Thy Delightful Shade



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Front cover photograph: Lage Vuursche, The Netherlands

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Shall Earth No More Inspire Thee

Poem by Emily Jane Brontë (1818-1848)

Shall earth no more inspire thee,
Thou lonely dreamer now?
Since passion may not fire thee,
Shall nature cease to bow?

Thy mind is ever moving,
In regions dark to thee;
Recall its useless roving,
Come back, and dwell with me.

I know my mountain breezes
Enchant and soothe thee still,
I know my sunshine pleases,
Despite thy wayward will.

When day with evening blending,
Sinks from the summer sky,
I've seen thy spirit bending
In fond idolatry.

I've watched thee every hour;
I know my mighty sway:
I know my magic power
To drive thy griefs away.

Few hearts to mortals given,
On earth so wildly pine;
Yet few would ask a heaven
More like this earth than thine.

Then let my winds caress thee
Thy comrade let me be:
Since nought beside can bless thee,
Return--and dwell with me.



The Deserted House
Poem by Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

Life and Thought have gone away
Side by side,
Leaving door and windows wide.
Careless tenants they!

All within is dark as night:
In the windows is no light;
And no murmur at the door,
So frequent on its hinge before.

Close the door; the shutters close;
Or through the windows we shall see
The nakedness and vacancy
Of the dark deserted house.

Come away: no more of mirth
Is here or merry-making sound.
The house was builded of the earth,
And shall fall again to ground.

Come away: for Life and Thought
Here no longer dwell;
But in a city glorious -
A great and distant city -have bought
A mansion incorruptible.
Would they could have stayed with us!



Ode To Pity
Poem by William Collins (1721-1759)

O Thou, the Friend of Man assign'd,
With balmy Hands his Wounds to bind,
And charm his frantic Woe:
When first Distress with Dagger keen
Broke forth to waste his destin'd Scene,
His wild unsated Foe!

By Pella's Bard, a magic Name,
By all the Griefs his Thoughts could frame,
Receive my humble Rite:
Long, Pity, let the Nations view
Thy sky-worn Robes of tend'rest Blue,
And Eyes of dewy Light!

But wherefore need I wander wide
To old Ilissus' distant Side,
Deserted Stream, and mute?
Wild Arun too has heard thy Strains,
And Echo, 'midst my native Plains,
Been sooth'd by Pity's Lute.

There first the Wren thy Myrtles shed
On gentlest Otway's infant Head,
To Him thy Cell was shown;
And while He sung the Female heart,
With Youth's soft Notes unspoil'd by Art,
Thy Turtles mix'd their own.

Come, Pity, come, by Fancy's Aid,
Ev'n now my Thoughts, relenting Maid,
Thy Temple's Pride design:
Its Southern Site, its Truth compleat
Shall raise a wild Enthusiast Heat,
In all who view the Shrine.

There Picture's Toils shall well relate,
How Chance, or hard involving Fate,
O'er mortal Bliss prevail:
The Buskin'd Muse shall near her stand,
And sighing prompt her tender Hand,
With each disastrous Tale.

There let me oft, retir'd by Day,
In Dreams of Pasion melt away,
Allow'd with Thee to dwell:
There waste the mournful Lamp of Night,
Till, Virgin, Thou again delight
To hear a British shell!



To Autumn
Poem by John Keats (1795-1821)

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.



The Tree
Poem by Anne Finch (1661-1720)

Fair tree! for thy delightful shade
'Tis just that some return be made;
Sure some return is due from me
To thy cool shadows, and to thee.
When thou to birds dost shelter give,
Thou music dost from them receive;
If travellers beneath thee stay
Till storms have worn themselves away,
That time in praising thee they spend
And thy protecting pow'r commend.
The shepherd here, from scorching freed,
Tunes to thy dancing leaves his reed;
Whilst his lov'd nymph, in thanks, bestows
Her flow'ry chaplets on thy boughs.
Shall I then only silent be,
And no return be made by me,

No; let this wish upon thee wait,
And still to flourish be thy fate.
To future ages may'st thou stand
Untouch'd by the rash workman's hand,
Till that large stock of sap is spent,
Which gives thy summer's ornament;
Till the fierce winds, that vainly strive
To shock thy greatness whilst alive,
Shall on thy lifeless hour attend,
Prevent the axe, and grace thy end;
Their scatter'd strength together call
And to the clouds proclaim thy fall;
Who then their ev'ning dews may spare
When thou no longer art their care,
But shalt, like ancient heroes, burn,
And some bright hearth be made thy urn.



The Redbreast
Poem by Susan Evance (±1780)

Autumn's charms are fading fast--
Mark how every ruthless blast
Scatters, as it sweeps around,
Showers of leaves upon the ground.
Ah! no hand its force can stay;
All will soon be torn away.

'Midst the ruins of the year,
See the cheerful bird appear,
Who, of all the warbling train,
Hails alone sad Winter's reign;
And throughout each' dreary day,
Sings the lonely hours away.

Sweet Bird! a summer bright as thine
Within this bosom once did shine;
But now the wintry hour draws near,--
Fast, fast my comforts disappear;
And sinking from my clouded heart,
I feel the Sun of bliss depart.

But shall thy admonition be
Unheeded, gentle Bird! by me?
Or shall its influence fail to move
A wish of emulative love!
No! I will view thy patient form,
And learn to bear the beating storm.

Back to the past I'll turn my eyes;
How many blessings there arise!
Blessings so undeserv'd, that still
My heart must feel the grateful thrill.
Sweet monitor! I'll learn to be
All cheerfully resign'd--like thee.



The Hermit
Poem by James Beattie (1735-1803)

At the close of day, when the hamlet is still,
And mortals the sweets of forgetfulness prove,
When nought but the torrent is heard on the hill,
And nought but the nightingale's song in the grove.
'Twas thus, by the cave of the mountain afar,
While his harp rung symphonious, a Hermit began
No more with himself or with nature at war,
He thought as a Sage, though he felt as a Man.

"Ah, why, all abandon'd to darkness and wo,
Why, lone Philomela, that languishing fall?
For Spring shall return, and a lover bestow,
And sorrow no longer thy bosom enthrall
But, if pity inspire thee, renew the sad lay,
Mourn, sweetest complainer, man calls thee to mourn;
O soothe him, whose pleasures like thine pass away
Full quickly they pass - but they never return.

"Now gliding remote, on the verge of the sky,
The Moon, half-extinguish'd, her crescent displays:
But lately I mark'd, when majestic on high
She shone, and the planets were lost in her blaze.
Roll on, thou fair orb, and with gladness pursue
The path that conducts thee to splendour again.
But Man's faded glory what change shall renew!
Ah fool! to exult in a glory so vain!

"'Tis night, and the landscape is lovely no more;
I mourn, but, ye woodlands, I mourn not for you;
For morn is approaching, your charms to restore,
Perfumed with fresh fragrance, with glittering dew,
Nor yet for the ravage of winter I mourn;
Kind Nature the embryo blossom will save.
But when shall Spring visit the mouldering urn!
O when shall it dawn on the night of the grave!

"'Twas thus, by the glare of false Science betray'd,
That leads, to bewilder; and dazzles, to blind;
My thoughts wont to roam, from shade onward to shade,
Destruction before me, and sorrow behind.
'O pity, great Father of light,' then I cried,
'Thy creature who fain would not wander from Thee!
Lo, humbled in dust, I relinquish my pride:
From doubt and from darkness thou only canst free.

"And darkness and doubt are now flying away,
No longer I roam in conjecture forlorn.
So breaks on the traveller, faint, and astray,
The bright and the balmy effulgence of morn.
see Truth, Love, and Mercy, in triumph descending,
And Nature all glowing in Eden's first bloom!
On the cold cheek of Death smiles and roses are blending,
And Beauty Immortal awakes from the tomb."



Come, Come - What Do I Here?
Poem by Henry Vaughan (1621-1695)

Come, come!
What do I here?
Since he is gone
Each day is grown a dozen year
And each hour, one;

Come, come!
Cut off the sum:
By these soil'd tears!
Which only Thou
Know'st to be true,
Days are my fears.

There's not a wind can stir,
Or beam pass by,
But straight I think, though far,
Thy hand is nigh.

Come, come!
Strike these lips dumb:
This restless breath,
That soils Thy name,
Will ne'er be tame
Until in death.

Perhaps some think a tomb
No house of store,
But a dark and seal'd up womb,
Which ne'er breeds more.

Come, come!
Such thoughts benumb:
But I would be
With him I weep
Abed, and sleep,
To wake in Thee.



Times Go By Turns
Poem by Saint Sir Robert Southwell (1561-1595)

The lopped tree in time may grow again,
Most naked plants renew both fruit and flower;
The sorest wight may find release of pain,
The driest soil suck in some moist'ning shower;
Times go by turns and chances change by course,
From foul to fair, from better hap to worse.

The sea of Fortune doth not ever flow,
She draws her favours to the lowest ebb;
Her tides hath equal times to come and go,
Her loom doth weave the fine and coarsest web;
No joy so great but runneth to an end,
No hap so hard but may in fine amend.

Not always fall of leaf nor ever spring,
No endless night yet not eternal day;
The saddest birds a season find to sing,
The roughest storm a calm may soon allay:
Thus with succeeding turns God tempereth all,
That man may hope to rise, yet fear to fall.

A chance may win that by mischance was lost;
The net that holds no great, takes little fish;
In some things all, in all things none are crost,
Few all they need, but none have all they wish;
Unmeddled joys here to no man befall:
Who least, hath some; who most, hath never all.



Cradle Song
Poem by William Blake (1757-1827)

Sleep, sleep, beauty bright,
Dreaming in the joys of night;
Sleep, sleep; in thy sleep
Little sorrows sit and weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face
Soft desires I can trace,
Secret joys and secret smiles,
Little pretty infant wiles.

As thy softest limbs I feel,
Smiles as of the morning steal
O'er thy cheek, and o'er thy breast
Where thy little heart doth rest.

O the cunning wiles that creep
In thy little heart asleep!
When thy little heart doth wake,
Then the dreadful light shall break.



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