

Classic Poetry Series

Elsie Cole

- poems -

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Song of the Foot Track

COME away, come away from the straightness of the road;
I will lead you into delicate recesses
Where peals of ripples ring through the maidenhair's abode
In the heart of little water wildernesses.

I will show you pleasant places; tawny hills the sun has kissed,
Where the giant trees the wind is always swinging
Rise from clouds of pearly saplings tipped with rose and amethyst,—
Fairy boughs where fairy butterflies are clinging.

Come away from the road; I will lead through shade and sheen,
Changing brightly as the year of colour passes
Through each tint the opal knows, from the flaming winter green
To the summer gold and silver of the grasses.

Here is riot of leaf and blossom, ferny mosses in the glade
Pressing round the wattle's stem of dappled splendour;
Even the pathway that you tread smiles with daisies unafraid,—
Laden branches lean to breathe a welcome tender.

Come away from the road; let wild petals cool your eyes
Dim and hardened with the arid light of duty;
Lose awhile your weary purpose, leave the highway of the wise
For the little reckless of joy and beauty.

I am fairer still to follow where the Bush is lonelier grown
And the purple vines fling tendrils out to bind me;
For the secret of my lure is the call of the Unknown,
Hidden Loveliness that laughs: 'Come and find me!'

Follow on, ah, come with me! Though the way is fainter shown
Where the restless waves of green have splashed and crossed me;
In the temple of the trees you have met delight alone;
Winning happiness, what matter though you lost me?

In this dreamy fane of sunshine, where wood-violets are rife,
Though I leave you,—path and bracken surges blended,—
Would you say I led you vainly? I have sung the joy of life,
I have set you in the way; my song is ended.

Elsie Cole