Classic Poetry Series

Thomas Campion

- poems -

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A Hymn in Praise of Neptune

OF Neptune's empire let us sing,
At whose command the waves obey;
To whom the rivers tribute pay,
Down the high mountains sliding:
To whom the scaly nation yields
Homage for the crystal fields
   Wherein they dwell:
And every sea-dog pays a gem
Yearly out of his wat'ry cell
To deck great Neptune's diadem.

The Tritons dancing in a ring
Before his palace gates do make
The water with their echoes quake,
Like the great thunder sounding:
The sea-nymphs chant their accents shrill,
And the sirens, taught to kill
   With their sweet voice,
Make ev'ry echoing rock reply
Unto their gentle murmuring noise
The praise of Neptune's empery.

Thomas Campion

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 fill'd 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,
Threat'ning 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

Devotion i

FOLLOW thy fair sun, unhappy shadow!
   Though thou be black as night,
   And she made all of light,
Yet follow thy fair sun, unhappy shadow!

Follow her, whose light thy light depriveth!
   Though here thou liv'st disgraced,
   And she in heaven is placed,
Yet follow her whose light the world reviveth!

Follow those pure beams, whose beauty burneth!
   That so have scorched thee
   As thou still black must be,
Till her kind beams thy black so brightness turneth.

Follow her, while yet her glory shineth!
   There comes a luckless night
   That will dim all her light;
And this the black unhappy shade divineth.

Follow still, since so thy fates ordained!
   The sun must have his shade,
   Till both at once do fade,--
The sun still proud, the shadow still disdained.

Thomas Campion

Devotion ii

FOLLOW your saint, follow with accents sweet!
Haste you, sad notes, fall at her flying feet!
There, wrapt in cloud of sorrow, pity move,
And tell the ravisher of my soul I perish for her love:
But if she scorns my never-ceasing pain,
Then burst with sighing in her sight, and ne'er return again!

All that I sung still to her praise did tend;
Still she was first, still she my songs did end;
Yet she my love and music both doth fly,
The music that her echo is and beauty's sympathy:
Then let my notes pursue her scornful flight!
It shall suffice that they were breathed and died for her delight.

Thomas Campion

Follow Thy Fair Sun

Follow thy fair sun, unhappy shadow;
Though thou be black as night,
And she made all of light,
Yet follow thy fair sun, unhappy shadow.

Follow her, whose light thy light depriveth;
Though here thou liv'st disgrac'd,
And she in heaven is plac'd,
Yet follow her whose light the world reviveth.

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Follow Your Saint

Follow your saint, follow with accents sweet;
Haste you, sad notes, fall at her flying feet.
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Integer Vitae

THE man of life upright,
   Whose guiltless heart is free
From all dishonest deeds,
   Or thought of vanity;

The man whose silent days
   In harmless joys are spent,
Whom hopes cannot delude,
   Nor sorrow discontent;

That man needs neither towers
   Nor armour for defence,
Nor secret vaults to fly
   From thunder's violence:

He only can behold
   With unaffrighted eyes
The horrors of the deep
   And terrors of the skies.

Thus, scorning all the cares
   That fate or fortune brings,
He makes the heaven his book,
   His wisdom heavenly things;

Good thoughts his only friends,
   His wealth a well-spent age,
The earth his sober inn
   And quiet pilgrimage.

Thomas Campion

Laura

ROSE-CHEEK'D Laura, come;
Sing thou smoothly with thy beauty's
Silent music, either other
   Sweetly gracing.

   Lovely forms do flow
From concent divinely framed:
Heaven is music, and thy beauty's
   Birth is heavenly.

   These dull notes we sing
Discords need for helps to grace them;
Only beauty purely loving
   Knows no discord;

   But still moves delight,
Like clear springs renew'd by flowing,
Ever perfect, ever in them-
   selves eternal.

Thomas Campion

Now Winter Nights Enlarge

Now winter nights enlarge
This number of their hours;
And clouds their storms discharge
Upon the airy towers.
Let now the chimneys blaze
And cups o'erflow with wine,
Let well-tuned words amaze
With harmony divine.
Now yellow waxen lights
Shall wait on honey love
While youthful revels, masques, and courtly sights
Sleep's leaden spells remove.

This time doth well dispense
With lovers' long discourse;
Much speech hath some defense,
Though beauty no remorse.
All do not all things well:
Some measures comely tread,
Some knotted riddles tell,
Some poems smoothly read.
The summer hath his joys,
And winter his delights;
Though love and all his pleasures are but toys
They shorten tedious nights.

Thomas Campion

O come quickly!

NEVER weather-beaten sail more willing bent to shore,
Never tired pilgrim's limbs affected slumber more,
Than my wearied sprite now longs to fly out of my troubled breast:
O come quickly, sweetest Lord, and take my soul to rest!

Ever blooming are the joys of heaven's high Paradise,
Cold age deafs not there our ears nor vapour dims our eyes:
Glory there the sun outshines; whose beams the Blessed only see:
O come quickly, glorious Lord, and raise my sprite to Thee!

Thomas Campion

Rose-Cheeked Laura

Rose-cheek'd Laura, come,
Sing thou smoothly with thy beauty's
Silent music, either other
Sweetly gracing.

Lovely forms do flow
From concent divinely framed;
Heav'n is music, and thy beauty's
Birth is heavenly.

These dull notes we sing
Discords need for helps to grace them;
Only beauty purely loving
Knows no discord,

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Thomas Campion

There Is A Garden In Her Face

There is a garden in her face
Where roses and white lilies grow;
A heav'nly paradise is that place
Wherein all pleasant fruits do flow.
There cherries grow which none may buy,
Till 'Cherry ripe' themselves do cry.

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Of orient pearl a double row,
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Thrice Toss These Oaken Ashes

Thrice toss these oaken ashes in the air,
Thrice sit thou mute in this enchanted chair,
Then thrice three times tie up this true love's knot,
And murmur soft 'She will, or she will not.'

Go burn these pois'nous weeds in yon blue fire,
These screech-owl's feathers and this prickling briar,
This cypress gathered at a dead man's grave,
That all my fears and cares an end may have.

Then come, you fairies! dance with me a round;
Melt her hard heart with your melodious sound.
In vain are all the charms I can devise:
She hath an art to break them with her eyes.

Thomas Campion

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 finish'd 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 honours done to thee,
Then tell, O tell, how thou didst murder me!

Thomas Campion

When Thou must Home to Shades of Underground

When thou must home to shades of underground,
And there arriv'd, a new admired guest,
The beauteous spirits do engirt thee round,
White Iope, blithe Helen, and the rest,
To hear the stories of thy finish'd love
From that smooth tongue whose music hell can move;

Then wilt thou speak of banqueting delights,
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