

THOMAS CAMPION

My Sweetest Lesbia (in imitation of Catallus)

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.

BEN JONSON

To Penhurst

THOU art not, Penshurst, built to envious show
Of touch, or marble; nor canst boast a row
Of polished pillars, or a roof of gold;
Thou hast no lantern, whereof tales are told,
Or stair, or courts; but stand'st an ancient pile,
And, these grudged at, art reverenced the while.
Thou joy'st in better marks, of soil, of air,
Of wood, of water: therein thou art fair.
Thou hast thy walks for health, as well as sport;
Thy Mount, to which the dryads do resort,
Where Pan and Bacchus their high feasts have made
Beneath the broad beech and the chestnut shade;
That taller tree, which of a nut was set,
At his great birth, where all the Muses met.
There in the writhed bark are cut the names
Of many a sylvan, taken with his flames.
And thence the ruddy satyrs oft provoke
The lighter fauns to reach thy Lady's oak.
Thy copse, too, named of Gamage, thou hast there,
That never fails to serve thee seasoned deer
When thou wouldst feast, or exercise thy friends.

The lower land, that to the river bends,
Thy sheep, thy bullocks, kine, and calves do feed;
The middle ground thy mares and horses breed.
Each bank doth yield thee coney; and the tops
Fertile of wood, Ashore and Sidney's copse,
To crown thy open table, doth provide
The purpled pheasant with the speckled side;
The painted partridge lies in every field,
And, for thy mess, is willing to be killed.
And if the high-swol'n Medway fail thy dish,
Thou hast thy ponds, that pay thee tribute fish,
Fat, aged carps, that run into thy net,
And pikes, now weary their own kind to eat,
As loath the second draught or cast to stay,
Officiously at first themselves betray;
Bright eels that emulate them, and leap on land
Before the fisher, or into his hand.
Then hath thy orchard fruit, thy garden flowers,
Fresh as the air, and new as are the hours.
The early cherry, with the later plum,
Fig, grape, and quince, each in his time doth come;
The blushing apricot and woolly peach
Hang on thy walls that every child may reach.
And though thy walls be of the country stone,
They're reared with no man's ruin, no man's groan;
There's none that dwell about them wish them down;
But all come in, the farmer, and the clown,
And no one empty-handed to salute
Thy lord and lady, though they have no suit.
Some bring a capon, some a rural cake,
Some nuts, some apples; some that think they make
The better cheeses bring'em, or else send
By their ripe daughters whom they would commend
This way to husbands, and whose baskets bear
An emblem of themselves, in plum or pear.
But what can this (more than express their love)
Add to thy free provisions, far above
The need of such whose liberal board doth flow
With all that hospitality doth know!
Where comes no guest but is allowed to eat
Without his fear, and of thy lord's own meat;
Where the same beer and bread and self-same wine
That is his lordship's shall be also mine.
And I not fain to sit, as some, this day,
At great men's tables, and yet dine away.
Here no man tells my cups; nor, standing by,
A waiter doth my gluttony envy,
But gives me what I call and lets me eat,
He knows, below, he shall find plenty of meat.
Thy tables hoard not up for the next day,
Nor when I take my lodging need I pray

For fire, or lights, or livery; all is there
As if thou, then, wert mine, or I reigned here;
There's nothing I can wish, for which I stay.
That found King James, when hunting late this way
With his brave son, the Prince, they saw thy fires
Shine bright on every hearth as the desires
Of thy Penates had been set on flame
To entertain them; or the country came,
With all their zeal, to warm their welcome here.
What (great, I will not say, but) sudden cheer
Didst thou then make them! and what praise was heaped
On thy good lady then! who therein reaped
The just reward of her high huswifery;
To have her linen, plate, and all things nigh,
When she was far; and not a room but dressed,
As if it had expected such a guest!
These, Penshurst, are thy praise, and yet not all.
Thy lady's noble, fruitful, chaste withal.
His children thy great lord may call his own,
A fortune in this age but rarely known.
They are and have been taught religion; thence
Their gentler spirits have sucked innocence.
Each morn and eve they are taught to pray
With the whole household, and may, every day,
Read, in their virtuous parents' noble parts,
The mysteries of manners, arms, and arts.
Now, Penshurst, they that will proportion thee
With other edifices, when they see
Those proud, ambitious heaps, and nothing else,
May say, their lords have built, but thy lord dwells.

Inviting a Friend to Supper

TONIGHT, grave sir, both my poor house and I
Do equally desire your company;
Not that we think us worthy such a guest,
But that your worth will dignify our feast
With those that come, whose grace may make that seem
Something, which else could hope for no esteem.
It is the fair acceptance, sir, creates
The entertainment perfect; not the cates.
Yet shall you have, to rectify your palate,
An olive, capers, or some better salad
Ushering the mutton; with a short-legged hen,
If we can get her, full of eggs, and then
Lemons and wine for sauce; to these, a coney
Is not to be despaired of, for our money;
And though fowl, now, be scarce, yet there are clerks,
The sky not falling, think we may have larks.
I'll tell you of more, and lie, so you will come:

Of partridge, pheasant, woodcock, of which some
May yet be there; and godwit, if we can,
Knat, rail, and ruff, too. Howsoe'er, my man
Shall read a piece of Virgil, Tacitus,
Livy, or of some better book to us,
Of which we'll speak our minds, amidst our meat;
And I'll profess no verses to repeat;
To this, if ought appear which I know not of,
That will the pastry, not my paper, show of.
Digestive cheese, and fruit there sure will be;
But that which most doth take my Muse, and me
Is a pure cup of rich Canary wine,
Which is the Mermaid's now, but shall be mine;
Of which had Horace or Anacreon tasted,
Their lives, as do their lines, till now had lasted.
Tobacco, nectar, or the Thespian spring
Are all but Luther's beer to this I sing.
Of this we shall sup free, but moderately,
And we will have no Pooly, or Parrot by;
Nor shall our cups make any guilty men,
But at our parting we shall be as when
We innocently met. No simple word
That shall be uttered at our mirthful board
Shall make us sad next morning, or affright
The liberty that we'll enjoy tonight.

Come, My Celia

COME, my celia, let us prove
While we may, the sports of love;
Time will not be ours forever;
He at length our good will sever.
Spend not then his gifts in vain.
Suns that set may rise again;
But if once we lose this light,
'Tis with us perpetual night.
Why should we defer our joys?
Fame and rumor are but toys.
Cannot we delude the eyes
Of a few poor household spies,
Or his easier ears beguile,
So removed by our wile?
'Tis no sin love's fruit to steal;
But the sweet theft to reveal.
To be taken, to be seen,
These have crimes accounted been.

To Celia

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 honouring thee,
As giving it a hope, that there
It could not withered be.
But thou thereon didst only breathe,
And sent'st back to me:
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself, but thee.

Still to be neat

STILL to be neat, still to be dressed,
As you were going to a feast;
Still to be powdered, still perfumed;
Lady, it is to be presumed,
Though art's hid causes are not found,
All is not sweet, all is not sound.

Give me a look, give me a face
That makes simplicity a grace;
Robes losely flowing, hair as free;
Such sweet neglect more taketh me
Than all th' adulteries of art.
They strike mine eyes but not my heart.

ROBERT HERRICK

Delight in Disorder

A SWEET disorder in the dress
Kindles in clothes a wantonness.
A lawn about the shoulders thrown
Into a fair distraction;
An erring lace which here and there
Enthralls the crimson stomacher;
A cuff neglectful, and thereby
Ribbons to flow confusedly;
A winning wave, deserving note,
In the tempestuous petticoat;
A careless shoestring, in whose tie
I see a wild civility;

Do more bewitch me than when art
Is too precise in every part.

Corinna's Going A-Maying

GET up, get up for shame! The blooming morn
Upon her wings presents the god unshorn.
See how Aurora throws her fair
Fresh-quilted colors through the air.
Get up, sweet slug-a-bed, and see
The dew bespangling herb and tree!
Each flower has wept and bowed toward the east
Above an hour since, yet you not drest;
Nay! not so much as out of bed?
When all the birds have matins said
And sung their thankful hymns, 'tis sin,
Nay, profanation, to keep in,
Whenas a thousand virgins on this day
Spring sooner than the lark, to fetch in May.

Rise and put on your foliage, and be seen
To come forth, like the springtime, fresh and green,
And sweet as Flora. Take no care
For jewels for your gown or hair.
Fear not; the leaves will strew
Gems in abundance upon you.
Besides, the childhood of the day has kept
Against you come, some orient pearls unwept.
Come, and receive them while the light
Hangs on the dew-locks of the night;
And Titan on the eastern hill
Retires himself, or else stands still
Till you come forth! Wash, dress, be brief in praying;
Few beads are best when once we go a-Maying.

Come, my Corinna, come; and coming, mark
How each field turns a street, each street a park,
Made green and trimmed with trees! see how
Devotion gives each house a bough
Or branch! each porch, each door, ere this,
An ark, a tabernacle is,
Made up of whitethorn neatly interwove,
As if here were those cooler shades of love.
Can such delights be in the street
And open fields, and we not see't?
Come, we'll abroad; and let's obey
The proclamation made for May,
And sin no more, as we have done, by staying;
But, my Corinna, come, let's go a-Maying.

There's not a budding boy or girl this day
But is got up and gone to bring in May.
A deal of youth ere this is come
Back, and with white-thorn laden home.
Some have dispatched their cakes and cream,
Before that we have left to dream;
And some have wept and wooed, and plighted troth,
And chose their priest, ere we can cast off sloth.
Many a green-gown has been given,
Many a kiss, both odd and even;
Many a glance, too, has been sent
From out of the eye, love's firmament;
Many a jest told of the keys betraying
This night, and locks picked; yet we're not a-Maying!

Come, let us go, while we are in our prime,
And take the harmless folly of the time!
We shall grow old apace, and die
Before we know our liberty.
Our life is short, and our days run
As fast away as does the sun.
And, as a vapor or a drop of rain,
Once lost, can ne'er be found again,
So when you or I are made
A fable, song, or fleeting shade,
All love, all liking, all delight
Lies drowned with us in endless night.
Then, while time serves, and we are but decaying,
Come, my Corinna, come, let's go a-Maying.

Upon Julia's Clothes

WHENAS in silks my Julia goes
Then, then, (methinks) how sweetly flows
That liquefaction of her clothes.

Next, when I cast mine eyes and see
That brave vibration each way free;
Oh, how that glittering taketh me!

To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time

GATHER ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old time is still a-flying;
And the same flower that smiles today
Tomorrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven the sun,
The higher he's a-getting,

The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And, while ye may, go marry;
For, having lost but once your prime,
You may forever tarry.

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 sparks of fire befriend thee.

No will-o'-th'-wisp mislight thee;
No 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 through 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 silv'ry feet,
My soul I'll pour into thee.

THE WHITE ISLAND: OR PLACE OF THE BLEST

In this world, the Isle of Dreams,
While we sit by sorrow's streams,
Tears and terrors are our themes,
Reciting:

But when once from hence we fly,
More and more approaching nigh
Unto young eternity,

Uniting

In that whiter Island, where
Things are evermore sincere:
Candour here, and lustre there,
Delighting:--

There no monstrous fancies shall
Out of hell an horror call,
To create, or cause at all
Affrighting.

There, in calm and cooling sleep,
We our eyes shall never steep,
But eternal watch shall keep,
Attending

Pleasures such as shall pursue
Me immortalized, and you;
And fresh joys, as never too
Have ending.

GEORGE HERBERT

The Collar

I STRUCK the board, and cried, No more.
I will abroad.
What? shall I ever sigh and pine?
My lines and life are free; free as the road,
Loose as the wind, as large as store.
Shall I be still in suit?
Have I no harvest but a thorn
To let me blood, and not restore
What I have lost with cordial fruit?
Sure there was wine
Before my sighs did dry it: there was corn
Before my tears did drown it.
Is the year only lost to me?
Have I no bays to crown it?
No flowers, no garlands gay? all blasted?
All wasted?
No so, my heart: but there is fruit,
And thou hast hands.
Recover all thy sigh-blown age
On double pleasures: leave thy cold dispute
Of what is fit, and not forsake thy cage,
Thy rope of sands,

Which petty thoughts have made, and made to thee
Good cable, to enforce and draw,
 And be thy law,
While thou didst wink and wouldst not see.
 Away; take heed:
 I will abroad.
Call in thy death's head there: tie up thy fears.
 He that forbears
 To suit and serve his need,
 Deserves his load.

But as I rav'd and grew more fierce and wild
 At every word,
Me thoughts I heard one calling, Child:
 And I reply'd, My Lord.

The Pulley

 WHEN God at first made man,
Having a glass of blesings standing by;
Let us (said he) pour on him all we can:
Let the world's riches, which dispersed lie,
 Contract into a span.

 So strength first made a way;
The beauty flow'd, then wisdom, honour, pleasure:
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that alone of all his treasure
 Rest in the bottom lay.

 For if I should (said he)
Bestow this jewel also on my creature,
He would adore my gifts instead of me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature:
 So both should losers be.

 Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness:
Let him be rish and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
 May toss him to my breast.

The Forerunners.

THE harbingers are come. See, see their mark;
White is their colour, and behold my head.
But must they have my brain? must they dis-park
Those sparkling notions, which therein were bred?
 Must dullness turn me to a clod?
Yet have they left me, Thou art still my God.

Good men ye be, to leave me my best room,
Ev'n all my heart, and what is lodged there:
I pass not, I, what of the rest become,
So Thou art still my God, be out of fear.

He will be pleased with that ditty;
And if I please him, I write fine and witty.

Farewell sweet phrases, lovely metaphors.
But will ye leave me thus? when ye before
Of stews and brothels only knew the doors,
Then did I wash you with my tears, and more,
Brought you to Church well dressed and clad:
My God must have my best, ev'n all I had.

Lovely enchanting language, sugar-cane,
Honey of roses, whither wilt thou fly?
Hath some fond lover tic'd thee to thy bane?
And wilt thou leave the Church, and love a sty?
Fie, thou wilt soil thy broider's coat,
And hurt thyself, and him that sings the note.

Let foolish lovers, if they will love dung,
And canvas, not with arras, clothe their shame:
Let folly speak in her own native tongue.
True beauty dwells on high: ours is a flame
But borrow'd thence to light us thither.
Beauty and beauteous words should go together.

Yet if you go, I passe not; take your way:
For, Thou art still my God, is all that ye
Perhaps with more embellishment can say,
Go birds of spring: let winter have his fee,
Let a bleak paleness chalk the door,
So all within be livelier then before.

THOMAS CAREW

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 doth 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.

EDMUND WALLER

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 retir'd:
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desir'd,
And not blush so to be admir'd.

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.