

**Classic Poetry Series**

# **Thomas Lord Vaux**

**- poems -**

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## The Aged Lover Renounceth Love

1 I loathe that I did love,  
2 In youth that I thought sweet;  
3 As time requires for my behove,  
4 Me thinks they are not meet.  
5 My lusts they do me leave,  
6 My fancies all be fled,  
7 And tract of time begins to weave  
8 Gray hairs upon my head.  
9 For age, with stealing steps,  
10 Hath clawed me with his crutch,  
11 And lusty life away she leaps  
12 As there had been none such.  
13 My muse doth not delight  
14 Me as she did before,  
15 My hand and pen are not in plight  
16 As they have been of yore.  
17 For reason me denies  
18 This youthly idle rhyme,  
19 And day by day to me she cries,  
20 Leave off these toys in time.  
21 The wrinkles in my brow,  
22 The furrows in my face,  
23 Say limping age will hedge him now  
24 Where youth must give him place.  
25 The harbinger of death,  
26 To me I see him ride;  
27 The cough, the cold, the gasping breath,  
28 Doth bid me to provide  
29 A pickaxe and a spade,  
30 And eke a shrouding sheet;  
31 A house of clay for to be made  
32 For such a guest most meet.  
33 Me thinks I hear the clerk  
34 That knolls the careful knell,  
35 And bids me leave my woeful work  
36 Ere nature me compel.  
37 My keepers knit the knot  
38 That youth did laugh to scorn,  
39 Of me that clean shall be forgot  
40 As I had not been born.  
41 Thus must I youth give up,  
42 Whose badge I long did wear;  
43 To them I yield the wanton cup  
44 That better may it bear.  
45 Lo, here the bared skull  
46 By whose bald sign I know  
47 That stooping age away shall pull  
48 Which youthful years did sow.  
49 For beauty, with her band,  
50 These crooked cares hath wrought,  
51 And shipped me into the land  
52 From whence I first was brought.

53     And ye that bide behind,  
54     Have ye none other trust;  
55     As ye of clay were cast by kind,  
56     So shall ye waste to dust.

Thomas Lord Vaux

## Try Before You Trust

To counsel my estate, abandoned to the spoil  
Of forged friends, whose grossest fraud is set with finest foil;  
To verify true dealing wights, whose trust no treason dreads,  
And all too dear th'acquaintance be, of such most harmful heads;  
I am advised thus: who so doth friend, friend so,  
As though tomorrow next he feared for to become a foe.

To have a feigned friend, no peril like I find;  
Oft fleering face may mantle best a mischief in the mind.  
A pair of angel's ears oft times doth hide a serpent's heart,  
Under whose grips who so doth come, too late complains the smart.  
Wherefore I do advise, who doth friend, friend so,  
As though tomorrow next he should become a mortal foe.

Refuse respecting friends that courtly know to feign,  
For gold that wins for gold shall lose the selfsame friends again.  
The quail needs never fear in fowler's nets to fall,  
If he would never bend his ear to listen to his call.  
Therefore trust not too soon, but when you friend, friend so,  
As though tomorrow next ye feared for to become a foe.

Thomas Lord Vaux