



William Shakespeare

Love Poems

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● *Love Poems*

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Who loves to lie with me ...



Love songs from the plays

IT WAS A LOVER AND HIS LASS,
With a hey and a ho, and a hey-nonino,
That o'er the green corn-field did pass
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing hey ding a ding, ding:
Sweet lovers love the spring.

Between the acres of the rye
With a hey and a ho, and a hey-nonino,
These pretty country folks would lie,
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing hey ding a ding, ding:
Sweet lovers love the spring.

This carol they began that hour,
With a hey and a ho, and a hey-nonino,
How that a life was but a flower,
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing hey ding a ding, ding:
Sweet lovers love the spring.

And therefore take the present time,
With a hey and a ho, and a hey-nonino,
For love is crownéd with the prime,
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing hey ding a ding, ding:
Sweet lovers love the spring.

UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE

Who loves to lie with me,
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,

Come hither, come hither, come hither:

Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats
And pleased with what he gets,

Come hither, come hither, come hither:

Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.



HOW SHOULD I YOUR TRUE LOVE KNOW

From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff
And his sandal shoon.

He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf
At his heels a stone.

White his shroud as the mountain snow,
Larded with sweet flowers;
Which bewept to the grave did go
With true-love showers.



TOMORROW IS SAINT VALENTINE'S DAY,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.
Then up he rose, and donn'd his clothes,
And dupp'd the chamber-door;
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.

By Gis and by Saint Charity,
Alack, and fie, for shame!
Young men will do 't, if they come to 't;

By cock, they are to blame.
Quoth she, 'Before you tumbled me,
You promised me to wed.'
He answers,
'So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,
And thou hadst not come to my bed.'



O MISTRESS MINE, WHERE ARE YOU ROAMING?
O stay and hear; your true love's coming,
That can sing both high and low:
Trip no further, pretty sweeting;
Journeys end in lovers' meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 'tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure:
In delay there lies no plenty;
Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not endure.

TAKE, O TAKE THOSE LIPS AWAY,
That so sweetly were forsworn,
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn:
But my kisses bring again,
Bring again,
Seals of love, but seal'd in vain,
Seal'd in vain!



THE WILLOW SONG

The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree,
Sing all a green willow;
Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,
Sing willow, willow, willow
The fresh streams ran by her, and murmur'd her moans;
Sing willow, willow, willow
Her salt tears fell from her, and soften'd the stones;
Sing willow, willow, willow
Sing all a green willow must be my garland.
Let nobody blame him; his scorn I approve,
I called my love false love; but what said he then?
Sing willow, willow, willow
If I court more women, you'll couch with more men.

BLOW, BLOW, THOU WINTER WIND,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.
Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.



SIGH NO MORE, LADIES, SIGH NO MORE,
Men were deceivers ever,
One foot in sea, and one on shore,
To one thing constant never.

Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into hey nonny nonny.

Sing no more ditties, sing no more,
Of dumps so dull and heavy;
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was leavy.

Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into hey nonny nonny.



*O know, sweet love,
I always write of you ...*



The Sonnets

FROM FAIREST CREATURES WE DESIRE INCREASE,
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,
But as the riper should by time decease,
His tender heir might bear his memory:
But thou, contracted to thine own bright eyes,
Feed'st thy light's flame with self-substantial fuel,
Making a famine where abundance lies,
Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel.
Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament,
And only herald to the gaudy spring,
Within thine own bud buriest thy content,
And, tender churl, mak'st waste in niggarding.
Pity the world, or else this glutton be,
To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee.



WHEN FORTY WINTERS SHALL BESIEGE THY BROW,
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,
Thy youth's proud livery so gazed on now,
Will be a tattered weed of small worth held:
Then being asked, where all thy beauty lies,
Where all the treasure of thy lusty days,
To say within thine own deep-sunken eyes,
Were an all-eating shame and thriftless praise.

How much more praise deserved thy beauty's use
If thou couldst answer, 'This fair child of mine
Shall sum my count, and make my old excuse',
Proving his beauty by succession thine:
This were to be new made when thou art old,
And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it cold.



FOR SHAME DENY THAT THOU BEAR'ST LOVE TO ANY,
Who for thyself art so unprovident;
Grant, if thou wilt, thou art belov'd of many,
But that thou none lov'st is most evident:
For thou art so possessed with murd'rous hate,
That 'gainst thyself thou stick'st not to conspire,
Seeking that beauteous roof to ruinate
Which to repair should be thy chief desire:
O change thy thought, that I may change my mind;
Shall hate be fairer lodged than gentle love?
Be as thy presence is, gracious and kind;
Or to thyself at least kind-hearted prove,
Make thee another self for love of me,
That beauty still may live in thine or thee.

WHEN I CONSIDER EVERYTHING THAT GROWS
Holds in perfection but a little moment;
That this huge stage presenteth nought but shows
Whereon the stars in secret influence comment;
When I perceive that men as plants increase,
Cheered and checked even by the self-same sky,
Vaunt in their youthful sap, at height decrease,
And wear their brave state out of memory:
Then the conceit of this inconstant stay,
Sets you, most rich in youth, before my sight,
Where wasteful time debateth with decay
To change your day of youth to sullied night:
 And all in war with time for love of you,
 As he takes from you, I engraft you new.



WHO WILL BELIEVE MY VERSE IN TIME TO COME,
If it were filled with your most high deserts?
Though yet, heaven knows, it is but as a tomb,
Which hides your life, and shows not half your parts:
If I could write the beauty of your eyes,
And in fresh numbers number all your graces,
The age to come would say, 'This poet lies;
Such heavenly touches ne'er touched earthly faces.'

So should my papers (yellowed with their age)
Be scorned, like old men of less truth than tongue,
 And your true rights be termed a poet's rage,
 And stretched metre of an antique song;
But were some child of yours alive that time,
You should live twice in it, and in my rhyme.



SHALL I COMPARE THEE TO A SUMMER'S DAY?
 Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
 And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
 Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
 And often is his gold complexion dimmed;
 And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimmed:
 But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
 Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,
Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade
 When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:
 So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
 So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

DEVOURING TIME, BLUNT THOU THE LION'S PAWS,
And make the earth devour her own sweet brood;
Pluck the keen teeth from the fierce tiger's jaws,
And burn the long-lived Phoenix in her blood;
Make glad and sorry seasons as thou fleet'st,
And do whate'er thou wilt swift-footed time,
To the wide world and all her fading sweets:
But I forbid thee one most heinous crime,
O carve not with thy hours my love's fair brow,
Nor draw no lines there with thine antique pen;
Him in thy course untainted do allow
For beauty's pattern to succeeding men.

Yet do thy worst, old time, despite thy wrong,
My love shall in my verse ever live young.



A WOMAN'S FACE WITH NATURE'S OWN HAND PAINTED
Hast thou the master mistress of my passion;
A woman's gentle heart but not acquainted
With shifting change, as is false women's fashion;
An eye more bright than theirs, less false in rolling,
Gilding the object whereupon it gazeth;
A man in hue, all hues in his controlling,
Which steals men's eyes and women's souls amazeth;