure did deem
Them heavenly born, or to be that same pair
Which through the sky draw Venus' silver team;
For sure they did not seem
To be begot of any earthly seed,
But rather angels, or of angels' breed;
Yet were they bred of summer's heat, they say,
In sweetest season, when each flower and weed
The earth did fresh array;
So fresh they seemed as day,
Even as their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Then forth they all out of their baskets drew
Great store of flowers, the honor of the field,
That to the sense did fragrant odors yield,
All which upon those goodly birds they threw
And all the waves did strew,
That like old Peneus' waters they did seem,
When down along by pleasant Tempe's shore,
Scattered with flowers, through Thessaly they stream,
That they appear, through lilies' plenteous store,
Like a bride's chamber floor:
Two of those nymphs, meanwhile, two garlands bound
Of freshest flowers which in that mead they found,
The which presenting all in trim array,
Their snowy foreheads therewithal they crowned,
Whilst one did sing this lay,
Prepared against that day,

Against their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

"Ye gentle birds! the world's fair ornament,
And heaven's glory whom this happy hour
Doth lead unto your lover's blissful bower,
Joy may you have, and gentle hearts' content
Of your love's couplement;
And let fair Venus, that is queen of love,
With her heart-quelling son upon you smile,
Whose smile, they say, hath virtue to remove
All love's dislike, and friendship's faulty guile
For ever to assoil;
Let endless peace your steadfast hearts accord,
And blessed plenty wait upon your board;
And let your bed with pleasures chaste abound,
That fruitful issue may to you afford,
Which may your foes confound,
And make your joys redound
Upon your bridal day, which is not long":
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

So ended she: and all the rest around
To her redoubled that her undersong,
Which said their bridal day should not be long:
And gentle Echo from the neighbor-ground
Their accents did resound.
So forth those joyous birds did pass along,
Adown the Lee, that to them murmured low,
As he would speak, but that he lacked a tongue,
Yet did by signs his glad affection show,
Making his stream run slow.
And all the fowl which in his flood did dwell
'Gan flock about these twain, that did excel
The rest, so far as Cynthia doth shend
The lesser stars. So they, enranged well,
Did on those two attend,
And their best service lend
Against their wedding day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

At length they all to merry London came,
To merry London, my most kindly nurse,
That to me gave this life's first native source;
Though from another place I take my name,
An house of ancient fame:
There when they came, whereas those bricky towers
The which on Thames' broad, aged back do ride,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whilom wont the Templar Knights to bide,
Till they decayed through pride:
Next whereunto there stands a stately place,
Where oft I gained gifts and goodly grace
Of that great lord, which therein wont to dwell,
Whose want too well now feels my friendless case;
But ah! here fits not well
Old woes, but joys, to tell
Against the bridal day, which is not long:

Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Yet therein now doth lodge a noble peer,
Great England's glory, and the world's wide wonder,
Whose dreadful name late through all Spain did thunder,
And Hercules' two pillars standing near
Did make to quake and fear:
Fair branch of honor, flower of chivalry!
That fillest England with thy triumph's fame,
Joy have thou of thy noble victory,
And endless happiness of thine own name,
That promiseth the same;
That through thy prowess, and victorious arms,
Thy country may be freed from foreign harms;
And great Elisa's glorious name may ring
Through all the world, filled with thy wide alarms,
Which some brave muse may sing
To ages following,
Upon the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

From those high towers this noble lord issuing,
Like radiant Hesper, when his golden hair
In the ocean billows he hath bathed fair,
Descended to the river's open viewing,
With a great train ensuing.
Above the rest were goodly to be seen
Two gentle knights of lovely face and feature
Beseeming well the bower of any queen,
With gifts of wit and ornaments of nature,
Fit for so goodly stature,
That like the twins of Jove they seemed in sight,
Which deck the baldrick of the heavens bright;
They two, forth pacing to the river's side,
Received those two fair brides, their love's delight;
Which, at the appointed tide,
Each one did make his bride
Against their bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Edmund Spenser [1552?-1599]

EPITHALAMION

Ye learned sisters, which have oftentimes
Been to me aiding, others to adorn,
Whom ye thought worthy of your graceful rhymes,
That even the greatest did not greatly scorn
To hear their names sung in your simple lays,
But joyed in their praise;
And when ye list your own mishaps to mourn,
Which death, or love, or fortune's wreck did raise,
Your string could soon to sadder tenor turn,
And teach the woods and waters to lament
Your doleful dreariment:
Now lay those sorrowful complaints aside;
And, having all your heads with garlands crowned,

Help me mine own love's praises to resound;
Nor let the same of any be envide:
So Orpheus did for his own bride!
So I unto myself alone will sing;
The woods shall to me answer, and my echo ring.

Early, before the world's light-giving lamp
His golden beam upon the hills doth spread,
Having dispersed the night's uncheerful damp,
Do ye awake; and, with fresh lusty-hed,
Go to the bower of my beloved love,
My truest turtle dove;
Bid her awake; for Hymen is awake,
And long since ready forth his mask to move,
With his bright Tead that flames with many a flake,
And many a bachelor to wait on him,
In their fresh garments trim.
Bid her awake therefore, and soon her dight,
For lo! the wished day is come at last,
That shall, for all the pains and sorrows past,
Pay to her usury of long delight:
And, whilst she doth her dight,
Do ye to her of joy and solace sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Bring with you all the Nymphs that you can hear,
Both of the rivers and the forests green,
And of the sea that neighbors to her near,
All with gay garlands goodly well beseen.
And let them also with them bring in hand
Another gay garland,
For my fair love, of lilies and of roses,
Bound truelove wise with a blue silk riband;
And let them make great store of bridal posies,
And let them eke bring store of other flowers,
To deck the bridal bowers.
And let the ground whereas her foot shall tread,
For fear the stones her tender foot should wrong,
Be strewed with fragrant flowers all along,
And diapered like the discolored mead;
Which done, do at her chamber door await,
For she will waken straight;
The whiles do ye this song unto her sing,
The woods shall to you answer, and your echo ring.

Ye Nymphs of Mulla, which with careful heed
The silver scaly trouts do tend full well,
And greedy pikes which use therein to feed
(Those trouts and pikes all others do excel);
And ye likewise, which keep the rushy lake,
Where none do fishes take;
Bind up the locks the which hang scattered light,
And in his waters, which your mirror make,
Behold your faces as the crystal bright,
That when you come whereas my love doth lie,
No blemish she may spy.
And eke, ye lightfoot maids, which keep the deer,
That on the hoary mountain used to tower;

And the wild wolves, which seek them to devour,
With your steel darts do chase from coming near;
Be also present here,
To help to deck her, and to help to sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Wake, now, my love, awake! for it is time;
The rosy mom long since left Tithon's bed,
All ready to her silver coach to climb;
And Phoebus 'gins to show his glorious head.
Hark, how the cheerful birds do chant their lays
And carol of love's praise.
The merry lark her matins sings aloft;
The thrush replies; the mavis descant plays;
The ouzel shrills; the ruddock warbles soft;
So goodly all agree, with sweet consent,
To this day's merriment.
Ah! my dear love, why do ye sleep thus long,
When meeter were that ye should now awake,
To await the coming of your joyous mate,
And hearken to the birds' love-learned song,
The dewy leaves among!
For they of joy and pleasance to you sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring.

My love is now awake out of her dreams,
And her fair eyes, like stars that dimmed were
With darksome cloud, now show their goodly beams
More bright than Hesperus his head doth rear.
Come now, ye damsels, daughters of delight,
Help quickly her to dight:
But first come, ye fair hours, which were begot
In Jove's sweet paradise of Day and Night;
Which do the seasons of the year allot,
And all that ever in this world is fair,
Do make and still repair:
And ye three handmaids of the Cyprian queen,
The which do still adorn her beauty's pride,
Help to adorn my beautifulest bride;
And as ye her array, still throw between
Some graces to be seen,
And, as ye use to Venus, to her sing,
The whiles the woods shall answer, and your echo ring.

Now is my love all ready forth to come:
Let all the virgins therefore well await:
And ye fresh boys, that tend upon her groom,
Prepare yourselves; for he is coming straight;
Set all your things in seemly good array,
Fit for so joyful day:
The joyfulest day that ever sun did see.
Fair Sun! show forth thy favorable ray,
And let thy life-full heat not fervent be,
For fear of burning her sunshiny face,
Her beauty to disgrace.
O fairest Phoebus! father of the Muse!
If ever I did honor thee aright,
Or sing the thing that might thy mind delight,

Do not thy servant's simple boon refuse;
But let this day, let this one day, be mine;
Let all the rest be thine.
Then I thy sovereign praises loud will sing,
That all the woods shall answer, and their echo ring.

Hark! how the Minstrels 'gin to shrill aloud
Their merry music that resounds from far,
The pipe, the tabor, and the trembling croud,
That well agree withouten breach or jar.
But, most of all, the Damsels do delight
When they their timbrels smite,
And thereunto do dance and carol sweet,
That all the senses they do ravish quite;
The whiles the boys run up and down the street,
Crying aloud with strong confused noise,
As if it were one voice,
Hymen, io Hymen, Hymen, they do shout;
That even to the heavens their shouting shrill
Doth reach, and all the firmament doth fill;
To which the people standing all about,
As in approvance, do thereto applaud,
And loud advance her laud;
And evermore they Hymen, Hymen sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring.

Lo! where she comes along with portly pace,
Like Phoebe, from her chamber of the East,
Arising forth to run her mighty race,
Clad all in white, that seems a virgin best.
So well it her beseems, that ye would ween
Some angel she had been.
Her long loose yellow locks like golden wire,
Sprinkled with pearl, and pearling flowers atween,
Do like a golden mantle her attire;
And, being crowned with a garland green,
Seem like some maiden queen.
Her modest eyes, abashed to behold
So many gazers as on her do stare,
Upon the lowly ground affixed are;
Nor dare lift up her countenance too bold,
But blush to hear her praises sung so loud,
So far from being proud.
Nathless do ye still loud her praises sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Tell me, ye merchants' daughters, did ye see
So fair a creature in your town before;
So sweet, so lovely, and so mild as she,
Adorned with beauty's grace and virtue's store?
Her goodly eyes like sapphires shining bright,
Her forehead ivory white,
Her cheeks like apples which the sun hath ruddied,
Her lips like cherries charming men to bite,
Her breast like to a bowl of cream uncrudded,
Her paps like lilies budded,
Her snowy neck like to a marble tower;
And all her body like a palace fair,

Ascending up, with many a stately stair,
To honor's seat and chastity's sweet bower.
Why stand ye still, ye virgins, in amaze,
Upon her so to gaze,
Whiles ye forget your former lay to sing,
To which the woods did answer, and your echo ring?

But if ye saw that which no eyes can see,
The inward beauty of her lively spright,
Garnished with heavenly gifts of high degree,
Much more then would ye wonder at that sight,
And stand astonished like to those which read
Medusa's mazeful head.
There dwells sweet love, and constant chastity,
Unspotted faith, and comely womanhood,
Regard of honor, and mild modesty;
There virtue reigns as queen in royal throne,
And giveth laws alone,
The which the base affections do obey,
And yield their services unto her will;
Nor thought of thing uncomely ever may
Thereto approach to tempt her mind to ill.
Had ye once seen these her celestial treasures,
And unrevealed pleasures,
Then would ye wonder, and her praises sing,
That all the woods should answer, and your echo ring.

Open the temple gates unto my love,
Open them wide that she may enter in,
And all the posts adorn as doth behove,
And all the pillars deck with garlands trim,
For to receive this Saint with honor due,
That cometh in to you.
With trembling steps, and humble reverence,
She cometh in, before the Almighty's view;
Of her ye virgins learn obedience,
When so ye come into those holy places,
To humble your proud faces:
Bring her up to the high altar, that she may
The sacred ceremonies there partake,
The which do endless matrimony make;
And let the roaring organs loudly play
The praises of the Lord in lively notes;
The whiles, with hollow throats,
The Choristers the joyous Anthems sing,
That all the woods may answer, and their echo ring.

Behold, whiles she before the altar stands,
Hearing the holy priest that to her speaks,
And blesseth her with his two happy hands,
How the red roses flush up in her cheeks,
And the pure snow, with goodly vermill stain
Like crimson dyed in grain:
That even the Angels, which continually
About the sacred altar do remain,
Forget their service and about her fly,
Oft peeping in her face, that seems more fair,
The more they on it stare.

But her sad eyes, still fastened on the ground,
Are governed with goodly modesty,
That suffers not one look to glance awry,
Which may let in a little thought unsound.
Why blush ye, love, to give to me your hand,
The pledge of all our band?
Sing, ye sweet Angels, Alleluja sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Now all is done: bring home the bride again;
Bring home the triumph of our victory:
Bring home with you the glory of her gain;
With joyance bring her and with jollity.
Never had man more joyful day than this,
Whom heaven would heap with bliss.
Make feast therefore now all this live-long day;
This day for ever to me holy is.
Pour out the wine without restraint or stay,
Pour not by cups, but by the belly full,
Pour out to all that will,
And sprinkle all the posts and walls with wine,
That they may sweat, and drunken be withal.
Crown ye God Bacchus with a coronal,
And Hymen also crown with wreaths of vine;
And let the Graces dance unto the rest,
For they can do it best:
The whiles the maidens do their carol sing,
To which the woods shall answer, and their echo ring.

Ring ye the bells, ye young men of the town,
And leave your wonted labors for this day:
This day is holy; do ye write it down,
That ye for ever it remember may.
This day the sun is in his chiefest height,
With Barnaby the bright,
From whence declining daily by degrees,
He somewhat loseth of his heat and light,
When once the Crab behind his back he sees.
But for this time it ill ordained was,
To choose the longest day in all the year,
And shortest night, when longest fitter were:
Yet never day so long, but late would pass.
Ring ye the bells, to make it wear away,
And bonfires make all day;
And dance about them, and about them sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Ah! when will this long weary day have end,
And lend me leave to come unto my love?
How slowly do the hours their numbers spend?
How slowly does sad Time his feathers move?
Haste thee, O fairest Planet, to thy home,
Within the Western foam:
Thy tired steeds long since have need of rest.
Long though it be, at last I see it gloom,
And the bright evening-star with golden crest
Appear out of the East.
Fair child of beauty! glorious lamp of love!

That all the host of heaven in ranks dost lead,
And guidest lovers through the night's sad dread,
How cheerfully thou lookest from above,
And seems to laugh atween thy twinkling light,
As joying in the sight
Of these glad many, which for joy do sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring!

Now, cease, ye damsels, your delights fore-past;
Enough is it that all the day was yours:
Now day is done, and night is nighing fast,
Now bring the bride into the bridal bowers.
The night is come, now soon her disarray,
And in her bed her lay;
Lay her in lilies and in violets,
And silken curtains over her display,
And odored sheets, and Arras coverlets.
Behold how goodly my fair love does lie,
In proud humility!
Like unto Maia, when as Jove her took
In Tempe, lying on the flowery grass,
'Twixt sleep and wake, after she weary was,
With bathing in the Acidalian brook.
Now it is night, ye damsels may be gone,
And leave my love alone,
And leave likewise your former lay to sing:
The woods no more shall answer, nor your echo ring.

Now welcome, night! thou night so long expected,
That long day's labor dost at last defray,
And all my cares, which cruel Love collected,
Hast summed in one, and cancelled for aye:
Spread thy broad wing over my love and me,
That no man may us see;
And in thy sable mantle us enwrap,
From fear of peril and foul horror free.
Let no false treason seek us to entrap,
Nor any dread disquiet once annoy
The safety of our joy;
But let the night be calm, and quietsome,
Without tempestuous storms or sad affray:
Like as when Jove with fair Alcmena lay,
When he begot the great Tirynthian groom:
Or like as when he with thyself did lie
And begot Majesty.
And let the maids and young men cease to sing;
Nor let the woods them answer, nor their echo ring.

Let no lamenting cries, nor doleful tears,
Be heard all night within, nor yet without:
Nor let false whispers, breeding hidden fears,
Break gentle sleep with misconceived doubt.
Let no deluding dreams, nor dreadful sights,
Make sudden sad affrights;
Nor let house-fires, nor lightning's helpless harms,
Nor let the Puck, nor other evil sprites,
Nor let mischievous witches with their charms,
Nor let hobgoblins, names whose sense we see not,

Fray us with things that be not:
Let not the screech-owl nor the stork be heard,
Nor the night raven, that still deadly yells;
Nor damned ghosts, called up with mighty spells,
Nor grizzly vultures, make us once afraid:
Nor let the unpleasant choir of frogs still croaking
Make us to wish their choking.
Let none of these their dreary accents sing;
Nor let the woods them answer, nor their echo ring.

But let still Silence true night-watches keep,
That sacred Peace may in assurance reign,
And timely Sleep, when it is time to sleep,
May pour his limbs forth on your pleasant plain;
The whiles an hundred little winged loves,
Like divers-feathered doves,
Shall fly and flutter round about your bed,
And in the secret dark, that none reproves,
Their pretty stealths shall work, and snares shall spread
To filch away sweet snatches of delight,
Concealed through covert night.
Ye sons of Venus, play your sports at will!
For greedy pleasure, careless of your toys,
Thinks more upon her paradise of joys,
Then what ye do, albeit good or ill.
All night therefore attend your merry play,
For it will soon be day:
Now none doth hinder you, that say or sing;
Nor will the woods now answer, nor your echo ring.

Who is the same, which at my window peeps?
Or whose is that fair face that shines so bright?
Is it not Cynthia, she that never sleeps,
But walks about high heaven all the night?
O! fairest goddess, do thou not envy
My love with me to spy:
For thou likewise didst love, though now unthought,
And for a fleece of wool, which privily
The Latmian shepherd once unto thee brought,
His pleasures with thee wrought.
Therefore to us be favorable now;
And since of women's labors thou hast charge,
And generation goodly dost enlarge,
Incline thy will to effect our wishful vow,
And the chaste womb inform with timely seed,
That may our comfort breed:
Till which we cease our hopeful hap to sing;
Nor let the woods us answer, nor our echo ring.

And thou, great Juno! which with awful might
The laws of wedlock still dost patronize,
And the religion of the faith first plight
With sacred rites hast taught to solemnize;
And eke for comfort often called art
Of women in their smart;
Eternally bind thou this lovely band,
And all thy blessings unto us impart.
And thou, glad Genius! in whose gentle hand

The bridal bower and genial bed remain,
Without blemish or stain;
And the sweet pleasures of their love's delight
With secret aid dost succor and supply,
Till they bring forth the fruitful progeny;
Send us the timely fruit of this same night.
And thou, fair Hebe! and thou, Hymen free!
Grant that it may so be.
Till which we cease your further praise to sing;
Nor any woods shall answer, nor your echo ring.

And ye high heavens, the temple of the gods,
In which a thousand torches flaming bright
Do burn, that to us wretched earthly clods
In dreadful darkness lend desired light;
And all ye powers which in the same remain,
More than we men can feign,
Pour out your blessing on us plenteously,
And happy influence upon us rain,
That-we may raise a large posterity,
Which from the earth, which they may long possess
With lasting happiness,
Up to your haughty palaces may mount;
And, for the guerdon of their glorious merit,
May heavenly tabernacles there inherit,
Of blessed Saints for to increase the count.
So let us rest, sweet love, in hope of this,
And cease till then our timely joys to sing:
The woods no more us answer, nor our echo ring!

Song! made in lieu of many ornaments,
With which my love should duly have been decked,
Which cutting off through hasty accidents,
Ye would not stay your due time to expect,
But promised both to recompense;
Be unto her a goodly ornament,
And for short time an endless monument.

Edmund Spenser [1552?-1599]

THE KISS

Before you kissed me only winds of heaven
Had kissed me, and the tenderness of rain -
Now you have come, how can I care for kisses
Like theirs again?

I sought the sea, she sent her winds to meet me,
They surged about me singing of the south -
I turned my head away to keep still holy
Your kiss upon my mouth.

And swift sweet rains of shining April weather
Found not my lips where living kisses are;
I bowed my head lest they put out my glory
As rain puts out a star.

I am my love's and he is mine forever,
Sealed with a seal and safe forevermore -
Think you that I could let a beggar enter
Where a king stood before?

Sara Teasdale [1884-1933]

MARRIAGE

Going my way of old
Contented more or less
I dreamt not life could hold
Such happiness.

I dreamt not that love's way
Could keep the golden height
Day after happy day,
Night after night.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson [1878-

THE NEWLY-WEDDED

Now the rite is duly done,
Now the word is spoken,
And the spell has made us one
Which may ne'er be broken;
Rest we, dearest, in our home,
Roam we o'er the heather:
We shall rest, and we shall roam,
Shall we not? together.

From this hour the summer rose
Sweeter breathes to charm us;
From this hour the winter snows
Lighter fall to harm us:
Fair or foul - on land or sea -
Come the wind or weather,
Best and worst, whate'er they be,
We shall share together.

Death, who friend from friend can part,
Brother rend from brother,
Shall but link us, heart and heart,
Closer to each other:
We will call his anger play,
Deem his dart a feather,
When we meet him on our way
Hand in hand together.

Winthrop Mackworth Praed [1802-1839]

"I SAW TWO CLOUDS AT MORNING"

I saw two clouds at morning,

Tinged by the rising sun,
And in the dawn they floated on,
And mingled into one;
I thought that morning cloud was blest,
It moved so sweetly to the west.

I saw two summer currents
Flow smoothly to their meeting,
And join their course, with silent force,
In peace each other greeting;
Calm was their course through banks of green,
While dimpling eddies played between.

Such be your gentle motion,
Till life's last pulse shall beat;
Like summer's beam, and summer's stream,
Float on, in joy, to meet
A calmer sea, where storms shall cease,
A purer sky, where all is peace.

John Gardiner Calkins Brainard [1796-1828]

HOLY MATRIMONY

The voice that breathed o'er Eden,
That earliest wedding-day,
The primal marriage blessing,
It hath not passed away.

Still in the pure espousal
Of Christian man and maid,
The holy Three are with us,
The threefold grace is said.

For dower of blessed children,
For love and faith's sweet sake,
For high mysterious union,
Which naught on earth may break.

Be present, awful Father,
To give away this bride,
As Eve thou gav'st to Adam
Out of his own pierced side:

Be present, Son of Mary,
To join their loving hands,
As thou didst bind two natures
In thine eternal bands:

Be present, Holiest Spirit,
To bless them as they kneel,
As thou for Christ, the Bridegroom,
The heavenly Spouse dost seal.

Oh, spread thy pure wing o'er them,
Let no ill power find place,
When onward to thine altar

The hallowed path they trace,

To cast their crowns before thee
In perfect sacrifice,
Till to the home of gladness
With Christ's own Bride they rise. Amen.

John Keble [1792-1866]

THE BRIDE

Beat on the Tom-toms, and scatter the flowers,
Jasmine, hibiscus, vermilion and white,
This is the day, and the Hour of Hours,
Bring forth the Bride for her Lover's delight.
Maidens no more as a maiden shall claim her,
Near, in his Mystery, draweth Desire.
Who, if she waver a moment, shall blame her?
She is a flower, and love is a fire.

Give her the anklets, the ring, and the necklace,
Darken her eyelids with delicate art,
Heighten the beauty, so youthful and fleckless,
By the Gods favored, oh, Bridegroom, thou art!
Twine in thy fingers her fingers so slender,
Circle together the Mystical Fire,
Bridegroom, - a whisper, - be gentle and tender,
Choti Tinchaurya knows not desire.

Bring forth the silks and the veil that shall cover
Beauty, till yesterday careless and wild;
Red are her lips for the kiss of a lover,
Ripe are her breasts for the lips of a child.
Center and Shrine of Mysterious Power,
Chalice of Pleasure and Rose of Delight,
Shyly aware of the swift-coming hour,
Waiting the shade and the silence of night.

Still must the Bridegroom his longing dissemble,
Longing to loosen the silk-woven cord,
Ah, how his fingers will flutter and tremble,
Fingers well skilled with the bridle and sword.
Thine is his valor, oh Bride, and his beauty,
Thine to possess and re-issue again,
Such is thy tender and passionate duty,
Licit thy pleasure and honored thy pain.

Choti Tinchaurya, lovely and tender,
Still all unbroken to sorrow and strife,
Come to the Bridegroom who, silk-clad and slender,
Brings thee the Honor and Burden of Life.
Bidding farewell to thy light-hearted playtime,
Worship thy Lover with fear and delight;
Art thou not ever, though slave of his daytime,
Choti Tinchaurya, queen of his night?

Laurence Hope [1865-1904]

A MARRIAGE CHARM

I set a charm upon your hurrying breath,
I set a charm upon your wandering feet,
You shall not leave me - not for life, nor death,
Not even though you cease to love me, Sweet.

A woman's love nine Angels cannot bind,
Nor any rune that wind or water knows,
My heart were all as well set on the wind,
Or bound, to live or die, upon a rose.

I set a charm upon you, foot and hand,
That you and Knowledge, love, may never meet,
That you may never chance to understand
How strong you are, how weak your lover, Sweet.

I set my charm upon your kindly arm,
I set it as a seal upon your breast;
That you may never hear another's charm,
Nor guess another's gift outruns my best.

I bid your wandering footsteps me to follow,
Your thoughts to travel after in my track,
I am the sky that waits you, dear gray swallow,
No wind of mine shall ever blow you back.

I am your dream, Sweet; so no more of dreaming,
Your lips to mine must end this chanted charm,
Your heart to mine, 'neath nut-brown tresses streaming,
I set my love a seal upon your arm.

Nora Hopper [1871-1906]

"LIKE A LAVEROCK IN THE LIFT"

It's we two, it's we two, it's we two for aye,
All the world, and we two, and Heaven be our stay!
Like a laverock in the lift, sing, O bonny bride!
All the world was Adam once, with Eve by his side.

What's the world, my lass, my love! - what can it do?
I am thine, and thou art mine; life is sweet and new.
If the world have missed the mark, let it stand by;
For we two have gotten leave, and once more we'll try.

Like a laverock in the lift, sing, O bonny bride!
It's we two, it's we two, happy side by side.
Take a kiss from me, thy man; now the song begins:
"All is made afresh for us, and the brave heart wins."

When the darker days come, and no sun will shine,
Thou shalt dry my tears, lass, and I'll dry thine.
It's we two, it's we two, while the world's away,
Sitting by the golden sheaves on our wedding-day.

Jean Ingelow [1820-1897]

MY OWEN

Proud of you, fond of you, clinging so near to you,
Light is my heart now I know I am dear to you!
Glad is my voice now, so free it may sing for you
All the wild love that is burning within for you!
Tell me once more, tell it over and over,
The tale of that eve which first saw you my lover.
Now I need never blush
At my heart's hottest gush -
The wife of my Owen her heart may discover!

Proud of you, fond of you, having all right in you,
Quitting all else through my love and delight in you!
Glad is my heart since 'tis beating so nigh to you!
Light is my step for it always may fly to you!
Clasped in your arms where no sorrow can reach to me,
Reading your eyes till new love they shall teach to me.
Though wild and weak till now,
By that blest marriage vow,
More than the wisest know your heart shall preach to me.

Ellen Mary Patrick Downing [1828-1869]

DORIS: A PASTORAL

I sat with Doris, the shepherd maiden;
Her crook was laden with wreathed flowers.
I sat and wooed her through sunlight wheeling,
And shadows stealing for hours and hours.

And she, my Doris, whose lap incloses
Wild summer roses of faint perfume,
The while I sued her, kept hushed and harkened
Till shades had darkened from gloss to gloom.

She touched my shoulder with fearful finger;
She said, "We linger, we must not stay;
My flock's in danger, my sheep will wander;
Behold them yonder, how far they stray!"

I answered bolder, "Nay, let me hear you,
And still be near you, and still adore!
No wolf nor stranger will touch one yearling -
Ah! stay my darling a moment more!"

She whispered, sighing, "There will be sorrow
Beyond to-morrow, if I lose to-day;
My fold unguarded, my flock unfolded -
I shall be scolded and sent away!"

Said I, denying, "If they do miss you,
They ought to kiss you when you get home;

And well rewarded by friend and neighbor
Should be the labor from which you come."

"They might remember," she answered meekly.
"That lambs are weakly and sheep are wild;
But if they love me it's none so fervent -
I am a servant and not a child."

Then each hot ember glowed quick within me,
And love did win me to swift reply:
"Ah! do but prove me, and none shall bind you,
Nor fray nor find you until I die!"

She blushed and started, and stood awaiting,
As if debating in dreams divine;
But I did brave them - I told her plainly,
She doubted vainly, she must be mine.

So we, twin-hearted, from all the valley
Did rouse and rally her nibbling ewes;
And homeward drove them, we two together,
Through blooming heather and gleaming dews.

That simple duty such grace did lend her,
My Doris tender, my Doris true,
That I her warder did always bless her,
And often press her to take her due.

And now in beauty she fills my dwelling
With love excelling, and undefiled;
And love doth guard her, both fast and fervent,
No more a servant, nor yet a child.

Arthur Joseph Munby [1828-1910]

"HE'D NOTHING BUT HIS VIOLIN"

He'd nothing but his violin,
I'd nothing but my song,
But we were wed when skies were blue
And summer days were long;
And when we rested by the hedge,
The robins came and told
How they had dared to woo and win,
When early Spring was cold.

We sometimes supped on dew-berries,
Or slept among the hay,
But oft the farmers' wives at eve
Came out to hear us play;
The rare old songs, the dear old tunes, -
We could not starve for long
While my man had his violin,
And I my sweet love-song.

The world has aye gone well with us
Old man since we were one, -

Our homeless wandering down the lanes
It long ago was done.
But those who wait for gold or gear,
For houses or for kine,
Till youth's sweet spring grows brown and sere,
And love and beauty tine,
Will never know the joy of hearts
That met without a fear,
When you had but your violin
And I a song, my dear.

Mary Kyle Dallas [1830-1897]

LOVE'S CALENDAR

That gusty spring, each afternoon
By the ivied cot I passed,
And noted at that lattice soon
Her fair face downward cast;
Still in the same place seated there,
So diligent, so very fair.

Oft-times I said I knew her not,
Yet that way round would go,
Until, when evenings lengthened out,
And bloomed the may-hedge row,
I met her by the wayside well,
Whose waters, maybe, broke the spell.

For, leaning on her pail, she prayed,
I'd lift it to her head.
So did I; but I'm much afraid
Some wasteful drops were shed,
And that we blushed, as face to face
Needs must we stand the shortest space.

Then when the sunset mellowed through
The ears of rustling grain,
When lattices wide open flew,
When ash-leaves fell like rain,
As well as I she knew the hour
At morn or eve I neared her bower.

And now that snow o'erlays the thatch,
Each starlit eve within
The door she waits, I raise the latch,
And kiss her lifted chin;
Nor do I think we've blushed again,
For Love hath made but one of twain.

William Bell Scott [1811-1890]

HOME

Two birds within one nest;
Two hearts within one breast;

Two spirits in one fair,
Firm league of love and prayer,
Together bound for aye, together blest.

An ear that waits to catch
A hand upon the latch;
A step that hastens its sweet rest to win;
A world of care without,
A world of strife shut out,
A world of love shut in.

Dora Greenwell [1821-1882]

TWO LOVERS

Two lovers by a moss-grown spring:
They leaned soft cheeks together there,
Mingled the dark and sunny hair,
And heard the wooing thrashes sing.
O budding time!
O love's blest prime!

Two wedded from the portal stept:
The bells made happy carolings,
The air was soft as fanning wings,
White petals on the pathway slept.
O pure-eyed bride!
O tender pride!

Two faces o'er a cradle bent:
Two hands above the head were locked:
These pressed each other while they rocked,
Those watched a life that love had sent.
O solemn hour!
O hidden power!

Two parents by the evening fire:
The red light fell about their knees
On heads that rose by slow degrees
Like buds upon the lily spire.
O patient life!
O tender strife!

The two still sat together there,
The red light shone about their knees;
But all the heads by slow degrees
Had gone and left that lonely pair.
O voyage fast!
O vanished past!

The red light shone upon the floor
And made the space between them wide;
They drew their chairs up side by side,
Their pale cheeks joined, and said, "Once more!"
O memories!
O past that is!

George Eliot [1819-1880]

THE LAND OF HEART'S DESIRE

"Somewhere," he mused, "its dear enchantments wait,
That land, so heavenly sweet;
Yet all the paths we follow, soon or late,
End in the desert's heat.

"And still it lures us to the eager quest,
And calls us day by day" -
"But I," she said, her babe upon her breast
"But I have found the way."

"Some time," he sighed, "when youth and joy are spent,
Our feet the gates may win" -
"But I," she smiled, with eyes of deep content,
"But I have entered in."

Emily Huntington Miller [1833-1913]

MY AIN WIFE

I wadna gi'e my ain wife
For ony wife I see;
I wadna gi'e my ain wife
For ony wife I see;
A bonnier yet I've never seen,
A better canna be -
I wadna gi'e my ain wife
For ony wife I see!

O couthie is my ingle-cheek,
An' cheerie is my Jean;
I never see her angry look,
Nor hear her word on ane.
She's gude wi' a' the neebors roun'
An' aye gude wi' me -
I wadna gi'e my ain wife
For ony wife I see.

An' O her looks sae kindlie,
They melt my heart outright,
When o'er the baby at her breast
She hangs wi' fond delight;
She looks intill its bonnie face,
An' syne looks to me -
I wadna gi'e my ain wife
For ony wife I see.

Alexander Laing [1787-1857]

THE IRISH WIFE

I would not give my Irish wife

For all the dames of the Saxon land;
I would not give my Irish wife
For the Queen of France's hand;
For she to me is dearer
Than castles strong, or lands, or life.
An outlaw - so I'm near her
To love till death my Irish wife.

O what would be this home of mine,
A ruined, hermit-haunted place,
But for the light that nightly shines
Upon its walls from Kathleen's face!
What comfort in a mine of gold,
What pleasure in a royal life,
If the heart within lay dead and cold,
If I could not wed my Irish wife?

I knew the law forbade the banns;
I knew my king abhorred her race;
Who never bent before their clans
Must bow before their ladies' grace.
Take all my forfeited domain,
I cannot wage with kinsmen strife:
Take knightly gear and noble name,
And I will keep my Irish wife.

My Irish wife has clear blue eyes,
My heaven by day, my stars by night;
And twin-like truth and fondness lies
Within her swelling bosom white.
My Irish wife has golden hair,
Apollo's harp had once such strings,
Apollo's self might pause to hear
Her bird-like carol when she sings.

I would not give my Irish wife
For all the dames of the Saxon land;
I would not give my Irish wife
For the Queen of France's hand;
For she to me is dearer
Than castles strong, or lands, or life:
In death I would be near her,
And rise beside my Irish wife.

Thomas D'Arcy McGee [1825-1868]

MY WIFE'S A WINSOME WEE THING

See is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing,
She is a bonnie wee thing,
This sweet wee wife o' mine.

I never saw a fairer,
I never lo'ed a dearer,
And niest my heart I'll wear her,
For fear my jewel tine.

She is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing,
She is a bonnie wee thing,
This sweet wee wife o' mine.

The warld's wrack we share o't,
The warsle and the care o't:
Wi' her I'll blithely bear it,
And think my lot divine.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

LETTICE

I said to Lettice, our sister Lettice,
While drooped and glistened her eyelash brown,
"Your man's a poor man, a cold and dour man,
There's many a better about our town."
She smiled securely - "He loves me purely:
A true heart's safe, both in smile or frown;
And nothing harms me while his love warms me,
Whether the world go up or down."

"He comes of strangers, and they are rangers,
And ill to trust, girl, when out of sight:
Fremd folk may blame ye, and e'en defame ye,
A gown oft handled looks seldom white."
She raised serenely her eyelids queenly, -
"My innocence is my whitest gown;
No harsh tongue grieves me while he believes me,
Whether the world go up or down."

"Your man's a frail man, was ne'er a hale man,
And sickness knocketh at every door,
And death comes making bold hearts cower, breaking -"
Our Lettice trembled; - but once, no more.
"If death should enter, smite to the center
Our poor home palace, all crumbling down,
He cannot fright us, nor disunite us,
Life bears Love's cross, death brings Love's crown."

Dinah Maria Mulock Craik [1826-1887]

"IF THOU WERT BY MY SIDE, MY LOVE"

If thou wert by my side, my love,
How fast would evening fail
In green Bengala's palmy grove,
Listening the nightingale!

If thou, my love, wert by my side,
My babies at my knee,
How gayly would our pinnace glide
O'er Gunga's mimic sea!

I miss thee at the dawning gray,
When, on our deck reclined,
In careless ease my limbs I lay
And woo the cooler wind.

I miss thee when by Gunga's stream
My twilight steps I guide,
But most beneath the lamp's pale beam
I miss thee from my side.

I spread my books, my pencil try,
The lingering noon to cheer,
But miss thy kind, approving eye,
Thy meek, attentive ear.

But when at morn and eve the star
Beholds me on my knee,
I feel, though thou art distant far,
Thy prayers ascend for me.

Then on! then on! where duty leads,
My course be onward still,
O'er broad Hindostan's sultry meads,
O'er bleak Almorah's hill.

That course nor Delhi's kingly gates,
Nor mild Malwah detain;
For sweet the bliss us both awaits
By yonder western main.

Thy towers, Bombay, gleam bright, they say,
Across the dark blue sea;
But ne'er were hearts so light and gay
As then shall meet in thee!

Reginald Heber [1783-1826]

THE SHEPHERD'S WIFE'S SONG
From "The Mourning Garment"

Ah, what is love? It is a pretty thing,
As sweet unto a shepherd as a king,
And sweeter, too:
For kings have cares that wait upon a crown,
And cares can make the sweetest love to frown:
Ah then, ah then,
If country loves such sweet desires do gain,
What lady would not love a shepherd swain?

His flocks are folded; he comes home at night
As merry as a king in his delight,
And merrier, too:
For kings bethink them what the state require,
Where shepherds, careless, carol by the fire:

He kisseth first, then sits as blithe to eat
His cream and curds, as doth a king his meat,

And blither, too:
For kings have often fears when they do sup,
Where shepherds dread no poison in their cup:

To bed he goes, as wanton then, I ween,
As is a king in dalliance with a queen;
More wanton, too:
For kings have many griefs, affects to move,
Where shepherds have no greater grief than love:

Upon his couch of straw he sleeps as sound
As doth the king upon his bed of down;
More sounder, too:
For cares cause kings full oft their sleep to spill,
Where weary shepherds lie and snort their fill:

Thus, with his wife, he spends the year as blithe
As doth the king at every tide or sithe,
And blither, too:
For kings have wars and broils to take in hand,
Where shepherds laugh and love upon the land:
Ah then, ah then,
Since country loves such sweet desires do gain,
What lady would not love a shepherd swain?

Robert Greene [1560?-1592]

"TRUTH DOTH TRUTH DESERVE"
From the "Arcadia"

Who doth desire that chaste his wife should be,
First be he true, for truth doth truth deserve:
Then such be he as she his worth may see,
And one man still credit with her preserve.
Not toying kind, nor causelessly unkind;
Not stirring thoughts, nor yet denying right;
Not spying faults, nor in plain errors blind;
Never hard hand, nor ever reins too light.
As far from want, as far from vain expense
(The one doth force, the latter doth entice);
Allow good company, but keep from thence
All filthy mouths that glory in their vice.
This done, thou hast no more, but leave the rest
To virtue, fortune, time, and woman's breast.

Philip Sidney [1554-1586]

THE MARRIED LOVER
From "The Angel in the House"

Why, having won her, do I woo?
Because her spirit's vestal grace
Provokes me always to pursue,
But, spirit-like, eludes embrace;
Because her womanhood is such
That, as on court-days subjects kiss

The Queen's hand, yet so near a touch
Affirms no mean familiarness;
Nay, rather marks more fair the height
Which can with safety so neglect
To dread, as lower ladies might,
That grace could meet with disrespect;
Thus she with happy favor feeds
Allegiance from a love so high
That thence no false conceit proceeds
Of difference bridged, or state put by;
Because, although in act and word
As lowly as a wife can be,
Her manners, when they call me lord,
Remind me 'tis by courtesy;
Not with her least consent of will,
Which would my proud affection hurt,
But by the noble style that still
Imputes an unattained desert;
Because her gay and lofty brows,
When all is won which hope can ask,
Reflect a light of hopeless snows
That bright in virgin ether bask;
Because, though free of the outer court
I am, this Temple keeps its shrine
Sacred to heaven; because, in short,
She's not and never can be mine.

Coventry Patmore [1823-1896]

MY LOVE

Not as all other women are
Is she that to my soul is dear;
Her glorious fancies come from far,
Beneath the silver evening-star,
And yet her heart is ever near.

Great feelings hath she of her own,
Which lesser souls may never know;
God giveth them to her alone,
And sweet they are as any tone
Wherewith the wind may choose to blow.

Yet in herself she dwelleth not,
Although no home were half so fair;
No simplest duty is forgot,
Life hath no dim and lowly spot
That doth not in her sunshine share.

She doeth little kindnesses,
Which most leave undone, or despise:
For naught that sets one heart at ease,
And giveth happiness or peace,
Is low-esteemed in her eyes.

She hath no scorn of common things,
And, though she seem of other birth,

Round us her heart intwines and clings,
And patiently she folds her wings
To tread the humble paths of earth.

Blessing she is: God made her so,
And deeds of week-day holiness
Fall from her noiseless as the snow,
Nor hath she ever chanced to know
That aught were easier than to bless.

She is most fair, and thereunto
Her life doth rightly harmonize;
Feeling or thought that was not true
Ne'er made less beautiful the blue
Unclouded heaven of her eyes.

She is a woman: one in whom
The spring-time of her childish years
Hath never lost its fresh perfume,
Though knowing well that life hath room
For many blights and many tears.

I love her with a love as still
As a broad river's peaceful might,
Which, by high tower and lowly mill,
Seems following its own wayward will,
And yet doth ever flow aright.

And, on its full, deep breast serene,
Like quiet isles my duties lie;
It flows around them and between,
And makes them fresh and fair and green,
Sweet homes wherein to live and die.

James Russell Lowell [1819-1891]

MARGARET TO DOLCINO

Ask if I love thee? Oh, smiles cannot tell
Plainer what tears are now showing too well.
Had I not loved thee, my sky had been clear:
Had I not loved thee, I had not been here,
Weeping by thee.

Ask if I love thee? How else could I borrow
Pride from man's slander, and strength from my sorrow?
Laugh when they sneer at the fanatic's bride,
Knowing no bliss, save to toil and abide
Weeping by thee.

Charles Kingsley [1819-1875]

DOLCINO TO MARGARET

The world goes up and the world goes down,
And the sunshine follows the rain;

And yesterday's sneer, and yesterday's frown,
Can never come over again,
Sweet wife:
No, never come over again.

For woman is warm, though man be cold,
And the night will hallow the day;
Till the heart which at even was weary and old
Can rise in the morning gay,
Sweet wife;
To its work in the morning gay.

Charles Kingsley [1819-1875]

AT LAST

When first the bride and bridegroom wed,
They love their single selves the best;
A sword is in the marriage bed,
Their separate slumbers are not rest.
They quarrel, and make up again,
They give and suffer worlds of pain.
Both right and wrong,
They struggle long,
Till some good day, when they are old,
Some dark day, when the bells are tolled,
Death having taken their best of life,
They lose themselves, and find each other;
They know that they are husband, wife,
For, weeping, they are Father, Mother!

Richard Henry Stoddard [1825-1903]

THE WIFE TO HER HUSBAND

Linger not long. Home is not home without thee:
Its dearest tokens do but make me mourn.
O, let its memory, like a chain about thee,
Gently compel and hasten thy return!

Linger not long. Though crowds should woo thy staying,
Bethink thee, can the mirth of thy friends, though dear,
Compensate for the grief thy long delaying
Costs the fond heart that sighs to have thee here?

Linger not long. How shall I watch thy coming,
As evening shadows stretch o'er moor and dell;
When the wild bee hath ceased her busy humming,
And silence hangs on all things like a spell!

How shall I watch for thee, when fears grow stronger,
As night grows dark and darker on the hill!
How shall I weep, when I can watch no longer!
Ah! art thou absent, art thou absent still?

Yet I shall grieve not, though the eye that seeth me

Gazeth through tears that make its splendor dull;
For oh! I sometimes fear when thou art with me,
My cup of happiness is all too full.

Haste, haste thee home unto thy mountain dwelling,
Haste, as a bird unto its peaceful nest!
Haste, as a skiff, through tempests wide and swelling,
Flies to its haven of securest rest!

Unknown

A WIFE'S SONG

O well I love the Spring,
When the sweet, sweet hawthorn blows;
And well I love the Summer,
And the coming of the rose;
But dearer are the changing leaf,
And the year upon the wane,
For O, they bring the blessed time
That brings him home again.

November may be dreary,
December's days may be
As full of gloom to others
As once they were to me;
But O, to hear the tempest
Beat loud against the pane!
For the roaring wind and the blessed time
That brings him home again.

William Cox Bennett [1820-1895]

THE SAILOR'S WIFE

And are ye sure the news is true?
And are ye sure he's weel?
Is this a time to talk o' wark?
Ye jauds, fling by your wheel!
Is this a time to spin a thread,
When Colin's at the door?
Rax down my cloak - I'll to the quay,
And see him come ashore.
For there's nae luck aboot the house,
There's nae luck ava',
There's little pleasure in the house,
When our gudeman's awa'.

And gi'e to me my bigonet,
My bishop's satin gown;
For I maun tell the baillie's wife
That Colin's in the town.
My Turkey slippers maun gae on,
My stockins pearly blue;
It's a' to pleasure our gudeman,
For he's baith leal and true.

Rise, lass, and mak' a clean fireside,
Put on the muckle pot;
Gi'e little Kate her button gown,
And Jock his Sunday coat.
And mak' their shoon as black as slaes,
Their hose as white as snaw;
It's a' to please my own gudeman,
He likes to see them braw.

There's twa hens upon the bauk,
Hae fed this month and mair;
Mak' haste and thraw their necks about
That Colin weel may fare!
And spread the table neat and clean,
Gar ilka thing look braw;
For wha can tell how Colin fared,
When he was far awa'?

Sae true his heart, sae smooth his speech,
His breath like caller air;
His very foot has music in't
As he comes up the stair.
And will I see his face again,
And will I hear him speak?
I'm downright dizzy wi' the thought,
In troth I'm like to greet!

If Colin's weel, and weel content,
I ha'e nae mair to crave;
And gin I live to keep him sae,
I'm blest abune the lave.
And will I see his face again,
And will I hear him speak?
I'm downright dizzy wi' the thought,
In troth I'm like to greet!
For there's nae luck aboot the house,
There's nae luck ava';
There's little pleasure in the house
When our gudeman's awa'.

William Julius Mickle [1735-1788]
(or Jean Adam (?) [1710-1765])

JERRY AN' ME

No matter how the chances are,
Nor when the winds may blow,
My Jerry there has left the sea
With all its luck an' woe:
For who would try the sea at all,
Must try it luck or no.

They told him - Lor', men take no care
How words they speak may fall -
They told him blunt, he was too old,
Too slow with oar an' trawl,

An' this is how he left the sea
An' luck an' woe an' all.

Take any man on sea or land
Out of his beaten way,
If he is young 'twill do, but then,
If he is old an' gray,
A month will be a year to him.
Be all to him you may.

He sits by me, but most he walks
The door-yard for a deck,
An' scans the boat a-goin' out
Till she becomes a speck,
Then turns away, his face as wet
As if she were a wreck.

I cannot bring him back again,
The days when we were wed.
But he shall never know - my man -
The lack o' love or bread,
While I can cast a stitch or fill
A needleful o' thread.

God pity me, I'd most forgot
How many yet there be,
Whose goodmen full as old as mine
Are somewhere on the sea,
Who hear the breakin' bar an' think
O' Jerry home an' - me.

Hiram Rich [1832-1901]

"DON'T BE SORROWFUL, DARLING"

O don't be sorrowful, darling!
And don't be sorrowful, pray;
Taking the year together, my dear,
There isn't more night than day.

'Tis rainy weather, my darling;
Time's waves they heavily run;
But taking the year together, my dear,
There isn't more cloud than sun.

We are old folks now, my darling,
Our heads are growing gray;
But taking the year all round, my dear,
You will always find the May.

We have had our May, my darling,
And our roses long ago;
And the time of the year is coming, my dear,
For the silent night and the snow.

But God is God, my darling,
Of the night as well as the day;

And we feel and know that we can go
Wherever He leads the way.

A God of the night, my darling,
Of the night of death so grim;
The gate that leads out of life, good wife,
Is the gate that leads to Him.

Rembrandt Peale [1778-1860]

WINIFREDA

Away! let naught to love displeasing,
My Winifreda, move your care;
Let naught delay the heavenly blessing,
Nor squeamish pride, nor gloomy fear.

What though no grants of royal donors
With pompous titles grace our blood,
We'll shine in more substantial honors,
And, to be noble, we'll be good.

Our name, while virtue thus we tender,
Will sweetly sound where'er 'tis spoke,
And all the great ones, they shall wonder
How they respect such little folk.

What though, from fortune's lavish bounty,
No mighty treasures we possess;
We'll find, within our pittance, plenty,
And be content without excess.

Still shall each kind returning season
Sufficient for our wishes give;
For we will live life of reason,
And that's the only life to live.

Through youth and age, in love excelling,
We'll hand in hand together tread;
Sweet smiling peace shall crown our dwelling
And babes, sweet smiling babes, our bed.

How should I love the pretty creatures,
While round my knees they fondly clung!
To see them look their mother's features,
To hear them lisp their mother's tongue!

And when with envy time transported
Shall think to rob us of our joys,
You'll in your girls again be courted,
And I'll go wooing in my boys.

Unknown

AN OLD MAN'S IDYL

By the waters of Life we sat together,
Hand in hand, in the golden days
Of the beautiful early summer weather,
When skies were purple and breath was praise,
When the heart kept tune to the carol of birds,
And the birds kept tune to the songs which ran
Through shimmer of flowers on grassy swards,
And trees with voices aeolian.

By the rivers of Life we walked together,
I and my darling, unafraid;
And lighter than any linnet's feather
The burdens of being on us weighed;
And Love's sweet miracles o'er us threw
Mantles of joy outlasting Time,
And up from the rosy morrows grew
A sound that seemed like a marriage chime.

In the gardens of Life we strayed together,
And the luscious apples were ripe and red,
And the languid lilac, and honeyed heather
Swooned with the fragrance which they shed;
And under the trees the angels walked,
And up in the air a sense of wings
Awed us tenderly while we talked
Softly in sacred communings.

In the meadows of Life we strayed together,
Watching the waving harvests grow,
And under the benison of the Father
Our hearts, like the lambs, skipped to and fro;
And the cowslip, hearing our low replies,
Broidered fairer the emerald banks,
And glad tears shone in the daisy's eyes,
And the timid violet glistened thanks.

Who was with us, and what was round us,
Neither myself nor my darling guessed;
Only we knew that something crowned us
Out from the heavens with crowns of rest;
Only we knew that something bright
Lingered lovingly where we stood,
Clothed with the incandescent light
Of something higher than humanhood.

Oh, the riches Love doth inherit!
Oh, the alchemy which doth change
Dross of body and dregs of spirit
Into sanctities rare and strange!
My flesh is feeble, and dry, and old,
My darling's beautiful hair is gray;
But our elixir and precious gold
Laugh at the footsteps of decay.

Harms of the world have come unto us,
Cups of sorrow we yet shall drain;
But we have a secret which doth show us
Wonderful rainbows in the rain.

And we hear the tread of the years move by,
And the sun is setting behind the hills;
But my darling does not fear to die,
And I am happy in what God wills.

So we sit by our household fires together,
Dreaming the dreams of long ago;
Then it was balmy, sunny weather,
And now the valleys are laid in snow;
Icicles hang from the slippery eaves,
The wind blows cold, - 'tis growing late;
Well, well! we have garnered all our sheaves,
I and my darling, and we wait.

Richard Realf [1834-1878]

THE POET'S SONG TO HIS WIFE

How many summers, love,
Have I been thine?
How many days, thou dove,
Hast thou been mine?
Time, like the winged wind
When it bends the flowers,
Hath left no mark behind,
To count the hours.

Some weight of thought, though loth,
On thee he leaves;
Some lines of care round both
Perhaps he weaves;
Some fears, - a soft regret
For joys scarce known;
Sweet looks we half forget; -
All else is flown!

Ah! - With what thankless heart
I mourn and sing!
Look, where our children start,
Like sudden Spring!
With tongues all sweet and low,
Like a pleasant rhyme,
They tell how much I owe
To thee and Time!

Bryan Waller Procter [1787-1874]

JOHN ANDERSON

John Anderson my jo, John,
When we were first acquent
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonnie brow was brent;
But now your brow is bald, John,
Your locks are like the snow;
But blessings on your frosty pow,

John Anderson my jo.

John Anderson my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither,
And mony a canty day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither:
Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson my jo.

Robert Burns [1759-1796]

TO MARY

"Thee, Mary, with this ring I wed,
So, fourteen years ago, I said -
Behold another ring! - "For what?
To wed thee o'er again - why not?"

With that first ring I married Youth,
Grace, Beauty, Innocence, and Truth;
Taste long admired, sense long revered,
And all my Molly then appeared.
If she, by merit since disclosed,
Prove twice the woman I supposed,
I plead that double merit now,
To justify a double vow.

Here then, to-day, (with faith as sure,
With ardor as intense and pure,
As when, amidst the rites divine,
I took thy troth, and plighted mine),
To thee, sweet girl, my second ring
A token, and a pledge, I bring;
With this I wed, till death us part,
Thy riper virtues to my heart;
Those virtues, which, before untried,
The wife has added to the bride;
Those virtues, whose progessive claim,
Endearing wedlock's very name,
My soul enjoys, my song approves,
For Conscience' sake, as well as Love's.

For why? - They show me every hour,
Honor's high thought, Affection's power,
Discretion's deed, sound Judgment's sentence,
And teach me all things - but Repentance.

Samuel Bishop [1731-1795]

THE GOLDEN WEDDING

O Love, whose patient pilgrim feet
Life's longest path have trod;
Whose ministry hath symbolled sweet

The dearer love of God;
The sacred myrtle wreathes again
Thine altar, as of old;
And what was green with summer then,
Is mellowed now to gold.

Not now, as then, the future's face
Is flushed with fancy's light;
But memory, with a milder grace,
Shall rule the feast to-night.
Blest was the sun of joy that shone,
Nor less the blinding shower;
The bud of fifty years agone
Is love's perfected flower.

O memory, ope thy mystic door;
O dream of youth, return;
And let the light that gleamed of yore
Beside this altar burn.
The past is plain; 'twas love designed
E'en sorrow's iron chain;
And, mercy's shining thread has twined
With the dark warp of pain.

So be it still. O Thou who hast
That younger bridal blest,
Till the May-morn of love has passed
To evening's golden west;
Come to this later Cana, Lord,
And, at thy touch divine,
The water of that earlier board
To-night shall turn to wine.

David Gray [1837-1888]

MOGGY AND ME

Oh wha are sae happy as me an' my Moggy?
Oh wha are sae happy as Moggy an' me?
We're baith turnin' auld, an' our walth is soon tauld,
But contentment bides aye in our cottage sae wee.
She toils a' the day when I'm out wi' the hirsel,
An' chants to the bairns while I sing on the brae;
An' aye her blithe smile welcomes me frae my toil,
When down the glen I come weary an' wae.

Aboon our auld heads we've a nice little biggin,
That keeps out the cauld when the simmer's awa;
We've twa webs o' linen o' Moggy's ain spinnin',
As thick as silk velvet and white as the snaw;
We've kye in the byre, an' yauds in the stable,
A grumphie sae fat that she hardly can stand;
An' something, I guess, in yon auld painted press
To cheer up the speerits an' steady the hand.

'Tis true we hae had mony sorrows an' crosses,
Our pouches oft toom, an' our hearts fu' o' care;

But wi' a' our crosses, our sorrows an' losses,
Contentment, thank heaven! has aye been our share.
I've an auld roostit sword that was left by my father,
Whilk aye has been drawn when my king had a fae;
We hae friends ane or twa that aft gie us a ca',
To laugh when we're happy or grieve when we're wae.

Our duke may hae gowd mair than schoolmen can reckon,
An' flunkies to watch ilka glance o' his e'e,
His lady aye braw sittin' prim in her ha';
But are they sae happy as Moggy an' me?
A' ye wha ne'er fand the straight road to be happy,
Wha are nae content wi' the lot that ye dree,
Come down to the dwellin' o' whilk I've been tellin',
You'll learn it by lookin' at Moggy an' me.

James Hogg [1770-1835]

"O, LAY THY HAND IN MINE, DEAR!"

O, lay thy hand in mine, dear!
We're growing old;
But Time hath brought no sign, dear,
That hearts grow cold.
'Tis long, long since our new love
Made life divine;
But age enricheth true love,
Like noble wine.

And lay thy cheek to mine, dear,
And take thy rest;
Mine arms around thee twine, dear,
And make thy nest.
A many cares are pressing
On this dear head;
But Sorrow's hands in blessing
Are surely laid.

O, lean thy life on mine, dear!
'Twill shelter thee.
Thou wert a winsome vine, dear,
On my young tree:
And so, till boughs are leafless,
And songbirds flown,
We'll twine, then lay us, griefless
Together down.

Gerald Massey [1828-1907]

THE EXEQUY

Accept, thou shrine of my dead saint,
Instead of dirges this complaint;
And for sweet flowers to crown thy hearse,
Receive a strew of weeping verse
From thy grieved friend, whom thou might'st see

Quite melted into tears for thee.
Dear loss! since thy untimely fate,
My task hath been to meditate
On thee, on thee: thou art the book,
The library whereon I look,
Though almost blind. For thee (loved clay)
I languish out, not live, the day,
Using no other exercise
But which I practise with mine eyes:
By which wet glasses I find out
How lazily time creeps about
To one that mourns: this, only this,
My exercise and business is:
So I compute the weary hours
With sighs dissolved into showers.

Nor wonder if my time go thus
Backward and most preposterous;
Thou hast benighted me; thy set
This eve of blackness did beget,
Who wast my day (though overcast
Before thou hadst thy noontide passed):
And I remember must in tears
Thou scarce hadst seen so many years
As day tells hours. By thy clear sun
My love and fortune first did run;
But thou wilt never more appear
Folded within my hemisphere,
Since both thy light and motion,
Like a fled star, is fallen and gone,
And 'twixt me and my soul's dear wish
The earth now interposed is,
Which such a strange eclipse doth make
As ne'er was read in almanac.

I could allow thee for a time
To darken me and my sad clime;
Were it a month, a year, or ten,
I would thy exile live till then,
And all that space my mirth adjourn,
So thou wouldst promise to return,
And putting off thy ashy shroud
At length disperse this sorrow's cloud.
But woe is me! the longest date
Too narrow is to calculate
These empty hopes: never shall I
Be so much blest as to descry
A glimpse of thee, till that day come
Which shall the earth to cinders doom,
And a fierce fever must calcine
The body of this world - like thine,
(My little world!) That fit of fire
Once off, our bodies shall aspire
To our souls' bliss: then we shall rise
And view ourselves with clearer eyes
In that calm region where no night
Can hide us from each other's sight.

Meantime thou hast her, earth: much good
May my harm do thee! Since it stood
With Heaven's will I might not call
Her longer mine, I give thee all
My short-lived right and interest
In her whom living I loved best:
With a most free and bounteous grief
I give thee what I could not keep.
Be kind to her, and prithee look
Thou write into thy Doomsday book
Each parcel of this rarity
Which in thy casket shrined doth lie,
See that thou make thy reckoning straight,
And yield her back again by weight;
For thou must audit on thy trust
Each grain and atom of this dust,
As thou wilt answer Him that lent -
Not gave - thee my dear monument.
So close the ground, and 'bout her shade
Black curtains draw: my bride is laid.

Sleep on, my Love, in thy cold bed
Never to be disquieted!
My last good-night! Thou wilt not wake
Till I thy fate shall overtake:
Till age, or grief, or sickness must
Marry my body to that dust
It so much loves; and fill the room
My heart keeps empty in thy tomb.
Stay for me there: I will not fail
To meet thee in that hollow vale.
And think not much of my delay:
I am already on the way,
And follow thee with all the speed
Desire can make, or sorrows breed.
Each minute is a short degree
And every hour a step towards thee.
At night when I betake to rest,
Next morn I rise nearer my west
Of life, almost by eight hours' sail,
Than when sleep breathed his drowsy gale.

Thus from the Sun my bottom steers,
And my day's compass downward bears:
Nor labor I to stem the tide
Through which to thee I swiftly glide.
'Tis true, with shame and grief I yield,
Thou, like the van, first took'st the field;
And gotten hast the victory
In thus adventuring to die
Before me, whose more years might crave
A just precedence in the grave.
But hark! my pulse, like a soft drum,
Beats my approach, tells thee I come:
And slow howe'er my marches be
I shall at last sit down by thee.

The thought of this bids me go on

And wait my dissolution
With hope and comfort. Dear (forgive
The crime), I am content to live
Divided, with but half a heart,
Till we shall meet and never part.

Henry King [1592-1669]

LOVE SONNETS

SONNETS
From "Amoretti"

III
The sovereign beauty which I do admire,
Witness the world how worthy to be praised!
The light whereof hath kindled heavenly fire
In my frail spirit, by her from baseness raised;
That being now with her huge brightness dazed,
Base thing I can no more endure to view:
But, looking still on her, I stand amazed
At wondrous sight of so celestial hue.
So when my tongue would speak her praises due,
It stopped is with thought's astonishment;
And when my pen would write her titles true,
It ravished is with fancy's wonderment:
Yet in my heart I then both speak and write
The wonder that my wit cannot indite.

VIII
More than most fair, full of the living fire
Kindled above unto the Maker near;
No eyes but joys, in which all powers conspire
That to the world naught else be counted dear;
Through your bright beams doth not the blinded guest
Shoot out his darts to base affections wound;
But angels come to lead frail minds to rest
In chaste desires, on heavenly beauty bound.
You frame my thoughts, and fashion me within;
You stop my tongue, and teach my heart to speak;
You calm the storm that passion did begin,
Strong through your cause, but by your virtue weak.
Dark is the world, where your light shined never;
Well is he born that may behold you ever.

XXIV
When I behold that beauty's wonderment,

And rare perfection of each goodly part,
Of Nature's still the only complement,
I honor and admire the Maker's art.
But when I feel the bitter baleful smart
Which her fair eyes un'wares do work in me,
That death out of their shiny beams do dart,
I think that I a new Pandora see,
Whom all the gods in council did agree
Into this sinful world from heaven to send,
That she to wicked men a scourge should be,
For all their faults with which they did offend.
But since ye are my scourge, I will entreat
That for my faults ye will me gently beat.

XXXIV

Like as a ship, that through the ocean wide,
By conduct of some star doth make her way,
Whenas a storm hath dimmed her trusty guide,
Out of her course doth wander far astray;
So I, whose star, that wont with her bright ray
Me to direct, with clouds is overcast,
Do wander now, in darkness and dismay,
Through hidden perils round about me placed;
Yet hope I well that, when this storm is past,
My Helice, the lodestar of my life,
Will shine again, and look on me at last,
With lovely light to clear my cloudy grief:
Till then I wander care-full, comfortless,
In secret sorrow, and sad pensiveness.

LV

So oft as I her beauty do behold,
And therewith do her cruelty compare,
I marvel of what substance was the mould,
The which her made at once so cruel fair;
Not earth, for her high thoughts more heavenly are;
Not water, for her love doth burn like fire;
Not air, for she is not so light or rare;
Not fire, for she doth freeze with faint desire.
Then needs another element inquire
Whereof she might be made - that is, the sky;
For to the heaven her haughty looks aspire,
And eke her mind is pure immortal high.
Then, since to heaven ye likened are the best,
Be like in mercy as in all the rest.

LXVIII

Most glorious Lord of Life! that on this day
Didst make thy triumph over death and sin,
And, having harrowed hell, didst bring away
Captivity thence captive, us to win,
This joyous day, dear Lord, with joy begin;
And grant that we, for whom thou diddest die,
Being with thy dear blood clean washed from sin,
May live forever in felicity;
And that thy love we weighing worthily,
May likewise love thee for the same again,
And for thy sake, that all 'like dear didst buy,

With love may one another entertain!
So let us love, dear Love, like as we ought:
Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.

LXX

Fresh Spring, the herald of love's mighty king,
In whose coat-armor richly are displayed
All sorts of flowers the which on earth do spring
In goodly colors gloriously arrayed;
Go to my love, where she is careless laid,
Yet in her winter's bower not well awake;
Tell her the joyous time will not be stayed,
Unless she do him by the forelock take;
Bid her therefore herself soon ready make
To wait on Love amongst his lovely crew;
Where everyone that misseth then her mate
Shall be by him amerced with penance due.
Make haste, therefore, sweet love, whilst it is prime;
For none can call again the passed time.

LXXV

One day I wrote her name upon the strand,
But came the waves and washed it away:
Again I wrote it with a second hand,
But came the tide and made my pains his prey.
"Vain man," said she, "that dost in vain essay
A mortal thing so to immortalize;
For I myself shall like to this decay,
And eke my name be wiped out likewise."
"Not so," quoth I; "let baser things devise
To die in dust, but you shall live by fame;
My verse your virtues rare shall eternize,
And in the heavens write your glorious name:
Where, whenas Death shall all the world subdue,
Our love shall live, and later life renew."

LXXIX

Men call you fair, and you do credit it,
For that yourself ye daily such do see:
But the true fair, that is the gentle wit
And virtuous mind, is much more praised of me:
For all the rest, however fair it be,
Shall turn to naught and lose that glorious hue;
But only that is permanent and free
From frail corruption that doth flesh ensue.
That is true beauty; that doth argue you
To be divine, and born of heavenly seed;
Derived from that fair Spirit from whom all true
And perfect beauty did at first proceed:
He only fair, and what he fair hath made;
All other fair, like flowers, untimely fade.

Edmund Spenser [1552?-1599]

SONNETS
From "Astrophel and Stella"

I

Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show,
That She, dear She! might take some pleasure of my pain;
Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her know,
Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain:
I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe,
Studying inventions fine, her wits to entertain;
Oft turning others' leaves, to see if thence would flow
Some fresh and fruitful showers upon my sunburnt brain:
But words came halting forth, wanting Invention's stay.
Invention, Nature's child, fled step-dame Study's blows;
And others' feet still seemed but strangers in my way.
Thus, great with child to speak, and helpless in my throes,
Biting my truant pen, beating myself for spite:
"Fool!" said my Muse to me, "look in thy heart, and write!"

XXXI

With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies!
How silently, and with how wan a face!
What! may it be that even in heavenly place
That busy archer his sharp arrows tries?
Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case;
I read it in thy looks. Thy languished grace
To me, that feel the like, thy state descries.
Then, even of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
Is constant love deemed there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be loved, and yet
Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?
Do they call virtue there, ungratefulness?

XXXIX

Come Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
The indifferent judge between the high and low!
With shield of proof, shield me from out the press
Of those fierce darts Despair at me doth throw:
O make in me those civil wars to cease!
I will good tribute pay if thou do so.
Take thou of me, smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
A chamber deaf to noise and blind to light,
A rosy garland, and a weary head:
And if these things, as being thine in right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

LXII

Late tired with woe, even ready for to pine
With rage of love, I called my Love unkind;
She in whose eyes love, though unfelt, doth shine,
Sweet said that I true love in her should find.
I joyed; but straight thus watered was my wine,
That love she did, but loved a love not blind;
Which would not let me, whom she loved, decline
From nobler cause, fit for my birth and mind:
And therefore, by her love's authority,

Willed me these tempests of vain love to fly,
And anchor fast myself on Virtue's shore.
Alas, if this the only metal be
Of love new-coined to help my beggary,
Dear! love me not, that ye may love me more!

LXIV

No more, my Dear, no more these counsels try;
O give my passions leave to run their race!
Let Fortune lay on me her worst disgrace;
Let folk o'ercharged with brain, against me cry;
Let clouds bedim my face, break in mine eye;
Let me no steps but of lost labor trace;
Let all the earth with scorn recount my case;
But do not will me from my love to fly!
I do not envy Aristotle's wit;
Nor do aspire to Caesar's bleeding fame;
Nor aught do care, though some above me sit;
Nor hope, nor wish another course to frame,
But that which once may win thy cruel heart:
Thou art my Wit, and thou my Virtue art.

LXXIII

Love still a boy and oft a wanton is,
Schooled only by his mother's tender eye;
What wonder, then, if he his lesson miss,
When for so soft a rod dear play he try?
And yet my Star, because a sugared kiss
In sport I sucked while she asleep did lie,
Doth lower, nay chide, nay threat, for only this. -
Sweet, it was saucy Love, not humble I!
But no 'scuse serves; she makes her wrath appear
In Beauty's throne; see now, who dares come near
Those scarlet judges, threatening bloody pain!
O heavenly fool, thy most kiss-worthy face
Anger invests with such a lovely grace,
That Anger's self I needs must kiss again.

CIII

O happy Thames that didst my Stella bear!
I saw thee with full many a smiling line
Upon thy cheerful face, Joy's livery wear,
While those fair planets on thy streams did shine.
The boat for joy could not to dance forbear;
While wanton winds, with beauties so divine,
Ravished, stayed not, till in her golden hair
They did themselves, (O sweetest prison!) twine.
And fain those Aeol's youths there would their stay
Have made, but forced by Nature still to fly,
First did with puffing kiss those locks display.
She so dishevelled, blushed. From window, I,
With sight thereof, cried out, "O fair disgrace!
Let Honor's self to thee grant highest place!"

CVII

Stella! since thou so right a Princess art
Of all the powers which life bestows on me,
That ere by them aught undertaken be,

They first resort unto that sovereign part;
Sweet! for a while give respite to my heart,
Which pants as though it still should leap to thee;
And on my thoughts give thy lieutenancy
To this great cause, which needs both use and art.
And as a Queen, who from her presence sends
Whom she employs, dismiss from thee my wit,
Till it have wrought what thy own will attends:
On servants' shame oft master's blame doth sit.
O, let not fools in me thy works reprove,
And scorning, say, "See what it is to love!"

Philip Sidney [1554-1586]

SONNETS
From "To Delia"

VI

Fair is my Love, and cruel as she's fair:
Her brow shades frowns, although her eyes are sunny;
Her smiles are lightning, though her pride despair,
And her disdains are gall, her favors honey.
A modest maid, decked with a blush of honor,
Whose feet do tread green paths of youth and love;
The wonder of all eyes that look upon her,
Sacred on earth, designed a Saint above.
Chastity and Beauty, which were deadly foes,
Live reconciled friends within her brow;
And had she Pity to conjoin with those,
Then who had heard the plaints I utter now?
O had she not been fair, and thus unkind,
My Muse had slept, and none had known my mind.

XII

My spotless love hovers, with purest wings,
About the temple of the proudest frame,
Where blaze those lights, fairest of earthly things,
Which clear our clouded world with brightest flame.
My ambitious thoughts, confined in her face,
Affect no honor but what she can give;
My hopes do rest in limits of her grace;
I weigh no comfort, unless she relieve.
For she, that can my heart imparadise,
Holds in her fairest hand what dearest is.
My Fortune's Wheel's the Circle of her Eyes,
Whose rolling grace deign once a turn of bliss!
All my life's sweet consists in her alone;
So much I love the most unloving one.

XXX

And yet I cannot reprehend the flight
Or blame the attempt, presuming so to soar;
The mounting venture, for a high delight,
Did make the honor of the fall the more.
For who gets wealth, that puts not from the shore?
Danger hath honor; great designs, their fame;
Glory doth follow, courage goes before;

And though the event oft answers not the same,
Suffice that high attempts have never shame.
The Mean-observer (whom base safety keeps)
Lives without honor, dies without a name,
And in eternal darkness ever sleeps.
And therefore, Delia! 'tis to me no blot
To have attempted, though attained thee not.

XXXVI

When men shall find thy flower, thy glory pass,
And thou, with careful brow, sitting alone,
Received hast this message from thy glass,
That tells the truth, and says that All is gone;
Fresh shalt thou see in me the wounds thou madest,
Though spent thy flame, in me the heat remaining:
I that have loved thee thus before thou fadest,
My faith shall wax, when thou art in thy waning!
The world shall find this miracle in me,
That fire can burn when all the matter's spent:
Then what my faith hath been, thyself shalt see,
And that thou wast unkind, thou may'st repent!
Thou may'st repent that thou hast scorned my tears,
When Winter snows upon thy golden hairs.

XXXIX

Look, Delia, how we esteem the half-blown rose
The image of thy blush, and Summer's honor!
Whilst yet her tender bud doth undisclose
That full of beauty Time bestows upon her.
No sooner spreads her glory in the air
But straight her wide-blown pomp comes to decline;
She then is scorned that late adorned the fair;
So fade the roses of those cheeks of thine.
No April can revive thy withered flowers
Whose springing grace adorns thy glory now;
Swift, speedy Time, feathered with flying hours,
Dissolves the beauty of the fairest brow.
Then do not thou such treasure waste in vain,
But love now, whilst thou may'st be loved again.

XLV

Beauty, sweet Love, is like the morning dew,
Whose short refresh upon the tender green
Cheers for a time, but till the sun doth show:
And straight 'tis gone, as it had never been.
Soon doth it fade, that makes the fairest flourish;
Short is the glory of the blushing rose:
The hue which thou so carefully dost nourish,
Yet which, at length, thou must be forced to lose.
When thou, surcharged with burthen of thy years,
Shalt bend thy wrinkles homeward to the earth;
When Time hath made a passport for thy fears,
Dated in Age, the Calends of our Death:
But ah, no more! This hath been often told;
And women grieve to think they must be old.

XLVI

I must not grieve my Love, whose eyes would read

Lines of delight, whereon her youth might smile!
Flowers have a time, before they come to seed;
And she is young, and now must sport the while.
And sport, Sweet Maid, in season of these years,
And learn to gather flowers before they wither!
And where the sweetest blossom first appears,
Let Love and Youth conduct thy pleasures thither!
Lighten forth smiles to clear the clouded air,
And calm the tempest which my sighs do raise!
Pity and smiles do best become the fair;
Pity and smiles shall yield thee lasting praise.
I hope to say, when all my griefs are gone,
"Happy the heart that sighed for such a one!"

L

Let others sing of Knights and Paladines
In aged accents and untimely words,
Paint shadows in imaginary lines,
Which well the reach of their high wit records:
But I must sing of Thee, and those fair eyes!
Authentic shall my verse in time to come,
When the yet unborn shall say, Lo, where she lies!
Whose beauty made him speak, that else was dumb!
These are the arks, the trophies I erect,
That fortify thy name against old age;
And these thy sacred virtues must protect
Against the Dark, and Time's consuming rage.
Though the error of my youth in them appear,
Suffice, they showed I lived, and loved thee dear.

LI

Care-charmer Sleep, son of the sable Night,
Brother to Death, in silent darkness born:
Relieve my languish, and restore the light;
With dark forgetting of my care, return!
And let the day be time enough to mourn
The shipwreck of my ill-adventured youth:
Let waking eyes suffice to wail their scorn,
Without the torment of the night's untruth.
Cease, dreams, the images of day-desires,
To model forth the passions of the morrow;
Never let rising sun approve you liars,
To add more grief to aggravate my sorrow.
Still let me sleep, embracing clouds in vain;
And never wake to feel the day's disdain.

Samuel Daniel [1562-1619]

SONNETS
From "Idea"
To The Reader Of These Sonnets

Into these Loves, who but for Passion looks,
At this first sight, here let him lay them by,
And seek elsewhere in turning other books,
Which better may his labor satisfy.
No far-fetched sigh shall ever wound my breast;

Love from mine eye a tear shall never wring;
Nor in "Ah me's!" my whining sonnets dressed!
A libertine, fantasticly I sing!
My verse is the true image of my mind,
Ever in motion, still desiring change;
And as thus, to variety inclined,
So in all humors sportively I range!
My Muse is rightly of the English strain,
That cannot long one fashion entertain.

IV

Bright Star of Beauty! on whose eyelids sit
A thousand nymph-like and enamored Graces,
The Goddesses of Memory and Wit,
Which there in order take their several places;
In whose dear bosom, sweet delicious Love
Lays down his quiver, which he once did bear,
Since he that blessed paradise did prove;
And leaves his mother's lap, to sport him there.
Let others strive to entertain with words!
My soul is of a braver mettle made:
I hold that vile, which vulgar wit affords,
In me's that faith which Time cannot invade!
Let what I praise be still made good by you!
Be you most worthy, whilst I am most true!

XX

An evil Spirit (your Beauty) haunts me still,
Wherewith, alas, I have been long possessed;
Which ceaseth not to attempt me to each ill,
Nor give me once, but one poor minute's rest.
In me it speaks, whether I sleep or wake;
And when by means to drive it out I try,
With greater torments then it me doth take,
And tortures me in most extremity.
Before my face, it lays down my despairs,
And hastes me on unto a sudden death;
Now tempting me, to drown myself in tears,
And then in sighing to give up my breath.
Thus am I still provoked to every evil,
By this good-wicked Spirit, sweet Angel-Devil.

XXXVII

Dear! why should you command me to my rest,
When now the night doth summon all to sleep?
Methinks this time becometh lovers best!
Night was ordained together friends to keep.
How happy are all other living things,
Which, through the day, disjoined by several flight,
The quiet evening yet together brings,
And each returns unto his Love at night!
O thou that art so courteous else to all,
Why shouldst thou, Night, abuse me only thus!
That every creature to his kind doth call,
And yet 'tis thou dost only sever us?
Well could I wish it would be ever day,
If, when night comes, you bid me go away!

XL

My heart the Anvil where my thoughts do beat;
My words the Hammers fashioning my Desire;
My breast the Forge including all the heat,
Love is the Fuel which maintains the fire.
My sighs the Bellows which the flame increaseth,
Filling mine ears with noise and nightly groaning.
Toiling with pain, my labor never ceaseth;
In grievous Passions, my woes still bemoaning.
My eyes with tears against the fire striving,
Whose scorching glede my heart to cinders turneth:
But with those drops, the flame again reviving
Still more and more it to my torment burneth.
With Sisyphus thus do I roll the stone,
And turn the wheel with damned Ixion.

XLII

How many paltry, foolish, painted things,
That now in coaches trouble every street,
Shall be forgotten, whom no poet sings,
Ere they be well wrapped in their winding-sheet?
Where I to thee eternity shall give,
When nothing else remaineth of these days,
And queens hereafter shall be glad to live
Upon the alms of thy superfluous praise;
Virgins and matrons reading these my rhymes,
Shall be so much delighted with thy story,
That they shall grieve they lived not in these times,
To have seen thee, their sex's only glory:
So shalt thou fly above the vulgar throng,
Still to survive in my immortal song.

LXI

Since there's no help, come, let us kiss and part!
Nay, I have done. You get no more of me!
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free.
Shake hands for ever! Cancel all our vows!
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,
When, his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies,
When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And Innocence is closing up his eyes:
Now, if thou wouldst, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover!

Michael Drayton [1563-1631]

SONNETS
From "Diana"

IX

My Lady's presence makes the Roses red,
Because to see her lips they blush for shame.
The Lily's leaves, for envy pale became;

And her white hands in them this envy bred.
The Marigold the leaves abroad doth spread,
Because the sun's and her power is the same.
The Violet of purple color came,
Dyed in the blood she made my heart to shed.
In brief, all flowers from her their virtue take;
From her sweet breath, their sweet smells do proceed;
The living heat which her eyebeams doth make
Warmeth the ground, and quickeneth the seed.
The rain, wherewith she watereth the flowers,
Falls from mine eyes, which she dissolves in showers.

LXII

To live in hell, and heaven to behold;
To welcome life, and die a living death;
To sweat with heat, and yet be freezing cold;
To grasp at stars, and lie the earth beneath;
To tread a maze that never shall have end;
To burn in sighs, and starve in daily tears;
To climb a hill, and never to descend;
Giants to kill, and quake at childish fears;
To pine for food, and watch the Hesperian tree;
To thirst for drink, and nectar still to draw;
To live accurst, whom men hold blest to be;
And weep those wrongs which never creature saw;
If this be love, if love in these be founded,
My heart is love, for these in it are grounded.

Henry Constable (?) [1562-1613]

SONNETS

XVIII

Shall I compare thee to a Summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And Summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimmed:
But thy eternal Summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wanderest in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

XXIII

As an unperfect actor on the stage,
Who with his fear is put besides his part,
Or some fierce thing replete with too much rage,
Whose strength's abundance weakens his own heart;
So I, for fear of trust, forget to say
The perfect ceremony of love's rite,
And in mine own love's strength seem to decay,
O'ercharged with burden of mine own love's might.

O, let my books be then the eloquence
And dumb presagers of my speaking breast;
Who plead for love, and look for recompense,
More than that tongue that more hath more expressed.
O, learn to read what silent love hath writ:
To hear with eyes belongs to love's fine wit.

XXIX

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee: and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate:
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

XXX

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long-since cancelled woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanished sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before:
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored, and sorrows end.

XXXII

If thou survive my well-contented day
When that churl Death my bones with dust shall cover,
And shalt by fortune once more re-survey
These poor rude lines of thy deceased lover,
Compare them with the bettering of the time,
And though they be outstripped by every pen,
Reserve them for my love, not for their rhyme,
Exceeded by the height of happier men.
O, then vouchsafe me but this loving thought:
"Had my friend's Muse grown with this growing age,
A dearer birth than this his love had brought,
To march in ranks of better equipage:
But since he died, and poets better prove,
Theirs for their style I'll read, his for his love."

XXXIII

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,

Kissing with golden lace the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy.
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:
Even so my sun one early morn did shine
With all-triumphant splendor on my brow;
But out, alack! he was but one hour mine,
The region cloud hath masked him from me now.
Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun staineth.

LX

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end;
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
Nativity, once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crowned,
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
And Time that gave, doth now his gift confound.
Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth,
And delves the parallels in beauty's brow;
Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow:
And yet, to times in hope, my verse shall stand
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

LXXI

No longer mourn for me when I am dead,
Than you shall hear the surly, sullen bell
Give warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell:
Nay, if you read this line, remember not
The hand that writ it; for I love you so,
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
If thinking on me then should make you woe.
O, if (I say) you look upon this verse,
When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,
But let your love even with my life decay;
Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
And mock you with me after I am gone.

LXXIII

That time of year thou may'st in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was nourished by.

This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

CIV

To me, fair friend, you never can be old;
For as you were when first your eye I eyed,
Such seems your beauty still. Three Winters cold
Have from the forests shook three Summers' pride;
Three beauteous Springs to yellow Autumn turned
In process of the seasons have I seen,
Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burned,
Since first I saw you fresh, which yet are green.
Ah! yet doth beauty, like a dial-hand,
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived;
So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,
Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceived:
For fear of which, hear this, thou age unbred:
Ere you were born was beauty's Summer dead.

CVI

When in the chronicle of wasted time
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme
In praise of ladies dead, and lovely knights;
Then in the blazon of sweet beauty's best
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their antique pen would have expressed
Even such a beauty as you master now.
So all their praises are but prophecies
Of this our time, all, you prefiguring;
And, for they looked but with divining eyes,
They had not skill enough your worth to sing:
For we, which now behold these present days,
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

CIX

O, never say that I was false of heart
Though absence seemed my flame to qualify:
As easy might I from myself depart
As from my soul, which in thy breast doth lie;
That is my home of love; if I have ranged,
Like him that travels, I return again,
Just to the time, not with the time exchanged,
So that myself bring water for my stain.
Never believe, though in my nature reigned
All frailties that besiege all kinds of blood,
That it could so preposterously be stained
To leave for nothing all thy sum of good!
For nothing this wide universe I call,
Save thou, my rose: in it thou art my all.

CXVI

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken;

It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom:
If this be error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

CXXX

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damasked, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, - yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;
I grant I never saw a goddess go, -
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare.

CXLVI

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,
Pressed by these rebel powers that thee array,
Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth,
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
Eat up thy charge? Is this thy body's end?
Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more:
So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on men;
And Death once dead, there's no more dying then.

William Shakespeare [1564-1616]

"ALEXIS, HERE SHE STAYED"

Alexis, here she stayed; among these pines,
Sweet hermitress, she did alone repair;
Here did she spread the treasure of her hair,
More rich than that brought from the Colchian mines.
She set her by these musked eglantines,
The happy place the print seems yet to bear;
Her voice did sweeten here thy sugared lines,
To which winds, trees, beasts, birds, did lend their ear.
Me here she first perceived, and here a morn
Of bright carnations did o'erspread her face;
Here did she sigh, here first my hopes were born,
And I first got a pledge of promised grace:

But, ah! what served it to be happy so,
Since passed pleasures double but new woe?

William Drummond [1585-1649]

"WERE I AS BASE AS IS THE LOWLY PLAIN"

Were I as base as is the lowly plain,
And you, my love, as high as heaven above,
Yet should the thoughts of me, your humble swain,
Ascend to heaven in honor of my love.
Were I as high as heaven above the plain,
And you, my love, as humble and as low
As are the deepest bottoms of the main,
Wheresoe'er you were, with you my love should go.
Were you the earth, dear love, and I the skies,
My love should shine on you, like to the sun,
And look upon you with ten thousand eyes,
Till heaven waxed blind and till the world were done.
Wheresoe'er I am, - below, or else above you, -
Wheresoe'er you are, my heart shall truly love you.

Joshua Sylvester [1563-1618]

A SONNET OF THE MOON

Look how the pale Queen of the silent night
Doth cause the ocean to attend upon her,
And he, as long as she is in his sight,
With his full tide is ready her to honor:
But when the silver wagon of the Moon
Is mounted up so high he cannot follow,
The sea calls home his crystal waves to moan,
And with low ebb doth manifest his sorrow.
So you that are the sovereign of my heart,
Have all my joys attending on your will,
My joys low-ebbing when you do depart,
When you return, their tide my heart doth fill.
So as you come, and as you do depart,
Joys ebb and flow within my tender heart.

Charles Best [fl. 1602]

TO MARY UNWIN

Mary! I want a lyre with other strings,
Such aid from Heaven as some have feigned they drew,
An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new
And undebased by praise of meaner things;
That, ere through age or woe I shed my wings,
I may record thy worth with honor due,
In verse as musical as thou art true,
And that immortalizes whom it sings:
But thou hast little need. There is a Book
By seraphs writ with beams of heavenly light,

On which the eyes of God not rarely look,
A chronicle of actions just and bright:
There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine;
And, since thou own'st that praise, I spare thee mine.

William Cowper [1731-1800]

"WHY ART THOU SILENT"

Why art thou silent? Is thy love a plant
Of such weak fibre that the treacherous air
Of absence withers what was once so fair?
Is there no debt to pay, no boon to grant?
Yet have my thoughts for thee been vigilant,
Bound to thy service with unceasing care -
The mind's least generous wish a mendicant
For naught but what thy happiness could spare.
Speak! - though this soft warm heart, once free to hold
A thousand tender pleasures, thine and mine,
Be left more desolate, more dreary cold
Than a forsaken bird's-nest filled with snow
'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine -
Speak, that my torturing doubts their end may know!

William Wordsworth [1770-1850]

SONNETS
From "The House of Life"

IV
LOVESIGHT
When do I see thee most, beloved one?
When in the light the spirits of mine eyes
Before thy face, their altar, solemnize
The worship of that Love through thee made known?
Or when in the dusk hours, (we two alone,)
Close-kissed and eloquent of still replies
Thy twilight-hidden glimmering visage lies,
And my soul only sees thy soul its own?
O love, my love! if I no more should see
Thyself, nor on the earth the shadow of thee,
Nor image of thine eyes in any spring, -
How then should sound upon Life's darkening slope
The ground-whirl of the perished leaves of Hope,
The wind of Death's imperishable wing?

V
HEART'S HOPE
By what word's power, the key of paths untrod,
Shall I the difficult deeps of Love explore,
Till parted waves of Song yield up the shore
Even as that sea which Israel crossed dryshod?
For lo! in some poor rhythmic period,
Lady, I fain would tell how evermore
Thy soul I know not from thy body, nor
Thee from myself, neither our love from God.

Yea, in God's name, and Love's, and thine, would I
Draw from one loving heart such evidence
As to all hearts all things shall signify;
Tender as dawn's first lull-fire, and intense
As instantaneous penetrating sense,
In Spring's birth-hour, of other Springs gone by.

XV

THE BIRTH-BOND

Have you not noted, in some family
Where two were born of a first marriage-bed,
How still they own their gracious bond, though fed
And nursed on the forgotten breast and knee? -
How to their father's children they shall be
In act and thought of one goodwill; but each
Shall for the other have, in silence speech,
And in a word complete community?
Even so, when first I saw you, seemed it, love,
That among souls allied to mine was yet
One nearer kindred than life hinted of.
O born with me somewhere that men forget,
And though in years of sight and sound unmet,
Known for my soul's birth-partner well enough!

XIX

SILENT NOON

Your hands lie open in the long fresh grass, -
The finger-points look through like rosy blooms:
Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams and glooms
'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.
All round our nest, far as the eye can pass,
Are golden kingcup-fields with silver edge
Where the cow-parsley skirts the hawthorn-hedge.
'Tis visible silence, still as the hour-glass.
Deep in the sun-searched growths the dragon-fly
Hangs like a blue thread loosened from the sky: -
So this winged hour is dropped to us from above.
Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for deathless dower,
This close-companioned inarticulate hour
When twofold silence was the song of love.

XXVI

MID-RAPTURE

Thou lovely and beloved, thou my love;
Whose kiss seems still the first; whose summoning eyes,
Even now, as for our love-world's new sunrise,
Shed very dawn; whose voice, attuned above
All modulation of the deep-bowered dove,
Is like a hand laid softly on the soul;
Whose hand is like a sweet voice to control
Those worn tired brows it hath the keeping of: -
What word can answer to thy word, - what gaze
To thine, which now absorbs within its sphere
My worshipping face, till I am mirrored there
Light-circled in a heaven of deep-drawn rays?
What clasp, what kiss mine inmost heart can prove,
O lovely and beloved, O my love?

XXXI

HER GIFTS

High grace, the dower of queens; and therewithal
Some wood-born wonder's sweet simplicity;
A glance like water brimming with the sky
Or hyacinth-light where forest-shadows fall;
Such thrilling pallor of cheek as doth enthrall
The heart; a mouth whose passionate forms imply
All music and all silence held thereby;
Deep golden locks, her sovereign coronal;
A round reared neck, meet column of Love's shrine
To cling to when the heart takes sanctuary;
Hands which for ever at Love's bidding be,
And soft-stirred feet still answering to his sign: -
These are her gifts, as tongue may tell them o'er.
Breathe low her name, my soul; for that means more.

XXXIV

THE DARK GLASS

Not I myself know all my love for thee:
How should I reach so far, who cannot weigh
To-morrow's dower by gage of yesterday?
Shall birth and death, and all dark names that be
As doors and windows bared to some loud sea,
Lash deaf mine ears and blind my face with spray;
And shall my sense pierce love, - the last relay
And ultimate outpost of eternity?
Lo! what am I to Love, the lord of all?
One murmuring shell he gathers from the sand, -
One little heart-flame sheltered in his hand.
Yet through thine eyes he grants me clearest call
And veriest touch of powers primordial
That any hour-girt life may understand.

XLIX

WILLOWWOOD

I sat with Love upon a woodside well,
Leaning across the water, I and he;
Nor ever did he speak nor looked at me,
But touched his lute wherein was audible
The certain secret thing he had to tell:
Only our mirrored eyes met silently
In the low wave; and that sound came to be
The passionate voice I knew; and my tears fell.
And at their fall, his eyes beneath grew hers;
And with his foot and with his wing-feathers
He swept the spring that watered my heart's drouth.
Then the dark ripples spread to waving hair,
And as I stooped, her own lips rising there
Bubbled with brimming kisses at my mouth.

LXXVIII

BODY'S BEAUTY

Or Adam's first wife, Lilith, it is told
(The witch he loved before the gift of Eve,)
That, ere the snake's, her sweet tongue could deceive,
And her enchanted hair was the first gold.
And still she sits, young while the earth is old,

And, subtly of herself contemplative,
Draws men to watch the bright web she can weave,
Till heart and body and life are in its hold.
The rose and poppy are her flowers: for where
Is he not found, O Lilith! whom shed scent
And soft-shed kisses and soft sleep shall snare?
Lo! as that youth's eyes burned at thine, so went
Thy spell through him, and left his straight neck bent,
And round his heart one strangling golden hair.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti [1828-1882]

SONNETS

MEETING
They made the chamber sweet with flowers and leaves,
And the bed sweet with flowers on which I lay;
While my soul, love-bound, loitered on its way.
I did not hear the birds about the eaves,
Nor hear the reapers talk among the sheaves:
Only my soul kept watch from day to day,
My thirsty soul kept watch for one away: -
Perhaps he loves, I thought, remembers, grieves.
At length there came the step upon the stair,
Upon the lock the old familiar hand:
Then first my spirit seemed to scent the air
Of Paradise; then first the tardy sand
Of time ran golden; and I felt my hair
Put on a glory, and my soul expand.

THE FIRST DAY
I wish I could remember the first day,
First hour, first moment of your meeting me,
If bright or dim the season, it might be
Summer or Winter for aught I can say;
So unrecorded did it slip away,
So blind was I to see and to foresee,
So dull to mark the budding of my tree
That would not blossom yet for many a May.
If only I could recollect it, such
A day of days! I let it come and go
As traceless as a thaw of bygone snow;
It seemed to mean so little, meant so much;
If only now I could recall that touch,
First touch of hand in hand - Did one but know!

REMEMBER
Remember me when I am gone away,
Gone far away into the silent land;
When you can no more hold me by the hand,
Nor I half turn to go, yet turning stay.
Remember me when no more, day by day,
You tell me of our future that you planned:
Only remember me; you understand
It will be late to counsel then or pray.
Yet if you should forget me for a while
And afterwards remember, do not grieve:

For if the darkness and corruption leave
A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
Better by far you should forget and smile
Than that you should remember and be sad.

REST

O earth, lie heavily upon her eyes;
Seal her sweet eyes weary of watching, Earth;
Lie close around her; leave no room for mirth
With its harsh laughter, nor for sound of sighs.
She hath no questions, she hath no replies,
Hushed in and curtained with a blessed dearth
Of all that irked her from the hour of birth;
With stillness that is almost Paradise.
Darkness more clear than noonday holdeth her,
Silence more musical than any song;
Even her very heart has ceased to stir:
Until the morning of Eternity
Her rest shall not begin nor end, but be;
And when she wakes she will not think it long.

Christina Georgina Rossetti [1830-1894]

HOW MY SONGS OF HER BEGAN

God made my lady lovely to behold; -
Above the painter's dream he set her face,
And wrought her body in divinest grace;
He touched the brown hair with a sense of gold,
And in the perfect form He did enfold
What was alone as perfect, the sweet heart;
Knowledge most rare to her He did impart,
And filled with love and worship all her days.
And then God thought Him how it would be well
To give her music, and to Love He said,
"Bring thou some minstrel now that he may tell
How fair and sweet a thing My hands have made."
Then at Love's call I came, bowed down my head,
And at His will my lyre grew audible.

Philip Bourke Marston [1850-1887]

AT THE LAST

Because the shadows deepened verily, -
Because the end of all seemed near, forsooth, -
Her gracious spirit, ever quick to ruth,
Had pity on her bond-slave, even on me.
She came in with the twilight noiselessly,
Fair as a rose, immaculate as Truth;
She leaned above my wrecked and wasted youth;
I felt her presence, which I could not see.
"God keep you, my poor friend," I heard her say;
And then she kissed my dry, hot lips and eyes.
Kiss thou the next kiss, quiet Death, I pray;
Be instant on this hour, and so surprise

My spirit while the vision seems to stay;
Take thou the heart with the heart's Paradise.

Philip Bourke Marston [1850-1887]

TO ONE WHO WOULD MAKE A CONFESSION

On! leave the past to bury its own dead.
The past is naught to us, the present all.
What need of last year's leaves to strew Love's bed?
What need of ghosts to grace a festival?
I would not, if I could, those days recall,
Those days not ours. For us the feast is spread,
The lamps are lit, and music plays withal.
Then let us love and leave the rest unsaid.
This island is our home. Around it roar
Great gulfs and oceans, channels, straits and seas.
What matter in what wreck we reached the shore,
So we both reached it? We can mock at these.
Oh leave the past, if past indeed there be;
I would not know it; I would know but thee.

Wilfrid Scawen Blunt [1840-1922]

THE PLEASURES OF LOVE

I do not care for kisses. 'Tis a debt
We paid for the first privilege of love.
These are the rains of April which have wet
Our fallow hearts and forced their germs to move.
Now the green corn has sprouted. Each new day
Brings better pleasures, a more dear surprise,
The blade, the ear, the harvest - and our way
Leads through a region wealthy grown and wise.
We now compare our fortunes. Each his store
Displays to kindred eyes of garnered grain,
Two happy farmers, learned in love's lore,
Who weigh and touch and argue and complain -
Dear endless argument! Yet sometimes we
Even as we argue kiss. There! Let it be.

Wilfrid Scawen Blunt [1840-1922]

"WERE BUT MY SPIRIT LOOSED UPON THE AIR"

Were but my spirit loosed upon the air, -
By some High Power who could Life's chains unbind,
Set free to seek what most it longs to find, -
To no proud Court of Kings would I repair:
I would but climb, once more, a narrow stair,
When day was wearing late, and dusk was kind;
And one should greet me to my failings blind,
Content so I but shared his twilight there.
Nay! well I know he waits not as of old, -
I could not find him in the old-time place, -

I must pursue him, made by sorrow bold,
Through worlds unknown, in strange celestial race,
Whose mystic round no traveller has told,
From star to star, until I see his face.

Louise Chandler Moulton [1835-1908]

RENOUNCEMENT

I must not think of thee; and, tired yet strong,
I shun the thought that lurks in all delight -
The thought of thee - and in the blue heaven's height,
And in the dearest passage of a song.
Oh, just beyond the fairest thoughts that throng
This breast the thought of thee waits, hidden yet bright
But it must never, never come in sight;
I must stop short of thee the whole day long.
But when sleep comes to close each difficult day,
When night gives pause to the long watch I keep,
And all my bonds I needs must loose apart,
Must doff my will as raiment laid away, -
With the first dream that comes with the first sleep
I run, I run, I am gathered to thy heart.

Alice Meynell [1850-1922]

"MY LOVE FOR THEE"

My love for thee doth march like armed men,
Against a queenly city they would take.
Along the army's front its banners shake;
Across the mountain and the sun-smit plain
It steadfast sweeps as sweeps the steadfast rain;
And now the trumpet makes the still air quake,
And now the thundering cannon doth awake
Echo on echo, echoing loud again.
But, lo! the conquest higher than bard e'er sung:
Instead of answering cannon, proud surrender!
Joyful the iron gates are open flung
And, for the conqueror, welcome gay and tender!
O, bright the invader's path with tribute flowers,
While comrade flags flame forth on wall and towers!

Richard Watson Gilder [1844-1909]

SONNETS

AFTER THE ITALIAN

I know not if I love her overmuch;
But this I know, that when unto her face
She lifts her hand, which rests there, still, a space,
Then slowly falls - 'tis I who feel that touch.
And when she sudden shakes her head, with such
A look, I soon her secret meaning trace.

So when she runs I think 'tis I who race.
Like a poor cripple who has lost his crutch
I am if she is gone; and when she goes,
I know not why, for that is a strange art -
As if myself should from myself depart.
I know not if I love her more than those
Who long her light have known; but for the rose
She covers in her hair, I'd give my heart.

I like her gentle hand that sometimes strays,
To find the place, through the same book with mine;
I like her feet; and O, those eyes divine!
And when we say farewell, perhaps she stays
Love-lingering - then hurries on her ways,
As if she thought, "To end my pain and thine."
I like her voice better than new-made wine;
I like the mandolin whereon she plays.
And I like, too, the cloak I saw her wear,
And the red scarf that her white neck doth cover,
And well I like the door that she comes through;
I like the ribbon that doth bind her hair -
But then, in truth, I am that lady's lover,
And every new day there is something new.

Richard Watson Gilder [1844-1909]

STANZAS
From "Modern Love"

I

By this he knew she wept with waking eyes:
That, at his hand's light quiver by her head,
The strange low sobs that shook their common bed
Were called into her with a sharp surprise,
And strangled mute, like little gaping snakes,
Dreadfully venomous to him. She lay
Stone-still, and the long darkness flowed away
With muffled pulses. Then as midnight makes
Her giant heart of Memory and Tears
Drink the pale drug of silence, and so beat
Sleep's heavy measure, they from head to feet
Were moveless, looking through their dead black years,
By vain regret scrawled over the blank wall.
Like sculptured effigies they might be seen
Upon their marriage-tomb, the sword between;
Each wishing for the sword that severs all.

II

It ended, and the morrow brought the task.
Her eyes were guilty gates, that let him in
By shutting all too zealous for their sin:
Each sucked a secret, and each wore a mask.
But, oh, the bitter taste her beauty had!
He sickened as at breath of poison-flowers:
A languid humor stole among the hours,
And if their smiles encountered, he went mad,
And raged deep inward, till the light was brown

Before his vision, and the world forgot,
Looked wicked as some old dull murder-spot.
A star with lurid beams, she seemed to crown
The pit of infamy: and then again
He fainted on his vengefulness, and strove
To ape the magnanimity of love,
And smote himself, a shuddering heap of pain.

III

This was the woman; what now of the man?
But pass him. If he comes beneath a heel,
He shall be crushed until he cannot feel,
Or, being callous, haply till he can.
But he is nothing: - nothing? Only mark
The rich light striking out from her on him!
Ha! what a sense it is when her eyes swim
Across the man she singles, leaving dark
All else! Lord God, who mad'st the thing so fair,
See that I am drawn to her, even now!
It cannot be such harm on her cool brow
To plant a kiss? Yet if I meet him there!
But she is mine! Ah, no! I know too well
I claim a star whose light is overcast:
I claim a phantom-woman in the Past.
The hour has struck, though I heard not the bell!

XIV

What soul would bargain for a cure that brings
Contempt the nobler agony to kill?
Rather let me bear on the bitter ill,
And strike this rusty bosom with new stings!
It seems there is another veering fit,
Since on a gold-haired lady's eyeballs pure,
I looked with little prospect of a cure,
The while her mouth's red bow loosed shafts of wit.
Just heaven! can it be true that jealousy
Has decked the woman thus? and does her head
Swim somewhat for possessions forfeited?
Madam, you teach me many things that be.
I open an old book, and there I find,
That "Women still may love whom they deceive."
Such love I prize not, madam: by your leave,
The game you play at is not to my mind.

XVI

In our old shipwrecked days there was an hour
When in the firelight steadily aglow,
Joined slackly, we beheld the red chasm grow
Among the clicking coals. Our library-bower
That eve was left to us: and hushed we sat
As lovers to whom Time is whispering.
From sudden-opened doors we heard them sing:
The nodding elders mixed good wine with chat.
Well knew we that Life's greatest treasure lay
With us, and of it was our talk. "Ah, yes!
Love dies!" I said: I never thought it less.
She yearned to me that sentence to unsay.
Then when the fire domed blackening, I found

Her cheek was salt against my kiss, and swift
Up the sharp scale of sobs her breast did lift: -
Now am I haunted by that taste! that sound!

XXVI

Love ere he bleeds, an eagle in high skies,
Has earth beneath his wings: from reddened eve
He views the rosy dawn. In vain they weave
The fatal web below while far he flies.
But when the arrow strikes him, there's a change.
He moves but in the track of his spent pain,
Whose red drops are the links of a harsh chain,
Binding him to the ground, with narrow range.
A subtle serpent then has Love become.
I had the eagle in my bosom erst:
Henceforward with the serpent I am cursed.
I can interpret where the mouth is dumb.
Speak, and I see the side-lie of a truth.
Perchance my heart may pardon you this deed:
But be no coward: - you that made Love bleed,
You must bear all the venom of his tooth!

XLI

How many a thing which we cast to the ground,
When others pick it up becomes a gem!
We grasp at all the wealth it is to them;
And by reflected light its worth is found.
Yet for us still 'tis nothing! and that zeal
Of false appreciation quickly fades.
This truth is little known to human shades,
How rare from their own instinct 'tis to feel!
They waste the soul with spurious desire,
That is not the ripe flame upon the bough.
We two have taken up a lifeless vow
To rob a living passion: dust for fire!
Madam is grave, and eyes the clock that tells
Approaching midnight. We have struck despair
Into two hearts. O, look we like a pair
Who for fresh nuptials joyfully yield all else?

XLIII

Mark where the pressing wind shoots javelin-like,
Its skeleton shadow on the broad-backed wave!
Here is a fitting spot to dig Love's grave;
Here where the ponderous breakers plunge and strike,
And dart their hissing tongues high up the sand:
In hearing of the ocean, and in sight
Of those ribbed wind-streaks running into white.
If I the death of Love had deeply planned,
I never could have made it half so sure,
As by the unblest kisses which upbraid
The full-waked sense; or failing that, degrade?
'Tis morning: but no morning can restore
What we have forfeited. I see no sin:
The wrong is mixed. In tragic life, God wot,
No villain need be! Passions spin the plot:
We are betrayed by what is false within.

XLIX

He found her by the ocean's moaning verge,
Nor any wicked change in her discerned;
And she believed his old love had returned,
Which was her exultation, and her scourge.
She took his hand, and walked with him, and seemed
The wife he sought, though shadow-like and dry.
She had one terror, lest her heart should sigh,
And tell her loudly she no longer dreamed.
She dared not say, "This is my breast: look in."
But there's a strength to help the desperate weak.
That night he learned how silence best can speak
The awful things when Pity pleads for Sin.
About the middle of the night her call
Was heard, and he came wondering to the bed.
"Now kiss me, dear! it may be, now!" she said,
Lethe had passed those lips, and he knew all.

L

Thus piteously Love closed what he begat:
The union of this ever-diverse pair!
These two were rapid falcons in a snare,
Condemned to do the flitting of the bat.
Lovers beneath the singing sky of May,
They wandered once; clear as the dew on flowers:
But they fed not on the advancing hours:
Their hearts held cravings for the buried day.
Then each applied to each that fatal knife,
Deep questioning, which probes to endless dole.
Ah, what a dusty answer gets the soul
When hot for certainties in this our life! -
In tragic hints here see what evermore
Moves dark as yonder midnight ocean's force,
Thundering like ramping hosts of warrior horse,
To throw that faint thin line upon the shore!

George Meredith [1828-1909]

LOVE IN THE WINDS

When I am standing on a mountain crest,
Or hold the tiller in the dashing spray,
My love of you leaps foaming in my breast,
Shouts with the winds and sweeps to their foray;
My heart bounds with the horses of the sea,
And plunges in the wild ride of the night,
Flaunts in the teeth of tempest the large glee
That rides out Fate and welcomes gods to fight.
Ho, love, I laugh aloud for love of you,
Glad that our love is fellow to rough weather, -
No fretful orchid hothoused from the dew,
But hale and hardy as the highland heather,
Rejoicing in the wind that stings and thrills,
Comrade of ocean, playmate of the hills.

Richard Hovey [1864-1900]

"OH! DEATH WILL FIND ME"

Oh! Death will find me, long before I tire
Of watching you; and swing me suddenly
Into the shade and loneliness and mire
Of the last land! There, waiting patiently,
One day, I think, I'll feel a cool wind blowing,
See a slow light across the Stygian tide,
And hear the Dead about me stir, unknowing,
And tremble. And I shall know that you have died.
And watch you, a broad-browed and smiling dream,
Pass, light as ever, through the lightless host,
Quietly ponder, start, and sway, and gleam -
Most individual and bewildering ghost! -
And turn, and toss your brown delightful head
Amusedly, among the ancient Dead.

Rupert Brooke [1887-1915]

THE BUSY HEART

Now that we've done our best and worst, and parted,
I would fill my mind with thoughts that will not rend.
(O heart, I do not dare go empty-hearted)
I'll think of Love in books, Love without end;
Women with child, content; and old men sleeping;
And wet strong ploughlands, scarred for certain grain;
And babes that weep, and so forget their weeping;
And the young heavens, forgetful after rain;
And evening hush, broken by homing wings;
And Song's nobility and Wisdom holy,
That live, we dead. I would think of a thousand things,
Lovely and durable, and taste them slowly,
One after one, like tasting a sweet food.
I have need to busy my heart with quietude.

Rupert Brooke [1887-1915]

THE HILL

Breathless, we flung us on the windy hill,
Laughed in the sun, and kissed the lovely grass.
You said, "Through glory and ecstasy we pass;
Wind, sun, and earth remain, the birds sing still,
When we are old, are old. . . ." "And when we die
All's over that is ours; and life burns on
Through other lovers, other lips," said I,
- "Heart of my heart, our heaven is now, is won!"
"We are Earth's best, that learnt her lesson here.
Life is our cry. We have kept the faith!" we said;
"We shall go down with unreluctant tread
Rose-crowned into the darkness!" . . . Proud we were,
And laughed, that had such brave true things to say.
- And then you suddenly cried, and turned away.

Rupert Brooke [1887-1915]

SONNETS
From "Sonnets to Miranda"

Daughter of her whose face, and lofty name
Prenuptial, of old States and Cities speak,
Where lands of wine look north to peak on peak
Of the overwatching Alps: through her, you claim
Kinship with vanished Power, unvanished Fame;
And midst a world grown colorless and bleak
I see the blood of Doges in your cheek,
And in your hair the Titian tints of flame.
Daughter of England too, you first drew breath
Where our coy Springs to our coy Summers yield;
And you descend from one whose lance and shield
Were with the grandsire of Elizabeth,
When the Plantagenet saw the avenger Death
Toward him spurring over Bosworth field.

II

If you had lived in that more stately time
When men remembered the great Tudor queen,
To noblest verse your name had wedded been,
And you for ever crowned with golden rhyme.
If, mid Lorenzo's Florence, made sublime
By Art's Re-Birth, you had moved, a Muse serene,
The mightiest limners had revealed your mien
To all the ages and each wondering clime.
Fled are the singers that from language drew
Its virgin secrets; and in narrow space
The mightiest limners sleep: and only He,
The Eternal Artist, still creates anew
That which is fairer than all song - the grace
That takes the world into captivity.

III

I dare but sing of you in such a strain
As may beseem the wandering harper's tongue,
Who of the glory of his Queen hath sung,
Outside her castle gates in wind and rain.
She, seated mid the noblest of her train,
In her great halls with pictured arras hung,
Hardly can know what melody hath rung
Through the forgetting night, and rung in vain.
He, with one word from her to whom he brings
The loyal heart that she alone can sway,
Would be made rich for ever; but he sings
Of queenhood too aloof, too great, to say
"Sing on, sing on, O minstrel" - though he flings
His soul to the winds that whirl his songs away.

V

I cast these lyric offerings at your feet,
And ask you but to fling them not away:
There suffer them to rest, till even they,
By happy nearness to yourself, grow sweet.

He that hath shaped and wrought them holds it meet
That you be sung, not in some artless way,
But with such pomp and ritual as when May
Sends her full choir, the throned Morn to greet.
With something caught from your own lofty air,
With something learned from your own highborn grace,
Song must approach your presence; must forbear
All light and easy accost; and yet abase
Its own proud spirit in awe and reverence there,
Before the Wonder of your form and face.

VI

I move amid your throng, I watch you hold
Converse with many who are noble and fair,
Yourself the noblest and the fairest there,
Reigning supreme, crowned with that living gold.
I talk with men whose names have been enrolled
In England's book of honor; and I share
With these one honor - your regard; and wear
Your friendship as a jewel of worth untold.
And then I go from out your sphered light
Into a world which still seems full of You.
I know the stars are yonder, that possess
Their ancient seats, heedless what mortals do;
But I behold in all the range of Night
Only the splendor of your loveliness.

VIII

If I had never known your face at all,
Had only heard you speak, beyond thick screen
Of leaves, in an old garden, when the sheen
Of morning dwelt on dial and ivied wall,
I think your voice had been enough to call
Yourself before me, in living vision seen,
So pregnant with your Essence had it been.
So charged with You, in each soft rise and fall.
At least I know, that when upon the night
With chanted word your voice lets loose your soul,
I am pierced, I am pierced and cloven, with Delight
That hath all Pain within it, and the whole
World's tears, all ecstasy of inward sight,
And the blind cry of all the seas that roll.

William Watson [1858-1935]

SONNETS
From "Thysia"

II

Twin songs there are, of joyance, or of pain;
One of the morning lark in midmost sky,
When falls to earth a mist, a silver rain,
A glittering cascade of melody;
And mead and wold and the wide heaven rejoice,
And praise the Maker; but alone I kneel
In sorrowing prayer. Then wanes the day; a voice
Trembles along the dusk, till peal on peal

It pierces every living heart that hears,
Pierces and burns and purifies like fire;
Again I kneel under the starry spheres,
And all my soul seems healed, and lifted higher,
Nor could that jubilant song of day prevail
Like thine of tender grief, O nightingale.

III

Bow down, my song, before her presence high,
In that far world where you must seek her now;
Say that you bring to her no sonnetry,
But plain-set anguish of the breast or brow;
Say that on earth I sang to her alone,
But now, while in her heaven she sits divine,
Turning, I tell the world my bitter moan,
Bidding it share its hopes and griefs with mine,
Versing not what I would, but what I must,
Wail of the wind, or sobbing of the wave;
Ah! say you raised my bowed head from the dust,
And held me backward from a willful grave;
Say this, and her sweet pity will approve,
And bind yet closer her dead bond of love.

VII

I watch beside you in your silent room;
Without, the chill rain falls, life dies away,
The dead leaves drip, and the fast-gathering gloom
Closes around this brief November day,
First day of holy death, of sacred rest;
I kiss your brow, calm, beautiful and cold,
I lay my yearning arms across your breast,
I claim our darling rapture as of old;
Dear heart, I linger but a little space,
Sweet wife, I come to your new world ere long;
This lily - keep it till our next embrace,
While the mute Angel makes our love more strong,
While here I cling, in life's short agony,
To God, and to your deathless memory.

XVI

Comes the New Year; wailing the north winds blow;
In her cold, lonely grave my dead love lies;
Dead lies the stiffened earth beneath the snow,
And blinding sleet blots out the desolate skies;
I stand between the living and the dead;
Hateful to me is life, hateful is death;
Her life was sad, and on that narrow bed
She will not turn, nor wake with human breath.
I kneel between the evil and the good;
The struggle o'er, this one sweet faith have I -
Though life and death be dimly understood,
She loved me; I loved her; love cannot die;
Go then thy way with thine accustomed cheer,
Nor heed my churlish greeting, O New Year.

XXIII

Like some lone miser, dear, behold me stand,
To count my treasures, and their worth extol: -

A last word penciled by that poor left hand;
Two kindred names on the same gentle scroll,
(I found it near your pillow,) traced below;
This little scarf you made, our latest pride;
The violet I digged so long ago,
That nestled in your bosom till you died;
But dearest to my heart, whereon it lies,
Is one warm tress of your luxuriant hair,
Still present to my touch, my lips, my eyes,
Forever changeless, and forever fair,
And even in your grave, beauteous and free
From the cold grasp of mutability.

XXXVI

So sang I in the springtime of my years -
"There's nothing we can call our own but love;"
So let me murmur now that winter nears,
And even in death the deathless truth approve.
Oft have I seen the slow, the broadening river
Roll its glad waters to the parent sea;
Death is the call of love to love; the giver
Claims his own gift for some new mystery.
In boundless love divine the heavens are spread,
In wedded love is earth's divinest store,
And he that liveth to himself is dead,
And he that lives for love lives evermore;
Only in love can life's true path be trod;
Love is self-giving; therefore love is God.

XXXVII

Hear, O Self-Giver, infinite as good;
This faith, at least, my wavering heart should hold,
Nor find in dark regret its daily food,
But catch the gleam of glories yet untold.
Yea, even on earth, beloved, as love well knew,
Brief absence brought our fond returning kiss,
So let my soul to God's great world and you
Look onward with sweet pain of secret bliss; -
O sunset sky and lonely gleaming star,
Your beauty thrills me from the bound of space,
O Love, thy loveliness shows best afar,
And only Heaven shall give thee perfect grace;
Grant then, dear Lord, that all who love may be
Heirs of Thy glorious Immortality.

XLV

How shall I tell the measure of my love?
'Tis vain that I have given thee vows and tears,
Or striven in verse my tenderness to prove,
Or held thy hand in journeyings through the years;
Vain that I follow now with hastening feet,
And sing thy death, still murmuring in my song,
"Only for thee I would the strain were sweet,
Only for thee I would the words were strong;"
Vain even that I closed with death, and fought
To hold thee longer in a world so dear,
Vain that I count a weary world as naught,
That I would die to bring thee back; I hear

God answer me from heaven, O angel wife -
"To prove thy love, live thou a nobler life."

Morton Luce [1849-

SONNETS
From "Sonnets from the Portuguese"

I

I thought once how Theocritus had sung
Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-for years,
Who each one in a gracious hand appears
To bear a gift for mortals, old or young:
And, as I mused it in his antique tongue,
I saw, in gradual vision through my tears,
The sweet, sad years, the melancholy years,
Those of my own life, who by turns had flung
A shadow across me. Straightway I was 'ware,
So weeping, how a mystic Shape did move
Behind me, and drew me backward by the hair;
And a voice said in mastery, while I strove, -
Guess now who holds thee?" - "Death," I said. But, there,
The silver answer rang, - "Not Death, but Love."

III

Unlike are we, unlike, O princely Heart!
Unlike our uses and our destinies.
Our ministering two angels look surprise
On one another, as they strike athwart
Their wings in passing. Thou, bethink thee, art
A guest for queens to social pageantries,
With gages from a hundred brighter eyes
Than tears even can make mine, to play thy part
Of chief musician. What hast thou to do
With looking from the lattice-lights at me,
A poor, tired, wandering singer, singing through
The dark, and leaning up a cypress tree?
The chrism is on thine head, - on mine, the dew, -
And Death must dig the level where these agree.

VI

Go from me. Yet I feel that I shall stand
Henceforward in thy shadow. Nevermore
Alone upon the threshold of my door
Of individual life, I shall command
The uses of my soul, nor lift my hand
Serenely in the sunshine as before,
Without the sense of that which I forbore, -
Thy touch upon the palm. The widest land
Doom takes to part us, leaves thy heart in mine
With pulses that beat double. What I do
And what I dream include thee, as the wine
Must taste of its own grapes. And when I sue
God for myself, He hears that name of thine,
And sees within my eyes the tears of two.

VII

The face of all the world is changed, I think,
Since first I heard the footsteps of thy soul
Move still, oh, still, beside me, as they stole
Betwixt me and the dreadful outer brink
Of obvious death, where I, who thought to sink,
Was caught up into love, and taught the whole
Of life in a new rhythm. The cup of dole
God gave for baptism, I am fain to drink,
And praise its sweetness, Sweet, with thee anear.
The name of country, heaven, are changed away
For where thou art or shalt be, there or here;
And this . . . this lute and song . . . loved yesterday,
(The singing angels know) are only dear,
Because thy name moves right in what they say.

VIII

What can I give thee back, O liberal
And princely giver, who hast brought the gold
And purple of thine heart, unstained, untold,
And laid them on the outside of the wall
For such as I to take or leave withal,
In unexpected largess? Am I cold,
Ungrateful, that for these most manifold
High gifts, I render nothing back at all?
Not so; not cold, - but very poor instead.
Ask God who knows. For frequent tears have run
The colors from my life, and left so dead
And pale a stuff, it were not fitly done
To give the same as pillow to thy head.
Go farther! let it serve to trample on.

IX

Can it be right to give what I can give?
To let thee sit beneath the fall of tears
As salt as mine, and hear the sighing years
Re-sighing on my lips renunciative
Through those infrequent smiles which fail to live
For all thy adjurations? O my fears,
That this can scarce be right! We are not peers
So to be lovers; and I own, and grieve,
That givers of such gifts as mine are, must
Be counted with the ungenerous. Out, alas!
I will not soil thy purple with my dust,
Nor breathe my poison on thy Venice-glass,
Nor give thee any love - which were unjust.
Beloved, I only love thee! let it pass.

X

Yet, love, mere love, is beautiful indeed
And worthy of acceptation. Fire is bright,
Let temple burn, or flax; an equal light
Leaps in the flame from cedar-plank or weed:
And love is fire. And when I say at need
I love thee . . . mark! . . . I love thee - in thy sight
I stand transfigured, glorified aright,
With conscience of the new rays that proceed
Out of my face toward thine. There's nothing low
In love, when love the lowest: meanest creatures

Who love God, God accepts while loving so.
And what I feel, across the inferior features
Of what I am, doth flash itself, and show
How that great work of Love enhances Nature's.

XII

Indeed this very love which is my boast,
And which, when rising up from breast to brow,
Doth crown me with a ruby large enow
To draw men's eyes and prove the inner cost, -
This love even, all my worth, to the uttermost,
I should not love withal, unless that thou
Hadst set me an example, shown me how,
When first thine earnest eyes with mine were crossed,
And love called love. And thus, I cannot speak
Of love even, as a good thing of my own:
Thy soul hath snatched up mine all faint and weak,
And placed it by thee on a golden throne, -
And that I love (O soul, we must be meek!)
Is by thee only, whom I love alone.

XIV

If thou must love me, let it be for naught
Except for love's sake only. Do not say
"I love her for her smile - her look - her way
Of speaking gently, - for a trick of thought
That falls in well with mine, and certes brought
A sense of pleasant ease on such a day" -
For these things in themselves, Beloved, may
Be changed, or change for thee, - and love, so wrought,
May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry, -
A creature might forget to weep, who bore
Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby!
But love me for love's sake, that evermore
Thou may'st love on, through love's eternity.

XVII

My poet, thou canst touch on all the notes
God set between His After and Before,
And strike up and strike off the general roar
Of the rushing worlds a melody that floats
In a serene air purely. Antidotes
Of medicated music, answering for
Mankind's forlornest uses, thou canst pour
From thence into their ears. God's will devotes
Thine to such ends, and mine to wait on thine.
How, Dearest, wilt thou have me for most use?
A hope, to sing by gladly? or a fine
Sad memory, with thy songs to interfuse?
A shade, in which to sing - of palm or pine?
A grave, on which to rest from singing? Choose.

XVIII

I never gave a lock of hair away
To a man, Dearest, except this to thee,
Which now upon my fingers thoughtfully
I ring out to the full brown length and say

"Take it." My day of youth went yesterday;
My hair no longer bounds to my foot's glee,
Nor plant I it from rose or myrtle-tree,
As girls do, any more: it only may
Now shade on two pale cheeks the mark of tears,
Taught drooping from the head that hangs aside
Through sorrow's trick. I thought the funeral-shears
Would take this first, but Love is justified, -
Take it thou, - finding pure, from all those years,
The kiss my mother left here when she died.

XXI

Say over again, and yet once over again,
That thou dost love me. Though the word repeated
Should seem "a cuckoo-song," as thou dost treat it,
Remember, never to the hill or plain,
Valley and wood, without her cuckoo-strain,
Comes the fresh Spring in all her green completed.
Beloved, I, amid the darkness greeted
By a doubtful spirit-voice, in that doubt's pain
Cry: "Speak once more - thou lovest!" Who can fear
Too many stars, though each in heaven shall roll,
Too many flowers, though each shall crown the year?
Say thou dost love me, love me, love me, - toll
The silver iterance! - only minding, Dear,
To love me also in silence with thy soul.

XXII

When our two souls stand up erect and strong,
Face to face, silent, drawing nigh and nigher,
Until the lengthening wings break into fire
At either curved point, - what bitter wrong
Can the earth do us, that we should not long
Be here contented? Think. In mounting higher,
The angels would press on us and aspire
To drop some golden orb of perfect song
Into our deep, dear silence. Let us stay
Rather on earth, Beloved, - where the unfit
Contrarious moods of men recoil away
And isolate pure spirits, and permit
A place to stand and love in for a day,
With darkness and the death-hour rounding it.

XXVIII

My letters! all dead paper, mute and white!
And yet they seem alive and quivering
Against my tremulous hands which loose the string
And let them drop down on my knee to-night.
This said, - he wished to have me in his sight
Once, as a friend: this fixed a day in spring
To come and touch my hand . . . a simple thing,
Yet I wept for it! - this, . . . the paper's light . . .
Said, Dear, I love thee; and I sank and quailed,
As if God's future thundered on my past.
This said, I am thine, - and so its ink has paled
With lying at my heart that beat too fast.
And this . . . O Love, thy words have ill availed,
If, what this said, I dared repeat at last!

XXXVIII

First time he kissed me, he but only kissed
The fingers of this hand wherewith I write;
And ever since, it grew more clean and white,
Slow to world-greetings, quick with its "Oh, list,"
When the angels speak. A ring of amethyst
I could not wear here, plainer to my sight,
Than that first kiss. The second passed in height
The first, and sought the forehead, and half missed,
Half falling on the hair. O beyond meed!
That was the chrism of love, which love's own crown,
With sanctifying sweetness, did precede.
The third upon my lips was folded down
In perfect, purple state; since when, indeed,
I have been proud, and said, "My love, my own!"

XLIII

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of everyday's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints, - I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life! - and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning [1806-1861]

ONE WORD MORE
TO E. B. B.

I

There they are, my fifty men and women
Naming me the fifty poems finished!
Take them, Love, the book and me together;
Where the heart lies, let the brain lie also.

II

Rafael made a century of sonnets,
Made and wrote them in a certain volume
Dinted with the silver-pointed pencil
Else he only used to draw Madonnas:
These, the world might view - but one, the volume.
Who that one, you ask? Your heart instructs you.
Did she live and love it all her lifetime?
Did she drop, his lady of the sonnets,
Die, and let it drop beside her pillow
Where it lay in place of Rafael's glory,
Rafael's cheek so duteous and so loving -
Cheek, the world was wont to hail a painter's,

Rafael's cheek, her love had turned a poet's?

III
You and I would rather read that volume,
(Taken to his beating bosom by it)
Lean and list the bosom-beats of Rafael,
Would we not? than wonder at Madonnas -
Her, San Sisto names, and Her, Foligno,
Her, that visits Florence in a vision,
Her, that's left with lilies in the Louvre -
Seen by us and all the world in circle.

IV
You and I will never read that volume.
Guido Reni, like his own eye's apple
Guarded long the treasure-book and loved it.
Guido Reni dying, all Bologna
Cried, and the world cried too, "Ours, the treasure!"
Suddenly, as rare things will, it vanished.

V
Dante once prepared to paint an angel:
Whom to please? You whisper "Beatrice."
While he mused and traced it and retraced it,
(Peradventure with a pen corroded
Still by drops of that hot ink he dipped for,
When, his left hand i' the hair o' the wicked,
Back he held the brow and pricked its stigma,
Bit into the live man's flesh for parchment,
Loosed him, laughed to see the writing rankle,
Let the wretch go festering through Florence) -
Dante, who loved well because he hated,
Hated wickedness that hinders loving,
Dante standing, studying his angel, -
In there broke the folk of his Inferno.
Says he - "Certain people of importance"
(Such he gave his daily dreadful line to)
"Entered and would seize, forsooth, the poet."
Says the poet - "Then I stopped my painting."

VI
You and I would rather see that angel,
Painted by the tenderness of Dante,
Would we not? - than read a fresh Inferno.

VII
You and I will never see that picture.
While he mused on love and Beatrice,
While he softened o'er his outlined angel,
In they broke, those "people of importance":
We and Bice bear the loss forever.

VIII
What of Rafael's sonnets, Dante's picture?
This: no artist lives and loves, that longs not
Once, and only once, and for one only,
(Ah, the prize!) to find his love a language
Fit and fair and simple and sufficient -

Using nature that's an art to others,
Not, this one time, art that's turned his nature.
Ay, of all the artists living, loving,
None but would forego his proper dowry, -
Does he paint? he fain would write a poem, -
Does he write? he fain would paint a picture,
Put to proof art alien to the artist's,
Once, and only once, and for one only,
So to be the man and leave the artist,
Gain the man's joy, miss the artist's sorrow.

IX

Wherefore? Heaven's gift takes earth's abatement!
He who smites the rock and spreads the water,
Bidding drink and live a crowd beneath him,
Even he, the minute makes immortal,
Proves, perchance, but mortal in the minute,
Desecrates, belike, the deed in doing.
While he smites, how can he but remember,
So he smote before, in such a peril,
When they stood and mocked - "Shall smiting help us?"
When they drank and sneered - "A stroke is easy!"
When they wiped their mouths and went their journey,
Throwing him for thanks - "But drought was pleasant."
Thus old memories mar the actual triumph;
Thus the doing savors of disrelish;
Thus achievement lacks a gracious somewhat;
O'er-importuned brows becloud the mandate,
Carelessness or consciousness - the gesture.
For he bears an ancient wrong about him,
Sees and knows again those phalanxed faces,
Hears, yet one time more, the 'customed prelude -
"How shouldst thou of all men, smite, and save us?"
Guesses what is like to prove the sequel -
"Egypt's flesh-pots - nay, the drought was better."

X

Oh, the crowd must have emphatic warrant!
Theirs, the Sinai-forehead's cloven brilliance,
Right-arm's rod-sweep, tongue's imperial fiat.
Never dares the man put off the prophet.

XI

Did he love one face from out the thousands,
(Were she Jethro's daughter, white and wifely,
Were she but the Aethiopian bondslave,)
He would envy yon dumb patient camel,
Keeping a reserve of scanty water
Meant to save his own life in the desert;
Ready in the desert to deliver
(Kneeling down to let his breast be opened)
Hoard and life together for his mistress.

XII

I shall never, in the years remaining,
Paint you pictures, no, nor carve you statues,
Make you music that should all-express me;
So it seems: I stand on my attainment.

This of verse alone, one life allows me;
Verse and nothing else have I to give you.
Other heights in other lives, God willing:
All the gifts from all the heights, your own, Love!

XIII

Yet a semblance of resource avails us -
Shade so finely touched, love's sense must seize it.
Take these lines, look lovingly and nearly,
Lines I write the first time and the last time.
He who works in fresco, steals a hair-brush,
Curbs the liberal hand, subservient proudly,
Cramps his spirit, crowds its all in little,
Makes a strange art of an art familiar,
Fills his lady's missal-marge with flowerets.
He who blows through bronze, may breathe through silver,
Fitly serenade a slumbrous princess.
He who writes, may write for once as I do.

XIV

Love, you saw me gather men and women,
Live or dead or fashioned by my fancy,
Enter each and all, and use their service,
Speak from every mouth, - the speech, a poem.
Hardly shall I tell my joys and sorrows,
Hopes and fears, belief and disbelieving:
I am mine and yours - the rest be all men's,
Karshish, Cleon, Norbert, and the fifty.
Let me speak this once in my true person,
Not as Lippo, Roland, or Andrea,
Though the fruit of speech be just this sentence:
Pray you, lock on these my men and women,
Take and keep my fifty poems finished;
Where my heart lies, let my brain lie also!
Poor the speech; be how I speak, for all things.

XV

Not but that you know me! Lo, the moon's self!
Here in London, yonder late in Florence,
Still we find her face, the thrice-transfigured.
Curving on a sky imbrued with color,
Drifted over Fiesole by twilight,
Came she, our new crescent of a hair's-breadth.
Full she flared it, lamping Samminiato,
Rounder 'twixt the cypresses and rounder,
Perfect till the nightingales applauded.
Now, a piece of her old self, impoverished,
Hard to greet, she traverses the house-roofs,
Hurries with unhandsome thrift of silver,
Goes dispiritedly, glad to finish,

XVI

What, there's nothing in the moon noteworthy?
Nay: for if that moon could love a mortal,
Use, to charm him (so to fit a fancy),
All her magic ('tis the old sweet mythos),
She would turn a new side to her mortal,
Side unseen of herdsman, huntsman, steersman -

Blank to Zoroaster on his terrace,
Blind to Galileo on his turret,
Dumb to Homer, dumb to Keats - him, even!
Think, the wonder of the moonstruck mortal -
When she turns round, comes again in heaven,
Opens out anew for worse or better!
Proves she like some portent of an iceberg
Swimming full upon the ship it founders,
Hungry with huge teeth of splintered crystals?
Proves she as the paved work of a sapphire
Seen by Moses when he climbed the mountain?
Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu
Climbed and saw the very God, the Highest,
Stand upon the paved work of a sapphire.
Like the bodied heaven in his clearness
Shone the stone, the sapphire of that paved work,
When they ate and drank and saw God also!

XVII

What were seen? None knows, none ever shall know.
Only this is sure - the sight were other,
Not the moon's same side, born late in Florence,
Dying now impoverished here in London.
God be thanked, the meanest of his creatures
Boasts two soul-sides, one to face the world with,
One to show a woman when he loves her!

XVIII

This I say of me, but think of you, Love!
This to you - yourself my moon of poets!
Ah, but that's the world's side, there's the wonder,
Thus they see you, praise you, think they know you!
There, in turn I stand with them and praise you -
Out of my own self, I dare to phrase it.
But the best is when I glide from out them,
Cross a step or two of dubious twilight,
Come out on the other side, the novel
Silent silver lights and darks undreamed of,
Where I hush and bless myself with silence.

XIX

Oh, their Rafael of the dear Madonnas,
Oh, their Dante of the dread Inferno,
Wrote one song - and in my brain I sing it,
Drew one angel - borne, see, on my bosom!

Robert Browning [1812-1889]

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