

Classic Poetry Series

**Matthew Prior**  
**- poems -**

**Publication Date:**

2004

**Publisher:**

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## Matthew Prior(1664 - 1721)

Matthew Prior, poet and diplomat, was born near Wimborne Minster, Dorset. His family moved to London while he was still a child. He was educated at Westminster School, but was taken out when his father died and apprenticed to his uncle, a tavern-keeper. In 1680 he went to Cambridge on a scholarship from the Earl of Dorset and while there he co-wrote with Charles Montague, *The Hind and the Panther Transversed to the Story of the Country and City Mouse* (1687), a burlesque on Dryden's *Hind and the Panther* which cuts it down to size by making it absurd.

Prior held various diplomatic posts, and in 1700 entered parliament with the Tories. He was Ambassador at Paris when he was recalled at the death of Queen Anne in 1715, and imprisoned for two years. During his time in prison he composed *Alma or the Progress of the Mind* (1715), a sceptical and humorous poem for which he is best known today. A folio edition of his work was published in 1719 and secured him a profit of 4000 guineas. He died in 1721 in Down Hall which he had purchased two years previously. At its best his work stands alongside Swift, and was admired by Samuel Johnson and William Cowper. He is buried in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey.

## A Better Answer

Dear Cloe, how blubber'd is that pretty Face?  
Thy cheek all on fire, and thy hair all uncurl'd:  
Pr'ythee quit this caprice; and (as old Falstaf says)  
Let us e'en talk a little like folks of this world.

How can'st thou presume, thou hast leave to destroy  
The beauties, which Venus but lent to thy keeping?  
Those looks were design'd to inspire love and joy:  
More ord'nary eyes may serve people for weeping.

To be vexed at a trifle or two that I writ,  
Your judgment at once, and my passion you wrong:  
You take that for fact, which will scarce be found Wit:  
Od's Life! must one swear to the truth of a song?

What I speak, my fair Cloe, and what I write, shews  
The diff'rence there is betwixt Nature and Art:  
I court others in verse; but I love thee in prose:  
And they have my whimsies; but thou hast my heart.

The god of us verse-men (you know child) the sun,  
How after his journeys he sets up his rest:  
If at morning o'er earth 'tis his fancy to run;  
At night he reclines on his Thetis's breast.

So when I am weary'd with wand'ring all day,  
To thee my delight in the evening I come:  
No matter what beauties I saw in my way:  
They were but my visits; but thou art my home.

Then finish, dear Cloe, this pastoral war;  
And let us like Horace and Lydia agree:  
For thou art a girl as much brighter than her  
As he was a poet sublimer than me.

Matthew Prior

## A Dutch Proverb

Fire, Water, Woman, are Man's Ruin;  
Says wise Professor Vander Bruin.  
By Flames a House I hir'd was lost  
Last Year: and I must pay the Cost.  
This Spring the Rains o'erflow'd my Ground:  
And my best Flanders Mare was drown'd.  
A Slave I am to Clara's Eyes:  
The Gipsej knows her Pow'r, and flies.  
Fire, Water, Woman, are My Ruin:  
And great Thy Wisdom, Vander Bruin.

Matthew Prior

## A Flower. Painted By Simon Varelst

When famed Varelst this little wonder drew,  
Flora vouchsafed the growing works to view;  
Finding the painter's science at a stand,  
The goddess snatch'd the pencil from his hand,  
And finishing the piece, she smiling said,  
Behold one work of mine that ne'er shall fade.

Matthew Prior

# A Letter To Lady Margaret Cavendish Holles-Harley, When A Child

MY noble, lovely, little Peggy,  
Let this my First Epistle beg ye,  
At dawn of morn, and close of even,  
To lift your heart and hands to Heaven.  
In double duty say your prayer:  
Our Father first, then Notre Pere.

And, dearest child, along the day,  
In every thing you do and say,  
Obey and please my lord and lady,  
So God shall love and angels aid ye.

If to these precepts you attend,  
No second letter need I send,  
And so I rest your constant friend.

Matthew Prior

# A Letter To Monsieur Boileau Despreaux, Occasioned By The Victory At Blenheim

Since hired for life, thy servile Muse must sing  
Successive conquests and a glorious King;  
Must of a man immortal vainly boast,  
And bring him laurels whatso'er they cost,  
What turn wilt thou employ, what colours lay,  
On the event of that superior day,  
In which one English subject's prosperous hand  
(So Jove did will, so Anna did command)  
Broke the proud column of thy master's praise,  
Which sixty winters had conspired to raise?  
From the lost field a hundred standards brought  
Must be the work of Chance, and Fortune's fault.  
Bavaria's stars must be accused, which shone,  
That fatal day the mighty work was done,  
With rays oblique upon the Gallic sun.  
Some demon envying France misled the sight,  
And Mars mistook, though Louis order'd right.  
When thy young Muse invoked the tuneful Nine,  
To say how Louis did not pass the Rhine,  
What work had we with Wageninghen, Arnheim,  
Places that could not be reduced to rhyme?  
And though the poet made his last efforts,  
Wurts -- who could mention in heroic -- Wurts?  
But, tell me, hast thou reason to complain  
Of the rough triumphs of the last campaign?  
The Danube rescued and the Empire saved,  
Say, is the majesty of verse retrieved?  
And would it prejudice thy softer vein  
To sing the princes Louis and Eugene?  
Is it too hard in happy verse to place  
The Vans and Vanders of the Rhine and Maese?  
Her warriors Anna sends from Tweed and Thames,  
That France may fall by more harmonious names.  
Canst thou not Hamilton or Lumley bear?  
Would Ingoldsby or Palmes offend thy ear?  
And is there not a sound in Marlbro's name  
Which thou and all thy brethren ought to claim,

Sacred to verse, and sure of endless fame?  
Cutts is in metre something harsh to read;  
Place me the valiant Gouram in his stead;  
Let the intention make the number good;  
Let generous Sylvius speak for honest Wood,  
And though rough Churchill scarce in verse will stand,  
So as to have one rhyme at his command.  
With ease the bard reciting Blenheim's plain,  
May close the verse, remembering but the Dane.  
I grant, old friend, old foe, (for such we are  
Alternate as the chance of peace and war)  
That we poetic folks, who must restrain  
Our measured sayings in an equal chain,  
Have troubles utterly unknown to those  
Who let their fancy loose in rambling prose.  
For instance, now, how hard is it for me  
To make my matter and my my verse agree?  
In one great day, on Hochstets fatal plain,  
French and Bavarians twenty thousand slain;  
Push'd through the Danube to the shores of Styx  
Squadrons eighteen, battalions twenty-six;  
Officers captive made, and private men,  
Of these twelve hundred, of those thousands ten;  
Tents, ammunition, colours, carriages,  
Cannons, and kettle-drums, -- sweet numbers these  
But is it thus you English bards compose?  
With Runic lays thus tag insipid prose?  
And when you should your hero's deeds rehearse  
Give us a commissary's list in verse?  
Why, faith, Despreaux, there's sense in what you say;  
I told you where my difficulty lay:  
So vast, so numerous, were great Blenheim's spoils,  
They scorn the bounds of verse, and mock the muse's toils.  
To make the rough recital aptly chime,  
Or bring the sum of Gallia's loss to rhyme,  
'Tis mighty hard: what poet would essay  
To count the streamers of my Lord Mayor's day?  
To number all the several dishes dress'd  
By honest Lamb last coronation-feast?  
Or make arithmetic and epic meet,  
And Newton's thoughts in Dryden's style repeat?  
O Poet, had it been Apollo's will



That I had shared a portion of thy skill;  
Had this poor breast received the heavenly beam,  
Or could I hope my verse might reach my theme;  
Yet, Boileau, yet the labouring muse should strive  
Beneath the shades of Marlbro's wreaths to live;  
Should call aspiring gods to bless her choice,  
And to their favourite's strain exalt her voice,  
Arms and a Queen to sing, who, great and good,  
From peaceful Thames to Danube's wondering flood,  
Sent forth the terror of her high commands,  
To save the nations from invading hands,  
To prop fair Liberty's declining cause,  
And fix the jarring world with equal laws.  
The queen should sit in Windsor's sacred grove  
Attended by the gods of War and Love;  
Both should with equal zeal her smiles implore,  
To fix her joys, or to extend her Power.  
Sudden the Nymphs and Tritons should appear  
And as great Anna smiles dispel their fear;  
With active dance should her observance claim:  
With vocal shell should sound her happy name;  
Their master Thames should leave the neigh'bring shore  
By his strong anchor known and silver oar;  
Should lay his ensigns at his sovereign's feet,  
And audience mild with humble grace entreat.  
To her, his dear defence, she should complain,  
That whilst he blesses her indulgent reign,  
Whilst further seas are by his fleets survey'd,  
And on his happy banks each India laid,  
His brethren Maese, and Waal, and Rhine, and Saar,  
Feel the hard burden of oppressive war;  
That Danube scarce retains his rightful course  
Against two rebel armies' neighbouring force;  
And all must weep, sad captive to the Seine,  
Unless unchain'd and freed by Britain's queen.  
The valiant Sovereign calls her general forth,  
Neither recites her bounty nor his worth;  
She tells him he must Europe's fate redeem,  
And by that labour merit her esteem;  
She bids him wait her to the sacred hall,  
Shows him Prince Edward, and the conquer'd Gaul;  
Fixing the bloody cross upon his breast,

Says he must die, or succour the distrest.  
Placing the saint an emblem by his side,  
She tells him Virtue arm'd must conquer lawless Pride.  
The hero bows obedient, and retires:  
The Queen's commands exalt the warrior's fires:  
His steps are to the silent woods inclined,  
The great designs revolving in his mind,  
When to his sight a heavenly form appears,  
Her hand a palm, her head a laurel wears.  
Me, she begins, the fairest child of Jove,  
Below for ever sought, and bless'd above;  
Me, the bright source of wealth, and power and fame,  
(Nor need I say Victoria is my name)  
Me the great Father down to thee has sent;  
He bids me wait at thy distinguish'd tent,  
To execute what Anna's wish would have;  
Her subject thou, I only am her slave.  
Dare, then, thou much beloved by smiling Fate;  
For Anna's sake, and in her name, be great:  
Go forth, and be to distant nations known,  
My future favourite, and my darling son:  
At Schellenberg I'll manifest, sustain  
Thy glorious cause, and spread thy wings again,  
Conspicuous o'er thy helm, in Blenheim's plain.  
The goddess said, nor would admit reply,  
But cut the liquid air, and gain'd the sky.  
His high commission is through Britain known,  
And thronging armies to his standard run;  
He marches thoughtful, and he speedy sails;  
(Bless him, ye seas, and prosper him, ye gales!)  
Belgia receives him welcome to her shores,  
And William's death with lessen'd grief deplores:  
His presence only must retrieve that loss;  
Marl'brough to her must be what William was:  
So when great Atlas, from these low abodes  
Recall'd, was gather'd to his kindred gods,  
Alcides, respited by prudent Fate,  
Sustain'd the ball, nor droop'd beneath the weight.  
Secret and swift behold the chief advance;  
Sees half the empire join'd, and friend to France:  
The British General dooms the fight; his sword  
Dreadful he draws: the captains wait the word.

Anne and St. George, the charging hero cries:  
Shrill Echo from the neighbouring wood replies,  
Anne and St. George -- At that auspicious sign  
The standards move, the adverse armies join.  
Of eight great hours Time measures out the sands,  
And Europe's fate in doubtful balance stands;  
The ninth, Victoria comes:-- o'er Marl'brough's head  
Confess'd she sits: the hostile troops recede;--  
Triumphs the goddess, from her promise freed.  
The Eagle, by the British Lion's might  
Unchain'd and free, directs her upward flight;  
Nor did she e'er with stronger pinions soar  
From Tyber's banks, than now from Danube's shore.  
Fired with the thoughts which these ideas raise,  
And great ambition of my country's praise,  
The English Muse should like the Mantuan rise,  
Scornful of earth and clouds, should reach the skies,  
With wonder (though with envy still) pursued by human eyes.  
But we must change the style -- Just now I said  
I ne'er was master of the tuneful trade;  
Or the small genius which my youth could boast,  
In prose and business lies extinct and lost;  
Bless'd if I may some younger muse excite,  
Point out the game, and animate the flight;  
That from Marseilles to Calais France may know,  
As we have conquerors, we have poets too,  
And either laurel does in Britain grow;  
That, though amongst ourselves, with too much heat,  
We sometimes wrangle when we should debate,  
(A consequential ill, which freedom draws;  
A bad effect, but from a nobler cause)  
We can with universal zeal advance  
To curb the faithless arrogance of France,  
Nor ever shall Britannia's sons refuse  
To answer to thy Master or thy Muse;  
Nor want just subject for victorious strains,  
While Marl'brough's arm eternal laurels gains,  
And where old Spenser sung a new Eliza reigns.

Matthew Prior

# A Lover's Anger

As Cloe came into the Room t'other Day,  
I peevish began; Where so long cou'd You stay?  
In your Life-time You never regarded your Hour:  
You promis'd at Two; and (pray look Child) 'tis Four.  
A Lady's Watch needs neither Figures nor Wheels:  
'Tis enough, that 'tis loaded with Baubles and Seals.  
A Temper so heedless no Mortal can bear—  
Thus far I went on with a resolute Air.  
Lord bless Me! said She; let a Body but speak:  
Here's an ugly hard Rose-Bud fall'n into my Neck:  
It has hurt Me, and vext Me to such a Degree—  
See here; for You never believe Me; pray see,  
On the left Side my Breast what a Mark it has made.  
So saying, her Bosom She careless display'd.  
That Seat of Delight I with Wonder survey'd;  
And forgot ev'ry Word I design'd to have said.

Matthew Prior

# A Passage In The Moriae Encomium Of Erasmus. Imitated

In awful pomp and melancholy state,  
See settled Reason on the judgement-seat;  
Around her crowd Distrust, and Doubt, and Fear,  
And thoughtful Foresight, and tormenting Care;  
Far from the throne the trembling Pleasures stand,  
Chain'd up or exiled by her stern command.  
Wretched her subjects, gloomy sits the queen,  
Till happy chance reverts the cruel scene;  
And apish Folly, with her wild resort  
Of wit and jest, disturbs the solemn court.

See the fantastic Minstrelsy advance  
To breathe the song and animate the dance.  
Bless'd the usurper! happy the surprise!  
Her mimic postures catch our eager eyes;  
Her jingling bells affect our captive ear,  
And in the sights we see and sounds we hear,  
Against our judgement she our sense employs,  
The laws of troubled reason she drestroys,  
And in their place rejoices to indite  
Wild schemes of mirth and plans of loose delight.

Matthew Prior

## A Reasonable Affliction

On his death-bed poor Lubin lies:  
His spouse is in despair:  
With frequent sobs, and mutual cries,  
They both express their care.

A different cause, says Parson Sly,  
The same effect may give:  
Poor Lubin fears that he may die;  
His wife, that he may live.

Matthew Prior

## A Simile

Dear Thomas, didst thou never pop  
Thy head into a tin-man's shop?  
There, Thomas, didst thou never see  
( 'Tis but by way of simile)  
A squirrel spend his little rage  
In jumping round a rolling cage?  
The cage, as either side turn'd up,  
Striking a ring of bells a-top?--

Mov'd in the orb, pleas'd with the chimes,  
The foolish creature thinks he climbs:  
But here or there, turn wood or wire,  
He never gets two inches higher.

So fares it with those merry blades,  
That frisk it under Pindus' shades.  
In noble songs, and lofty odes,  
They tread on stars, and talk with gods;  
Still dancing in an airy round,  
Still pleas'd with their own verses' sound;  
Brought back, how fast soe'er they go,  
Always aspiring, always low.

Matthew Prior

## A Song. If Wine And Music Have The Power

If wine and music have the power  
To ease the sickness of the soul,  
Let Phoebis every string explore,  
And Bacchus fill the sprightly bowl:  
Let them their friendly aid employ  
To make my Cloe's absense light,  
And seek for pleasure to destroy  
The sorrows of this live-long night.

But she to-morrow will return:  
Venus, be thou to-morrow great;  
Thy myrtles strow, thy odours burn,  
And meet thy favourite nymph in state,  
Kind goddess, to no other powers  
Let us to-morrow's blessings own,  
Thy darling Loves shall guide the hours,  
And all the day be thine alone.

Matthew Prior



## A Song. In Vain You Tell Your Parting Lover

In vain you tell your parting lover  
You wish fair winds may waft him over  
Alas! what winds can happy prove  
That bear me far from what I love?  
Alas! what dangers on the main  
Can equal those that I sustain  
From slighted vows and cold disdain?

Be gentle, and in pity choose  
To wish the wildest tempests loose,  
That thrown again upon the coast  
Where first my shipwreck'd heart was lost,  
I may once more repeat my pain,  
Once more in dying notes complain  
Of slighted vows and cold disdain.

Matthew Prior

# Alma; Or, The Progress Of The Mind. In Three Cantos. - Canto I.

Matthew met Richard, when or where  
From story is not mighty clear:  
Of many knotty points they spoke,  
And pro and con by turns they took:  
Rats half the manuscript have ate;  
Dire hunger! which we still regret;  
O! may they ne'er again digest  
The horrors of so sad a feast;  
Yet less our grief, if what remains,  
Dear Jacob, by thy care and pains  
Shall be to future times convey'd:  
It thus begins:

\*\* Here Matthew said,  
Alma in verse, in prose, the mind,  
By Aristotle's pen defined,  
Throughout the body squat or tall,  
Is  
bona fide  
, all in all;  
And yet, slapdash, is all again  
In every sinew, nerve, and vein;  
Runs here and there, like Hamlet's ghost,  
While every where she rules the roast.

This system, Richard, we are told  
The men of Oxford firmly hold:  
The Cambridge wits, you know, deny  
With  
ispe dixit  
to comply:  
They say (for in good truth they speak  
With small respect of that old Greek)  
That, putting all his words together,  
'Tis three blue beans in one blue bladder.

Alma, they strenuously maintain,

Sits cock-horse on her throne, the brain,  
And from that seat of thought dispenses,  
Her sovereign pleasure to the senses.  
Two optic nerves, they say, she ties,  
Like spectacle across the eyes,  
By which the spirits bring her word  
Whene'er the balls are fix'd or stirr'd;  
How quick at Park and play they strike;  
The duke they court; the toast they like;  
And at St. James's turn their grace  
From former friends, now out of place.

Without these aids, to be more serious,  
Her power they hold had been precarious;  
The eyes might have conspired her ruin,  
And she not known what they were doing.  
Foolish it had been and unkind  
That they should see and she be blind.

Wise Nature, likewise, they suppose,  
Has drawn two conduits down our nose:  
Could Alma else with judgement tell  
When cabbage stinks or roses smell?  
Or who would ask for her opinion  
Between an oyster and an onion?  
For from most bodies, Dick, you know,  
Some little bits ask leave to flow,  
And as through these canals they roll,  
Bring up a sample of the whole;  
Like footmen running before coaches,  
To tell the inn what lord approaches.

By nerves about our palate placed,  
She likewise judges of the taste;  
Else (dismal thought!) our warlike men  
Might drink thick Port for fine Champaign,  
And our ill-judging wives and daughters,  
Mistake small-beer for citron-waters.

Hence, too, that she might better hear,  
She sets a drum at either ear,  
And loud or gentle, harsh or sweet,

Are but the alarums which they beat.

Last, to enjoy her sense of feeling,  
(A thing she much delights to deal in)  
A thousand little nerves she sends  
Quite to our toes and fingers' ends,  
And these, in gratitude, again  
Return their spirits to the brain,  
In which their figure being printed,  
(As just before I think I hinted)  
Alma inform'd can try the case,  
As she had been upon the place.

Thus while the judge gives different journeys  
To country counsel and attorneys,  
He on the bench in quiet sits,  
Deciding as they bring the writs.  
The Pope thus prays and sleeps at Rome,  
And very seldom stirs from home,  
Yet sending forth his holy spies,  
And having heard what they advise,  
He rules the church's bless'd dominions,  
And sets men's faith by his opinions.

The scholars of the Stagyrice,  
Who for the old opinion fight,  
Would make their modern friends confess  
The difference but from more or less:  
The Mind, say they, while you sustain  
To hold her station in the brain,  
You grant, at least, she is extended,

Ergo  
, the whole dispute is ended:  
For till to-morrow should you plead,  
From form and structure of the head,  
The Mind as visibly is seen  
Extended through the whole machine.  
Why should all honour then be ta'en  
From lower parts to load the brain,  
When other limbs we plainly see  
Each in his way as brisk as he?

For music, grant the head receives it,  
It is the artist's hand that gives it:  
And though the skull may wear the laurel,  
The soldier's arm sustains the quarrel.  
Besides, the nostrils, ears, and eyes,  
Are not his parts, but his allies:  
E'en what you here the tongue proclaim,  
Comes  
ab origine  
from them.

What could the head perform alone  
If all their friendly aids were gone?  
A foolish figure we must make,  
Do nothing else but sleep and ake.

Nor matters it that you can show  
How to the head the spirits go;  
Those spirits started from some goal  
Before they through the veins could roll;  
Nor we should hold them much to blame  
If they went back before they came.

If, therefore, as we must suppose,  
They came from fingers and from toes,  
Or toes or fingers, in this case,  
Of numskull's self should take the place;  
Disputing fair you grant this much,  
That all sensation is but touch.  
Dip but your toes into cold water,  
Their correspondent teeth will chatter;  
And strike the bottom of your feet,  
You set your head into a heat.  
The bully beat, and happy lover,  
Confess that feeling lies all over.

Not here, Lucretius dares to teach  
(As all our youth may learn from Creech)  
That eyes were made, but could not view,  
Nor bands embrace, not feet pursue,  
But heedless Nature did produce  
The members first, and then the use:  
What each must act was yet unknown,

Till all is moved by Chance alone.

A man first builds a country-seat,  
Then finds the walls not good to eat.  
Another plants, and wondering, sees  
Nor books nor medals on his trees.  
Yet poet and philosopher  
Was he who durst such whims aver.  
Bless'd for his sake be human reason,  
That came at all, though late, in season.

But no man sure e'er left his house,  
And saddled Ball, with thoughts so wild  
To bring a midwife to his spouse  
Before he knew she was with child:  
And no man ever reapt his corn,  
Or from the oven drew his bread,  
Ere hinds and bakers yet were born,  
That taught them both to sow and knead.  
Before they're ask'd can maids refuse?  
Can - Pray, says Dick, hold in your Muse,  
While you Pindaric truths rehearse,  
She hobbles in alternate verse.  
Verse! Matt. replied; is that my care?  
Go on, quoth Richard, soft and fair.

This looks, friend Dick, as Nature had  
But exercised the salesman's trade;  
As if she haply had sat down  
And cut out clothes for all the Town,  
Then sent them out to Monmouth street  
To try what persons they would fit;  
But every free and licensed tailor  
Would in this thesis find a failure.  
Should whims like these his head perplex,  
How could he work for either sex!  
His clothes as atoms might prevail,  
Might fit a pismire or a whale.  
No, no: he views with studious pleasure  
Your shape before he takes your measure  
For real Kate he made the bodice,  
And not for an ideal goddess.

No error near his shopboard lurk'd;  
He knew the folks for whom he work'd:  
Still to their size he aim'd his skill,  
Else pray thee who would pay his bill?

Next, Dick, if Chance herself should vary,  
Observe how matter would miscarry:  
Across your eyes, Friend, place your shoes,  
Your spectacles upon your toes,  
Then you and Memmius shall agree  
How nicely men would walk or see.

But wisdom, peevish, and cross-gain'd  
Must be opposed to be sustain'd;  
And still your knowledge will increase,  
As your make other people's less.  
In arms and science 'tis the same;  
Our rival's hurts create our fame.  
At Faubert's, if disputes arise  
Among the champions for the prize,  
To prove who gave the fairer butt,  
John shows the chalk on Robert's coat.  
So for the honour of your book,  
It tells where other folks mistook,  
And as their notions you confound,  
Those you invent get farther ground.

The commentators on old Ari-  
Stotle ('tis urged) in judgement vary:  
They to their own conceits have brought  
The image of his general thought,  
Just as the melancholic eye  
Sees fleets and armies in the sky,  
And to the poor apprentice ear  
The bells sound Whittington Lord Mayor.  
The conjurer thus explains his scheme;  
Thus spirits walk and prophets dream;  
North Britons thus have second sight,  
And Germans free from gunshot fight.

Theodoret and Origen,  
And fifty other learned men,

Attest that if their comments find  
The traces of their master's mind,  
Alma can ne'er decay nor die:  
This flatly th' other sect deny,  
Simplicius, Theophrast, Durand,  
Great names, but hard in verse to stand  
They wonder men should have mistook  
The tenets of their master's book,  
And hold that Alma yields her breath,  
O'ercome by age and seized by death.  
Now which were wise, and which were fools?  
Poor Alma sits between two stools;  
The more she reads the more perplex'd,  
The comment ruining the text:  
Now fears, now hopes her doubtful fate.  
But, Richard, let her look to that -  
Whilst we our own affairs pursue.

These different systems old or new,  
A man with half an eye may see  
Were only form'd to disagree.  
Now to bring things to fair conclusion,  
And save much Christian ink's effusion,  
Let me propose a healing scheme,  
And sail along the middle stream;  
For, Dick, if we could reconcile  
Old Aristotle with Gassendus,  
How many would admire our toil,  
And yet how few would comprehend us?

Here, Richard, let my scheme commence:  
Oh! may my words be lost in sense,  
While pleas'd Thalia deigns to write  
The slips and bounds of Alma's flight.

My simple system shall suppose  
That Alma enters at the toes;  
That then she mounts, by just degrees,  
Up to the ancles, legs, and knees:  
Next as the sap of life does rise,  
She lends her vigour to the thighs:  
And, all these under regions past,



She nestles somewhere near the waist;  
Gives pain or pleasure, grief or laughter,  
As we shall show at large hereafter:  
Mature, if not improved by time,  
Up to the heart she loves to climb:  
From thence, compell'd by craft and age,  
She makes the head her latest stage.

From the feet upward to the head,  
Pithy, and short, says Dick, proceed.

Dick, this is not an idle notion;  
Observe the progress of the motion:  
First, I demonstratively prove  
That feet were only made to move,  
And legs desire to come and go,  
For they have nothing else to do.

Hence, long before the child can crawl,  
He learns to kick, and wince, and sprawl,  
To hinder which, your midwife knows  
To bind those parts extremely close,  
Lest Alma, newly enter'd in,  
And stunn'd at her own christ'ning's din,  
Fearful of future grief and pain,  
Should silently sneak out again.  
Full piteous seems young Alma's case,  
As in a luckless gamester's place,  
She would not play, yet must not pass.

Again, as she grows something stronger,  
And master's feet are swath'd no longer,  
If in the night too oft he kicks,  
Or shows his  
loco  
-motive tricks,  
These first assaults fat Kate repays him,  
When halt-asleep she overlays him.

Now mark, dear Richard, from the age  
That children tread this worldly stage,  
Broomstaff or poker they bestride,

And round the parlour love to ride,  
Till thoughtful father's pious care  
Provides his brood, next Smithfield fair,  
With supplemental hobby-horses,  
And happy be their infant courses!

Hence for some years they ne'er stand still;  
Their legs you see direct their will;  
From opening morn till setting sun  
Around the fields and woods they run,  
They frisk, and dance, and leap, and play,  
Nor heed what Friend or Snape can say.

To her next stage as Alma flies,  
And likes, as I have said, the thighs,  
With sympathetic power she warms  
Their good allies and friends the arms;  
White Betty dances on the green,  
And Susan is at stoolball seen:  
While John for ninepins does declare,  
And Roger loves to pitch the bar,  
Both legs and arms spontaneous move,  
Which was the thing I meant to prove.

Another motion now she makes:  
O need I name the seat she takes?  
His thought quite changes the stripling finds;  
The sport and race no more he minds;  
Neglected Tray and Pointer lie,  
And covies unmolested fly:  
Sudden the jocund plain he leaves,  
And for the nymph in secret grieves:  
In dying accents he complains  
Of cruel fires and raging pains.  
The nymph, too, longs to be alone,  
Leaves all the swains and sighs for one:  
The nymph is warm'd with young desire,  
And feels, and dies to quench his fire.  
They meet each evening in the grove;  
Their parley but augments their love:  
So to the priest their case they tell;  
He toes the knot, and all goes well.

But, O my Muse, just distance keep,  
Thou art a maid, and must not peep.  
In nine months time the bodice loose,  
And petticoats too short, disclose  
That at this age the active mind  
About the waist lies most confined,  
And that young life, and quickening sense  
Spring from his influence darted thence:  
So from the middle of the world  
The sun's prolific rays are hurl'd;  
'Tis from that seat he darts those beams  
Which quicken earth with genial flames.

Dick, who thus long had passive sat,  
Here stroked his chin and cock'd his hat,  
Then slapp'd his hand upon the board,  
And thus the youth put in his word.  
Love's advocates, sweet Sir, would find him  
A higher place than you assign'd him.  
Love's advocates, Dick, who are those? -  
The poets, you may well suppose.  
I'm sorry, Sir, you have discarded  
The men with whom till now you herded.  
Prosemen alone, for private ends,  
I thought forsook their ancient friends,

In cor stillavit,  
cries Lucretius,  
If he may be allow'd to teach us.  
The selfsame thing soft Ovid says,  
(A proper judge in such a case.)  
Horace his phrase is  
torret jecur,

And happy was that curious speaker.  
Here Virgil too has placed this passion;  
What signifies too long quotation?  
In ode and epic plain the case is,  
That Love holds one of these two places.

Dick, without passion or reflection,

I'll straight demolish this objection.

First, poets, all the world agrees,  
Write half to profit half to please;  
Matter and figure they produce,  
For garnish this, and that for use;  
And, in the structure of their feasts,  
They seek to feed and please their guests:  
But one may baulk this good intent,  
And take things otherwise than meant.  
Thus, if you dine with my Lord Mayor,  
Roast beef and venison is your fare,  
Thence you proceed to swan and bustard,  
And persevere in tart and custard:  
But tulip-leaves and lemon-peel  
Help only to adorn the meal,  
And painted flags, superb and neat,  
Proclaim you welcome to the treat.  
The man of sense his meat devours,  
But only smells the peel and flowers;  
And he must be an idle dreamer  
Who leaves the pie and gnaws the streamer.

That Cupid goes with bow and arrows,  
And Venus keeps her coach and sparrows,  
Is all but emblem, to acquaint one  
The son is sharp, the mother wanton.  
Such images have sometimes shown  
A mystic sense, but oftener none;  
For who conceives what bards devise,  
That heaven is placed in Celia's eyes?  
Or where's the sense, direct and moral,  
That teeth are pearl, or lips are coral?

Your Horace owns he various writ,  
As wild or sober maggots bit;  
And where too much the poet ranted,  
The sage philosopher recanted.  
His grave Epistles may disprove  
The wanton Odes he made to love.

Lucretius keeps a mighty pother

With Cupid and his fancied mother;  
Calls her great Queen of earth and air,  
Declares that winds and seas obey her.  
And, while her honour he rehearses,  
Implores her to inspire his verses.

Yet, free from this poetic madness,  
Next page he says, in sober sadness,  
That she and all her fellow-gods  
Sit idling in their high abodes,  
Regardless of this world below,  
Our health or hanging, weal or wo,  
Nor once disturb their heavenly spirits  
With Scapin's cheats, or Caesar's merits.

Nor e'er can Latin poets prove  
Where lies the real seat of Love.

Jecur  
they burn, and  
cor  
they pierce,  
As either best supplies their verse;  
And if folks ask the reason for't,  
Say one was long the other short.  
Thus I presume the British Muse  
In prose our property is greater,  
Why should it then be less in metre?  
If Cupid throws a single dart,  
We make him wound the lover's heart  
But if he takes his bow and quiver,  
'Tis sure he must transfix the liver:  
For rhyme with reason may dispense,  
And sound has right to govern sense.

But let your friends in verse suppose,  
What ne'er shall be allow'd in prose,  
Anatomists can make it clear  
The liver minds his own affair,  
Kindly supplies our public uses,  
And parts and strains the vital juices,  
Still lays some useful bile aside

To tinge the chyle's insipid tide,  
Else we should want both gibe and satire,  
And all be burst with pure good-nature:  
Now gall is bitter with a witness,  
And love is all delight and sweetness:  
My logic then has lost its aim  
If sweet and bitter be the same:  
And he methinks is no great scholar  
Who can mistake his desire for choler.

The like may of the heart be said;  
Courage and terror there are bred.  
All those whose hearts are loose and low  
Start if they hear but the tattoo;  
And mighty physical their fear is,  
Their heart, descending to their breeches,  
Must give their stomach cruel twitches:  
But heroes who o'ercome or die  
Have their hearts hung extremely high,  
The string of which, in battle's heat,  
Against their very corslets beat,  
Keep time with their own trumpet's measure,  
And yield them most excessive pleasure.

Now, if 'tis chiefly in the heart  
That courage does itself exert,  
That this is eke the throne of Love.  
Would nature make one place the seat  
Of fond desire and fell debate?  
Must people only take delight in  
Those hours when they are tired with fighting?  
And has no man but who has kill'd  
A father, right to get a child?  
These notions, then, I think but idle,  
And love shall still possess the middle.

This truth more plainly to discover,  
Suppose your hero were a lover;  
Though he before had gall and rage,  
Which death or conquest must assuage,  
He grows dispirited and low,  
He hates the fight and shuns the foe.

In scornful sloth Achilles slept,  
And for his wench, like Tallboy, wept,  
Nor would return to war and slaughter,  
Till they brought back the parson's daughter.

Antonius fled from Actium's coast,  
Augustus pressing Asia lost.  
His sails by Cupid's hand unfurl'd,  
To keep the fair he gave the world.  
Edward our Fourth, revered and crown'd,  
Vigorous in youth, in arms renown'd,  
While England's voice and Warwick's care  
Design'd him Gallia's beauteous heir,  
Changed peace and power for rage and wars,  
Only to dry one widow's tears.

France's Fourth Henry we may see  
A servant to the fair d'Estree;  
When quitting Coutras' prosperous field,  
And Fortune taught at length to yield,  
He, from his guards and midnight tent,  
Disguis'd, o'er hills and valleys went,  
To wanton with the sprightly dame,  
And in his pleasure lost his fame.

Bold is the critic who dares prove  
These heroes were no friends to love;  
And bolder he who dares aver  
That they were enemies to war;  
Yet when their thought should, now or never,  
Have raise their heart or fired their liver,  
Fond Alma to those parts was gone  
Which Love more justly calls his own.

Examples I could cite you more,  
But he contented with these four;  
For when one's proofs are aptly chosen,  
Four are as valid as four dozen.  
One came from Greece, and one from Rome  
The other two grew nearer home,  
For some in ancient books delight,

Others prefer what moderns write;  
Now I should be extremely loath  
Not to be thought expert in both.

Matthew Prior



# Alma; Or, The Progress Of The Mind. In Three Cantos. - Canto II.

But shall we take the Muse abroad,  
To drop her idly on the road,  
And leave our subject in the middle,  
As Butler did his Bear and Fiddle?  
Yet he, consummate master, knew  
When to recede and where pursue:  
His noble negligence teach  
What others' toils despair to reach.  
He, perfect dancer, climbs the rope,  
And balances your fear and hope.  
If, after some distinguished leap,  
He drops his pole, and seems to slip,  
Straight gathering all his active strength,  
He rises higher half his length:  
With wonder you approve his sleight,  
And owe your pleasure to your fright:  
But like poor Andrew I advance,  
False mimic of my master's dance;  
Around the chord a while I sprawl,  
And thence, though low, in earnest fall.

My preface tells you I digress'd;  
He's half absolved who has confess'd.

I like, quoth Dick, your simile,  
And in return take two from me.  
As masters in the  
clare-obscure

With various light your eyes allure,  
A flaming yellow here they spread,  
Draw off in blue, or change in red;  
Yet from these colours oddly mix'd  
Your sight upon the whole is fix'd:  
Or as, again, your courtly dames  
(Whose clothes returning birthday claims)  
By arts improve the stuffs they vary,

And things are best as most contrary;  
The gown with stiff embroidery shining,  
Looks charming with a slighter lining;  
Look out, if Indian figure stain,  
The in-side must be rich and plain:  
So you, great authors, have thought fit  
To make digression temper wit:  
You calm them with a milder air:  
To break their points you turn their force,  
And furbelow the plain discourse.

Richard, quoth Matt, these words of thine  
Speak something sly and something fine;  
But I shall e'en resume my theme,  
However thou may'st praise or blame.

As people marry now and settle,  
Fierce Love abates his usual mettle;  
Worldly desires and household cares  
Disturb the godhead's soft affairs:  
So now, as health or temper changes,  
In larger compass Alma ranges,  
This day below, the next above,  
As light or solid whimsies move.  
So merchant has his house in Town,  
And country seat near Bansted Down;  
From one he dates his foreign letters,  
Sends out his goods and duns his debtors:  
In th' other, at his hours of leisure,  
He smokes his pipe, and takes his pleasure.

And now your matrimonial Cupid,  
Lash'd on by Time, grows tired and stupid:  
For story and experience tell us  
That man grows cold and woman jealous.  
Both would their solid ends secure;  
He sighs for freedom she for power:  
His wishes tend abroad to roam,  
And hers to domineer at home.  
Thus passion flags by slow degrees,  
And ruffled more delighted legs,  
The busy mind does seldom go

To those once charming seats below;  
For well-bred feints and future wars,  
(When he last autumn lay a-dying)  
Was but to gain him to appoint her  
By codicil a larger jointure:  
The woman finds it all a trick  
That he could swoon when she was sick,  
And knows that in that grief he reckon'd  
One black-eyed Susan for his second.

Thus having strove some tedious years  
With feign'd desires and real fears,  
And tired with answers and replies  
Of John affirms, and Martha lies,  
Leaving this endless altercation,  
The mind affects a higher station.

Poltis, that generous king of Thrace,  
I think was in this very case.  
All Asia now was by the ears,  
And gods beat up for volunteers  
To Greece and Troy, while Poltis sate  
In quiet, governing his state.  
And whence, said the pacific king,  
Does all this noise and discord spring?  
Why, Paris took Atrides' wife -  
With ease I could compose this strife:  
The injured hero should not lose,  
Nor the young lover want, a spouse.  
But Helen changed her first condition  
Without her husband's just permission.  
What from the dame can Paris hope?  
She may as well from him elope.  
Again, How can her old good man  
With honour take her back again?  
From hence I logically gather  
The woman cannot live with either.  
Now I have two right honest wives,  
For whose possession no man strives:  
One to Atrides I will send,  
And t'other to my Trojan friend.  
Each prince shall thus with honour have

What both so warmly seem to crave;  
The wrath of gods and men shall cease,  
And Poltis live and die in peace.

Dick, if this story pleaseth thee,  
Pray thank Dan Pope, who told it me.

Howe'er swift Alma's flight may vary,  
(Take this by way of corollary)  
Some limbs she finds the very same  
In place, and dignity, and name:  
These dwell at such convenient distance,  
That each may give his friend assistance.  
Thus he who runs or dances, begs  
The equal vigour of two legs;  
So much to both does Alma trust  
She ne'er regards which goes the first.  
Teague could make neither of them stay,  
For whilst one hand exalts the blow,  
And on the earth extends the foe,  
Th' other would take it wondrous ill  
If in your pocket he lay still.  
And when you shoot and shut one eye,  
To lend the other friendly aid,  
Or wink as coward, and afraid.  
No, Sir; whilst he withdraws his flame,  
His comrade takes the surer aim.  
One moment if his beams recede,  
As soon as e'er the bird is dead,  
Opening again, he lays his claim  
To half the profit, half the fame,  
And helps to pocket up the game.  
'Tis thus one tradesman slips away  
To give his partner fairer play.

Some limbs again, in bulk or stature  
Unlike, and not a-kin by Nature,  
In concert act, like modern friends,  
Because one serves the other's ends.  
The arm thus waits upon the heart,  
So quick to take the bully's part,  
That one, though warm, decides more slow

Than th' other executes the blow:  
A stander-by may chance to have it  
Ere Hack himself perceives he gave it.

The amorous eyes thus always go  
A strolling for their friends below;  
For long before the squire and dame  
Have  
tete a tete  
relieved their flame,  
Ere visits yet are brought about,  
They eye by sympathy looks out,  
Knows Florimel, and longs to meet her,  
And if he sees is sure to greet her,  
Though at sash-window, on the stairs,  
At court, nay, (authors say) at prayers -

The funeral of some valiant knight  
May give this thing its proper light.  
View his two gauntlets; these declare  
That both his hands were used to war;  
And from his two gilt spurs 'tis learn'd  
His feet were equally concern'd:  
But have you not with thought beheld  
The sword hang dangling o'er his shield?  
Which shows the breast that plate was used to  
Had an ally right arm to trust to;  
And by the peep holes in his crest,  
Is it not virtually confess'd  
That there his eye took distant aim,  
And glances respect to that bright dame,  
In whose delight his hope was center'd,  
And for whose glove his life he ventured?

Objections to my general system  
May rise, perhaps, and I have miss'd them;  
But I can call to my assistance  
Proximity (mark that!) and distance;  
Can prove that all things, on occasion,  
Love union, and desire adhesion!  
That Alma merely is a scale,  
And motives, like the weights prevail.

If neither side turn down or up,  
With loss or gain, with fear or hope,  
The balance always would hang even,  
Like Mahomet's tomb, 'twixt earth and heaven.

This, Richard, is a curious case:  
Suppose your eyes sent equal rays  
Upon two distant pots of ale,  
Not knowing which was mild or stale;  
In this sad state your doubtful choice  
Would never have the casting voice;  
Which best nor worst you could not think,  
And die you must for want of drink,  
Unless some chance inclines your sight,  
Setting one pot in fairer light;  
Then you prefer or A or B,  
As lines and angles best agree;  
Your sense resolved impels your will;  
She guides your hand - So drink your fill.

Have you not seen a baker's maid  
Between two equal panniers sway'd?  
Her tallies useless lie and idle  
If placed exactly in the middle;  
But forced from this unactive state  
By virtue of some casual weight,  
On either side you hear them clatter,  
And judge of right and left hand matter.

Now, Richard, this coercive force  
Without your choice must take its course.  
Great kings to wars are pointed forth  
Like loaded needles to the North,  
And thou and I, by power unseen,  
Are barely passive and suck'd in  
To Henault's vaults or Celia's chamber,  
As straw and paper are by amber.  
If we sit down to play or set,  
(Suppose at Ombre or Basset)  
Let people call us cheats or fools,  
Our cards and we are equal tools,  
We sure in vain the cards condemn;

Ourselves both cut and shuffled them:  
In vain on Fortune's aid rely;  
She only is a stander-by.  
Poor men! poor papers! we and they  
Do some impulsive force obey,  
Are but play'd with - do not play.  
But space and matter we should blame;  
They palm'd the trick that lost the game.

Thus to save further contradiction  
Against what you may think but fiction,  
I for attraction, Dick, declare,  
Deny it those bold men that dare.  
As well your mention as your thought  
Is all by hidden impulse wrought:  
Even saying that you think or walk,  
How like a country squire you talk?

Mark then; - Where fancy or desire  
Collects the beams of vital fire,  
Into that limb fair Alma slides  
And there  
pro tempore  
resides:  
She dwells in Nicholini's tongue,  
When Pyrrhus chants the heavenly song;  
When Pedro does the lute command,  
She guides the cunning artist's hand;  
Through Macer's gullet she runs down,  
When the vile glutton dines alone;  
And, void of modesty and thought,  
She follows Bibo's endless draught,  
Through the soft sex again she ranges,  
As youth, caprice, or fashion, changes:  
Fair Alma, careless and serene,  
In Fanny's sprightly eyes is seen.  
While they diffuse their infant beams,  
Themselves not conscious of their flames.  
Again, fair Alma sits confess'd  
On Florimel's experter breast,  
When she the rising sigh constrains,  
And by concealing speaks her pains.

In Cynthia's neck fair Alma glows,  
When the vain thing her jewels shows;  
When Jenny's stays are newly laced  
Fair Alma plays about her waist;  
And when the swelling hoop sustains  
The rich brocade, fair Alma deigns  
Into that lower space to enter,  
Of the large round herself the center.

Again; that single limb or feature  
(Such is the cogent force of Nature)  
Which most did Alma's passion move,  
In the first object of her love,  
For ever will be found confess'd,  
And printed on the amorous breast.

O Abelard! ill-fated youth,  
Thy tale will justify this truth;  
But well I weet thy cruel wrong  
Adorns a nobler poet's song,  
Dan Pope, for thy misfortune grieve!,  
With kind concern and skill has weaved  
A silken web, and ne'er shall fade  
Its colours gently: as he laid  
The mantle o'er thy sad distress,  
And Venus shall the texture bless.  
He o'er the weeping nun has drawn  
Such artful folds of sacred lawn,  
That Love, with equal grief and pride,  
Shall see the crime he strives to hide,  
And softly drawing back the veil,  
The god shall to his votaries tell  
Each conscious tear, each blushing grace,  
That deck'd dear Eloisa's face.

Happy the poet, bless'd the lays,  
Which Buckingham has deign'd to praise.

Next, Dick, as youth and habit sways,  
A hundred gambols Alma plays.  
If, whilst a boy, Jack run from school,  
Fond of his hunting-horn and pole,



Though gout and age his speed detain,  
Old John halloos his hounds again:  
By his fireside he starts the hare,  
And turns her in his wicker chair.  
His feet, however lame, you find,  
Have got the better of his mind.

If, while the Mind was in her leg,  
The dance affected nimble Peg,  
Old Madge bewitch'd, at sixty-one  
Calls for Green Sleeves and Jumping Joan.  
In public mask or private ball,  
From Lincoln's-inn to Goldsmith's-Hall,  
All Christmas long away she trudges,  
Trips it was 'prentices and judges;  
In vain her children urge her stay,  
And age or palsy bar the way:  
But if those images prevail,  
Which whilom did affect the tail,  
She still reviews the ancient scene,  
Forgets the forty years between;  
Awkwardly gay, and oddly merry,  
Her scarf pale pink, her headknot cherry,  
O'erheated with ideal rage,  
She cheats her son to wed her page.

If Alma, whilst the man was young,  
Slipp'd up too soon into his tongue,  
Pleased with his own fantastic skill,  
He lets that weapon ne'er lie still;  
On any point if you dispute,  
Depend upon it he'll confute:  
Change sides, and you increase your pain,  
For he'll confute you back again:  
For one may speak with Tully's tongue,  
Yet all the while be in the wrong;  
And 'tis remarkable that they  
talk most who have the least to say.  
Your dainty speakers have the curse  
To plead bad causes down to worse;  
As dames who native beauty want,  
Still uglier look the more they paint.

Again: if in the female sex  
Alma should on this member fix,  
(A cruel and a desperate case,  
From which Heaven shield my lovely lass!)  
For ever more all care is vain  
That would bring Alma down again.  
As in habitual gout or stone,  
The only thing that can be done  
Is to correct your drink and diet,  
And keep the inward foe in quiet;  
So if, for any sins of ours,  
Or our forefathers, higher powers,  
Severe, though just, afflict our life,  
With that prime ill, a talking wife,  
Till death shall bring the kind relief,  
We must be patient or be deaf.

You know a certain lady, Dick,  
Who saw me when I last was sick;  
She kindly talk'd, at least three hours,  
Of plastic forms and mental powers;  
Described our pre-existing station,  
Before this vile terrene creation;  
And, lest I should be wearied, Madam,  
To cut things short, came down to Adam;  
From whence, as fast as she was able,  
She drowns the world, and builds up Babel:  
Through Syria, Persia, Greece, she goes,  
And takes the Romans in the close.

But we'll descant on general Nature;  
This is a system, not a satire.

Turn we this globe, and let us see  
How different nations disagree,  
In what we wear, or eat, and drink;  
Nay, Dick, perhaps in what we think.  
In water as you smell and taste  
The soils through which it rose and past,  
In Alma's manners you may read  
The place where she was born and bred.

One people from their swaddling-bands  
Released their infants' feet and hands:  
Here Alma to these limbs was brought  
And Sparta's offspring kick'd and fought.

Another taught their babes to talk  
Ere they could yet in go-carts walk:  
There Alma settled in the tongue,  
And orators from Athens sprung.

Observe but in these neighbouring lands  
The different use of mouth and hands:  
As men reposed their various hopes,  
In battles these, and those in tropes.

In Britain's isles, as Heylin notes,  
The ladies trip in petticoats,  
Which, for the honour of their nation,  
They quit but on some great occasion,  
Men there in breeches clad you view;  
They claim that garment as their due.  
In Turkey the reverse appears;  
Long coats the haughty husband wears,  
And greets his wife with angry speeches,  
If she be seen without her breeches.

In our fantastic climes the fair  
With cleanly powder dry their hair,  
And round their lovely breast and head  
Fresh flowers their mingled odours shed:  
Your nicer Hottentots think meet  
With guts and tripe to deck their feet;  
With downcast looks on Totta's legs  
The ogling youth most humbly begs  
She would not from his hopes remove  
At once his breakfast and his love;  
And if the skittish nymph should fly,  
He in a double sense must die.

We simple toasters take delight  
To see our women's teeth look white,

And every saucy ill-bred fellow  
Sneers at a mouth profoundly yellow  
In China none hold women sweet,  
Except their snags are black as jet:  
King Chihu put nine queens to death,  
Convict on statute, ivory teeth.

At Tonquin, if a prince should die,  
(As Jesuits write, who never lie)  
The wife, and counsellor, and priest,  
Who served him most, and loved him best,  
Prepare and light his funeral fire,  
And cheerful on the pile expire.  
In Europe 'twould be hard to find  
In each degree on half so kind.

Now turn we to the farthest East,  
And there observe the gentry drest.  
Prince Giolo and his royal sisters,  
Scarr'd with ten thousand comely blisters,  
The marks remaining on the skin,  
To tell the quality within:  
Distinguish'd flashes deck the great,  
As each excels in birth or state;  
His oylet-holes are more and ampler:  
The king's own body was a sampler.  
Happy the climate where the beau  
Wears the same suit for use and show;  
And at a small expense your wife,  
If once well pink'd, is cloath'd for life.

Westward again, the Indian fair  
Is nicely smear'd with fat of bear:  
Before you see you smell your toast,  
And sweetest she who stinks the most.  
The finest sparks and cleanest beaux  
Drip from the shoulders to the toes.  
How sleek their skins, their joints how easy!  
There slovens only are not greasy.

I mention'd different ways of breeding;  
Begin we in our children's reading,

To master John the English maid  
A hornbrook gives of gingerbread,  
And that the child may learn the better,  
As he can name he eats the letter;  
Proceeding thus with vast delight,  
He spells and gnaws from left to right.  
But show a Hebrew's hopeful son  
Where we suppose the book begun,  
The child would thank you for your kindness,  
And read quite backward from our  
finis

;

Devour he learning ne'er so fast,  
Great A would be reserved the last.  
An equal instance of this matter  
Is in the manners of a daughter.  
In Europe if a harmless maid,  
By Nature and by Love betray'd,  
Should ere a wife become a nurse,  
Her friends would look on her the worse.  
In China, Dampier's Travels tell ye,  
(Look in his index for Pagelli)  
Soon as the British ships unmoor,  
And jolly long-boats row to shore,  
Down come the nobles of the land,  
Each brings his daughter in his hand,  
Beseeching the mysterious tar  
To make her but one hour his care:  
The tender mother stands affrighted,  
Lest her dear daughter should be slighted,  
And poor Miss Yaya dreads the shame  
Of going back the maid she came.

Observe how custom, Dick, compels  
The lady that in Europe dwells:  
After her tea she slips away,  
And what to do one need not say.  
Now see how great Pomonque's queen  
Behaved herself amongst the men;  
Pleased with her punch, the gallant soul  
First drank, then water'd in the bowl,  
And sprinkled in the captain's face

The marks of her peculiar grace. -

To close this point we need not roam  
For instances so far from home.  
What parts gay France from sober Spain?  
A little rising rocky chain.  
Of men born south or north o' the hill,  
Those seldom move, these ne'er stand still.  
Dick, you love maps, and may perceive  
Rome not far distant from Geneve.  
If the good Pope remains at home,  
He's the first prince in Christendom.  
Choose then, good Pope, at home to stay,  
Nor westward, curious, take thy way:  
Thy way, unhappy, shouldst thou take  
From Tiber's bank to Lemman lake,  
Thou art an aged priest no more,  
But a young flaring painted bunny:  
Thy sex is lost, thy town is gone;  
No longer Rome, but Babylon.  
That some few leagues should make this change,  
To men unlearn'd seems mighty strange.

But need we, friend, insist on this?  
Since, in the very Cantons Swiss,  
All your philosophers agree,  
And prove it plain, that one may be  
A heretic or true believer,  
On this or t'other side the rive.

Here, with an artful smile, quoth Dick -  
Your proofs come mighty full and thick -

The bard, on this extensive chapter,  
Wound up into poetic rapture,  
Continued: Richard, cast your eye  
By night upon a winter sky;  
Cast it by day-light on the strand,  
Which compasses fair Albion's land;  
If you can count the stars that glow  
Above, or sands that lie below,  
Into these common places look,

Which from great authors I have took,  
And count the proofs I have collected,  
To have my writings well protected:  
These I lay by for time of need,  
And thou may'st at thy leisure read:  
For standing every critic's rage,  
I safely will, to future age  
My system as a gift bequeath,  
Victorious over spite and death.

Matthew Prior

# An English Ballad, On The Taking Of Namur, By The King Of Great Britain

Dulce est desipere in loco.

Some Folks are drunk, yet do not know it:  
So might not Bacchus give You Law?  
Was it a Muse, O lofty Poet,  
Or Virgin of St. Cyr, You saw?  
Why all this Fury? What's the Matter,  
That Oaks must come from Thrace to dance?  
Must stupid Stocks be taught to flatter?  
And is there no such Wood in France?  
Why must the Winds all hold their Tongue?  
If they a little Breath should raise;  
Would that have spoil'd the Poet's Song;  
Or puff'd away the Monarch's Praise?

II.

Pindar, that Eagle, mounts the Skies;  
While Virtue leads the noble Way:  
Too like a Vultur Boileau flies,  
Where sordid Interest shows the Prey.  
When once the Poet's Honour ceases,  
From Reason far his Transports rove:  
And Boileau, for eight hundred Pieces,  
Makes Louis take the Wall of Jove.

III.

Neptune and Sol came from above,  
Shap'd like Megrigny and Vauban:  
They arm'd these Rocks; then show'd old Jove  
Of Marli Wood, the Wond'rous Plan.  
Such Walls, these three wise Gods agreed,  
By Human Force could ne'er be shaken:  
But You and I in Homer read  
Of Gods, as well as Men, mistaken.  
Sambre and Maese their Waves may join;  
But ne'er can William's Force restrain:  
He'll pass them Both, who pass'd the Boyn:



Remember this, and arm the Sein.

IV.

Full fifteen thousand lusty Fellows  
With Fire and Sword the Fort maintain:  
Each was a Hercules, You tell us;  
Yet out they march'd like common Men.  
Cannons above, and Mines below  
Did Death and Tombs for Foes contrive:  
Yet Matters have been order'd so,  
That most of Us are still alive.

V.

If Namur be compar'd to Troy;  
Then Britain's Boys excell'd the Greeks:  
Their Siege did ten long Years employ:  
We've done our Bus'ness in ten Weeks.  
What Godhead does so fast advance,  
With dreadful Pow'r those Hills to gain?  
'Tis little Will, the Scourge of France;  
No Godhead, but the first of Men.  
His mortal Arm exerts the Pow'r,  
To keep ev'n Mons's Victor under:  
And that same Jupiter no more  
Shall fright the World with impious Thunder.

VI.

Our King thus trembles at Namur,  
Whilst Villeroy, who ne'er afraid is,  
To Bruxelles marches on secure,  
To bomb the Monks, and scare the Ladies.  
After this glorious Expedition,  
One Battle makes the Marshal Great:  
He must perform the King's Commission:  
Who knows, but Orange may retreat?  
Kings are allow'd to feign the Gout,  
Or be prevail'd with not to Fight:  
And mighty Louis hop'd, no doubt,  
That William wou'd preserve that Right.

VII.

From Seyn and Loyre, to Rhone and Po,

See every Mother's Son appear:  
In such a Case ne'er blame a Foe,  
If he betrays some little Fear.  
He comes, the mighty Vill'roy comes;  
Finds a small River in his Way:  
So waves his Colours, beats his Drums;  
And thinks it prudent there to stay.  
The Gallic Troops breath Blood and War:  
The Marshal cares not to march faster:  
Poor Vill'roy moves so slowly here,  
We fancy'd all, it was his Master.

VIII.

Will no kind Flood, no friendly Rain  
Disguise the Marshal's plain Disgrace?  
No Torrents swell the low Mehayne?  
The World will say, he durst not pass.  
Why will no Hyades appear,  
Dear Poet, on the Banks of Sambre?  
Just as they did that mighty Year,  
When You turn'd June into December.  
The Water-Nymphs are too unkind  
To Vill'roy; are the Land-Nymphs so?  
And fly They All, at Once Combin'd  
To shame a General, and a Beau?

IX.

Truth, Justice, Sense, Religion, Fame  
May join to finish William's Story:  
Nations set free may bless his Name;  
And France in Secret own his Glory.  
But Ipres, Mastrich, and Cambray,  
Besancon, Ghent, St. Omers, Lysle,  
Courtray, and Dole—Ye Criticks, say,  
How poor to this was Pindar's Style?  
With Eke's and Also's tack thy Strain,  
Great Bard; and sing the deathless Prince,  
Who lost Namur the same Campaign,  
He bought Dixmude, and plunder'd Deynse.

X.

I'll hold Ten Pound, my Dream is out:

I'd tell it You, but for the Rattle  
Of those confounded Drums: no doubt  
Yon' bloody Rogues intend a Battel.  
Dear me! a hundred thousand French  
With Terror fill the neighb'ring Field;  
While William carries on the Trench,  
'Till both the Town and Castle yield.  
Vill'roy to Boufflers should advance,  
Says Mars, thro' Cannons Mouths in Fire;  
Id est , one Mareschal of France  
Tells t'other, He can come no nigher.

XI.

Regain the Lines the shortest Way,  
Vill'roy; or to Versailles take Post:  
For, having seen it, Thou can'st say  
The Steps, by which Namur was lost.  
The Smoke and Flame may vex thy Sight:  
Look not once back: but as thou goest,  
Quicken the Squadrons in their Flight;  
And bid the D—I take the slowest.  
Think not what Reason to produce,  
From Louis to conceal thy Fear:  
He'll own the Strength of thy Excuse;  
Tell him that William was but there.

XII.

Now let us look for Louis' Feather,  
That us'd to shine so like a Star:  
The Gen'rals could not get together,  
Wanting that Influence, great in War.  
O Poet! Thou had'st been discreeter,  
Hanging the Monarch's Hat so high;  
If Thou had'st dubb'd thy Star, a Meteor,  
That did but blaze, and rove, and die.

XIII.

To animate the doubtful Fight,  
Namur in vain expects that Ray:  
In vain France hopes, the sickly Light  
Shou'd shine near William's fuller Day.  
It knows Versailles, it's proper Station;

Nor cares for any foreign Sphere:  
Where You see Boileau's Constellation,  
Be sure no Danger can be near.

XIV.

The French had gather'd all their Force;  
And William met them in their Way:  
Yet off they brush'd, both Foot and Horse.  
What has Friend Boileau left to say?  
When his high Muse is bent upon't,  
To sing her King, that Great Commander,  
Or on the Shores of Hellespont,  
Or in the Valleys near Scamander;  
Wou'd it not spoil his noble Task,  
If any foolish Phrygian there is,  
Impertinent enough to ask,  
How far Namur may be from Paris?

XV.

Two Stanza's more before we end,  
Of Death, Pikes, Rocks, Arms, Bricks, and Fire:  
Leave 'em behind You, honest Friend:  
And with your Country-Men retire.  
Your Ode is spoilt; Namur is freed;  
For Dixmuyd something yet is due:  
So good Count Guiscard may proceed;  
But Boufflers, Sir, one Word with you.—

XVI.

'Tis done. In Sight of these Commanders,  
Who neither Fight, nor raise the Siege,  
The Foes of France march safe thro' Flanders;  
Divide to Bruxelles, or to Liege.  
Send, Fame, this News to Trianon;  
That Boufflers may new Honours gain:  
He the same Play by Land has shown,  
As Tourville did upon the Main.  
Yet is the Marshal made a Peer:  
O William, may thy Arms advance;  
That He may lose Dinant next Year,  
And so be Constable of France.



# An Epistle To Fleetwood Shephard, Esq.

When crowding folks, with strange ill faces,  
Were making legs, and begging places,  
And some with patents, some with merit,  
Tired out my good Lord Dorset's spirit:  
Sneaking I stood amongst the crew,  
Desiring much to speak with you.  
I waited while the clock struck thrice,  
And footman brought out fifty lies;  
Till, patience vex'd, and legs grown weary,  
I thought it was in vain to tarry!  
But did opine it might be better,  
By penny-post to send a letter;  
Now, if you miss of this epistle,  
I'm baulk'd again, and may go whistle.  
My business, Sir, you'll quickly guess,  
Is to desire some little place;  
And fair pretensions I have for't,  
Much need, and very small desert.  
Whene'er I writ to you, I wanted;  
I always begg'd, you always granted.  
Now, as you took me up when little,  
Gave me my learning and my vittle;  
Ask'd for me, from my lord, things fitting,  
Kind as I'd been your own begetting;  
Confirm what formerly you've given,  
Nor leave me now at six and seven,  
As Sunderland has left Mun Stephen.  
No family, that takes a whelp  
When first he laps, and scarce can yelp,  
Neglects or turns him out of gate  
When he's grown up to dog's estate:  
No parish, if they once adopt  
The spurious brats by strollers dropp'd,  
Leave them, when grown up lusty fellows,  
To, the wide world, that is, the gallows:  
No thank them for their love, that's worse,  
Than if they'd throttled them at nurse.  
My uncle, rest his soul! when living,  
Might have contrived me ways of thriving;

Taught me with cyder to replenish  
My vats, or ebbing tide of Rhenish.  
So when for hock I drew prickt white-wine,  
Swear't had the flavour, and was right wine.  
Or sent me with ten pounds to Furni-  
val's Inn, to some good rogue attorney;  
Where now, by forging deeds, and cheating,  
I'd found some handsome ways of getting.  
All this you made me quit, to follow  
That sneaking whey-faced god Apollo;  
Sent me among a fiddling crew  
Of folks, I'd never seen nor knew,  
Calliope, and God knows who,  
To add no more invectives to i,  
You spoil'd the youth, to make a poet.  
In common justice, Sir, there's no man  
That makes the whore, but keeps the woman.  
Amongst all honest Christian people,  
Whoe'er breaks limbs, maintains the cripple.  
The sum of all I have to say,  
Is, that you'll put me in some way;  
And your petitioner shall pray--  
There's one thing more I had almost slipt,  
But that may do as well in postscript:  
My friend Charles Montague's preferr'd;  
Nor would I have it long observed,  
That one mouse eats, while t'other starved.

Matthew Prior

# An Epistle To Fleetwood Shephard, Esq. Burleigh, May 14, 1689

Sir,  
As once a twelvemonth to the priest,  
Holy at Rome, here Antichrist,  
The Spanish king presents a jennet  
To show his love, -- that's all that's in it;  
For if his Holiness would thump  
His reverend bum 'gainst horse's rump,  
He might be 'quipp'd from his own stable  
With one more white and eke more able.  
Or as with gondolas and men his  
Good excellence the duke of Venice  
(I wish, for rhyme, it had been the king)  
Sails out, and gives the Gulf a ring,  
Which trick of state he wisely maintains,  
Keeps kindness up 'twixt old acquaintance,  
For else, in honest truth, the sea  
Has much less need of gold than he.  
Or, not to rove and pump one's fancy  
For popish similes beyond sea,  
As folks from mudwall'd tenement  
Bring landlords pepper corn for rent,  
Present a turkey or a hen  
To those might better spare them ten;  
Even so, with all submission, I  
(For first men instance, then apply)  
Send you each year a homely letter,  
Who may return me much a better.  
Then take it, Sir, as it was writ  
To pay respect, and not show wit,  
Nor look askew at what is saith;  
There's no petition in it, -- 'faith.  
Here some would scratch their heads, and try  
What they should write, and how, and why;  
But I conceive such folks are quite in  
Mistakes in theory of writing.  
If once for principle 'tis laid  
That thought is trouble to the head,



I argue thus: The world agrees  
That he writes well who writes with ease;  
Then he, by sequel logical,  
Writes best who never thinks at all.  
Verse comes from heaven like inward light;  
Mere human pains can ne'er come by't;  
The god, not we, the poem makes;  
We only tell folks what he speaks.  
Hence when anatomists discourse  
How like brutes' organs are to ours,  
They grant, if higher powers think fit,  
A bear might soon be made a wit,  
And that for any thing in nature,  
Figs might squeak love-odes, dogs bark satire.  
Memnon, though stone, was counted vocal,  
But 'twas the god meanwhile that spoke all.  
Rome oft has heard a cross haranguing,  
With prompting priests behind the hanging:  
The wooden head resolved the question,  
While you and Pettis help'd the jest on.  
Your crabbed rogues that read Lucretius  
Are against gods you know and teach us,  
The gods make not the poet; but  
The thesis vice versa put,  
Should Hebrew-wise be understood,  
And means, the poet makes the god.  
Egyptian gardeners thus are said to  
Have set the leeks they after pray'd to;  
And Romish bakers praised the deity,  
They chipp'd while yet in its paniety.  
That when you poets swear and cry  
The god inspires, I rave, I die;  
If inward wind does truly swell ye,  
'T must be the cholic in your belly:  
That writing is but just like dice,  
And lucky mains make people wise:  
That jumbled words, if fortune throw 'em,  
Shall well as Dryden form a poem,  
Or make a speech correct and witty,  
As you know who -- at the committee.  
So atoms, dancing round the centre,  
They urge, made all things at a venture.

But granting matters should be spoke  
By method rather than by luck.  
This may confine their younger styles  
Whom Dryden pedagogues at Will's,  
But never could be meant to tie  
Authentic wits like you and I:  
For as young children, who are tied in  
Gocarts, to keep their steps from sliding,  
When members knit, and legs grow stronger,  
Make use of such machine no longer,  
But leap pro libitu, and scout  
On horse call'd Hobby, or without;  
So when at school we first declaim,  
Old Busby walks us in a theme,  
Whose props support our infant vein,  
And help the rickets in the brain;  
But when our souls their force dilate,  
And thoughts grow up to wit's estate,  
In verse or prose we write or chat,  
Not sixpence matter upon what.  
'Tis not how well an author says,  
But 'tis how much, that gathers praise.  
Tonson, who is himself a wit,  
Counts writers' merits by the sheet.  
Thus each should down with all he thinks,  
As boys eat bread to fill up chinks.  
Kind Sir, I should be glad to see you;  
I hope ye're well; so God be wi' you;  
Was all I thought at first to write;  
But things since then are altered quite;  
Fancies flow in and Muse flies high,  
So God knows when my clack will lie:  
I must, Sir, prattle on, as afore,  
And beg your pardon yet this half hour.  
So at pure barn of loud Non-con,  
Where with my grannam I have gone,  
When Lobb had sifted all his text,  
And I well hoped the pudding next,  
Now to apply, has plagued me more  
Than all his villain cant before.  
For your religion; first, of her  
Your friends do sav'ry things aver;

They say she's honest as your claret,  
Not sour'd with cant, nor stumm'd with merit.  
Your chamber is the sole retreat  
Of chaplains every Sunday night;  
Of grace no doubt a certain sign  
When layman herds with man divine;  
For if their fame be justly great  
Who would no Popish nuncio treat,  
That his is greater we must grant  
Who will treat nuncios Protestant.  
One single positive weighs more,  
You know, than negatives a score.  
In politics I hear you're staunch,  
Directly bent against the French;  
Deny to have your freeborn toe  
Dragoon'd into a wooden shoe;  
Are in no plots, but fairly drive at  
The public welfare in your private;  
And will for England's glory try  
Turks, Jews, and Jesuits, to defy,  
And keep your places till you die.  
For me, whom wandering Fortune threw  
From what I loved, the Town and you,  
Let me just tell you how my time is  
Past in a country life. -- Imprimis,  
As soon as Phoebus' rays inspect us,  
First, Sir, I read, and then I breakfast;  
So on, till foresaid god does set,  
I sometimes study, sometimes eat.  
Thus of your heroes and brave boys,  
With whom old Homer makes such noise,  
The greatest actions I can find  
Are, that they did their work and dined.  
The books of which I'm chiefly fond  
Are such as you have whilom conn'd,  
That treat of China's civil law  
And subjects' right in Golconda;  
Of highway elephants at Ceylon,  
That rob in clans like men o' th' Highland;  
Of apes that storm or keep a town  
As well almost as Count Lauzun;  
Of unicorns and alligators,

Elks, mermaids, mummies, witches, satyrs,  
And twenty other stranger matters,  
Which, though they're things I've no concern in  
Make all our grooms admire my learning.  
Critiques I read on other men,  
And hypers upon them again,  
From whose remarks I give opinion  
On twenty books, yet ne'er look in one.  
Then all your wits that flee and sham,  
Down from Don Quixote to Tom Tram,  
From whom I jests and puns purloin,  
And slily put them off for mine,  
Fond to be thoughts a country wit,  
The rest -- when Fate and you think fit.  
Sometimes I climb my mare and kick her  
To bottled ale and neighbouring vicar;  
Sometimes at Stamford take a quart;  
Squire Shephard's health, -- with all my heart.  
Thus, without much delight or grief,  
I fool away an idle life,  
Till Shadwell from the town retires  
(Choked up with fume and seacoal fires)  
To bless the wood with peaceful lyric;  
Then hey for praise and panegyric;  
Justice restored, and nations freed;  
And wreaths round William's glorious head.

Matthew Prior

# An Epistle. Desiring The Queen's Picture, But Left Unfinished, By The Sudden News Of Her Majesty's Death

The train of equipage and pomp of state,  
The shining sideboard and the burnish'd plate,  
Let other ministers, great Anne, require,  
And partial fall thy gift to their desire.  
To the fair Portrait of my sovereign dame,  
To that alone eternal be my claim.  
My bright defender, and my dread delight,  
If ever I found favour in thy sight;  
If all the pains that for thy Britain's sake  
My past has took, or future life may take,  
Be grateful to my Queen, permit my prayer,  
And with this gift reward my total care.  
Will thy indulgent hand, fair Saint, allow  
The boon? and will thy ear accept the vow?  
That, in despite of age, of impious flame,  
And eating Time, thy Picture, like thy fame,  
Entire may last, that, as their eyes survey  
The semblant shade, men yet unborn may say,  
Thus great, thus gracious, look'd Britannia's Queen,  
Her brow thus smooth, her look was thus serene;  
When to a low but to a loyal hand  
The mighty Empress gave her high command,  
That he to hostile camps and kings should haste,  
To speak her vengeance, as their danger, past;  
To say, she wills detested wars to cease;  
She checks her conquest for her subjects' ease,  
And bids the world attend her terms of peace.  
Thee, gracious Anne, thee present I adore,  
Thee, Queen of Peace -- If Time and Fate have power  
Higher to raise the glories of thy reign  
In words sublimer and a nobler strain,  
May future bards the mighty theme rehearse!  
Here, Stator Jove, and Phoebus king of verse,  
The votive tablet I suspend \* \* \* \* \*



# An Epitaph

Interr'd beneath this marble stone,  
Lie saunt'ring Jack and idle Joan.  
While rolling threescore years and one  
Did round this globe their courses run;  
If human things went ill or well;  
If changing empires rose or fell;  
The morning passed, the evening came,  
And found this couple still the same.  
They walk'd and eat, good folks: what then?  
Why then they walk'd and eat again:  
They soundly slept the night away:  
They did just nothing all the day:  
And having buried children four,  
Would not take pains to try for more.  
Nor sister either had, nor brother:  
They seemed just tallied for each other.  
Their moral and economy  
Most perfectly they made agree:  
Each virtue kept its proper bound,  
Nor tresspass'd on the other's ground.  
Nor fame, nor censure they regarded:  
They neither punish'd nor rewarded.  
He cared not what the footmen did:  
Her maids she neither prais'd nor chid:  
So ev'ry servant took his course;  
And bad at first, they all grew worse.  
Slothful disorder fill'd his stable;  
And sluttish plenty deck'd her table.  
Their beer was strong; their wine was port;  
Their meal was large; their grace was short.  
They gave the poor the remnant-meat  
Just when it grew not fit to eat.  
They paid the church and parish rate;  
And took, but read not the receipt;  
For which they claim'd their Sunday's due,  
Of slumb'ring in an upper pew.  
No man's defects sought they to know;  
So never made themselves a foe.  
No man's good deeds did they commend;

So never rais'd themselves a friend.  
Nor cherish'd they relations poor:  
That might decrease their present store:  
Nor barn nor house did they repair:  
That might oblige their future heir.  
They neither added, nor confounded:  
They neither wanted, nor abounded.  
Each Christmas they accompts did clear;  
And wound their bottom through the year.  
Nor tear, nor smile did they employ  
At news of public grief, or joy.  
When bells were rung, and bonfires made,  
If asked they ne'er denied their aid:  
Their jug was to the ringers carried,  
Whoever either died, or married.  
Their billet at the fire was found,  
Whoever was depos'd or crown'd.  
Nor good, nor bad, nor fools, nor wise;  
They would not learn, nor could advise;  
Without love, hatred, joy, or fear,  
They led--a kind of--as it were:  
Nor wish'd nor car'd, nor laugh'd nor cry'd:  
And so they liv'd; and so they died.

Matthew Prior



# An Extempore Invitation To The Earl Of Oxford, Lord High Treasurer

My Lord,  
Our weekly friends to-morrow meet  
At Matthew's palace in Duke-street,  
To try for once if they can dine  
On bacon-ham and mutton-chine.  
If, wearied with the great affairs  
Which Britain trusts to Harley's cares,  
Thou, humble statesman, may'st descend  
Thy mind one moment to unbend,  
To see thy servant from his soul  
Crown with thy health the sprightly bowl,  
Among the guests, which e'er my house  
Received it never can produce  
Of honour a more glorious proof -  
Though Dorset used to bless the roof.

Matthew Prior

# An Ode

The merchant, to secure his treasure,  
Conveys it in a borrowed name:  
Euphelia serves to grace my measure;  
But Cloe is my real flame.

My softest verse, my darling lyre  
Upon Euphelia's toilet lay;  
When Cloe noted her desire,  
That I should sing, that I should play.

My lyre I tune, my voice I raise;  
But with my numbers mix my sighs:  
And whilst I sing Euphelia's praise,  
I fix my soul on Cloe's eyes.

Fair Cloe blushed: Euphelia frowned:  
I sung and gazed: I played and trembled:  
And Venus to the Loves around  
Remarked, how ill we all dissembled.

Matthew Prior

# An Ode - Humbly Inscribed To The Queen, On The Glorious Success Of Her Majesty's Arms

When great Augustus govern'd ancient Rome,  
And sent his conquering bands to foreign wars,  
Abroad when dreaded, and beloved at home,  
He saw his fame increasing with his years,  
Horace, great bard, (so fate ordain'd) arose,  
And, bold as were his countryman in fight,  
Snatch'd their fair actions from degrading prose,  
And set their battles in eternal light:  
High as their trumpets tune his lyre he strung,  
And with his prince's arms he moralized his song.

When bright Eliza ruled Britannia's state,  
Widely distributing her high commands,  
And, boldly wise and fortunately great,  
Freed the glad nations from tyrannic bands,  
An equal genius was in Spenser found;  
To the high theme he match'd his noble lays;  
He travelled England o'er on fairy ground,  
In mystic notes to sing his monarch's praise:  
Reciting wondrous truths in pleasing dreams  
He deck'd Eliza's head with Gloriana's beams.

But, greatest Anna! while thy arms pursue  
Paths of renown, and climb ascents of fame,  
Which nor Augustus nor Eliza knew,  
What poet shall be found to sing thy name?  
What numbers shall record, what tongue shall say  
Thy wars on land, thy triumphs on the main?  
O fairest model of imperial sway!  
What equal pen shall write thy wondrous reign?  
Who shall attempts and feats of arms rehearse,  
Nor yet by story told, nor parallel'd by verse?

Me all too mean for such a task I weet;  
Yet if the sovereign Lady designs to smile  
I'll follow Horace with impetuous heat,  
And clothe the verse in Spenser's native style:

By these examples rightly taught to sing,  
And smit with pleasure of my country's praise,  
Stretching the plumes of an uncommon wing,  
High as Olympus I my flight will raise,  
And latest times shall in my numbers read  
Anna's immortal fame and Marlborough's hardy deed.

As the strong eagle in the silent wood,  
Mindless of warlike rage and hostile care,  
Plays round the rocky cliff or crystal flood,  
Till by Jove's high behests call'd out to war,  
And charged with thunder of his angry king,  
His bosom with the vengeful message glows,  
Upward the noble bird directs his wing,  
And towering round his master's earth-born foes,  
Swift he collects his fatal stock of ire,  
Lifts his fierce talon high, and darts the forked fire.

Sedate and calm thus victor Marlborough sate,  
Shaded with laurels, in his native land,  
Till Anna calls him from his soft retreat,  
And gives her second thunder to his hand:  
Then leaving sweet repose and gentle ease,  
With ardent speed he seeks the distant foe,  
Marching o'er hills and vales, o'er rocks and seas,  
He meditates and strikes the wondrous blow.  
Our thought flies slower than our General's fame;  
Grasps he the bolt? (we ask) when he has hurl'd the flame.

When fierce Bavar on Judoign's spacious plain  
Did from afar the British chief behold,  
Betwixt despair, and rage, and hope, and pain,  
Something within his warring bosom roll'd:  
He views that favourite of indulgent Fame,  
Whom whilom he had met on Ister's shore;  
Too well, alas! the man he knows the same  
Whose prowess there repell'd the Boyan power,  
And sent them trembling thro' the frightened lands,  
Swift as the whirlwind drives Arabia's scatter'd sands.

His former losses he forgets to grieve;  
Absolves his fate with a kinder ray

It now would shine, and only give him leave  
To balance the account of Blenheim's day.  
So the fell lion, in the lonely glade,  
His side still smarting with the hunter's spear,  
Though deeply wounded, no way yet dismay'd,  
Roars terrible, and meditates new war,  
In sullen fury traverses the plain  
To find the venturous foe, and battle him again.

Misguided prince, no longer urge thy fate,  
Nor tempt the hero to unequal war;  
Famed in misfortune, and in ruin great,  
Confess the force of Malbro's stronger star.  
Those laurel groves (the merits of thy youth)  
Which thou from Mahomet didst greatly gain,  
While, bold assertor of resistless truth,  
Thy sword did godlike Liberty maintain.  
Must from thy brow their falling honours shed,  
And their transplanted wreaths must deck a worthier head.

Yet cease the ways of Providence to blame,  
And human faults with human grief confess;  
'Tis thou art changed, while Heaven is still the same;  
From thy ill counsels date thy ill success:  
Impartial Justice holds her equal scales,  
Till stronger virtue does the weight incline;  
If over thee thy glorious foe prevails,  
He now defends the cause that once was thine.  
Righteous the war, the champion shall subdue,  
For Jove's great handmaid, Power, must Jove's decrees pursue.

Hark! the dire trumpets sound their shrill alarms!  
Auverqueque, branch'd from the renown'd Nassaus,  
Hoary in war, and bent beneath his arms,  
His glorious sword with dauntless courage draws.  
When anxious Britain mourn'd her parting lord,  
And all of William that was mortal died,  
The faithful hero had received his sword  
From his expiring master's much-loved side:  
Oft from its fatal ire has Louis flown,  
Where'er great William led or Maese and Sambre run.

But brandish'd high, in an ill-omen'd hour  
To thee, proud Gaul, behold thy justest fear,  
The master-sword, disposer of thy power:  
'Tis that which Caesar gave the British peer.  
He took the gift: Nor ever will I sheath  
This steel (so Anna's high behests ordain)  
The General said, unless by glorious death  
Absolved, till conquest has confirm'd your reign.  
Returns like these our mistress bids us make,  
When from a foreign prince a gift her Britons take.

And now fierce Gallia rushes on her foes,  
Her force augmented by the Boyan bands;  
So Volga's stream, increased by mountain snows,  
Rolls with new fury down through Russia's lands.  
Like two great rocks against the raging tide  
(If Virtue's force with Nature's we compare)  
Unmoved the two united chiefs abide,  
Sustain the impulse, and receive the war:  
Round their firm sides in vain the tempest beats,  
And still the foaming wave with lessen'd power retreats.

The rage dispersed, the glorious pair advance,  
With mingled anger and collected might,  
To turn the war, and tell aggressing France  
How Britain's sons and Britain's friends can fight.  
On conquest fix'd, and covetous of fame,  
Behold them rushing through the Gallic host;  
Through standing corn so runs the sudden flame,  
Or eastern winds along Sicilia's coast.  
They deal their terrors to the adverse nation:  
Pale Death attends their arms, and ghastly Desolation.

But while with fiercest ire Bellona glows,  
And Europe rather hopes than fears her fate,  
While Britain presses her afflicted foes,  
What horror damps the strong and quells the great?  
Whence look the soldier's cheeks dismay'd and pale?  
Erst ever dreadful, know they now to dread?  
The hostile troops, I ween, almost prevail,  
And the pursuers only not recede.  
Alas! their lessen'd rage proclaims their grief!

For anxious, lo! they crowd around their falling chief.

I thank thee, Fate, exclaims the fierce Bavar;  
Let Boya's trumpet graceful Io's sound;  
I saw him fall, their thunderbolt of war; -  
Ever to Vengeance sacred be the ground -  
Vain wish! short joy! the hero mounts again  
In greater glory, and with fuller light;  
The evening star so falls into the main,  
To rise at morn more prevalently bright.  
He rises safe, but near, too near his side,  
A good man's grievous loss, a faithful servant died.

Propitious Mars! the battle is regain'd';  
The foe with lessen'd wrath disputes the field:  
The Briton fights, by favoring gods sustain'd;  
Freedom must live, and lawless power must yield.  
Vain now the tales which fabling poets tell,  
That wavering Conquest still desires to rove!  
In Marlbro's camp the goddess knows to dwell;  
Long as the hero's life remains her love.  
Again France flies, again the Duke pursues,  
And on Ramilia's plains he Blenheim's fame renews.

Great thanks, O Captain, great in arms! receive  
From thy triumphant country's public voice;  
Thy country greater thanks can only give  
To Anne, to her who made those arms her choice.  
Recording Schellenberg's and Blenheim's toils,  
We dreaded lest thou should'st those toils repeat:  
We view'd the palace charged with Gallic spoils,  
And in those spoils we thought thy praise complete.  
For never Greek we deem'd, nor Roman knight,  
In characters like these did e'er his acts indite.

Yet, mindless still of ease, thy virtue flies  
A pitch to old and modern times unknown:  
Those goodly deeds, which we so highly prize,  
Imperfect seem, great Chief, to thee alone.  
Those heights, where William's virtue might have staid,  
And on the subject world look'd safely down,  
By Marlbro's pass'd, the props and steps were made

Sublimer yet to raise his Queen's renown:  
Still gaining more, still slighting what he gain'd,  
Nought done the hero deem'd while ought undone remain'd.

When swift-wing'd Rumour told the mighty Gaul  
How lessen'd from the field Bavar was fled,  
He wept the swiftness of the champion's fall,  
And thus the royal treaty-breaker said:  
And lives he yet, the great, the lost Bavar,  
Ruin to Gallia in the name of friend?  
Tell me how far has Fortune been severe?  
Has the foe's glory of our grief an end?  
Remains there, of the fifty thousand lost,  
To save our threaten'd realm, or guard our shatter'd coast?

To the close rock the frighted raven flies,  
Soon as the rising eagle cuts the air  
The shaggy wolf unseen and trembling lies,  
When the hoarse roar proclaims the lion near:  
Ill starr'd did we our forts and lines forsake,  
To dare our British foes to open fight:  
Our conquest we by stategem should make:  
'Tis ours by craft and by surprise to gain:  
'Tis theirs, to meet in arms, and battle in the plain.

The ancient father of this hostile brood,  
Their boasted Brute, undaunted snatch'd his gods  
From burning Troy, and Xanthus red with blood,  
And fix'd on silver Thames his dire abodes:  
And this be Trynovante, he said, the seat  
By Heaven ordain'd, my sons, your lasting place:  
Superior here to all the bolts of fate  
Live, mindful of the author of your race,  
Whom neither Greece, nor war, nor want, nor flame,  
Nor great Pelides' arm, nor Juno's rage, could tame.

Their Tudors hence, and Stuart's offspring flow:  
Hence Edward, dreadful with his sable shield,  
Talbot to Gallia's power eternal foe,  
And Seymour, famed in council or in field:  
Hence Nevel, great to settle or dethrone,  
And Drake, and Ca'ndish, terrors of the sea:



Hence Butler's sons, o'er land and ocean known,  
Herbert's and Churchill's warring progeny:  
Hence the long roll which Gallia should conceal:  
For, oh! who, vanquish'd, loves the victor's fame to tell?

Envy'd Britannia, sturdy as the oak,  
Which on her mountain top she proudly bears,  
Eludes the axe, and sproutes against the stroke;  
Strong from her wounds, and greater by her wars.  
And as those teeth, which Cadmus sow'd in earth,  
Produced new youth, and furnish'd fresh supplies;  
So with young vigour, and succeeding birth,  
Her losses more than recompensed arise;  
And every age she with a race is crown'd,  
For letters more polite, in battles more renown'd.

Obstinate power, whom nothing can repel;  
Not the fierce Saxon, nor the cruel Dane,  
Nor deep impression of the Norman steel,  
Nor Europe's force amass'd by envious Spain.  
Nor France on universal sway intent,  
Oft breaking leagues, and oft renewing wars;  
Nor (frequent bane of weaken'd government)  
Their own intestine feuds and mutual jars;  
Those feuds and jars, in which I trusted more,  
Than in my troops, and fleets, and all the Gallic power.

To fruitful Rheims, or fair Lutetia's gate,  
What tidings shall the messenger convey?  
Shall the loud herald our success relate,  
Or mitred priest appoint the solemn day?  
Alas! my praises they no more must sing;  
They to my statue now must bow no more;  
Broken, repulsed is their immortal king:  
Fall'n, fall'n for ever, is the Gallic power.-  
The woman chief is master of the war:  
Earth she has freed by arms, and vanquish'd Heaven by prayer.

While thus the ruin'd foe's despair commends  
Thy council and thy deed, victorious queen,  
What shall thy subjects say, and what thy friends;  
How shall thy triumphs in our joy be seen?

Oh! deign to let the eldest of the nine  
Recite Britannia great and Gallia free;  
Oh! with her sister Sculpture let her join  
To raise, great Anne, the monument to thee;  
To thee, of all our good the sacred spring;  
To thee, our dearest dread; to thee, our softer king.

Let Europe, saved, the column high erect,  
Than Trojan's higher, or than Antonine's,  
Where sembling art may carve the fair effect  
And full achievement of thy great designs,  
In a calm heaven and a serener air  
Sublime the queen shall on the summit stand,  
From danger far, as far removed from fear,  
And pointing down to earth her dread command.  
All winds, all storms, that threaten human wo  
Shall sink beneath her feet, and spread their rage below.

There fleets shall strive, by winds and waters tost,  
Till the young Austrian on Iberia's strand,  
Great as AEneas on the Latian coast  
Shall fix his foot: And this, be this the land,  
Great Jove, where I for ever will remain,  
(The empire's other hope shall say) and here  
Vanquish'd, intomb'd I'll lie, or crown'd I'll reign -  
O Virtue, to thy British Mother dear!  
Like the famed Trojan suffer and abide:  
For Anne is thine, I ween, as Venus was his guide.

There, in eternal characters engraved,  
Vigo, and Gibraltar, and Barcelone,  
Their force destroy'd, their privileges saved,  
Shall Anna's terrors and her mercies own:  
Spain, from the usurper Bourbon's arms retrieved,  
Shall with new life and grateful joy appear,  
Numbering the wonders which that youth achieved  
Whom Anna clad in arms and sent to war,  
Whom Anna sent to claim Iberia's throne,  
And made him more than king in calling him her son.

There Isther, pleased by Blenheim's glorious field,  
Rolling, shall bid his eastern waves declare

Germania saved by Britain's ample shield,  
And bleeding Gaul afflicted by her spear;  
Shall bid them mention Marlbro', on that shore  
Leading his islanders renown'd in arms,  
Through climes where never British chief before  
Or pitch'd his camp, or sounded his alarms;  
Shall bid them bless the queen, who made his streams  
Glorious as those of Boyne, and safe as those of Thames.

Brabantia, clad with fields, and crown'd with towers,  
With decent joy shall her deliverer meet,  
Shall own thy arms, great queen, and bless thy powers,  
Laying the keys beneath thy subject's feet.  
Flandria, by plenty made the home of war,  
Shall weep her crime, and bow to Charles restored,  
With double vows shall bless thy happy care  
In having drawn and having sheathed the sword,  
From these their sister provinces shall know  
How Anne supports a friend, and how forgives a foe.

Bright swords, and crested helms, and pointed spears,  
In artful piles around the work shall lie;  
And shields indented deep in ancient wars,  
Blazon'd with signs of Gallic heraldry;  
And standards with distinguish'd honours bright,  
Marks of high power and national command,  
Which Valois' sons, and Bourbon's bore in fight,  
Or gave to Foix', or Montmorancy's hand;  
Great spoils, which Gallia must to Britain yield,  
From Cressy's battle saved to grace Ramilia's field.

And, as fine art the spaces may dispose,  
The knowing thought and curious eye shall see  
Thy emblem, gracious queen, the British rose,  
Type of sweet rule and gentle majesty:  
The northern thistle, whom no hostile hand  
Unhurt too rudely may provoke, I ween;  
Hibernia's harp, device of her command,  
And parent of her mirth shall there be seen:  
Thy vanquish'd lilies, France, decay'd and torn,  
Shall with disorder'd pomp the lasting work adorn.

Beneath, great queen, oh! very far beneath,  
Next to the ground and on the humble base,  
To save herself from darkness and from death,  
That muse desires the last, the lowest place;  
Who, though unmeet, yet touch'd the trembling string,  
For the fair fame of Anne and Albion's land,  
Who durst of war and martial fury sing;  
And when thy will, and when thy subject's hand,  
Had quell'd those wars, and bid that fury cease,  
Hangs up her grateful harp to conquest, and to peace.

Matthew Prior

## An Ode - In Imitation Of Horace, Book Iii. Ode Ii.

How long, deluded Albion, wilt thou lie  
In the lethargic sleep, the sad repose  
By which thy close thy constant enemy  
Has softly lull'd thee to thy woes?  
Or wake, degenerate isle, or cease to own  
What thy old kings in Gallic camps have done,  
The spoils they brought thee back, the crowns they won,  
William (so Fate requires) again is arm'd,  
Thy father to the field is gone,  
Again Maria weeps her absent lord,  
For thy repose content to rule alone.  
Are thy enervate sons not yet alarm'd?  
When William fights dare they look tamely on,  
So slow to get their ancient fame restored,  
As not to melt at Beauty's tears nor follow Valour's sword?

See the repenting isle awakes,  
Her vicious chains the generous goddess breaks;  
The fogs around her temples are dispell'd;  
Abroad she looks, and sees arm'd Belgia stand  
Prepared to meet heir common lord's command,  
Her lions roaring by her side, her arrows in her hand,  
And blushing to have been so long withheld,  
Weeps off her crime, and hastens to the field:  
Henceforth her youth shall be inured to bear  
Hazardous toil and active war:  
To march beneath the dogstar's raging heat,  
Patient of summer's drought and martial sweat,  
And only grieve in winter's camp to find  
Its days too short for labours they design'd:  
All night beneath hard heavy arms to watch,  
All day to mount the trench, to storm the breach,  
And all the rugged paths to tread  
Where William and his virtue led.

Silence is the soul of war;  
Deliberate counsel must prepare  
The mighty work which valour must complete:  
Thus William rescued, thus preserves the state,

Thus teaches us to think and dare:  
As, whilst his cannon just prepared to breathe  
Avenging anger and swift death,  
In the tried metal the close dangers glow,  
And now, too late, the dying foe  
Perceives the flame, yet cannot ward the blow;  
So whilst in William's breast ripe counsels lie,  
Secret and sure as brooding Fate,  
No more of his design appears  
Than what awakens Gallia's fears,  
And (though Guilt's eye can sharply penetrate)  
Distracted Lewis can descry  
Only a long unmeasured ruin nigh.

On Norman coasts, and banks of frightened Seine,  
Lo! the impending storms begin;  
Britannia's safely through her master's sea  
Plows up her victorious way:  
The French Salmoneus throws his bolts in vain  
Whilst the true thunderer asserts the main.  
'Tis done! to shelves and rocks his fleets retire,  
Swift victory, in vengeful flames,  
Burns down the pride of their presumptuous names:  
They run to shipwreck to avoid our fire,  
And the torn vessels that regain their coast  
Are but sad marks to show the rest are lost.  
All this the mild the beauteous Queen has done,  
And William's softer half shakes Lewis' throne.  
Maria does the sea command,  
Whilst Gallia flies her husband's arms by land.  
So, the sun absent, with full sway the moon  
Governs the isles and rules the wave alone;  
So Juno thunders when her Jove is gone.  
Io, Britannia! loose thy ocean's chains,  
Whilst Russel strikes the blow thy Queen ordains.  
Thus rescued, thus revered, for ever stand,  
And bless the counsel, and reward the hand,  
Io Britannia! thy Maria reigns.

From Mary's conquests and the rescued main  
Let France look forth to Sambre's armed shore,  
And boast her joy for William's death no more.

He lives, let France confess the victor lives:  
Her triumphs for his death were vain,  
And spoke her terror of his life too plain.  
The mighty years begin, the days draw nigh  
In which  
that one  
of Lewis' many wives  
Who, by the baleful force of guilty charms  
Has long enthrall'd him in her wither'd arms,  
Shall o'er the plains from distant towers on high  
Cast around her mournful eye,  
And with prophetic sorrow cry,  
Why does my ruin'd lord retard his flight?  
As well the wolf may venture to engage  
The angry lion's generous rage,  
The ravenous vulture and the bird of night  
As safely tempt the stooping eagle's flight,  
As Lewis to unequal arms defy  
Yon hero, crown'd with blooming victory  
Just triumphing o'er rebel rage restrain'd,  
And yet unbreathed from battles gain'd.  
See! all yon dusty fields, quite cover'd o'er  
With hostile troops, and Orange at their heart,  
The great designs of labouring Fate;  
Orange, the name that tyrants dread:  
He comes; our ruin'd empire is no more:  
Down like the Persian goes the Gallic throne;  
Darius flies; young Ammon urges on.

Now from the dubious battle's mingled heat  
Let Fear look back, and stretch her hasty wing,  
Impatient to secure a base retreat;  
Let the pale coward leave his wounded king,  
For the vile privilege to breath,  
To live with shame in dread of glorious death!  
In vain; for Fate has swifter wings than Fear,  
She follows hard, and strikes him in the rear;  
Dying and mad the traitor bites the ground,  
His back transfix'd with a dishonest wound,  
Whilst through the fiercest troops and thickest press  
Virtues carries on success;  
Whilst equal Heaven guards the distinguish'd brave,

And armies cannot hurt whom angels save.

Virtue to verse immortal lustre gives;  
Each by the other's mutual friendship lives;  
AEneas suffer'd and Achilles fought;  
The hero's acts enlarged the poet's thought,  
Or Virgil's majesty and Homer's rage  
Had ne'er like lasting Nature vanquish'd age.  
Whilst Lewis then his rising terror drowns  
With drums' alarms and trumpets' sounds;  
Whilst hid in arm'd retreats and guarded towns,  
From danger as from honour far,  
He bribes close Murder against open War,  
In vain your Gallic Muses strive  
With labour'd verse to keep his fame alive;  
Your mouldering monuments in vain you raise  
On the weak basis of the tyrant's praise;  
Your songs are sold, your numbers are profane,  
'Tis incense to an idol given,  
Meat offer'd to Prometheus' man,  
That had no soul from Heaven.  
Against his will you chain your frightened king  
On rapid Rhine's divided bed,  
And mock your her, whilst ye sing  
The wounds for which he never bled;  
Falsehood does poison on your praise diffuse,  
And Lewis' fear gives death on Boileau's muse.

On its own worth true majesty is rear'd,  
And Virtue is her own reward;  
With solid beams and native glory bright,  
She neither darkness dreads nor covets light;  
True to herself, and fix'd to in-born laws,  
Nor sunk by spite, nor lifted by applause,  
She from her settled orb looks calmly down  
On life or death, a prison or a crown.  
When bound in double chains poor Belgia lay,  
To foreign arms and inward strife a prey;  
Whilst one good man buoy'd up her sinking state,  
And Virtue labour'd against Fate;  
When Fortune basely with Ambition join'd,  
And all was conquer'd but the patriot's mind;



When storms let loose, and raging seas,  
Just ready the torn vessel to o'erwhelm,  
Forced not the faithful pilot from his helm,  
Nor all the Siren songs of future peace,  
And dazzling prospect of a promised crown,  
Could lure his stubborn virtue down;  
But against charms, and threats, and hell he stood  
To that which was severely good;  
Then had no trophies justified his fame,  
No poet bless'd his song with Nassau's name;  
Virtue alone did all that honour bring,  
And Heaven as plainly pointed out the King,  
As when he at the altar stood  
In all his types and robes of power,  
Whilst at his feet religious Britain bow'd,  
And own'd him next to what we there adore.

Say joyful Maese, and Boyne's victorious flood,  
(For each has mix'd his waves with royal blood)  
When William's armies pass'd, did he retire,  
Or view from far the battle's distant fire;  
Could he believe his person was too dear?  
Or use his greatness to conceal his fear?  
Could prayers or sighs the dauntless hero move?  
Arm'd with heaven's justice, and his people's love,  
Through the first waves he wing'd his venturous way,  
And on the adverse shore arose,  
(Ten thousand flying deaths in vain oppose).  
Like the great ruler of the day,  
With strength and swiftness mounting from the sea:  
Like him all day he toil'd; but long in night  
The god has eased his wearied light,  
Ere vengeance left the stubborn foes,  
Or William's labours found repose.  
When his troops falter'd, stept not he between?  
Restored the dubious fight again,  
Mark'd out the coward that durst fly,  
And led the fainting brave to victory?  
Still as she fled him, did he not o'ertake  
Her doubtful course, still brought her bleeding back?  
By his keen sword did not the boldest fall?  
Was he not king, commander, soldier, all?

His dangers such as, with becoming dread,  
His subjects yet unborn shall weep to read:  
And were not those the only days that e'er  
The pious prince refused to hear  
His friends' advices, or his subjects' prayer?

Where'er old Rhine his fruitful water turns,  
Or fills his vassals' tributary urns;  
To Belgia's saved dominions, and the sea,  
Whose righted waves rejoice in William's sway?  
Is there a town where children are not taught,  
Here Holland prosper'd, for here Orange fought?  
Through rapid waters, and through flying fire;  
Here rush'd the prince, here made whole France retire?  
By different nations be his valour blest,  
In different languages confest;  
And then let Shannon speak the rest:  
Let Shannon speak, how on her wondering shore,  
When conquest hovering on his arms did wait,  
And only ask'd some lives to bribe her o'er;  
The god-like man, the more than conqueror,  
With high contempt sent back the specious bait:  
And, scorning glory at a price too great,  
With so much power, such piety did join,  
As made a perfect virtue soar  
A pitch unknown to man before;  
And lifted Shannon's waves o'er those of Boyne.

Nor do his subjects only share  
The prosperous fruits of his indulgent reign;  
His enemies approve the pious war,  
Which, with their weapon, takes away their chain.  
More than his sword his goodness strikes his foes,  
They bless his arms, and sigh they must oppose.  
Justice and freedom on his conquests wait;  
And 'tis for man's delight that he is great;  
Succeeding times shall with long joy contend  
If he were more a victor or a friend:  
So much his courage and his mercy strive,  
He wounds to cure, and conquers to forgive.

Ye Heroes! that have fought your country's cause,

Redress'd her injuries, or form'd her laws,  
To my adventurous song just witness bear,  
Assist the pious Muse, and hear her swear,  
That 'tis no poet's thought, no flight of youth  
But solid story and severest truth,  
That William treasures up a greater name  
Than any country, any age, can boast;  
And all that ancient stock of fame  
He did from his forefathers take  
He has improved, and gives with interest back,  
And in his constellation does unite  
Their scatter'd rays of fainter light:  
Above or Envy's lash or Fortune's wheel,  
That settled glory shall for ever dwell,  
Above the rolling orbs and common sky,  
Where nothing comes that e'er shall die.

Where roves the Muse? where, thoughtless to return,  
Is her short-lived vessel borne,  
By potent winds, too subject to be tost,  
And in the sea of William's praises lost?  
Nor let her tempt that deep, nor make the shore  
Where our abandoned youth she sees  
Shipwreck'd in luxury and lost in ease;  
Whom nor Britannia's danger can alarm,  
Nor William's exemplary virtue warm:  
Tell them, howe'er, the King can yet forgive  
Their guilty sloth, their homage yet receive,  
And let their wounded honour live:  
But sure and sudden be their just remorse:  
Swift be their virtue's rise, and strong its course  
For though for certain years and destin'd times  
Merit has lain confused with crimes,  
Though Jove seem'd negligent of human cares,  
Nor scourged our follies nor return'd our prayers,  
His justice now demands the equal scales,  
Sedition is suppress'd and truth prevails;  
Fate its great ends by slow degrees attains,  
And Europe is redeem'd, and William reigns.

Matthew Prior

# An Ode - Inscribed To The Memory Of The Hon. Colonel George Villiers

Say, dearest Villiers, poor departed friend,  
(Since fleeting life thus suddenly must end)  
Say, what did all thy busy hopes avail,  
That anxious thou from pole to pole didst sail,  
Ere on thy chin the springing beard began  
To spread a doubtful down and promise man?  
What profited thy thoughts, and toils, and cares  
In vigour more confirmed and riper years,  
To wake ere morning-dawn to loud alarms,  
And march till close of night in heavy arms,  
To scorn the summer's suns and winter's snows,  
And search through every clime thy country's foes?  
That thou might'st Fortune to thy side engage,  
That gentle Peace might quell Bellona's rage,  
And Anna's bounty crown her soldier's hoary age?

In vain we think that free-will'd man has power  
To hasten or protract th' appointed hour.  
Our term of life depends not on our deed:  
Before our birth our funeral was decreed.  
Nor awed by foresight, nor misled by chance,  
Imperious Death directs his ebon lance,  
Peoples great Henry's tombs, and leads up Holben's dance.

Alike must every state and every age  
Sustain the universal tyrant's rage,  
For neither William's power nor Mary's charms  
Could or repel or pacify his arms.  
Young Churchill fell as life began to bloom,  
And Bradford's trembling age expects the tomb.  
Wisdom and Eloquence in vain would plead  
One moment's respite for the learned head;  
Judges of writings and of men have died,  
Maecenas, Sackville, Socrates, and Hyde;  
And in their various turns the sons must tread  
Those gloomy journeys which their sires have led.

The ancient sage, who did so long maintain  
That bodies die, but souls return again,  
With all the births and deaths he had in store,  
Went out Pythagoras, and came no more.  
And modern Asgyll, whose capricious thought  
Is yet with stores of wilder notions fraught,  
Too soon convinced, shall yield that fleeting breath  
Which play'd so idly with the darts of Death.

Some from the stranded vessel force their way;  
Fearful of fate they meet it in the sea:  
Some, who escape the fury of the wave,  
Sicken on earth, and sink into a grave.  
In journeys or at home, in war or peace,  
By hardships many, many fall by ease.  
Each changing season does its poison bring,  
Rheums chill the winter, agues blast the spring:  
Wet, dry, cold, hot, at the appointed hour,  
All act subservient to the tyrant's power;  
And when obedient Nature knows his will  
A fly, a grape-stone, or a hair can kill.

For restless Proserpine for ever treads  
In paths unseen, o'er our devoted heads,  
And on the spacious land and liquid main  
Spreads slow disease, or darts afflictive pain:  
Variety of deaths confirms her endless reign.

On cursed Piava's banks the goddess stood,  
Show'd her dire warrant to the rising flood,  
When he I long must love and long must mourn  
With fatal speed was urging his return,  
In his dear country to disperse his care,  
And arm himself by rest for future war,  
To chide his anxious friends' officious fears,  
And promise to their joys his elder years.

Oh! destined head; and, oh! severe decree,  
Nor native country thou nor friend shalt see;  
Nor war hast thou to wage, nor year to come,  
Impending death is thine, and instant doom.  
Hark! the imperious goddess is obey'd;

Winds murmur, snows descend, and waters spread.  
Oh! Kinsman, Friend - Oh! vain are all the cries  
Of human voice, strong Destiny replies:  
Weep you on earth, for he shall sleep below;  
Thence none return, and thither all must go.

Whoe'er thou art, whom choice or business leads  
To this sad river, or the neighbouring meads,  
If thou may'st happen on the dreary shores  
To find the object which this verse deplores,  
Cleanse the pale corpse with a religious hand  
From the polluting weed and common sand;  
Lay the dead hero graceful in a grave,  
(The only honour he can now receive)  
And fragrant mould upon his body throw,  
And plant the warrior-laurel o'er his brow;  
Light lie the earth, and flourish green the bough!

So may just Heaven secure thy future life  
From foreign dangers and domestic strife;  
And when th' infernal Judge's dismal power  
From the dark urn shall throw thy destin'd hour;  
When, yielding to the sentence, breathless thou,  
And pale shalt lie, as what thou buriest now,  
May some kind friend the piteous object see,  
And equal rites perform to that which once was thee!

Matthew Prior

# An Ode - Presented To The King, On His Majesty's Arrival In Holland, After The Queen's Death

At Mary's tomb (sad sacred place!)  
The Virtues shall their vigils keep,  
And every Muse and every Grace  
In solemn state shall ever weep.

The future pious mournful fair,  
Oft as the rolling years return,  
With fragrant wreaths and flowering hair  
Shall visit her distinguish'd urn.

For her the wise and great shall mourn,  
When late records her deeds repeat;  
Ages to come and men unborn  
Shall bless her name and sigh her fate.

Fair Albion shall, with faithful trust,  
Her holy Queen's sad relics guard,  
Till Heaven awakes the precious dust,  
And gives the saint her full reward.

But let the King dismiss his woes,  
Reflecting on his fair renown,  
And take the cypress from his brows,  
To put his wonted laurels on.

If press'd by grief our monarch stoops,  
In vain the British lions roar:  
If he whose hand sustain'd them droops,  
The Belgic darts will wound no more.

Embattled princes wait the chief  
Whose voice should rule, whose arm should lead,  
And in kind murmurs chide that grief  
Which hinders Europe being freed.

The great example they demand  
Who still to conquest led the way,

Wishing him present to command,  
As they stand ready to obey.

They seek that joy which used to glow  
Expanded on the hero's face,  
When the thick squadrons press'd the foe,  
And William led the glorious chase.

To give the mournful nations joy  
Restore them thy auspicious light,  
Great Sun! with radiant beams destroy  
Those clouds which keep thee from our sight.

Let thy sublime meridian course  
For Mary's setting rays atone;  
Our lustre, with redoubled force,  
Must now proceed from thee alone.

See, pious King! with different strife  
Thy struggling Albion's bosom torn:  
So much she fears for William's life  
That Mary's fate she dare not mourn.

Her beauty, in thy softer half  
Buried and lost, she ought to grieve,  
But let her strength in thee be safe;  
And let her weep, but let her live.

Thou, guardian angel! save the land  
From thy own grief, her fiercest foe,  
Lest Britain, rescued by thy hand,  
Should bend, and sink beneath thy wo.

Her former triumphs all are vain  
Unless new trophies still be sought,  
And hoary Majesty sustain  
The battles which thy youth has fought.

Where now is all that fearful love  
Which made her hate the war's alarms?  
That soft excess with which she strove  
To keep her hero in her arms?



While still she chid the coming spring,  
Which call'd him o'er his subject seas,  
While for the safety of the king,  
She wish'd the victor's glory less.

'Tis changed; 'tis gone: sad Britain now  
Hastens her lord to foreign wars:  
Happy if toils may break his wo,  
Or danger may divert his cares.

In martial din she drowns her sighs,  
Lest he the rising grief should hear;  
She pulls her helmet o'er his eyes,  
Lest she should see the falling tear.

Go, mighty prince! let France be taught  
How constant minds by grief are tried,  
How great the land that wept and fought,  
When William led and Mary died!

Fierce in the battle make it known,  
Where Death with all his darts is seen,  
That he can touch thy heart with none  
But that which struck the beauteous Queen.

Belgia indulged her open grief,  
While yet her master was not near,  
With sullen pride refused relief,  
And sate obdurate in despair.

As waters from her sluices flow'd  
Unbounded sorrow from her eyes;  
To earth her bended front she bow'd,  
And sent her wailings to the skies.

But when her anxious lord return'd,  
Raised is her head, her eyes are dried;  
She smiles as William ne'er had mourn'd:  
She looks as Mary ne'er had died.

That freedom which all sorrows claim

She does for thy content resign;  
Her piety itself would blame  
If her regrets should weaken thine.

To cure thy wo she shows thy fame,  
Lest the great mourner should forget  
That all the race whence Orange came  
Made Virtue triumph over Fate.

William his country's cause could fight,  
And with his blood her freedom seal;  
Maurice and Henry guard that right  
For which their pious parents fell.

How heroes rise, how patriots set,  
Thy father's bloom and death may tell;  
Excelling others these were great;  
Thou, greater still, must these excel.

The last fair instance thou must give  
Whence Nassaus's virtue can be tried,  
And show the world that thou canst live  
Intrepid as thy consort died.

Thy virtue, whose resistless force  
No dire event could ever stay,  
Must carry on its destined course  
Though Death and Envy stop the way.

For Britain's sake, for Belgia's, live;  
Pierced by their grief, forget thy own;  
New toils endure, new conquest give,  
And bring them ease, though thou hast none.

Vanquish again, though she be gone  
Whose garland crown'd the victor's hair;  
And reign, though she has left the throne  
Who made thy glory worth thy care.

Fair Britain never yet before  
Breathed to her king a useless prayer;  
Fond Belgia never did implore

While William turn'd averse his ear.

But should the weeping hero now  
Relentless to their wishes prove,  
Should he recal, with pleasing wo,  
The object of his grief and love;

Her face with thousand beauties bless'd,  
Her mind with thousand virtues stored,  
Her power with boundless joy confess'd,  
Her person only not adored.

Yet ought his sorrow to be check'd;  
Yet ought his passions to abate;  
If the great mourner would reflect,  
Her glory in her death complete.

She was instructed to command,  
Great king, by long obeying there;  
Her sceptre, guided by thy hand,  
Preserved the isles, and ruled the sea.

But oh! 'twas little, that her life  
O'er earth and water bears thy fame:  
In death, 'twas worthy William's wife,  
Amidst the stars to fix his name.

Beyond where matter moves, or place  
Receives its forms, thy virtues roll;  
From Mary's glory, angels trace  
The beauty of her partner's soul.

Wise fate, which does its heaven decree  
To heroes, when they yield their breath,  
Hastens thy triumph. Half of thee  
Is deified before thy death.

Alone to thy renown 'tis given,  
Unbounded through all worlds to go:  
While she, great saint, rejoices heaven;  
And thou sustain'st the orb below.



## An Ode : On Exodus Iii. 14

On Exodus iii. 14. 'I am that I am.'

Man! foolish man!

Scarce know'st thou how thyself began,  
Scarce hadst thou thought enough to prove thou art,  
Yet, steel'd with studied boldness, thou darest try  
To send thy doubting Reason's dazzled eye  
Through the mysterious gulf of vast immensity;  
Much thou canst there discern, much thence impart.  
Vain wretch! suppress thy knowing pride,  
Mortify thy learned lust:  
Vain are thy thoughts while thou thyself art dust.

Let wit her sails, her oars let wisdom lend,  
The helm let politic experience guide;  
Yet cease to hope thy short-lived bark shall ride  
Down spreading Fate's unnavigable tide.  
What though still it farther tend?  
Still 'tis farther from its end,  
And, in the bosom of that boundless sea,  
Still finds its error lengthen with its way.

With daring pride and insolent delight,  
Your doubts resolved you boast, your labours crown'd,  
And, EYPHKA your God, forsooth, is found  
Incomprehensible and infinite.  
But is he therefore found? vain searcher! no:  
Let your imperfect definition show  
That nothing you, the weak definer, know.

Say, why should the collected main  
Itself within itself contain!  
Why to its caverns should it sometimes creep,  
And with delighted silence sleep  
On the loved bosom of its parent deep.  
Why should its numerous waters stay  
In comely discipline and fair array,  
Till winds and tides exert their high commands!  
Then, prompt and ready to obey,

Why do the rising surges spread  
Their opening ranks o'er earth's submissive head,  
Marching through different paths to different lands?

Why does the constant sun  
With measured steps his radiant journeys run?  
Why does he order the diurnal hours  
To leave earth's other part, and rise in ours?  
Why does he wake the correspondent moon,  
And fill her willing lamp with liquid light,  
Commanding her with delegated powers  
To beautify the world, and bless the night?  
Why does each animated star  
Love the just limits of its proper sphere,  
Why does each consenting sign  
With prudent harmony combine  
In turns to move, and subsequent appear,  
To gird the globe, and regulate the year?

Man does with dangerous curiosity  
These unfathom'd wonders try:  
With fancied rules and arbitrary laws  
Matter and motion he restrains:  
And studied lines and fictitious circles draws:  
Then with imagined sovereignty  
Lord of his new hypothesis he reigns.  
He reigns; how long? till some usurper rise!  
And he, too, mighty thoughtful, mighty wise,  
Studies new lines, and other circles feigns.  
From this last toil again what knowledge flows?  
Just as much, perhaps, as shows  
That all his predecessor's rules  
Were empty cant, all jargon of the schools:  
That he on t'other's ruin rears his throne,  
And shows his friend's mistake, and thence confirms his own.

On earth, in air, amidst the seas and skies,  
Mountainous heaps of wonders rise,  
Whose towering strength will ne'er submit  
To Reason's batteries or the mines of Wit:  
Yet still inquiring, still mistaking man,  
Each hour repulsed, each hour dares onward press,

And, levelling at God his wandering guess,  
(That feeble engine of his reasoning war,  
Which guides his doubts and combats his despair)  
Laws to his Maker the learn'd wretch can give,  
Can bound that nature and prescribe that will  
Whose pregnant Word did either ocean fill,  
Can tell us whence all beings are, and how they move and live.  
Through either ocean, foolish man!  
That pregnant Word sent forth again  
Might to a world extend each atom there,  
For every drop call forth a sea, a heaven for every star.

Let cunning earth her fruitful wonders hide,  
And only lift thy staggering reason up  
To trembling Calvary's astonish'd top,  
Then mock thy knowledge and confound thy pride.  
Explaining how Perfection suffer'd pain,  
Almighty languish'd, and Eternal died;  
How by her patient victor Death was slain,  
And earth profaned, yet bless'd with Deicide.  
Then down with all thy boasted volumes, down;  
Only reserve the sacred one:  
Low, reverently low,  
Make thy stubborn knowledge bow;  
Weep out thy reason's and thy body's eyes;  
Deject thyself that thou may'st rise:  
To look to heaven, to blind to all below.

Then Faith for Reason's glimmering light shall give  
Her immortal perspective,  
And Grace's presence Nature's loss retrieve;  
Then thy enliven'd soul shall see  
That all the volumes of philosophy,  
With all their comments, never could invent  
So politic an instrument,  
To reach the heaven of heavens, the high abode  
Where Moses places his mysterious God,  
As was the ladder which old Jacob rear'd,  
When light divine had human darkness clear'd,  
And his enlarged ideas found the road  
Which faith had dictated and angels trod.





# An Ode : While Blooming Youth And Gay Delight

While blooming youth and gay delight  
Sit on thy rosy cheeks confess'd,  
Thou hast, my dear, undoubted right  
To triumph o'er this destined breast.  
My reason bends to what thy eyes ordain;  
For I was born to love, and thou to reign.

But would you meanly thus rely  
On power you know I must obey?  
Exert a legal tyranny,  
And do an ill because you may?  
Still must I thee, as Atheists Heaven, adore;  
Not see thy mercy, and yet dread thy power?

Take heed, my dear: youth flies apace;  
As well as Cupid, Time is blind:  
Soon must those glories of thy face  
The fate of vulgar beauty find:  
The thousand Loves, that arm thy potent eye,  
Must drop their quivers, flag their wings, and die.

Then wilt thou sigh, when in each frown  
A hateful wrinkle more appears:  
And putting peevish humours on,  
Seems but the sad effect of years:  
Kindness itself too weak a charm will prove  
To raise the feeble fires of aged love.

Forced compliments, and formal bows,  
Will show thee just above neglect;  
The heat with which thy lover glows,  
Will settle into cold respect:  
A talking dull Platonic I shall turn;  
Learn to be civil, when I cease to burn.

Then, shun the ill, and know, my dear,  
Kindness and constancy will prove  
The only pillars, fit to bear  
So vast a weight as that of love.

If thou canst wish to make my flames endure,  
Thine must be very fierce, and very pure.

Haste, Celia, haste, while youth invites,  
Obey kind Cupid's present voice;  
Fill every sense with soft delights,  
And give thy soul a loose to joys:  
Let millions of repeated blisses prove  
That thou all kindness art, and I all love.

Be mine, and only mine; take care  
Thy looks, thy thoughts, thy dreams, to guide  
To me alone; nor come so far,  
As liking any youth beside:  
What men e'er court thee, fly them, and believe  
They're serpents all, and thou the tempted Eve.

So shall I court thy dearest truth,  
When beauty ceases to engage;  
So, thinking on thy charming youth,  
I'll love it o'er again in age;  
So time itself our raptures shall improve,  
While still we wake to joy, and live to love.

Matthew Prior

# An Ode : While From Our Looks, Fair Nymph, You Guess

While from our looks, fair nymph, you guess  
The secret passions of our mind;  
My heavy eyes, you say, confess  
A heart to love and grief inclined.

There needs, alas! but little art  
To have this fatal secret found;  
With the same ease you threw the dart,  
'Tis certain you can show the wound.

How can I see you, and not love,  
While you as opening cast are fair?  
While cold as northern blasts you prove,  
How can I love, and not despair?

The wretch in double fetters bound  
Your potent mercy may release;  
Soon, if my love but once were crown'd,  
Fair prophetess, my grief would cease.

Matthew Prior

# An Ode To A Lady. She Refusing To Continue A Dispute With Me, And Leaving Me In The Argument

Spare, generous victor, spare the slave,  
Who did unequal war pursue;  
That more than triumph he might have,  
In being overcome by you.

In the dispute, whate'er I said,  
My heart was by my tongue belied;  
And in my looks you might have read  
How much I argued on your side.

You, far from danger as from fear,  
Might have sustain'd an open fight;  
For seldom your opinions err,  
Your eyes are always in the right.

Why, fair one, would you not rely  
On reason's force with beauty's join'd?  
Could I their prevalence deny,  
I must at once be deaf and blind.

Alas! not hoping to subdue,  
I only to the fight aspired:  
To keep the beauteous foe in view  
Was all the glory I desired.

But she, howe'er of victory sure,  
Contemns the wreath too long delay'd:  
And arm'd with more immediate power,  
Calls cruel silence to her aid.

Deeper to wound she shuns the fight;  
She drops her arms, to gain the field;  
Secures her conquest by her flight;  
And triumphs, when she seems to yield.

So when the Parthian turn'd his steed,  
And from the hostile camp withdrew,

With cruel skill the backward reed  
He sent; and, as he fled, he slew.

Matthew Prior

# An Ode To Mr. Howard

Dear Howard, from the soft assaults of love  
Poets and painters never are secure;  
Can I untouch'd the fair one's passions move,  
Or thou draw beauty, and not feel its power?

To great Appelles when young Ammon brought  
The darling idol of his captive heart;  
And the pleased nymph with kind attention sat,  
To have her charms recorded by his art:

The amorous master own'd her potent eyes:  
Sigh'd when he look'd, and trembled as he drew:  
Each flowing line confirm'd his first surprise,  
And, as the piece advanced, the passion grew.

While Philip's son, while Venus' son, was near,  
What different tortures does his bosom feel?  
Great was the rival, and the god severe:  
Nor could he hide his flame, nor durst reveal.

The prince, renown'd in bounty as in arms,  
With pity saw the ill-conceal'd distress;  
Quitted his title to Campaspe's charms,  
And gave the fair one to the friend's embrace.

Thus the more beauteous Cloe sat to thee,  
Good Howard, emulous of the Grecian art:  
But happy thou, from Cupid's arrow free,  
And flames that pierced thy predecessor's heart!

Had thy poor breast received an equal pain;  
Had I been vested with the monarch's power;  
Thou must have sigh'd, unlucky youth, in vain;  
Nor from my bounty hadst thou found a cure.

Though, to convince thee that the friend did feel  
A kind concern for thy ill-fated care,  
I would have sooth'd thy flame I could not heal;  
Given thee the world; though I withheld the fair.

Matthew Prior

# An Ode. The Merchant, To Secure

The merchant, to secure his treasure,  
Conveys it in a borrow'd name:  
Euphelia serves to grace my measure:  
But Cloe is my real flame.

My softest verse, my darling lyre,  
Upon Euphelia's toilet lay;  
When Cloe noted her desire,  
That I should sing, that I should play.

My lyre I tune, my voice I raise,  
But with my numbers mix my sighs;  
And, whilst I sing Euphelia's praise,  
I fix my soul on Cloe's eyes.

Fair Cloe blush'd: Euphelia frown'd:  
I sung, and gazed: I play'd, and trembled:  
And Venus to the Loves around  
Remark'd how ill we all dissembled.

Matthew Prior



## Answer To Cloe Jealous. The Author Sick

Yes, fairest Proof of Beauty's Pow'r,  
Dear Idol of My panting Heart,  
Nature points This my fatal Hour:  
And I have liv'd; and We must part.

While now I take my last Adieu,  
Heave Thou no Sigh, nor shed a Tear;  
Lest yet my half-clos'd Eye may view  
On Earth an Object worth it's Care.

From Jealousy's tormenting Strife  
For ever be Thy Bosom free'd:  
That nothing may disturb Thy Life,  
Content I hasten to the Dead.

Yet when some better-fated Youth  
Shall with his am'rous Parly move Thee;  
Reflect One Moment on His Truth,  
Who dying Thus, persists to love Thee.

Matthew Prior

## Bibo And Charon

When Bibo thought fit from the world to retreat,  
As full of Champagne as an egg's full of meat,  
He waked in the boat, and to Charon he said,  
He would be row'd back, for he was not yet dead.  
Trim the boat and sit quiet, stern Charon replied,  
You may have forgot - you were drunk when you died.

Matthew Prior

## By Mons. Fontenelle

Ma petite ame, ma mignonne,  
Tu t'en vas donc, má fille, et Dieu scache ou tu vas:  
Tu pars seulette, nuë, et tremblotante, hélas!  
Que deviendra ton humeur folichonne?  
Que deviendront tant de jolis ébats?

IMITATED.

Poor, little, pretty, fluttering thing,  
Must we no longer live together?  
And dost thou prune thy trembling wing,  
To take thy flight thou know'st not whither?  
Thy hum'rous vein, thy pleasing folly,  
Lies all neglected, all forgot,  
And pensive, wavering melancholy,  
Thou dread'st, and hop'st, thou know'st not what.

Matthew Prior

## Cantata. Set By Mons. Galliard

Recit.

Beneath a verdant laurel's ample shade  
His lyre to mournful numbers strung,  
Horace, immortal bard supinely laid,  
To Venus thus address'd the song;  
Ten thousand little loves around,  
Listening dwelt on every sound.

Ariet.

Potent Venus, bid thy son  
Sound no more his dire alarms:  
Youth on silent wings is flown;  
Graver years come rolling on,  
Spare my age unfit for arms:  
Safe and humble let me rest,  
From all amorous care released.  
Potent Venus, bid thy son  
Sound no more his dire alarms.

Recit.

Yet, Venus, why do I each morn prepare  
The fragrant wreath for Cloe's hair?  
Why, why do I all day lament and sigh,  
Unless the beauteous maid be nigh?  
And why all night pursue her in my dreams  
Through flowery meads and crystal streams?

Recit.

Thus sung the bard, and thus the goddess spoke:  
Submissive bow to Love's imperious yoke;  
Every state and every age  
Shall own my rule and fear my rage:  
Compell'd by me, thy Muse shall prove  
That all the world was born to love.

Ariet.

Bid thy destined lyre discover  
Soft desire and gentle pain:  
Often praise, and always love her;

Through her ear her heart obtain.  
Verse shall please and sight shall move her,  
Cupid does with Phoebus reign.

Matthew Prior

# Carmen Seculare. For The Year 1700. To The King

Thy elder Look, Great Janus, cast  
Into the long Records of Ages past:  
Review the Years in fairest Action drest  
With noted White, Superior to the rest;  
Aera's deriv'd, and Chronicles begun  
From Empires founded, and from Battels won:  
Show all the Spoils by valiant Kings achiev'd,  
And groaning Nations by Their Arms reliev'd;  
The Wounds of Patriots in their Country's Cause,  
And happy Pow'r sustain'd by wholesom Laws:  
In comely Rank call ev'ry Merit forth:  
Imprint on ev'ry Act it's Standard Worth:  
The glorious Parallels then downward bring  
To Modern Wonders, and to Britain's King:  
With equal Justice and Historic Care  
Their Laws, Their Toils, Their Arms with His compare:  
Confess the various Attributes of Fame  
Collected and compleat in William's Name:  
To all the list'ning World relate  
(As Thou dost His Story read)  
That nothing went before so Great,  
And nothing Greater can succeed.  
Thy Native Latium was Thy darling Care,  
Prudent in Peace, and terrible in War:  
The boldest Virtues that have govern'd Earth  
From Latium's fruitful Womb derive their Birth.  
Then turn to Her fair-written Page:  
From dawning Childhood to establish'd Age,  
The Glories of Her Empire trace:  
Confront the Heroes of Thy Roman Race:  
And let the justest Palm the Victor's Temples grace.  
The Son of Mars reduc'd the trembling Swains,  
And spread His Empire o'er the distant Plains:  
But yet the Sabins violated Charms  
Obscur'd the Glory of His rising Arms.  
Numa the Rights of strict Religion knew;  
On ev'ry Altar laid the Incense due;  
Unskill'd to dart the pointed Spear,  
Or lead the forward Youth to noble War.

Stern Brutus was with too much Horror good,  
Holding his Fasces stain'd with Filial Blood.  
Fabius was Wise, but with Excess of Care;  
He sav'd his Country; but prolonged the War:  
While Decius, Paulus, Curius greatly fought;  
And by Their strict Examples taught,  
How wild Desires should be controll'd;  
And how much brighter Virtue was, than Gold;  
They scarce Their swelling Thirst of Fame could hide;  
And boasted Poverty with too much Pride.  
Excess in Youth made Scipio less rever'd:  
And Cato dying seem'd to own, He fear'd.  
Julius with Honor tam'd Rome's foreign Foes:  
But Patriots fell, e'er the Dictator rose.  
And while with Clemency Augustus reign'd;  
The Monarch was ador'd; the City chain'd.  
With justest Honour be Their Merits drest:  
But be Their Failings too confest:  
Their Virtue, like their Tyber's Flood  
Rolling, it's Course design'd the Country's Good:  
But oft the Torrent's too impetuous Speed  
From the low Earth tore some polluting Weed:  
And with the Blood of Jove there always ran  
Some viler Part, some Tincture of the Man.  
Few Virtues after These so far prevail,  
But that Their Vices more than turn the Scale:  
Valour grown wild by Pride, and Pow'r by Rage,  
Did the true Charms of Majesty impair:  
Rome by Degrees advancing more in Age,  
Show'd sad Remains of what had once been fair;  
'Till Heav'n a better Race of Men supplies;  
And Glory shoots new Beams from Western Skies.  
Turn then to Pharamond, and Charlemain,  
And the long Heroes of the Gallic Strain;  
Experienc'd Chiefs, for hardy Prowess known,  
And bloody Wreaths in vent'rous Battels won.  
From the First William, our great Norman King,  
The bold Plantagenets, and Tudors bring;  
Illustrious Virtues, who by turns have rose,  
In foreign Fields to check Britannia's Foes;  
With happy Laws Her Empire to sustain,  
And with full Pow'r assert Her ambient Main:

But sometimes too Industrious to be Great,  
Nor Patient to expect the Turns of Fate,  
They open'd Camps deform'd by Civil Fight,  
And made proud Conquest trample over Right:  
Disparted Britain mourn'd Their doubtful Sway,  
And dreaded Both, when Neither would obey.

From Didier, and Imperial Adolph trace  
The Glorious Offspring of the Nassaw Race,  
Devoted Lives to Publick Liberty;  
The Chief still dying, or the Country free.  
Then see the Kindred Blood of Orange flow,  
From warlike Cornet, thro' the Loins of Beau;  
Thro' Chalon next; and there with Nassaw join,  
From Rhone's fair Banks transplanted to the Rhine.  
Bring next the Royal List of Stuarts forth,  
Undaunted Minds, that rul'd the rugged North;  
'Till Heav'n's Decrees by rip'ning Times are shown;  
'Till Scotland's Kings ascend the English Throne;  
And the fair Rivals live for ever One.  
Janus, mighty Deity,  
Be kind; and as Thy searching Eye  
Does our Modern Story trace,  
Finding some of Stuart's Race  
Unhappy, pass Their Annals by:  
No harsh Reflection let Remembrance raise:  
Forbear to mention, what Thou canst not praise:  
But as Thou dwell'st upon that Heav'nly Name,  
To Grief for ever Sacred as to Fame,  
Oh! read it to Thy self; in Silence weep;  
And Thy convulsive Sorrows inward keep;  
Lest Britain's Grief should waken at the Sound;  
And Blood gush fresh from Her eternal Wound.  
Whither would'st Thou further look?  
Read William's Acts, and close the ample Book:  
Peruse the Wonders of His dawning Life;  
How, like Alcides, He began;  
With Infant Patience calm'd Seditious Strife,  
And quell'd the Snakes which round his Cradle ran.  
Describe His Youth, attentive to Alarms,  
By Dangers form'd, and perfected in Arms:  
When Conqu'ring, mild; when Conquer'd, not disgrac'd;



By Wrongs not lessen'd, nor by Triumphs rais'd:  
 Superior to the blind Events  
 Of little Human Accidents;  
 And constant to His first Decree,  
 To curb the Proud, to set the Injur'd free;  
 To bow the haughty Neck, and raise the suppliant Knee.  
 His opening Years to riper Manhood bring;  
 And see the Hero perfect in the King:  
 Imperious Arms by Manly Reason sway'd,  
 And Power Supreme by free Consent obey'd:  
 With how much Haste His Mercy meets his Foes:  
 And how unbounded His Forgiveness flows:  
 With what Desire He makes His Subjects bless'd,  
 His Favours granted ere His Throne address'd:  
 What Trophies o'er our captiv'd Hearts He rears,  
 By Arts of Peace more potent, than by Wars:  
 How o'er Himself, as o'er the World, He Reigns,  
 His Morals strength'ning, what His Law ordains.  
 Thro' all His Thread of Life already spun,  
 Becoming Grace and proper Action run:  
 The Piece by Virtue's equal Hand is wrought,  
 Mix'd with no Crime, and shaded with no Fault:  
 No Footsteps of the Victor's Rage  
 Left in the Camp, where William did engage:  
 No Tincture of the Monarch's Pride  
 Upon the Royal Purple spy'd:  
 His Fame, like Gold, the more 'tis try'd,  
 The more shall its intrinsic Worth proclaim;  
 Shall pass the Combat of the searching Flame,  
 And triumph o'er the vanquish'd Heat,  
 For ever coming out the same,  
 And losing nor it's Lustre, nor it's Weight.  
 Janus be to William just;  
 To faithful History His Actions trust:  
 Command Her, with peculiar Care  
 To trace each Toil, and comment ev'ry War:  
 His saving Wonders bid Her write  
 In Characters distinctly bright;  
 That each revolving Age may read  
 The Patriot's Piety, the Hero's Deed:  
 And still the Sire inculcate to his Son  
 Transmissive Lessons of the King's Renown:

That William's Glory still may live;  
 When all that present Art can give,  
 The Pillar'd Marble, and the Tablet Brass,  
 Mould'ring, drop the Victor's Praise:  
 When the great Monuments of His Pow'r  
 Shall now be visible no more:  
 When Sambre shall have chang'd her winding Flood;  
 And Children ask, where Namur stood.  
 Namur, proud City, how her Towr's were arm'd!  
 How She contemn'd th'approaching Foe!  
 'Till She by William's Trumpets was allarm'd,  
 And shook, and sunk, and fell beneath His Blow.  
 Jove and Pallas, mighty Pow'rs,  
 Guided the Hero to the hostile Tow'rs.  
 Perseus seem'd less swift in War,  
 When, wing'd with Speed, he flew thro' Air.  
 Embattl'd Nations strive in vain  
 The Hero's Glory to restrain:  
 Streams arm'd with Rocks, and Mountains red with Fire  
 In vain against His Force conspire.  
 Behold Him from the dreadful Height appear!  
 And lo! Britannia's Lions waving there.  
 Europe freed, and France repell'd  
 The Hero from the Height beheld:  
 He spake the Word, that War and Rage should cease:  
 He bid the Maese and Rhine in Safety flow;  
 And dictated a lasting Peace  
 To the rejoicing World below:  
 To rescu'd States, and vindicated Crowns  
 His Equal Hand prescrib'd their ancient Bounds;  
 Ordain'd whom ev'ry Province should obey;  
 How far each Monarch should extend His Sway:  
 Taught 'em how Clemency made Pow'r rever'd;  
 And that the Prince Belov'd was truly Fear'd.  
 Firm by His Side unspotted Honour stood,  
 Pleas'd to confess Him not so Great as Good:  
 His Head with brighter Beams fair Virtue deck't,  
 Than Those which all His num'rous Crowns reflect:  
 Establish'd Freedom clap'd her joyful Wings;  
 Proclaim'd the First of Men, and Best of Kings.  
 Whither would the Muse aspire  
 With Pindar's Rage without his Fire?

Pardon me, Janus, 'twas a Fault,  
Created by too great a Thought:  
Mindless of the God and Day,  
I from thy Altars, Janus, stray,  
From Thee, and from My self born far away.  
The fiery Pegasus disdains  
To mind the Rider's Voice, or hear the Reins:  
When glorious Fields and opening Camps He views;  
He runs with an unbounded Loose:  
Hardly the Muse can sit the headstrong Horse:  
Nor would She, if She could, check his impetuous Force:  
With the glad Noise the Cliffs and Vallies ring;  
While She thro' Earth and Air pursues the King.  
She now beholds Him on the Belgic Shoar;  
Whilst Britain's Tears His ready Help implore,  
Dissembling for Her sake his rising Cares,  
And with wise Silence pond'ring vengeful Wars.  
She thro' the raging Ocean now  
Views Him advancing his auspicious Prow;  
Combating adverse Winds and Winter Seas,  
Sighing the Moments that defer Our Ease;  
Daring to wield the Scepter's dang'rous Weight,  
And taking the Command, to save the State:  
Tho' e'er the doubtful Gift can be secur'd,  
New Wars must be sustain'd, new Wounds endur'd.  
Thro' rough Ierne's Camp She sounds Alarms,  
And Kingdoms yet to be redeem'd by Arms;  
In the dank Marshes finds her glorious Theme;  
And plunges after Him thro' Boyn's fierce Stream.  
She bids the Nereids run with trembling Haste,  
To tell old Ocean how the Hero past.  
The God rebukes their Fear, and owns the Praise  
Worthy that Arm, Whose Empire He obeys.  
Back to His Albion She delights to bring  
The humblest Victor, and the kindest King.  
Albion, with open Triumph would receive  
Her Hero, nor obtains His Leave:  
Firm He rejects the Altars She would raise;  
And thanks the Zeal, while He declines the Praise.  
Again She follows Him thro' Belgia's Land,  
And Countries often sav'd by William's Hand;  
Hears joyful Nations bless those happy Toils,

Which freed the People, but return'd the Spoils.  
In various Views She tries her constant Theme;  
Finds Him in Councils, and in Arms the Same:  
When certain to o'ercome, inclin'd to save,  
Tardy to Vengeance, and with Mercy, Brave.  
Sudden another Scene employs her Sight:  
She sets her Hero in another Light:  
Paints His great Mind Superior to Success,  
Declining Conquest, to establish Peace:  
She brings Astrea down to Earth again,  
And Quiet, brooding o'er His future Reign.  
Then with unweari'd Wing the Goddess soars  
East, over Danube and Propontis Shoars;  
Where jarring Empires ready to engage,  
Retard their Armies, and suspend their Rage;  
'Till William's Word, like That of Fate, declares,  
If They shall study Peace, or lengthen Wars.  
How sacred His Renown for equal Laws,  
To whom the World defers it's Common Cause!  
How fair His Friendships, and His Leagues how just,  
Whom ev'ry Nation courts, Whom all Religions trust!  
From the Maeotis to the Northern Sea,  
The Goddess wings her desp'rate Way;  
Sees the young Muscovite, the mighty Head,  
Whose Sov'reign Terror forty Nations dread,  
Inamour'd with a greater Monarch's Praise,  
And passing half the Earth to His Embrace:  
She in His Rule beholds His Volga's Force,  
O'er Precipices, with impetuous Sway  
Breaking, and as He rowls his rapid Course,  
Drowning, or bearing down, whatever meets his Way.  
But her own King She likens to His Thames,  
With gentle Course devolving fruitful Streams:  
Serene yet Strong, Majestic yet Sedate,  
Swift without Violence, without Terror Great.  
Each ardent Nymph the rising Current craves:  
Each Shepherd's Pray'r retards the parting Waves:  
The Vales along the Bank their Sweets disclose:  
Fresh Flow'rs for ever rise: and fruitful Harvest grows.  
Yet whither would th'advent'rous Goddess go?  
Sees She not Clouds, and Earth, and Main below?  
Minds She the Dangers of the Lycian Coast,

And Fields, where mad Belerophon was lost?  
Or is Her tow'ring Flight reclaim'd  
By Seas from Icarus's Downfall nam'd?  
Vain is the Call, and useless the Advice:  
To wise Perswasion Deaf, and human Cries,  
Yet upward She incessant flies;  
Resolv'd to reach the high Empyrean Sphere,  
And tell Great Jove, She sings His Image here;  
To ask for William an Olympic Crown,  
To Chromius' Strength, and Theron's Speed unknown:  
Till lost in trackless Fields of shining Day,  
Unable to discern the Way  
Which Nassaw's Virtue only could explore,  
Untouch'd, unknown, to any Muse before,  
She, from the noble Precipices thrown,  
Comes rushing with uncommon Ruin down.  
Glorious Attempt! Unhappy Fate!  
The Song too daring, and the Theme too great!  
Yet rather thus She wills to die,  
Than in continu'd Annals live, to sing  
A second Heroe, or a vulgar King;  
And with ignoble Safety fly  
In sight of Earth, along a middle Sky.  
To Janus' Altars, and the numerous Throng,  
That round his mystic Temple press,  
For William's Life, and Albion's Peace,  
Ambitious Muse reduce the roving Song.  
Janus, cast Thy forward Eye  
Future, into great Rhea's pregnant Womb;  
Where young Ideas brooding lye,  
And tender Images of Things to come:  
'Till by Thy high Commands releas'd;  
'Till by Thy Hand in proper Atoms dress'd,  
In decent Order They advance to Light;  
Yet then too swiftly fleet by human Sight;  
And meditate too soon their everlasting Flight.  
Nor Beaks of Ships in Naval Triumph born,  
Nor Standards from the hostile Ramparts torn,  
Nor Trophies brought from Battles won,  
Nor Oaken Wreath, nor Mural Crown  
Can any future Honours give  
To the Victorious Monarch's Name:

The Plenitude of William's Fame  
Can no accumulated Stores receive.  
Shut then, auspicious God, Thy Sacred Gate,  
And make Us Happy, as our King is Great.  
Be kind, and with a milder Hand,  
Closing the Volume of the finish'd Age,  
(Tho' Noble, 'twas an Iron Page)  
A more delightful Leaf expand,  
Free from Alarms, and fierce Bellona's Rage:  
Bid the great Months begin their joyful Round,  
By Flora some, and some by Ceres Crown'd:  
Teach the glad Hours to scatter, as they fly,  
Soft Quiet, gentle Love, and endless Joy:  
Lead forth the Years for Peace and Plenty fam'd,  
From Saturn's Rule, and better Metal nam'd.  
Secure by William's Care let Britain stand;  
Nor dread the bold Invader's Hand:  
From adverse Shoars in Safety let Her hear  
Foreign Calamity, and distant War;  
Of which let Her, great Heav'n, no Portion bear.  
Betwixt the Nations let Her hold the Scale;  
And as She wills, let either Part prevail:  
Let her glad Vallies smile with wavy Corn:  
Let fleecy Flocks her rising Hills adorn:  
Around her Coast let strong Defence be spread:  
Let fair Abundance on her Breast be shed:  
And Heav'nly Sweets bloom round the Goddess' Head.  
Where the white Towers and ancient Roofs did stand,  
Remains of Wolsey's or great Henry's Hand,  
To Age now yielding, or devour'd by Flame;  
Let a young Phenix raise her tow'ring Head:  
Her Wings with lengthen'd Honour let Her spread;  
And by her Greatness show her Builder's Fame.  
August and Open, as the Hero's Mind,  
Be her capacious Courts design'd:  
Let ev'ry Sacred Pillar bear  
Trophies of Arms, and Monuments of War.  
The King shall there in Parian Marble breath,  
His Shoulder bleeding fresh: and at His Feet  
Disarm'd shall lye the threat'ning Death:  
(For so was saving Jove's Decree compleat.)  
Behind, That Angel shall be plac'd, whose Shield

Sav'd Europe, in the Blow repell'd:  
On the firm Basis, from his Oozy Bed  
Boyn shall raise his Laurell'd Head;  
And his Immortal Stream be known,  
Artfully waving thro' the wounded Stone.  
And Thou, Imperial Windsor, stand inlarg'd,  
With all the Monarch's Trophies charg'd:  
Thou, the fair Heav'n, that dost the Stars inclose,  
Which William's Bosom wears, or Hand bestows  
On the great Champions who support his Throne,  
And Virtues nearest to His own.  
Round Ormond's Knee Thou ty'st the Mystic String,  
That makes the Knight Companion to the King.  
From glorious Camps return'd, and foreign Feilds,  
Bowing before thy sainted Warrior's Shrine,  
Fast by his great Forefather's Coats, and Shields  
Blazon'd from Bohun's, or from Butler's Line,  
He hangs His Arms; nor fears those Arms should shine  
With an unequal Ray; or that His Deed  
With paler Glory should recede,  
Eclips'd by Theirs; or lessen'd by the Fame  
Ev'n of His own Maternal Nassaw's Name.  
Thou smiling see'st great Dorset's Worth confest,  
The Ray distinguishing the Patriot's Breast:  
Born to protect and love, to help and please;  
Sov'reign of Wit, and Ornament of Peace.  
O! long as Breath informs this fleeting Frame,  
Ne'er let me pass in Silence Dorset's Name;  
Ne'er cease to mention the continu'd Debt,  
Which the great Patron only would forget,  
And Duty, long as Life, must study to acquit.  
Renown'd in Thy Records shall Ca'ndish stand,  
Asserting Legal Pow'r, and just Command:  
To the great House thy Favour shall be shown,  
The Father's Star transmissive to the Son.  
From Thee the Talbot's and the Seymour's Race  
Inform'd, Their Sire's immortal Steps shall trace:  
Happy may their Sons receive  
The bright Reward, which Thou alone canst give.  
And if a God these lucky Numbers guide;  
If sure Apollo o'er the Verse preside;  
Jersey, belov'd by all (For all must feel

The Influence of a Form and Mind,  
Where comely Grace and constant Virtue dwell,  
Like mingl'd Streams, more forcible when join'd.)  
Jersey shall at Thy Altars stand;  
Shall there receive the Azure Band,  
That fairest Mark of Favour and of Fame,  
Familiar to the Vilier's Name.

Science to raise, and Knowledge to enlarge,  
Be our great Master's future Charge;  
To write His own Memoirs, and leave His Heirs  
High Schemes of Government, and Plans of Wars;  
By fair Rewards our Noble Youth to raise  
To emulous Merit, and to Thirst of Praise;  
To lead Them out from Ease e'er opening Dawn,  
Through the thick Forest and the distant Lawn,  
Where the fleet Stag employs their ardent Care;  
And Chases give Them Images of War.  
To teach Them Vigilance by false Alarms;  
Inure Them in feign'd Camps to real Arms;  
Practise Them now to curb the turning Steed,  
Mocking the Foe; now to his rapid Speed  
To give the Rein; and in the full Career,  
To draw the certain Sword, or send the pointed Spear.  
Let Him unite His Subjects Hearts,  
Planting Societies for peaceful Arts;  
Some that in Nature shall true Knowledge found,  
And by Experiment make Precept sound;  
Some that to Morals shall recal the Age,  
And purge from vitious Dross the sinking Stage;  
Some that with Care true Eloquence shall teach,  
And to just Idioms fix our doubtful Speech:  
That from our Writers distant Realms may know,  
The Thanks We to our Monarch owe;  
And Schools profess our Tongue through ev'ry Land,  
That has invok'd His Aid, or blest His Hand.  
Let His high Pow'r the drooping Muses rear.  
The Muses only can reward His Care:  
'Tis They that guard the great Atrides' Spoils:  
'Tis They that still renew Ulysses' Toils:  
To Them by smiling Jove 'twas giv'n, to save  
Distinguish'd Patriots from the Common Grave;



To them, Great William's Glory to recal,  
When Statues moulder, and when Arches fall.  
Nor let the Muses, with ungrateful Pride,  
The Sources of their Treasure hide:  
The Heroe's Virtue does the String inspire,  
When with big Joy They strike the living Lyre:  
On William's Fame their Fate depends:  
With Him the Song begins: with Him it ends.  
From the bright Effluence of His Deed  
They borrow that reflected Light,  
With which the lasting Lamp They feed,  
Whose Beams dispel the Damps of envious Night.  
Through various Climes, and to each distant Pole  
In happy Tides let active Commerce rowl:  
Let Britain's Ships export an Annual Fleece,  
Richer than Argos brought to ancient Greece;  
Returning loaden with the shining Stores,  
Which lye profuse on either India's Shores.  
As our high Vessels pass their wat'ry Way,  
Let all the Naval World due Homage pay;  
With hasty Reverence their Top-Honours lower,  
Confessing the asserted Power,  
To Whom by Fate 'twas given, with happy Sway  
To calm the Earth, and vindicate the Sea.  
Our Pray'rs are heard, our Master's Fleets shall go,  
As far as Winds can bear, or Waters flow,  
New Lands to make, new Indies to explore,  
In Worlds unknown to plant Britannia's Power;  
Nations yet wild by Precept to reclaim,  
And teach 'em Arms, and Arts, in William's Name.  
With humble Joy, and with respectful Fear  
The list'ning People shall His Story hear,  
The Wounds He bore, the Dangers He sustain'd,  
How far he Conquer'd, and how well he Reign'd;  
Shall own his Mercy equal to His Fame;  
And form their Children's Accents to His Name,  
Enquiring how, and when from Heav'n He came.  
Their Regal Tyrants shall with Blushes hide  
Their little Lusts of Arbitrary Pride,  
Nor bear to see their Vassals ty'd:  
When William's Virtues raise their opening Thought,  
His forty Years for Publick Freedom fought,

Europe by His Hand sustain'd,  
His Conquest by His Piety restrain'd,  
And o'er Himself the last great Triumph gain'd.  
No longer shall their wretched Zeal adore  
Ideas of destructive Power,  
Spirits that hurt, and Godheads that devour:  
New Incense They shall bring, new Altars raise,  
And fill their Temples with a Stranger's Praise;  
When the Great Father's Character They find  
Visibly stamp'd upon the Hero's Mind;  
And own a present Deity confest,  
In Valour that preserv'd, and Power that bless'd.  
Through the large Convex of the Azure Sky  
(For thither Nature casts our common Eye)  
Fierce Meteors shoot their arbitrary Light;  
And Comets march with lawless Horror bright:  
These hear no Rule, no righteous Order own;  
Their Influence dreaded, as their Ways unknown:  
Thro' threaten'd Lands They wild Destruction throw;  
'Till ardent Prayer averts the Public Woe:  
But the bright Orb that blesses all above,  
The sacred Fire, the real Son of Jove,  
Rules not His Actions by Capricious Will;  
Nor by ungovern'd Power declines to Ill:  
Fix'd by just Laws He goes for ever right:  
Man knows His Course, and thence adores His Light.  
O Janus! would intreated Fate conspire  
To grant what Britain's Wishes could require;  
Above, That Sun should cease his Way to go,  
E'er William cease to rule, and bless below:  
But a relentless Destiny  
Urges all that e'er was born:  
Snatch'd from her Arms, Britannia once must mourn  
The Demi-God: The Earthly Half must die.  
Yet if our Incense can Your Wrath remove;  
If human Prayers avail on Minds above;  
Exert, great God, Thy Int'rest in the Sky;  
Gain each kind Pow'r, each Guardian Deity,  
That conquer'd by the publick Vow,  
They bear the dismal Mischief far away:  
O! long as utmost Nature may allow,  
Let Them retard the threaten'd Day:

Still be our Master's Life Thy happy Care:  
Still let His Blessings with His Years increase:  
To His laborious Youth consum'd in War,  
Add lasting Age, adorn'd and crown'd with Peace:  
Let twisted Olive bind those Laurels fast,  
Whose Verdure must for ever last.

Long let this growing AEra bless His Sway:  
And let our Sons His present Rule obey:  
On His sure Virtue long let Earth rely:  
And late let the Imperial Eagle fly,  
To bear the Hero thro' His Father's Sky,  
To Leda's Twins, or He whose glorious Speed  
On Foot prevail'd, or He who tam'd the Steed;  
To Hercules, at length absolv'd by Fate  
From Earthly Toil, and above Envy great;  
To Virgil's Theme, bright Cytherea's Son,  
Sire of the Latian, and the British Throne;  
To all the radiant Names above,  
Rever'd by Men, and dear to Jove.  
Late, Janus, let the Nassaw-Star  
New born, in rising Majesty appear,  
To triumph over vanquish'd Night,  
And guide the prosp'rous Mariner  
With everlasting Beams of friendly Light.

Matthew Prior

## Celia To Damon

What can I say? What Arguments can prove  
My Truth? What Colors can describe my Love?  
If it's Excess and Fury be not known,  
In what Thy Celia has already done?

Thy Infant Flames, whilst yet they were conceal'd  
In tim'rous Doubts, with Pity I beheld;  
With easie Smiles dispell'd the silent Fear,  
That durst not tell Me, what I dy'd to hear:  
In vain I strove to check my growing Flame,  
Or shelter Passion under Friendship's Name:  
You saw my Heart, how it my Tongue bely'd;  
And when You press'd, how faintly I deny'd-  
E'er Guardian Thought could bring it's scatter'd Aid;  
E'er Reason could support the doubting Maid;  
My Soul surpriz'd, and from her self disjoin'd,  
Left all Reserve, and all the Sex behind:  
From your Command her Motions She receiv'd;  
And not for Me, but You, She breath'd and liv'd.

But ever blest be Cytherea's Shrine;  
And Fires Eternal on Her Altars shine;  
Since Thy dear Breast has felt an equal Wound;  
Since in Thy Kindness my Desires are crown'd.  
By Thy each Look, and Thought, and Care 'tis shown,  
Thy Joys are center'd All in Me Alone;  
And sure I am, Thou would'st not change this Hour  
For all the white Ones, Fate has in it's Pow'r.—

Yet thus belov'd, thus loving to Excess;  
Yet thus receiving and returning Bliss;  
In this great Moment, in this golden Now,  
When ev'ry Trace of What, or When, or How  
Should from my Soul by raging Love be torn,  
And far on Swelling Seas of Rapture born;  
A melancholy Tear afflicts my Eye;  
And my Heart labours with a sudden Sigh:  
Invading Fears repel my Coward Joy;  
And Ills foreseen the present Bliss destroy.

Poor as it is, This Beauty was the Cause,  
That with first Sighs Your panting Bosom rose:  
But with no Owner Beauty long will stay,  
Upon the Wings of Time born swift away:  
Pass but some fleeting Years, and These poor Eyes  
(Where now without a Boast some Lustre lyes)  
No longer shall their little Honors keep;  
Shall only be of use to read, or weep:  
And on this Forehead, where your Verse has said,  
The Loves delighted, and the Graces play'd;  
Insulting Age will trace his cruel Way,  
And leave sad Marks of his destructive Sway.

Mov'd by my Charms, with them your Love may cease,  
And as the Fuel sinks, the Flame decrease:  
Or angry Heav'n may quicker Darts prepare;  
And Sickness strike what Time awhile would spare.  
Then will my Swain His glowing Vows renew:  
Then will His throbbing Heart to Mine beat true;  
When my own Face deters Me from my Glass;  
And Kneller only shows what Celia was.

Fantastic Fame may sound her wild Alarms:  
Your Country, as You think, may want your Arms.  
You may neglect, or quench, or hate the Flame,  
Whose Smoke too long obscured your rising Name:  
And quickly cold Indiff'rence will ensue;  
When You Love's Joys thro' Honor's Optic view.

Then Celia's loudest Pray'r will prove too weak,  
To this abandon'd Breast to bring You back;  
When my lost Lover the tall Ship ascends,  
With Musick gay, and wet with Jovial Friends:  
The tender Accents of a Woman's Cry  
Will pass unheard, will unreguarded die;  
When the rough Seaman's louder Shouts prevail;  
When fair Occasion shows the springing Gale;  
And Int'rest guides the Helm; and Honor swells the Sail.

Some wretched Lines from this neglected Hand,  
May find my Hero on the foreign Strand,

Warm with new Fires, and pleas'd with new Command:  
While She who wrote 'em, of all Joy bereft,  
To the rude Censure of the World is left;  
Her mangl'd Fame in barb'rous Pastime lost,  
The Coxcomb's Novel, and the Drunkard's Toast.

But nearer Care (O pardon it!) supplies  
Sighs to my Breast, and Sorrow to my Eyes.  
Love, Love himself (the only Friend I have)  
May scorn his Triumph, having bound his Slave.  
That Tyrant God, that restless Conqueror  
May quit his Pleasure, to assert his Pow'r;  
Forsake the Provinces that bless his Sway,  
To vanquish Those which will not yet obey.  
Another Nymph with fatal Pow'r may rise,  
To damp the sinking Beams of Celia's Eyes;  
With haughty Pride may hear Her Charms confest;  
And scorn the ardent Vows that I have blest:  
You ev'ry Night may sigh for Her in vain;  
And rise each Morning to some fresh Disdain:  
While Celia's softest Look may cease to Charm;  
And Her Embraces want the Pow'r to warm:  
While these fond Arms, thus circling You, may prove  
More heavy Chains, than Those of hopeless Love.

Just Gods! All other Things their Like produce:  
The Vine arises from her Mother's Juice:  
When feeble Plants, or tender Flow'rs decay;  
They to their Seed their Images convey:  
Where the old Myrtle her good Influence sheds;  
Sprigs of like Leaf erect their Filial Heads:  
And when the Parent Rose decays, and dies;  
With a resembling Face the Daughter-Buds arise.  
That Product only which our Passions bear,  
Eludes the Planter's miserable Care:  
While blooming Love assures us Golden Fruit;  
Some inborn Poison taints the secret Root:  
Soon fall the Flow'rs of Joy: soon Seeds of Hatred shoot.

Say, Shepherd, say: Are these Reflections true?  
Or was it but the Woman's Fear, that drew  
This cruel Scene, unjust to Love and You?

Will You be only, and for ever Mine?  
Shall neither Time, nor Age our Souls disjoin?  
From this dear Bosom shall I ne'er be torn?  
Or You grow cold, respectful, and forsworn?  
And can You not for Her You love do more,  
Than any Youth for any Nymph before?

Matthew Prior

## Chanson. - And Imitation

Que fais tu bergere dans ce beau verger  
Tu ne songe gueres a me soulager?  
Tu connois ma flamme, tu vois ma langueur,  
Prens belle inhumaine pitie de mon coeur.

Dequoy te plains tu malheureux berger?  
Que n'ay je point fait pour te soulager!  
J'ay quitte la plaine, mon troupeau, mon chien,  
Prend on tat de peine quand on n'aime rien.

### Imitation

Why thus from the plain does my sheperdess rove,  
Forsaking her swain and neglecting his love?  
You have heard all my grief, you see how I die,  
Oh! give some relief to the swain whom you fly.

How can you complain, or what am I to say,  
Since my dog lies unfed, and my sheep run astray?  
Need I tell what I mean that I languish alone!  
When I leave all the plain you may guess 'tis for one.

Matthew Prior



## Charity : A Paraphrase On 1 Cor. Chap. 13

Did sweeter Sounds adorn my flowing Tongue,  
Than ever Man pronounc'd, or Angel sung:  
Had I all Knowledge, Human and Divine,  
That Thought can reach, or Science can define;  
And had I Pow'r to give that Knowledge Birth,  
In all the Speeches of the babbling Earth:  
Did Shadrach's Zeal my glowing Breast inspire,  
To weary Tortures, and rejoice in Fire:  
Or had I Faith like That which Israel saw,  
When Moses gave them Miracles, and Law:

Yet, gracious Charity, indulgent Guest,  
Were not Thy Pow'r exerted in my Breast;  
Those Speeches would send up unheeded Pray'r:  
That Scorn of Life would be but wild Despair:  
A Tymbal's Sound were better than my Voice:  
My Faith were Form: my Eloquence were Noise.  
Charity, decent, modest, easy, kind,  
Softens the high, and rears the abject Mind;  
Knows with just Reins, and gentle Hand to guide,  
Betwixt vile Shame, and arbitrary Pride.

Not soon provok'd, She easily forgives;  
And much She suffers, as She much believes.  
Soft Peace She brings where-ever She arrives:  
She builds our Quiet, as She forms our Lives;  
Lays the rough Paths of peevish Nature ev'n;  
And opens in each Heart a little Heav'n.  
Each other Gift, which GOD on Man bestows,  
It's proper Bounds, and due Restriction knows;  
To one fixt Purpose dedicates it's Pow'r;  
And finishing it's Act, exists no more.

Thus, in Obedience to what Heav'n decrees,  
Knowledge shall fail, and Prophecy shall cease:  
But lasting Charity's more ample Sway,  
Nor bound by Time, nor subject to Decay,  
In happy Triumph shall for ever live,  
And endless Good diffuse, and endless Praise receive.

As thro' the Artist's intervening Glass,  
Our Eye observes the distant Planets pass;  
A little we discover; but allow,  
That more remains unseen, than Art can show:

So whilst our Mind it's Knowledge wou'd improve;  
(It's feeble Eye intent on Things above)  
High as We may, We lift our Reason up,  
By Faith directed, and confirm'd by Hope:  
Yet are We able only to survey  
Dawnings of Beams, and Promises of Day.  
Heav'n's fuller Effluence mocks our dazl'd Sight;  
Too great it's Swiftmess, and too strong it's Light.  
But soon the mediate Clouds shall be dispell'd;  
The Sun shall soon be Face to Face beheld,

In all His Robes, with all His Glory on,  
Seated sublime on His Meridian Throne.  
Then constant Faith, and holy Hope shall dye,  
One lost in Certainty, and One in Joy:  
Whilst Thou, more happy Pow'r, fair Charity,  
Triumphant Sister, greatest of the Three,  
Thy Office, and Thy Nature still the same,  
Lasting thy Lamp, and unconsum'd thy Flame,  
Shalt still survive -  
Shalt stand before the Host of Heav'n confest,  
For ever blessing, and for ever bless'd.

Matthew Prior

# Chaste Florimel

No - I'll endure ten thousand deaths  
Ere any further I'll comply:  
Oh! Sir, no man on earth that breathes  
Had ever yet his hand so high.

Oh! take your sword and pierce my heart,  
Undaunted see me meet the wound  
Oh! will you act a Tarquin's part?  
A second Lucrece you have found.

Thus to the pressing Corydon  
Poor Florimel, unhappy maid,  
Fearing by love to be undone,  
In broken dying accents said;

Delia who held the conscious door,  
Inspired by truth and brandy, smiled,  
Knowing that sixteen months before  
Our Lucrece had her second child.

And hark ye, Madam, cried the bawd,  
None of your flights, your high-rope dodging;  
Be civil here, or march abroad;  
Oblige the 'squire, or quit the lodging.

Oh! have I, Florimel went on,  
Lord what is lost my Delia's aid?  
Where shall forsaken virtue run  
If by her friend she is betray'd?

Oh! curse on empty friendship's name:  
Lord what is all our future view?  
Then, dear destroyer of my fame,  
Let my last succour be to you.

From Delia's rage and Fortune's frown  
A wretched lovesick maid deliver;  
Oh! tip me but another crown,  
Dear Sir, and make me yours for ever.

Matthew Prior

## Cloe Jealous

Forbear to ask Me, why I weep;  
Vext Cloe to her Shepherd said:  
'Tis for my Two poor stragling Sheep  
Perhaps, or for my Squirrel dead.  
For mind I what You late have writ?  
Your subtle Questions, and Replies;  
Emblems, to teach a Female Wit  
The Ways, where changing Cupid flies.  
Your Riddle, purpos'd to rehearse  
The general Pow'r that Beauty has:  
But why did no peculiar Verse  
Describe one Charm of Cloe's Face?  
The Glass, which was at Venus' Shrine,  
With such Mysterious Sorrow laid:  
The Garland (and You call it Mine)  
Which show'd how Youth and Beauty fade.  
Ten thousand Trifles light as These  
Nor can my Rage, nor Anger move:  
She shou'd be humble, who wou'd please:  
And She must suffer, who can love.  
When in My Glass I chanc'd to look;  
Of Venus what did I implore?  
That ev'ry Grace which thence I took,  
Shou'd know to charm my Damon more.

Reading Thy Verse; who heeds, said I,  
If here or there his Glances flew?  
O free for ever be His Eye,  
Whose Heart to Me is always true.  
My Bloom indeed, my little Flow'r  
Of Beauty quickly lost it's Pride:  
For sever'd from it's Native Bow'r,  
It on Thy glowing Bosom dy'd.  
Yet car'd I not, what might presage  
Or withering Wreath, or fleeting Youth:  
Love I esteem'd more strong than Age,  
And Time less permanent than Truth.  
Why then I weep, forbear to know:  
Fall uncontroll'd my Tears, and free:

O Damon, 'tis the only Woe,  
I ever yet conceal'd from Thee.  
The secret Wound with which I bleed  
Shall lie wrapt up, ev'n in my Herse:  
But on my Tomb-stone Thou shalt read  
My Answer to Thy dubious Verse.

Matthew Prior

## Colin's Mistakes. Written In Imitation Of Spenser's Style

Fast by the banks of Cam was Colin bred,  
(Ye Nymphs, for every guard that sacred stream)  
To Wimple's woody shade his way he sped,  
(Flourish those woods, the Muses' endless theme.)  
As whilom Colin ancient books had read,  
Lays Greek and Roman would he oft rehearse,  
And much he loved, and much by heart he said,  
What Father Spenser sung in British verse.  
Who reads that bard desire like him to write,  
Still fearful of success, still tempted by delight.

Soon as Aurora had unbarr'd the morn,  
And light discover'd Nature's cheerful face,  
The sounding clarion and the sprightly horn  
Call'd the blithe huntsman to the distance chase.  
Eftsoons they issue forth, a goodly band;  
The deep mouth'd bounds with thunder rend the air,  
The fiery coursers strike the rising sand,  
Far through the thicket flies the frightened deer;  
Harley the honour of the day supports,  
His presence glads the woods, his orders guide the sports.

On a fair palfrey, well equipp'd, did sit  
An Amazonian dame; a scarlet vest,  
For active horsemanship adaptly fit,  
Enclosed her dainty limbs; a plumed crest  
Waved o'er her head; obedient by her side  
Her friends and servants rode; with artful hand  
Full well knew she the steed to turn and guide:  
The willing steed received her soft command.  
Courage and sweetness on her face was seated:  
On her all eyes were bent, and all good wishes waited.

This seeing, Colin thus his Muse bespake,  
For alltydes was the Muse to Colin nigh,  
Ah me, too nigh! or, Clio, I mistake,  
Or that bright form that pleaseth so mine eye,

Is Jove's fair daughter Pallas, gracious queen  
Of liberal arts; with wonder and delight  
In Homer's verse we read her; well I ween  
That emulous of his Grecian master's flight,  
Dan Spenser makes the favourite goddess known,  
When in her graceful look fair Britomart is shown.

At noon as Colin to the castle came,  
Oped were the gates, and right prepared the feast;  
Appears at table richly clad a dame,  
The lord's delight, the wonder of the guest;  
With pearl and jewels was she sumptuous deck'd,  
As well became her dignity and place,  
But the beholders mought her gems neglect,  
To fix their eyes on her more lovely face,  
Serene with glory, and with softness bright:  
O beauty sent from heaven to cheer the mortal sight!

Liberal Munificence behind her stood,  
And decent State obey'd her high command,  
And Charity, diffuse of native good,  
At once portrays her mind and guides her hand.  
As to each guest some fruits she deign'd to lift,  
And silence with obliging parley broke,  
How gracious seem'd to each th' imparted gift!  
But how more gracious what the giver spoke!  
Such ease, such freedom, did her deed attend,  
That every guest rejoiced exalted to a friend.

Quoth Colin, Clio, if my feeble sense  
Can well distinguish yon illustrious dame,  
Who nobly doth such gentle gifts dispense  
In Latian numbers, Juno is her name;  
Great goddess who, with peace and plenty crown'd,  
To all that under sky breathe vital air,  
Diffuseth bliss, and through the world around  
Pours wealthy ease, and scatters joyous cheer;  
Certes of her in semblant guise I read,  
Where Spenser decks his lays with Gloriana's deed.

As Colin mused at evening near the wood,  
A nymph undress'd, beseemeth, by him pass'd,



Down to her feet her silken garment flow'd,  
A riband bound and shaped her slender waist;  
A veil dependent from her comely head,  
And beauteous plenty of Ambrosial hair,  
O'er her fair breast and lovely shoulders spread,  
Behind fell loose, and wanton'd with the air:  
The smiling Zephyrs call'd their amorous brothers,  
They kiss'd the waving lawn, and wafted it to others.

Daisies and violets rose where'er she trod,  
As Flora, kind, her roots and buds had sorted  
And, led by Hymen, wedlock's mystic god,  
Ten thousand Loves around the nymph disported.  
Quoth Colin, Now I ken the goddess bright  
Whom poets sing: all human hearts enthrall'd  
Obey her power; her kindness the delight  
Of gods and men; great Venus is she call'd,  
When Mantuan Virgil doth her charms rehearse;  
Belphebe is her name in gentle Edmund's verse.

Heard this the Muse, and with a smile replied,  
Which show'd soft anger mix'd with friendly love;  
Twin sisters still were Ignorance and Pride:  
Can we know right till error we remove?  
But Colin, well I wist will never learn;  
Who slights his guide shall deviate from his way:  
Me to have ask'd what thou couldst not discern  
To thee pertain'd; to me the thing to say.  
What heavenly will from human eye conceals,  
How can the bard aread unless the Muse reveals?

Nor Pallas thou nor Britomart hast seen,  
When soon at morn the flying deer was chased;  
Nor Jove's great wife, nor Spenser's fairy Queen,  
At noontide dealt the honours of the feast:  
Nor Venus nor Belphebe didst thou spy,  
The evening's glory and the groves delight;  
Henceforth, if ask'd, instructed right, reply,  
That all the day to knowing mortals' sight  
Bright Ca'ndish-Holles Harley stood confess'd,  
As various hour advised in various habit dress'd.



# Considerations - On Part Of The 88th Psalm. A College Exercise

Heavy, O Lord, on my thy judgements lie;  
Accursed I am while God rejects my cry.  
O'erwhelm'd in darkness and despair I groan,  
And every place is hell, for God is gone.  
O Lord, arise, and let thy beams control  
Those horrid clouds that press my frightened soul:  
Save the poor wanderer from eternal night,  
Thou that art the God of light.

Downward I hasten to my destined place;  
There none obtain thy aid, or sing thy praise,  
Soon shall I lie in death's deep ocean drown'd:  
Is mercy there, or sweet forgiveness found?  
O save me yet whilst on the brink I stand;  
Rebuke the storm, and waft my soul to land,  
O let her rest beneath thy wing secure,  
Thou that art the God of power.

Behold the prodigal! to thee I come,  
To hail my father, and to seek my home.  
Nor refuge could I find, nor friend abroad,  
Straying in vice, and destitute of God.  
O let thy terrors and my anguish end!  
Be thou my refuge, and be thou my friend:  
Receive the son thou didst so long reprove,  
Thou that art the God of love.

Matthew Prior

# Cupid And Ganymede

In Heav'n, one Holy-day, You read  
In wise Anacreon, Ganymede  
Drew heedless Cupid in, to throw  
A Main, to pass an Hour, or so.  
The little Trojan, by the way,  
By Hermes taught, play'd All the Play.

The God unhappily engag'd,  
By Nature rash, by Play enrag'd,  
Complain'd, and sigh'd, and cry'd, and fretted;  
Lost ev'ry earthly thing He betted:  
In ready Mony, all the Store  
Pick'd up long since from Danae's Show'r;  
A Snush-Box, set with bleeding Hearts,  
Rubies, all pierc'd with Diamond Darts;  
His Nine-pins, made of Myrtle Wood;  
(The Tree in Ida's Forest stood)  
His Bowl pure Gold, the very same  
Which Paris gave the Cyprian Dame;  
Two Table-Books in Shagreen Covers;  
Fill'd with good Verse from real Lovers;  
Merchandise rare! A Billet-doux,  
It's Matter passionate, yet true:  
Heaps of Hair Rings, and cypher'd Seals;  
Rich Trifles; serious Bagatelles.

What sad Disorders Play begets!  
Desp'rate and mad, at length He sets  
Those Darts, whose Points make Gods adore  
His Might, and deprecate his Pow'r:  
Those Darts, whence all our Joy and Pain  
Arise: those Darts—come, Seven's the Main,  
Cries Ganymede: The usual Trick:  
Seven, slur a Six; Eleven: A Nick.

Ill News goes fast: 'Twas quickly known,  
That simple Cupid was undone.  
Swifter than Lightning Venus flew:  
Too late She found the thing too true.

Guess how the Goddess greets her Son:  
Come hither, Sirrah; no, begon;  
And, hark Ye, is it so indeed?  
A Comrade You for Ganymede?  
An Imp as wicked, for his Age,  
As any earthly Lady's Page;  
A Scandal and a Scourge to Troy:  
A Prince's Son? A Black-guard Boy:  
A Sharper, that with Box and Dice  
Draws in young Deities to Vice.  
All Heav'n is by the Ears together,  
Since first That little Rogue came hither:  
Juno her self has had no Peace:  
And truly I've been favour'd less:  
For Jove, as Fame reports, (but Fame  
Says things not fit for Me to name)  
Has acted ill for such a God,  
And taken Ways extreamly odd.

And Thou, unhappy Child, She said  
(Her Anger by her Grief allay'd)  
Unhappy Child, who thus hast lost  
All the Estate We e'er could boast;  
Whither, O whither wilt Thou run,  
Thy Name despis'd, thy Weakness known?  
Nor shall thy Shrine on Earth be crown'd:  
Nor shall thy Pow'r in Heav'n be own'd;  
When Thou, nor Man, nor God can'st wound.

Obedient Cupid kneeling cry'd,  
Cease, dearest Mother, cease to chide:  
Gany's a Cheat, and I'm a Bubble:  
Yet why this great Excess of Trouble?  
The Dice were false: the Darts are gone:  
Yet how are You, or I undone?

The Loss of These I can supply  
With keener Shafts from Cloe's Eye:  
Fear not, We e'er can be disgrac'd,  
While That bright Magazine shall last:  
Your crowded Altars still shall smoke;  
And Man your Friendly Aid invoke:

Jove shall again revere your Pow'r,  
And rise a Swan, or fall a Show'r.

Matthew Prior

# Cupid In Ambush

It oft to many has successful been  
Upon his arm to let his mistress lean,  
Or with her airy fan to cool her heat,  
Or gently squeeze her knees, or press her feet.  
All public sports to favour young desire,  
With opportunities like this conspire.  
E'en where his skill the gladiator shows,  
With human blood where the Arena flows,  
There oftentimes Love's quiver-bearing boy  
Prepares his bow and arrows to destroy;  
While the spectator gazes on the sight,  
And sees them wound each other with delight;  
While he his pretty mistress entertains,  
And wagers with her who the conquest gains,  
Slily the god takes aim, and hits his heart,  
And in the wounds he sees he bears his part.

Matthew Prior

# Cupid Mistaken

As after noon, one summer's day,  
Venus stood bathing in a river;  
Cupid a-shooting went that way,  
New strung his bow, new fill'd his quiver.

With skill he chose his sharpest dart:  
With all his might his bow he drew:  
Swift to his beauteous parent's heart  
The too well-guided arrow flew.

I faint! I die! the Goddess cry'd:  
O cruel, could'st thou find none other,  
To wreck thy spleen on? Parricide!  
Like Nero, thou hast slain thy mother.

Poor Cupid sobbing scarce could speak;  
Indeed, Mamma, I did not know ye:  
Alas! how easy my mistake?  
I took you for your likeness, Cloe.

Matthew Prior



## Cupid Turned Ploughman. - From Moschus

His lamp, his bow, and quiver laid aside,  
A rustic wallet o'er his shoulders tied,  
Sly Cupid, always on new mischief bent,  
To the rich field and furrow'd tillage went;  
Like any ploughman toil'd the little god,  
His tune he whistled, and his wheat he sow'd;  
Then sat and laugh'd, and to the skies above  
Raising his eye, he thus insulted Jove:  
Lay by your hail, your hurtful storms restrain,  
And as I bid you let it shine or rain,  
Else you again beneath my yoke shall bow,  
Feel the sharp goad, and draw the servile plough;  
What once Europa was Nannette is now.

Matthew Prior

## Cupid Turned Stroller. - From Anacreon

At dead of night, when stars appear,  
And strong Bootes turns the Bear,  
When mortals sleep their cares away,  
Fatigued with labours of the day,  
Cupid was knocking at my gate;  
Who's there, says I? who knocks so late,  
Disturbs my dreams, and breaks my rest?  
O fear not me, a harmless guest,  
He said; but open, open pray;  
A foolish child, I've lost my way,  
And wander here this moonlight night,  
All wet and cold, and wanting light.  
With due regard his voice I heard,  
Then rose, a ready lamp prepared,  
And saw a naked boy below,  
With wings, a quiver, and a bow:  
In haste I ran, unlock'd my gate,  
Secure and thoughtless of my fate;  
I set the child an easy chair  
Against the fire, and dried his hair;  
Brought friendly cups of cheerful wine,  
And warm'd his little hands with mine.  
All this did I with kind intent;  
Said, dearest Friend, this bow ye see,  
This pretty bow, belongs to me:  
Observe, I pray, if all be right,  
I fear the rain has spoil'd it quite:  
He drew it then, and straight I found  
Within my breast a secret wound.  
'Tis done, the rogue no longer staid,  
But leapt away, and laughing said,  
Kind host adieu, we now must part,  
Safe is my bow, but sick thy heart.

Matthew Prior

## Cupid's Promise - Paraphrased

Soft Cupid, wanton, amorous boy,  
The other day, moved with my lyre,  
In flattering accents spoke his joy,  
And uttered thus his fond desire.

Oh! raise thy voice, one song I ask,  
Touch then th' harmonious string;  
To Thyrsis easy is the task,  
Who can so sweetly play and sing.

Two kisses from my mother dear,  
Thyrsis, thy due reward shall be;  
None, none like Beauty's queen is fair;  
Paris has vouch'd this truth for me.

I straight reply'd, thou know'st alone,  
That brightest Cloe rules my breast,  
I'll sing thee two instead of one  
If thou'lt be kind and make me blest.

One kiss from Cloe's lips, no more  
I crave. He promised me success;  
I play'd with all my skill and power,  
My glowing passion to express.

But, oh! my Cloe, beauteous maid,  
Wilt thou the wish'd reward bestow?  
Wilt thou make good what Love has said,  
And by thy grant his power show?

Matthew Prior

# Daphne To Apollo. Imitated From The First Book Of Ovid's Metamorphosis

Apollo.

Abate, fair fugitive, abate thy speed,  
Dismiss thy fears, and turn thy beauteous head;  
With kind regard a panting lover view;  
Less swiftly fly, less swiftly I'll pursue;  
Pathless, alas! and rugged is the ground,  
Some stone may hurt thee, or some thorn may wound.

Daphne

aside

]

This care is for himself as pure as death;  
One mile has put the fellow out of breath:  
He'll never go, I'll lead him th' other round;  
Washy he is, perhaps not over sound.

Apollo

You fly, alas! not knowing whom you fly;  
Nor ill-bred swain, nor rusty clown am I:  
I Claros' isle and Tenedos command -

Daphne

Thank ye, I would not leave my native land.

Apollo

What is to come be certain arts I know.

Daphne

Pish! Partridge has a fair pretence as you.

Apollo

Behold the beauty of my locks -

Daphne

----- A fig -----

That may be counterfeit, a Spanish wig:  
Who cares for all that bush of curling hair,  
Whilst your smooth chin is so extremely bare?

Apollo

I sing. -----

Daphne

That never shall be Daphne's choice.  
Siphacio had an admirable voice.

Apollo

Of every herb I tell the mystic power,  
To certain health the patient I restore,  
Sent for, caress'd -

Daphne

-- Ours is a wholesome air;  
You'd better go to Town and practise there:  
For me, I've no obstructions to remove;  
I'm pretty well, I thank your father Jove,

And physic is a weak ally to love.

Apollo

For learning famed, fine verses I compose.

Daphne

So do your brother quacks and brother beaux;  
Memorials only and reviews write prose.

Apollo

From the bent yew I send the pointed reed,  
Sure of its aim, and fatal in its speed. -

Daphne

Then leaving me, whom sure you would not kill,  
In yonder thicket exercise your skill:  
Shoot there at beasts; but for the human heart  
Your cousin Cupid has the only dart.

Apollo

Yet turn, O beauteous maid, yet deign to hear  
A love-sick deity's impetuous prayer!  
O let me woo thee as thou wouldst be woo'd.

Daphne

First, therefore, don't be so extremely rude;  
Don't tear the hedges down and tread the clover,  
Like an hobgoblin rather than a lover:  
Next, to my father's grotto sometimes come,  
At ebbing tide he always is at home.

Read the Courant with him, and let him know  
A little politics, how matters go  
Upon his brother-rivers Rhine or Po.  
As any maid or footman comes or goes,  
Pull off your hat and ask how Daphne does:  
These sort of folks will to each other tell  
That you respect me; that you know looks well!  
Then if you are, as you pretend, the god  
That rules the day, and much upon the road,  
You'll find a hundred trifles in your way,  
That you may bring one home from Africa;  
Some little rarity, some bird or best,  
And now and then a jewel from the East;  
A lacquer'd cabinet, some China-ware;  
You have them mighty cheap at Pekin fair.  
Next,  
note bene  
, you shall never rove,  
Nor take example by your father Jove.  
Last, for the ease and comfort of my life,  
Make me (Lord what startles you?) your wife.  
I'm now (they say) sixteen, or something more;  
We mortals seldom live about fourscore:  
Fourscore; you're good at numbers; let us see,  
Seventeen suppose, remaining sixty-three;  
Ay, in that span of time you'll bury me.  
Mean-time, if you have tumult, noise, and strife,  
(Things not abhorrent to a married life)  
They'll quickly end, you see; what signify  
A few odd years to you that never die?  
And, after all, you're half your time away,  
You know your business takes you up all day;  
And coming late to bed you need not fear,  
Whatever noise I make, you'll sleep my dear;  
Or, if a winter evening should be long,  
Even read your physic-book, or make a song.  
Your wife, your steeds, diachalon, and rhyme,  
May take up any honest godhead's time.  
Thus, as you like it, you may love again,  
And let another Daphne have her reign.

Now love, or leave, my dear; retreat, or follow;

I Daphne (this premised) take thee Apollo;  
And may I split into ten thousand trees  
If I give up on other terms than these.

She said, but what the amorous god replied,  
So Fate ordain'd, is to our search denied;  
By rats, alas! the manuscript is ate;  
O cruel banquet which we all regret;  
Bavius, thy labours must this work restore,  
May thy good-will be equal to thy power.

Matthew Prior



# Democritus And Heraclitus

Democritus, dear droll, revisit earth,  
And with our follies glut thy heighten'd mirth:  
Sad Heraclitus, serious wretch, return,  
In louder grief our greater crimes to mourn,  
Between you both I unconcern'd stand by;  
Hurt can I lauh? and honest need I cry?

Matthew Prior

## Down-Hall. A Ballad.

Tune. - 'King John and the Abbot of Canterbury.'

I sing not old Jason who travell'd through Greece  
To kiss the fair maids and possess the rich fleece,  
Nor sing I AEneas, who, led by his mother,  
Got rid of one wife and went far for another.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Nor him who through Asia and Europe did roam,  
Ulysses by name, who ne'er cared to go home,  
But rather desired to see cities and men  
Than return to his farms and converse with old Pen.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Hang Homer and Virgil; their meaning to seek,  
A man must have poked into Latin and Greek;  
Those who love their own tongue we have reason to hope,  
Have read them translated by Dryden and Pope.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

But I sing of exploits that have lately been done  
By two British heroes call'd Matthew and John,  
And how they rid friendly from fine London town,  
Fair Essex to see, and a place they call Down.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Now ere they went out, you may rightly suppose  
How much they discoursed both in prudence and prose:  
For before this great journey was thoroughly concerted,  
Full often they met, and as often they parted.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

And thus Matthew said, look you here my friend John,  
I fairly have travell'd years thirty and one,  
And though I still carried my Sovereign's warrants,  
I only have gone upon other folks errands.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

And now in this journey of life I would have  
A place where to bait 'twixt the court and the grave,  
Where joyful to live, not unwilling to die -  
Gadzooks, I had just a place in my eye.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

There are gardens so stately, and arbours so thick,  
A portal of stone, and a fabric of brick;  
The matter next week shall be all in your power;  
But the money, Gadzooks, must be paid in an hour.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

For things in this world must by law be made certain;  
We both must repair unto Oliver Martin,  
For he is a lawyer of worthy renown,  
I'll bring you to see he must fix you at Down.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Quoth Matthew, I know that from Berwick to Dover  
You've sold all our premises over and over;  
And now if your buyers and sellers agree  
You may throw all our acres into the South-sea.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

But a word to the purpose; to-morrow, dear friend,  
We'll see what to-night you so highly commend,  
And if with a garden and house I am bless'd,  
Let the devil and Coningsby go with the rest.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Then answer'd Squire Morley, pray get a calash,  
That in summer may burn, in winter may splash;  
I love dirt and dust; and 'tis always my pleasure  
To take with me much of the soil that I measure.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

But Matthew thought better, for Matthew thought right,  
And hired a chariot so trim and so tight,  
That extremes both of winter and summer might pass,  
For one window was canvas, the other was glass.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Draw up, quoth friend Matthew; pull down, quoth friend John,  
We shall be both hotter and colder anon:  
Thus talking and scolding they forward did speed,  
And Ralpho paced by under Newman the Swede.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Into an old inn did this equipage roll,  
At a town they call Hodsdon, the sign of the Bull,  
Near a nymph with an urn, that divides the highway,  
And into a puddle throws mother of tea.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Come here, my sweet landlady, pray, how d'ye do?  
Where is Cicily so cleanly, and Prudence, and Sue?  
And where is the widow that dwelt here below?  
And the ostler that sung about eight years ago?

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

And where is your sister, so mild and so dear?  
Whose voice to her maids like a trumpet was clear.  
By my troth, she replies, you grow younger I think;  
And pray, Sir, what wine does the gentleman drink?

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Why now let me die, Sir, or live upon trust,  
If I know to which question to answer you first:  
Why things since I saw you most strangely have varied?  
The ostler is hang'd, and the widow is married.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

And Prue left a child for the parish to nurse,  
And Cicily went off with a gentleman's purse;  
And as to my sister, so mild and so dear,  
She has lain in the churchyard full many a year.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Well, peace to her ashes; what signifies grief?  
She roasted red veal, and she powder'd lean beef;  
Full nicely she knew to cook up a fine dish,  
For tough were her pullets and tender her fish.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

For that matter, Sir, be ye 'squire, knight, or lord,  
I'll give you whate'er a good inn can afford:

I should look on myself as unhappily sped  
Did I yield a sister or living or dead.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Of mutton a delicate neck and a breast,  
Shall swim in the water in which they were dress'd;  
And because you great folks are with rarities taken,  
Addle-eggs shall be next course, tost up with rank bacon.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Then supper was served, and the sheets they were laid,  
And Morley most lovingly whisper'd the maid.  
The maid! was she handsome? why, truly so so;  
But what Morley whisper'd we never shall know,

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Then up rose these heroes as brisk as the sun,  
And their horses, like his, were prepared to run:  
Now when in the morning Matt ask'd for the score,  
John kindly had paid it the evening before.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Their breakfast so warm, to be sure they did eat,  
A custom in travellers mighty discreet:  
And thus with great friendship and glee they went on  
To find out the place you shall hear of anon,

Called Down, Down, hey derry down.

But what did they talk of from morning till noon?  
Why, of spots in the sun, and the man in the moon;  
Of the Czar's gentle temper, the stocks in the city,  
The wise men of Greece, and the secret Committee.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

So to Harlow they came; and hey, where are you all?  
Show us into the parlour, and mind when I call:  
Why, your maids have no motion, your men have no life:  
Well Master, I hear you have buried your wife,

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Come this very instant, take care to provide  
Tea, sugar, and toast, and a hoarse and a guide.  
Are the Harrisons here, both the old and the young?  
And where stands fair Down, the delight of my song.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

O 'squire, to the grief of my heart I may say  
I have buried two wives since you travell'd this way;  
And the Harrisons both may be presently here;  
And Down stands, I think, where it stood the last year.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Then Joan brought the tea-pot, and Caleb the toast,  
And the wine was frothed out by the hand of mine host;  
But we clear'd our extempore banquet so fast,  
That the Harrisons both were forgot in the haste.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Now hey or Down-Hall; for the guide he was got;  
The chariot was mounted, the horses did trot;  
The guide he did bring us a dozen miles round;  
But, oh! all in vain, for no Down could be found.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

O thou Popish guide, thou hast led us astray,  
Says he, How the devil should I know the way?  
I never yet travell'd this road in my life;  
But Down lies on the left I was told by my wife.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Thy wife, answer'd Matthew, when she went abroad,  
Ne'er told thee of half the by-ways she had trod;  
Perhaps she met friends, and brought pence to thy house,  
But thou shalt go home without ever a sous.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

What is this thing, Morley, and how can you mean it?  
We have lost our estate here before we have seen it;  
Have patience, soft Morley in anger replied;  
To find out our way let us send off our guide.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

O here I spy Down: cast your eye to the west,  
Where a windmill so stately stands plainly confess'd.  
On the west! replied Matthew, no windmill I find;  
As well thou may'st tell me I see the west wind.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Now pardon me, Morley, the windmill I spy,  
But faithful Achates, no house is there nigh:  
Look again, says mild Morley, Gadzooks, you are blind;  
The mill stands before and the house lies behind,

Derry down, down, hey derry down.



O now a low ruin'd white shed I discern,  
Untiled and unglazed, I believe 'tis a barn.  
A barn! why you have rave; 'tis a house for a 'squire,  
A justice of peace, or a knight of our shire.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

A house should be built or with brick or with stone,  
Why, 'tis plaster and lath, and I think that's all one;  
And such as it is it has stood with great fame,  
Been called a Hall, and has given its name,  
To Down, Down, hey derry down.

O Morley, O Morley, if that be a hall,  
The same with a building will suddenly fall -  
With your friend Jemmy Gibbs about buildings agree,  
My business is land, and it matters not me.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

I wish you could tell what a deuce your head ails;  
I show'd you Down-Hall, did you look for Versailles?  
Then take house and farm as John Ballet will let ye,  
For better for worse, as I took my dame Betty.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

And now, Sir, a word to the wise is enough;  
You'll make very little of all your old stuff;  
And to build at your age, by my troth, you grow simple,  
Are you young and rich, like the master of Wimple?

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

If you have these whims of apartments and gardens,  
From twice fifty acres you'll ne'er see five farthings;  
And in your's I shall find the true gentleman's fate,  
Ere you finish your house you'll have spent your estate.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Now let us touch thumb, and be friends ere we part,  
Here, John, is my thumb, and here, Mat, is heart;  
To Halstead I speed, and you go back to town;  
Thus ends the first part of the ballad of Down.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Matthew Prior

## Epigram - Frank Carves Very Ill

Frank carves very ill, yet will palm all the meats;  
He eats more than six, and drinks more than he eats.  
Four pipes after dinner he constantly smokes,  
And seasons his whiffs with impertinent jokes:  
Yet sighing, he says we must certainly break,  
And my cruel unkindness compels him to speak,  
For of late I invite him - but four times a week.

Matthew Prior

## Epigram - Thy Nags, The Leanest Things Alive

Thy nags, the leanest things alive,  
So very hard thou lovest to drive,  
I heard thy anxious coachman say  
It costs thee more in whips than hay.

Matthew Prior

## Epigram - To John I Owed Great Obligation

To John I owed great obligation,  
But John unhappily thought fit  
To publish it to all the nation:  
Sure John and I are more than quit.

Matthew Prior

## Epigram - Yes, Every Poet Is A Fool

Yes, every poet is a fool;  
By demonstration, Ned can show it:  
Happy could Ned's inverted rule  
Prove every fool to be a poet.

Matthew Prior

## Epitaph - On Himself

Nobles and Heralds, by your leave!  
Here lie the bones of Matthew Prior;  
A son of Adam and Eve:  
Let Bourbon or Nassau go higher.

Matthew Prior

## Epitaph Extempore

Nobles and Heralds, by your leave,  
Here lies what once was Matthew Prior,  
The son of Adam and of Eve;  
Can Stuart or Nassau claim higher.

Matthew Prior



## Erle Robert's Mice. In Chaucer's Style

Tway Mice, full Blythe and Amicable,  
Batten beside Erle Robert's Table.  
Lies there ne Trap their Necks to catch,  
Ne old black Cat their Steps to watch.  
Their Fill they eat of Fowl and Fish;  
Feast-lyche as Heart of Mouse mote wish.

As Guests sat Jovial at the Board,  
Forth leap'd our Mice: Eftsoons the Lord  
Of Boling, whilome John the Saint,  
Who maketh oft Propos full queint,  
Laugh'd jocund, and aloud He cry'd,  
To Matthew seated on t'oth' side;  
To Thee, lean Bard, it doth pertain  
To understand these Creatures Tweine.  
Come frame Us now some clean Device,  
Or playsant Rhime on yonder Mice:  
They seem, God shield Me, Mat. and Charles.

Bad as Sir Topaz, or 'Squire Quarles  
(Matthew did for the nonce reply)  
At Emblem, or Device am I:  
But could I Chaunt, or Rhyme, pardie,  
Clear as Dan Chaucer, or as Thee;  
Ne Verse from Me (so God me shrive)  
On Mouse, or other Beast alive.  
Certes, I have these many Days  
Sent myne Poetic Herd to graze.  
Ne Armed Knight ydrad in War  
With Lyon fierce will I compare:  
Ne Judge unjust, with furred Fox,  
Harming in Secret Guise the Flocks:  
Ne Priest unworth of Goddess Coat,  
To Swine ydrunk, or filthy Stoat.  
Elk Similè farwell for aye,  
From Elephant, I trow, to Flea.

Reply'd the friendlike Peer, I weene,  
Matthew is angred on the Spleen.

Ne so, quoth Mat. ne shall be e'er,  
With Wit that falleth all so fair:  
Eftsoons, well weet Ye, mine Intent  
Boweth to your Commaundement.  
If by these Creatures Ye have seen,  
Pourtrayed Charles and Matthew been;  
Behoveth neet to wreck my Brain,  
The rest in Order to explain.

That Cup-board, where the Mice disport,  
I liken to St. Stephen's Court:  
Therein is Space enough, I trow,  
For elke Comrade to come and goe:  
And therein eke may Both be fed  
With Shiver of the Wheaten Bread.  
And when, as these mine Eyen survey,  
They cease to skip, and squeak, and play;  
Return they may to different Cells,  
Auditing One, whilst t'other Tells.

Dear Robert, quoth the Saint, whose Mind  
In Bounteous Deed no Mean can bind;  
Now as I hope to grow devout,  
I deem this Matter well made out.  
Laugh I, whilst thus I serious Pray?  
Let that be wrought which Mat. doth say:  
Yea, quoth the ERLE; but not to-day.

Matthew Prior

# Fair Susan Did Her Wif-Hede Well Menteine - In Chaucer's Style

Fair Susan did her wif-hede well menteine,  
Algates assaulted sore by letchours tweine;  
Now, and I read aright that auncient song,  
Olde were the paramours, the dame full yong.

Had thilke same tale in other guise been tolde;  
Had they been young (pardie) and she been olde,  
That, by St. Kit, had wrought much sorer tryal,  
Full merveillous, I wrote, were swilk denyal.

Matthew Prior

## Fatal Love

Poor Hal caught his death standing under a spout  
Expecting till midnight when Nan would come out;  
But fatal his patience, as cruel the dame,  
And cursed was the weather that quench'd the man's flame.  
Whoe'er thou art that reads these moral lines,  
Make love at home, and go to bed betimes.

Matthew Prior

# For My Own Monument

AS doctors give physic by way of prevention,  
&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;Mat, alive and in health, of his tombstone took care;  
For delays are unsafe, and his pious intention  
&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;May haply be never fulfill'd by his heir.

Then take Mat's word for it, the sculptor is paid;  
&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;That the figure is fine, pray believe your own eye;  
Yet credit but lightly what more may be said,  
&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;For we flatter ourselves, and teach marble to lie.

Yet counting as far as to fifty his years,  
&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;His virtues and vices were as other men's are;  
High hopes he conceived, and he smother'd great fears,  
&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;In a life parti-colour'd, half pleasure, half care.

Nor to business a drudge, nor to faction a slave,  
&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;He strove to make int'rest and freedom agree;  
In public employments industrious and grave,  
&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;And alone with his friends, Lord! how merry was he!

Now in equipage stately, now humbly on foot,  
&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;Both fortunes he tried, but to neither would trust;  
And whirl'd in the round as the wheel turn'd about,  
&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;He found riches had wings, and knew man was but dust.

This verse, little polish'd, tho' mighty sincere,  
&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;Sets neither his titles nor merit to view;  
It says that his relics collected lie here,  
&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;And no mortal yet knows too if this may be true.

Fierce robbers there are that infest the highway,  
&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;So Mat may be kill'd, and his bones never found;  
False witness at court, and fierce tempests at sea,  
&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;So Mat may yet chance to be hang'd or be drown'd.

If his bones lie in earth, roll in sea, fly in air,  
&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;To Fate we must yield, and the thing is the same;  
And if passing thou giv'st him a smile or a tear,  
&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;He cares not--yet, prithee, be kind to his fame.

Matthew Prior

# For My Own Tombstone

To me 'twas given to die; to thee 'tis given  
To live: alas! one moment sets us even.  
Mark! how impartial is the will of Heaven!

Matthew Prior

## Full Oft Doth Matt. With Topaz Dine - In Chaucer's Style

Full oft doth Matt. with Topaz dine,  
Eateth baked meats, drinketh Greek wine:  
But Topas his own worke rehearseth,  
And Matt. mote praise what Topaz verseth.  
Now shure as priest did e'er shrive sinner,  
Full hardly earneth Matt. his dinner.

Matthew Prior



## Gualterus Danistonus, Ad Amicos. - And Imitation

Dum studeo fungi fallentis munere vitae,  
Adfectoque viam sedibus Elysiis  
Arctoa florens sophia, Samiisque superbus  
Discipulis, animas morte carere cano.  
Has ego corporibus profugas ad sidera mitto;  
Sideraque ingressis otia blanda dico;  
Qualia conveniunt divis, queis fata volebant  
Vitai faciles molliter ire vias:  
Vinaque coelicolis media inter gaudia libo;  
Et me quid majus suspicor esse viro,  
Sed fuerint nulli forsane, quos spondeo, coeli;  
Nullaque sint Ditis numina, nulla Jovis:  
Fabula sit torris agitur, quae vita relictis  
Quique superstes homo; qui nihil, esto Deus.  
Attamen esse hilares, et inanes mittere curas  
Proderit, ac vitae commoditate frui,  
Et festos agitasse dies, aevique fugacis  
Tempora perpetuis detinuisse jocis.  
His me parentem praeceptis occupet orcus,  
Et mors; seu divum, seu nihil esse velit;  
Nam sophia ars illa est, quae fallere suaviter hoyas  
Admonet, atque orci non timuisse minas.

Imitated

Studious the busy moments to deceive,  
That fleet between the cradle and the grave,  
I credit what the Grecian dictates say,  
And Samian sounds o'er Scotia's hills convey.  
When mortal man resigns his transient breath  
The body only I give o'er to death;  
The parts dissolved and broken frame I mourn:  
What came from earth I see to earth return.  
The immaterial part, th' ethereal soul,  
Nor can change vanquish, nor can death control.  
Glad I release it from its partner's cares,  
And bid good angels waft it to the stars:

Then in the flowing bowl I drown those sighs,  
Which, spite of wisdom, from our weakness rise.  
The draught to the dead's memory I commend,  
And offer to thee now, immortal friend:  
But if opposed to what my thoughts approve,  
Nor Pluto's rage there be, nor power of Jove,  
On its dark side if thou the prospect take,  
Grant all forgot beyond black Lethe's lake;  
In total death suppose the mortal lie,  
No new hereafter, nor a future sky;  
Yet bear thy lot content, yet cease to grieve;  
Why ere death comes dost thou forbear to live?  
The little time thou hast 'twixt instant now  
And Fate's approach is all the gods allow;  
And of this little hast thou ought to spare  
To sad reflection and corroding care?  
The moments past, if thou art wise, retrieve  
With pleasant memory of the bliss they gave.  
The present hours in present mirth employ,  
And bribe the future with the hopes of joy;  
The future (few or more, howe'er they be)  
Where destined erst, nor can by Fate's decree  
Be now cut off betwixt the grave and thee.

Matthew Prior

# Hans Carvel

Hans Carvel, impotent and old,  
Married a lass of London mould.  
Handsome? Enough; extremely gay;  
Loved music, company, and play:  
High flights she had, and wit at will,  
And so her tongue lay seldom still;  
For in all visits who but she  
To argue or to repartee?

She made it plain that human passion  
Was order'd by predestination;  
That if weak women went astray,  
Their stars were more in fault than they.  
Whole tragedies she had by heart;  
Enter'd into Roxana's part;  
To triumph in her rival's blood  
The action certainly was good.  
How like a vine young Ammon curl'd!  
Oh that dear conqueror of the world!  
She pity'd Betterton in age  
That ridiculed the godlike rage.

She, first of all the town, was told  
Where newest India things were sold;  
So in a morning, without bodice,  
Slipt sometimes out to Mrs. Thody's  
To cheapen tea, to buy a screen;  
What else could so much virtue mean?  
For to prevent the least reproach  
Betty went with her in the coach.

But when no very great affair  
Excited her peculiar care,  
She without fail was waked at ten,  
Drank chocolate, then slept again:  
At twelve she rose; with much ado  
Her clothes were huddled on by two:  
Then, does my lady dine at home?  
Yes, sure; - but is the colonel come?

Next, how to spend the afternoon,  
And not come home again too soon,  
The change, the city, or the play,  
As each was proper for the day;  
A turn in summer to Hyde-park,  
When it grew tolerably dark.

Wife's pleasure causes husband's pain;  
Strange fancies come in Hans's brain:  
He thought of what he did not name,  
And would reform but durst not name,  
At first he therefore preach'd his wife  
The comforts of a pious life;  
Told her how transient beauty was;  
That all must die, and flesh was grass:  
He bought her sermons, psalms, and graces,  
And doubled down the useful places:  
But still the weight of worldly care  
Allow'd her little time for prayer;  
And Cleopatra was read o'er,  
While Scot, and Wake, and twenty more,  
That teach one to deny one's self,  
Stood unmolested on the shelf.  
An untouch'd bible graced her toilette;  
No fear that thumb of hers should spoil it,  
In short, the trade was still the same;  
The dame went out, the colonel came.

What's to be done? poor Carvel cried;  
Another battery must be tried:  
What if to spells I had recourse?  
'Tis but to hinder something worse.  
The end must justify the means;  
He only sins who ill intends:  
Since therefore 'tis to combat evil  
'Tis lawful to employ the devil.

Forthwith the devil did appear,  
(For name him and he's always near)  
Not in the shape in which he plies  
At miss's elbow when she lies,  
Or stands before the nursery doors

To take the naughty boy that roars,  
But without tail, or eye, or claw,  
Like a grave barrister at law.

Hans Carvel, lay aside your grief,  
The devil says; I bring relief.  
Relief! says Hans; pray let me crave  
Your name Sir - Satan - Sir, your slave.  
I did not look upon your feet;  
You'll pardon me, - Ay, now I see't.  
And pray, Sir, when came you from hell?  
Our friends there, did you leave them well?  
All well; but, pr'ythee, honest Hans  
(Says Satan) leave your complaisance:  
The truth is this; I cannot stay  
Flaring in sunshine all the day,  
For, entre nous, we hellish sprites  
Love more the fresco of the nights;  
And oftener our receipts convey  
In dreams than any other way,  
I tell you, therefore, as a friend,  
Ere morning dawns your fears shall end:  
Go then this evening, Master Carvel,  
Lay down your fowls, and broach your barrel;  
Let friends and wine dissolve your care  
Whilst I the great receipt prepare ---  
To-night I'll bring it by my faith:  
Believe for once what Satan saith.

Away went Hans; glad not a little;  
Obey'd the devil to a tittle;  
Invited friends some half a dozen,  
The colonel and my lady's cousin.  
The meat was served, the bowls were crown'd,  
Catches were sung, and healths went round;  
Barbadoes' waters for the close,  
Till Hans had fairly got his dose;  
The colonel toasted to the best;  
The dame moved off to be undress'd;  
The chimes went twelve, the guests withdrew  
But when or how Hans hardly knew:  
Some modern anecdotes aver

He nodded in his elbow chair,  
From thence was carried off to bed;  
John held his heels, and Nan his head;  
My lady was disturb'd; new sorrow!  
Which Hans must answer for to-morrow.

In bed then view this happy pair,  
And think how Hymen triumph'd there;  
Hans fast asleep as soon as laid,  
The duty of the night unpaid;  
The waking dame with thoughts oppress'd  
That made her hate both him and rest:  
By such a husband, such a wife!  
'Twas Acme's and Septimius' life:  
The lady sigh'd, the lover snored,  
The punctual devil kept his word;  
Appear'd to Honest Hans again,  
But not at all by Madam seen,  
Fit for the finger of a king,  
Dear Hans, said he, this jewel take,  
And wear it long for Satan's sake;  
'Twill do your business to a hair;  
For long as you this ring shall wear,  
As sure as I look over Lincoln  
That ne'er shall happen which you think on.

Hans took the ring with joy extreme,  
(All this was only in a dream)  
And thrusting it beyond his joint.--  
'Tis done, he cried: I've gain'd my point. ---  
What point, said she, you ugly beast?  
You neither give me joy nor rest.  
'Tis done - What's done, you drunken bear?  
You've thrust your finger G-d knows where.

Matthew Prior

# Henry And Emma. A Poem.

Upon the Model of The Nut-Brown Maid. To Cloe.

Thou, to whose eyes I bend, at whose command  
(Though low my voice, though artless be my hand.  
I take the sprightly reed, and sing and play,  
Careless of what the censuring world may say;  
Bright Cloe! object of my constant vow,  
Wilt thou a while unbend thy serious brow?  
Wilt thou with pleasure hear thy lover's strains,  
And with one heavenly smile o'erpay his pains?  
No longer shall the Nut-brown Maid be old,  
Though since her youth three hundred years have roll'd:  
At thy desire she shall again be raised,  
And her reviving charms in lasting verse be praised.

No longer man of woman shall complain,  
That he may love and not be loved again;  
That we in vain the fickle sex pursue,  
Who change the constant lover for the new.  
Whatever has been writ, whatever said  
Henceforth shall in my verse refuted stand,  
Be said to winds, or writ upon the sand:  
And while my notes to future times proclaim  
Unconquer'd love and ever-during flame,  
O, fairest of the sex, be thou my muse;  
Deign on my work thy influence to diffuse:  
Let me partake the blessings I rehearse,  
And grant me love, the just reward of verse.

As beauty's potent queen with every grace  
That once was Emma's has adorn'd thy face,  
And as her son has to my bosom dealt  
That constant flame which faithful Henry felt,  
O let the story with thy life agree,  
Let men once more the bright example see;  
What Emma was to him be thou to me:  
Nor send me by thy frown from her I love,  
Distant and sad, a banish'd man to rove:

But, oh! with pity long entreated crown  
My pains and hopes: and when thou say'st that one  
Of all mankind thou lovest, oh! think on me alone.

Where beauteous Isis and her husband Thame  
With mingled waves for ever flow the same,  
In times of yore an ancient baron lived,  
Great gifts bestowed, and great respect received.

When dreadful Edward, with successful care  
Led his free Britons to the Gallic war,  
This Lord had headed his appointed bands,  
In firm allegiance to his king's commands,  
And (all due honours faithfully discharged)  
Had brought back his paternal coat, enlarged  
With a new mark, the witness of his toil,  
And no inglorious part of foreign spoil.

From the loud camp retired and noisy court,  
In honourable days and rural sport  
The remnant of his days he safely past,  
Nor found they lagg'd too slow nor flew too fast;  
He made his wish with his estate comply,  
Joyful to live, yet not afraid to die.

One child he had, a daughter, chaste and fair,  
His age's comfort, and his fortune's heir:  
They call'd her Emma, for the beauteous dame  
Who gave the virgin birth had borne the name;  
The name th' indulgent father doubly loved,  
For in the child the mother's charms improved:  
Yet as when little, round his knees she play'd,  
He call'd her oft in sport his Nut-brown Maid:  
The friends and tenants took the fondling word,  
(As still they please who imitate their lord)  
Usage confirm'd what fancy had begun;  
The mutual terms around the lands were known,  
And Emma and the Nut-brown Maid were one.

As with her stature still her charms increased,  
Through all the isle her beauty was confess'd.  
Oh! what perfections must that virgin share,



Who fairest is esteem'd where all are fair?  
From distant shires repair the noble youth,  
And find report for once had lessen'd truth.  
By wonder first, and then by passion moved,  
They came, they saw, they marvell'd, and they loved.  
By public praises and by secret sighs,  
Each own'd the general power of Emma's eyes.  
In tilts and tournaments the valiant strove  
By glorious deeds to purchase Emma's love.  
In gentle verse the witty told their flame,  
And graced their choicest songs with Emma's name.  
In vain they combated, in vain they writ,  
Useless their strength, and impotent their wit:  
Great Venus only must direct the dart,  
Which else will never reach the fair one's heart,  
Spite of th' attempt of force and soft effects of art:  
Great Venus must prefer the happy one;  
In Henry's cause her favour must be shown,  
And Emma, of mankind, must love but him alone.

While these in public to the castle came  
And by their grandeur justified their flame,  
More secret ways the careful Henry takes;  
His squires, his arms, and equipage forsakes.  
In borrow'd name and false attire array'd,  
Oft he finds means to see the beauteous maid.

When Emma hunts, in huntsman's habit dress'd,  
Henry on foot pursues the bounding beast;  
In his right hand his beachen pole he bears,  
And grateful at his side his horn he wears.  
Still to the glade where she has bent her way  
With knowing skill he drives the future prey;  
Bids her decline the hill and shun the brake,  
And shows the path her steed may safest take;  
Directs her spear to fix the glorious wound,  
Pleased in his toil, to have her triumphs crown'd,  
And blows her praises in no common sound.

A falconer Henry is when Emma hawks,  
With her of tarsels and of lures he talks.  
Upon his wrist the towering merlin stands,

Practised to rise and stoop at her commands:  
And when superior now the bird has flown,  
And headlong brought the tumbling quarry down,  
With humble reverence he accosts the fair,  
And with the honour'd feather decks her hair.  
Yet still as from the sportive field she goes,  
His downcast eye reveals his inward woes;  
And by his look and sorrow is express'd,  
A nobler game pursued than bird or beast  
A shepherd now along the plain he roves,  
And with his jolly pipe delights the groves.  
The neighbouring swains around the stranger throng,  
Or to admire or emulate his song;  
While with soft sorrow he renews his lays,  
Nor heedful of their envy nor their praise:  
But soon as Emma's eyes adorn the plain,  
His notes he raises to a nobler strain.  
With dutiful respect and studious fear,  
Lest any careless sound offend her ear.

A frantic gypsy now the house he haunts,  
And in wild phrases speaks dissembled wants.  
With the fond maids in psalmistry he deals:  
They tell the secret first which he reveals:  
Says who shall wed, and who shall be beguiled;  
What groom shall get, and squire maintain, the child;  
But when Bright Emma would her fortune know,  
A softer look unbends his opening brow:  
With trembling awe he gazes on her eye,  
And in soft accents forms the kind reply.  
That she shall prove as fortunate fair,  
And Hymen's choicest gifts are all reserved for her.

Now oft had Henry changed his sly disguise,  
Unmark'd by all but beauteous Emma's eyes;  
Oft had found means alone to see the dame,  
And at her feet to breathe his amorous flame;  
And oft the pangs of absence to remove  
By letters, soft interpreters of love.  
Till time and industry (the mighty wo  
That bring our wishes nearer to our view)  
Made him perceive that the inclining fair

Received his vows with no reluctant ear;  
That Venus had confirm'd her equal reign,  
And dealt to Emma's heart a share of Henry's pain.

While Cupid smiled, by kind occasion bless'd,  
And with the secret kept the love increased,  
The amorous youth frequents the silent groves,  
And much he meditates, for much he loves.  
He loves, 'tis true, and is beloved again;  
Great are his joys, but will they long remain?  
Emma with smiles receives his present flame,  
But, smiling, will she ever be the same?  
Beautiful looks are ruled by fickle minds,  
And summer seas are turn'd by sudden winds:  
Another love may gain her easy youth;  
Time changes thought, and flattery conquers truth.

O impotent estate of human life!  
Where hope and fear maintain eternal strife;  
Where fleeting joy does lasting doubt inspire,  
And most we question what we most desire.  
Amongst thy various gifts, great heaven, bestow  
Our cup of life unmix'd; forbear to throw  
Bitter ingredients in, nor pall the draught  
With nauseous grief; for our ill-judging thought  
Hardly enjoys the pleasurable taste,  
Or deems it not sincere, or fears it cannot last.

With wishes raised, with jealousies oppress'd,  
(Alternate tyrants of the human breast)  
By one great trial he resolves to prove  
The faith of woman and the force of love:  
If scanning Emma's virtues, he may find  
That beauteous frame enclose a steady mind,  
He'll fix his hope of future joy secure,  
And live a slave to Hymen's happy power;  
But if the fair one, as he fears, is frail,  
If poised aright in reason's equal scale,  
Light fly her merits, and her faults prevail.  
His mind he vows to free from amorous care,  
The latent mischief from his heart to tear,  
Resume his azure arms, and shine again in war.

South of the castle, in a verdant glade,  
A spreading beech extends her friendly shade;  
Here oft the nymph his breathing vows had heard:  
Here oft her silence had her heart declared.  
An active spring awaked her infant buds,  
And genial life inform'd the verdant woods,  
Henry in knots involving Emma's name,  
Had half express'd and half conceal'd his flame  
Upon this tree; and as the tender mark  
Grew with the year, and, widen'd with the bark,  
Venus had heard the virgin's soft address,  
That, as the wound, the passion might increase.  
As potent Nature shed her kindly showers,  
And deck'd the various mead with opening flowers,  
Upon this tree the nymph's obliging care  
Had left a frequent wreath for Henry's hair,  
Which as with gay delight the lover found,  
Pleased with his conquest, with her present crown'd,  
Glorious through all the plains he oft had gone,  
And to each swain the mystic honour shown,  
The gift still praised, the giver still unknown.

His secret note the troubled Henry writes;  
To the known tree the lovely maid invites:  
Imperfect words and dubious terms express  
That unforeseen mischance disturb'd his peace  
That he must something to her ear commend,  
On which her conduct and his life depend.

Soon as the fair one had the note received,  
The remnant of the day alone she grieved;  
For different this from every former note  
Which Venus dictated and Henry wrote;  
Which told her all his future hopes were laid  
On the dear bosom of his Nut-brown Maid;  
Which always bless'd her eyes and own'd her power,  
And bid her oft adieu, yet added more.

Now night advanced: the house in sleep were laid,  
The nurse experienced, and the prying maid;  
And, last, that sprite which does incessant haunt

The lover's steps, the ancient maiden aunt,  
To her dear Henry Emma wings her way,  
With quicken'd pace repairing forced delay:  
For love fantastic power that is afraid  
To stir abroad till watchfulness be laid,  
Undaunted then o'er cliffs and valleys strays,  
And leads his votaries safe through pathless ways.  
Not Argus with his hundred eyes shall find  
Where Cupid goes, though he poor guide is blind.

The maiden first arriving, sent her eye  
To ask if yet its chief delight were nigh:  
With fear and with desire, with joy and pain  
She sees, and runs to meet him on the plain;  
But, oh! his steps proclaim no lover's haste;  
On the low ground his fix'd regards are cast;  
His artful bosom heaves dissembled sighs,  
And tears suborn'd fall copious from his eyes.

With ease, alas! we credit what we love;  
His painted grief does real sorrow move  
In the afflicted fair: adown her cheek  
Trickling the genuine tears their current break!  
Attentive stood the mountain nymph; the man  
Broke silence first; the tale alternate ran.

Henry.  
Sincere, O tell me, hast thou felt a pain,  
Emma, beyond what woman knows to feign?  
Has thy uncertain bosom ever strove  
With the first tumults of a real love?  
Hast thou now dreaded and now bless'd his sway,  
By turns averse and joyful to obey,  
Thy virgin softness hast thou e'er bewail'd,  
As reason yielded and as love prevail'd?  
And wept the potent god's resistless dart,  
His killing pleasure, his ecstatic smart,  
And heavenly poison thrilling through thy heart?  
If so, with pity view my wretched state,  
At least deplore, and then forget my fate:  
To some more happy knight reserve thy charms,

By Fortune favour'd and successful arms;  
And only as the sun's revolving ray  
Brings back each year this melancholy day,  
Permit one sigh, and set apart one tear  
To an abandon'd exile's endless care,  
For me, alas! outcast of human race,  
Love's anger only waits and dire disgrace;  
For, lo! these hands in murder are imbrued,  
These trembling feet by Justice are pursued;  
Fate calls aloud and hastens my away;  
A shameful death attends my longer stay;  
And I this night must fly from thee and love,  
Condemn'd in lonely woods a banish'd man to rove.

Emma.

What is our bliss that changeth with the moon,  
And day of life that darkens ere 'tis noon?  
What is true passion, if unblest it dies?  
And where is Emma's joy if Henry flies?  
If love, alas! be pain, the pain I bear  
No thought can figure, and no tongue declare.  
Ne'er faithful woman felt, nor false one feign'd,  
The flames which long have in my bosom reign'd:  
The god of love himself inhabits there,  
With all his rage, and dread, and grief, and care,  
His complement of stores and total war.

O! cease then coldly to suspect my love,  
And let my deed, at least my faith, approve.  
Alas! no youth shall my endearments share,  
Nor day nor night shall interrupt my care;  
No future story shall with truth upbraid  
The cold indifference of the Nut-brown Maid;  
Nor to hard banishment shall Henry run  
While careless Emma sleeps on beds of down.  
View me resolved where'er thou lead'st to go,  
Friend to thy pain, and partner of thy wo;  
For I attest fair Venus and her son,  
That I of all mankind will love but thee alone.

Henry.

Let prudence yet obstruct thy venturous way,  
And take good heed what men will think and say;  
That beauteous Emma vagrant courses took,  
Her father's house and civil life forsook;  
That full of youthful blood, and fond of man,  
She to the woodland with an exile ran.  
Reflect, that lessen'd fame is ne'er regain'd,  
And virgin-honour once, is always stain'd:  
Timely advised, the coming evil shun;  
Better not do the deed than weep it done:  
No penance can absolve our guilty fame,  
Nor tears, that wash out sin, can wash out shame:  
Then fly the sad effects of desperate love,  
And leave a banish'd man through lonely woods to rove.

Emma.

Let Emma's hapless case be falsely told  
By the rash young or the ill-natured old;  
Let every tongue its various censures choose,  
Absolve with coldness, or with spite accuse;  
Fair Truth at last her radiant beams will raise,  
And Malice vanquish'd heightens Virtue's praise.  
Let then thy favour but indulge my flight,  
O! let my presence make thy travels light,  
And potent Venus shall exalt my name  
Above the rumours of censorious Fame;  
Nor from that busy demon's restless power  
Will ever Emma other grace implore,  
Than that this truth should to the world be known,  
That I of all mankind have loved but thee alone.

Henry.

But canst thou wield the sword and bend the bow?  
With active force repel the sturdy foe?  
When the loud tumult speaks the battle nigh,  
And winged deaths in whistling arrows fly,  
Wilt thou, though wounded, yet undaunted stay,  
Perform thy part, and share the dangerous day?  
Then, as thy strength decays, thy heart will fail,

Thy limbs all trembling, and thy cheeks all pale;  
With fruitless sorrow thou, inglorious Maid,  
Wilt weep thy safety by thy love betray'd;  
Then to thy friend, by foes o'ercharged, deny  
Thy little useless aid, and coward fly;  
Then wilt thou curse the chance that made thee love  
A banish'd man, condemn'd in lonely woods to rove.

Emma.

With fatal certainty Thalestris knew  
To send the arrow from the twanging yew  
And, great in arms, and foremost in the war,  
Bonduca brandish'd high the British spear.  
Could thirst of vengeance and desire of fame  
Excite the female breast with martial flame?  
And shall not Love's diviner power inspire  
More hardy virtue and more generous fire?

Near thee, mistrust not, constant I'll abide,  
And fall or vanquish, fighting by thy side.  
Though my inferior strength may not allow  
That I should bear or draw the warrior bow,  
With ready hand I will the shaft supply,  
And joy to see thy victor arrows fly.  
Touch'd in the battle by the hostile reed,  
Shouldst thou, (but Heaven avert it!) shouldst thou blend,  
To stop the wounds my finest lawn I'd tear,  
Wash them with tears, and wipe them with my hair;  
Blest when my dangers and my toils have shown,  
That I, of all mankind, could love but thee alone.

Henry.

But canst thou, tender Maid, canst thou sustain  
Afflictive want, or hunger's pressing pain?  
Those limbs, in lawn and softest silk array'd,  
From sunbeams guarded, and of winds afraid,  
Can they bear angry Jove? can they resist  
The parching Dogstar and the bleak North-east?  
When, chill'd by adverse snows and beating rain,  
We tread with weary steps the longsome plain;



When with hard toil we seek our evening food,  
Berries and acorns, from the neighbouring wood,  
And find among the cliffs no other house  
But the thin covert of some gather'd boughs,  
Wilt thou not then reluctant send thine eye  
Around the dreary waste, and weeping try,  
(Though then, alas! that trial be too late)  
To find thy father's hospitable gate,  
And seats where Ease and Plenty brooding sate?  
Those seats whence, long excluded, thou must mourn;  
That gate for ever barr'd to thy return;  
And hate baish'd man, condemn'd in woods to rove?

Emma.

Thy rise of fortune did I only wed,  
From its decline determined to recede;  
Did I but purpose to embark with thee  
On the smooth surface of a summer's sea,  
While gentle zephyrs play in prosperous gales,  
And Fortune's favour rills the swelling sails.  
But would forsake the ship and make the shore,  
When the winds whistle and the tempests roar?  
No, Henry, no: one sacred oath has tied  
Our loves; one destiny our life shall guide  
Nor wild nor deep our common way divide.

When from the cave thou risest with the day  
To beat the woods and rouse the bounding prey,  
The cave with moss and branches I'll adorn,  
And cheerful sit to wait my lord's return.  
And when thou frequent bring'st the smitten deer,  
(For seldom, archers say, thy arrows err)  
I'll fetch quick fuel from the neighbouring wood,  
And strike the sparkling flint, and dress the food:  
With humble duty and officious haste  
I'll cull the furthest mead for thy repast:  
The choicest herbs I to thy board will bring,  
And draw thy water from the freshest spring  
And when, at night, with weary toil opprest,  
Soft slumbers thou enjoy'st and wholesome rest,  
Watchful I'll guard thee, and with midnight prayer

Weary the gods to keep thee in their care;  
And joyous ask at morn's returning ray  
If thou hast health, and I may bless the day.  
My thoughts shall fix, my latest wish depend  
On thee, guide, guardian, kinsman, father, friend  
By all these sacred names be Henry known  
To Emma's heart; and, grateful, let him own  
That she, of all mankind, could love but him alone.

Henry.

Vainly thou tell'st me what the woman's care  
Shall in the wilderness of the wood prepare;  
Thou, ere thou goest, unhappiest of thy kind,  
Must leave the habit of the sex behind.  
No longer shall thy comely tresses break  
In flowing ringlets on thy snowy neck,  
Or sit behind thy head, an ample round,  
In graceful braids, with various ribbands bound;  
No longer shall the bodice, aptly laced  
From thy full bosom to thy slender waist,  
That air and harmony of shape exprest,  
Fine by degrees, and beautifully less;  
Nor shall thy lower garments artful plait,  
From thy fair side dependent to thy feet,  
Arm their chaste beauties with a modest pride,  
And double every charm they seek to hide.  
Th' ambrosial plenty of thy shining hair  
Cropt off and lost, scarce lower than thy ear  
Shall stand uncouth; a horseman's coat shall hide  
Thy taper shape and comeliness of side;  
The short trunk-hose shall show thy foot and knee  
Licentious, and to common eyesight free;  
And with a bolder stride and looser air,  
Mingled with men, a man thou must appear.

Nor solitude, nor gentle peace of mind,  
Mistaken Maid, shalt thou in forests find:  
'Tis long since Cynthia and her train were there,  
Or guardian gods made innocence their care:  
Vagrants and outlaws shall offend thy view,  
For such must be my friends; a hideous crew,

By adverse fortune mix'd in social ill,  
Train'd to assault, and disciplined to kill;  
Their common loves a lewd abandon'd pack,  
The beadle's lash still flagrant on their back;  
By sloth corrupted, by disorder fed,  
Made bold by want, and prostitute for bread:  
With such must Emma hunt the tedious day,  
Assist their violence and divide their prey;  
With such she must return at setting light,  
Though not partaker, witness of their night.  
Thy ear, inured to charitable sounds  
And pitying love, must feel the hateful wounds  
Of jest obscene and vulgar ribaldry,  
The ill-bred question and the lewd reply;  
Brought by long habitude from bad to worse,  
Must hear the frequent oath, the direful curse,  
That latest weapon of the wretches' war,  
And blasphemy, sad comrade of despair.

Now, Emma, now the last reflection make,  
What thou wouldst follow, what thou must forsake:  
By out ill-omen'd stars and adverse heaven  
No middle object to thy choice is given;  
Or yield thy virtue to attain thy love,  
Or leave a banish'd man, condemn'd in woods to rove.

Emma.

O grief of heart! that our unhappy fates  
Force thee to suffer what thy honour hates;  
Mix thee amongst the bad, or make thee run  
Too near the path which Virtue bids thee shun.  
Yet with her Henry still let Emma go;  
With him abhor the vice, but share the wo:  
And sure my little heart can never err  
Amidst the worse if Henry still be there.

Our outward act is prompted from within,  
And from the sinner's mind proceeds the sin:  
By her own choice free Virtue is approved,  
Nor by the force of outward objects moved.  
Who has essay'd no danger gains no praise,

In a small isle, amidst the widest seas,  
Triumphant Constancy has fix'd her seat;  
In vain the Syrens sing, the tempests beat:  
Their flattery she rejects, nor fears their threat.

For thee alone these little charms I drest,  
Condemn'd them or absolved them by thy test:  
In comely figure ranged my jewels shone,  
Or negligently placed for thee alone:  
For thee again they shall be laid aside;  
The woman, Henry, shall put off her pride  
I'll mingle with the people's wretched lee:  
O line extreme of human infamy!  
Wanting the scissors, with these hands I'll tear  
(If that obstructs my flight) this load of hair:  
Black soot or yellow walnut shall disgrace  
This little red and white of Emma's face:  
These nails with scratches shall deform my breast,  
Lest by my look or colour be exprest  
The mark of ought high-born, or ever better drest.  
Yet in this commerce, under this disguise,  
Let me be grateful still to Henry's eyes;  
Lost to the world, let me to him be known;  
My fate I can absolve if he shall own  
That, leaving all mankind, I love but him alone.

Henry.

O wildest thought of an abandon'd mind:  
Name, habit, parents, woman, left behind,  
Even honour dubious, thou preferr'st to go  
Wild to the woods with me. Said Emma so?  
Or did I dream what Emma never said:  
O guilty error! and O wretched Maid!  
Whose roving fancy would resolve the same  
With him who next should tempt her easy fame,  
And blow with empty words the susceptible flame.  
Now why should doubtful terms thy mind perplex?  
Confess thy frailty and avow the sex:  
No longer loose desire for constant love  
Mistake, but say, 'tis man with whom thou long'st to rove.

Emma.

Are there not poisons, racks, and flames, and swords,  
That Emma thus must die by Henry's words;  
Yet what could swords or poison, racks, or flame,  
But mangle and disjoint this brittle frame!  
More fatal Henry's words, they murder Emma's fame.

And fall these sayings from that gentle tongue,  
Where civil speech and soft persuasion hung?  
Whose artful sweetness and harmonious strain,  
Courting my grace, yet courting it in vain,  
Call sighs, and tears, and wishes, to its aid,  
And, whilst it Henry's glowing flame convey'd,  
Still blamed the coldness of the Nut-brown Maid?

Let envious Jealousy and canker'd Spite  
Produce my actions to severest light,  
And tax my open day or secret might.  
Did e'er my tongue speak my unguarded heart  
The least inclined to play the wanton's part?  
Did e'er my eye one inward thought reveal,  
Which angels might not hear and virgins tell!  
And hast thou, Henry, in my conduct known  
One fault but that which I must ever own  
That I, of all mankind, have loved but thee alone?

Henry.

Vainly thou talk'st of loving me alone?  
Each man is man, and all of our sex is one;  
False are our words, and fickle is our mind;  
Nor in Love's ritual can we ever find  
Vows made to last, or promises to blind.

By Nature prompted, and for empire made,  
Alike by strength or cunning we invade:  
When arm'd with rage we march against the foe,  
We lift the battle-axe, and draw the bow;  
When fired with passion we attack the fair,  
Delusive sighs and brittle vows we bear;  
Our falsehood and our arms have equal use,

As they our conquest or delight produce.

The foolish heart thou gavest again receive,  
The only boon departing Love can give.  
To be less wretched be no longer true:  
What strives to fly thee why shouldst thou pursue?  
Forget the present flame, indulge a new:  
Single the loveliest of the amorous youth:  
Ask for his vow, but hope not for his truth,  
The next man (and the next thou shalt believe)  
Will pawn his gods intending to deceive;  
Will kneel, implore, persist, o'ercome, and leave.  
Hence let thy Cupid aim his arrows right:  
Be wise and false, shun trouble, seek delight;  
Change thou the first, nor wait thy lover's flight.

Why shouldst thou weep? let Nature judge our case;  
I saw thee young and fair; I another saw  
Fairer and younger: yielding to the law  
Of our all-ruling mother, I pursued  
More youth, more beauty. Blest vicissitude!  
My active heart still keeps its pristine flame,  
The object alter'd, the desire the same.

This younger, fairer, pleads her rightful charms,  
With present power compels me to her arms;  
And much I fear from my subjected mind,  
(If beauty's force to constant love can bind)  
That years may roll ere in her turn the maid  
Shall weep the fury of my love decay'd,  
And weeping follow me, as thou dost now,  
With idle clamours of a broken vow.

Nor can the wildness of thy wishes err,  
So wide to hope that thou may'st live with her!  
Love, well thou know'st, no partnership allows;  
Cupid averse, rejects divided vows:  
Then from thy foolish heart, vain maid, remove  
A useless sorrow and an ill-starr'd love,  
And leave me, with the fair, at large in woods to rove.

Emma.

Are we in life through one great error led?  
Is each man perjured, and each nymph betray'd?  
Of the superior sex art thou the worst?  
Am I of mine the most completely cursed?  
Yet let me go with thee, and going prove,  
From what I will endure, how much I love.

This potent beauty, this triumphant fair,  
This unhappy object of our different care,  
Her let me follow; her let me attend,  
A servant: (she may scorn the name of friend)  
What she demands incessant I'll prepare;  
I'll weave her garlands, and I'll plait her hair;  
My busy diligence shall deck her board,  
(For there at least I may approach my lord)  
And when her Henry's softer hours advise  
His servant's absence, with dejected eyes  
Far I'll recede, and sighs forbid to rise.

Yet, when increasing grief brings slow disease  
And ebbing life, on terms severe as these,  
Will have its little lamp no longer fed;  
When Henry's mistress shows him Emma dead  
Rescue my poor remains from vile neglect:  
With virgin honours let my hearse be deck'd  
And decent emblem; and, at least, persuade  
This happy nymph that Emma may be laid  
Where thou, dear author of my death, where she  
With frequent eye my sepulchre may see.  
The nymph, amidst her joys, may haply breathe  
One pious sigh, reflecting on my death,  
And the sad fate which she may one day prove,  
Who hopes from Henry's vows eternal love.  
And thou forsworn, thou cruel, as thou art,  
If Emma's image ever touch'd thy heart,  
Thou sure must give one thought, and drop one tear  
To her whom love abandon'd to despair;  
To her who dying on the wounded stone,  
Bid it in lasting characters be known,  
That of mankind she loved but thee alone.

Henry.

Hear, solemn Jove, and, conscious Venus, hear;  
And thou, bright maid, believe me whilst I swear;  
No time, no charge, no future flame, shall move  
The well placed basis of my lasting love.  
O powerful Virtue! O victorious fair!  
At least excuse a trial too severe;  
Receive the triumph, and forget the war.

No banish'd man, condemn'd in woods to rove,  
Entreats thy pardon, and implores thy love:  
No perjured knight desires to quit thy arms,  
Fairest collection of thy sex's charms,  
Crown of my love, and honour of my youth;  
Henry, thy Henry, with eternal truth,  
As thou may'st wish, shall all his life employ,  
And found his glory in his Emma's joy.

In me behold the potent Edgar's heir,  
Illustrious earl: him terrible in war,  
Let Loyre confess, for she has felt his sword,  
And trembling fled before the British lord.  
Him great in peace and wealth fair Deva knows,  
For she amidst his spacious meadows flows,  
Inclines her urn upon his fatten'd lands,  
And sees his numerous herds imprint her sands.

And thou, my fair, my dove, shalt raise thy thought  
To greatness next to empire; shalt be brought  
With solemn pomp to my paternal seat,  
Where peace and plenty on thy word shall wait:  
Music and song shall wake the marriage day,  
And while the priests accuse the bride's delay,  
Myrtles and roses shall obstruct her way.

Friendship shall still thy evening feasts adorn,  
And blooming Peace shall ever bless thy morn,  
Succeeding years their happy race shall run,  
And Age unheeded by delight come on,  
While yet superior love shall mock his power;  
And when old Time shall turn the fated hour,



Which only can our well-tied knot unfold,  
What rests of both one sepulchre shall hold.

Hence, then, for ever, from my Emma's breast  
(That heaven of softness and that seat of rest)  
Ye doubts and tears, and all that know to move  
Tormenting grief, and all that trouble love;  
Scatter'd by winds recede, and wild in forests rove.

Emma.

O day, the fairest sure that ever rose!  
Period and end of anxious Emma's woes!  
Sire of her joy, and source of her delight,  
O! wing'd with pleasure take thy happy flight,  
And give each future morn a tincture of thy white.  
Yet tell thy votary, potent queen of love,  
Henry, my Henry, will he never rove?  
Will he be ever kind, and just, and good?  
And is there yet no mistress in the wood?  
None, none there is: the thought was rash and vain,  
A false idea, and a fancied pain,  
Doubt shall for ever quit my strengthen'd heart,  
And anxious Jealousy's corroding smart;  
Nor other inmate shall inhabit there,  
But soft Belief, young Joy, and pleasing Care.

Hence let the tides of Plenty ebb and flow,  
And Fortune's various gale unheeded blow.  
If at my feet the suppliant goddess stands,  
And sheds her treasure with unwearied hands,  
Her present favour cautious I'll embrace,  
And not unthankful use the proffer'd grace;  
If she reclaims the temporary boon,  
And tries her pinions, fluttering to be gone,  
Secure of mind I'll obviate her intent,  
And unconcern'd return the goods she lent,  
Nor happiness can I, not misery, feel,  
From any turn of her fantastic wheel:  
Friendship's great laws and love's superior powers,  
Must mark the colour of my future hours.  
From the events which thy commands create

I must my blessings or my sorrows date,  
And Henry's will must dictate Emma's fate.

Yet, while with close delight and inward pride  
(Which from the world my careful soul shall hide)  
I see thee, lord and end of my desire,  
Exalted high as virtue can require,  
With power invested, and with pleasure cheer'd,  
Sought by the good, by the oppressor fear'd,  
Loaded and bless'd with all the affluent store  
Which human vows at smoking shrines implore.  
Grateful and humble grant me to employ  
My life subservient only to thy joy,  
And at my death to bless thy kindness, shown  
To her who, of mankind, could love but thee alone.

While thus the constant pair alternate said,  
Joyful above them and around them play'd  
Angels and sportive loves, a numerous crowd:  
Smiling they clapp'd their wings, and low they bow'd:  
They tumbled all their little quivers o'er,  
To choose propitious shafts a precious store,  
That when their god should take his future darts,  
To strike, (however rarely) constant hearts,  
His happy skill might proper arms employ,  
All tipt with pleasure, and all wing'd with joy;  
And those, they vow'd, whose lives should imitate  
These lovers' constancy, should share their fate.

The queen of beauty stopp'd her bridled doves,  
Approved the little labour of the loves:  
Was proud and pleased the mutual vow to hear,  
And to the triumph call'd the god of war:  
Soon as she calls, the god is always near.

Now Mars, she said, let Fame exalt her voice,  
Nor let thy conquests only be her choice,  
But when she sings, great Edward from the field  
Return'd, the hostile spear and captive shield  
In Concord's temple hung, and Gallia taught to yield.  
And when, as prudent Saturn shall complete  
The years design'd to perfect Britain's state,

The swift-wing'd power shall take her trump again,  
To sing her favourite Anna's wondrous reign,  
To recollect unwearied Malbro's toils,  
Old Rufus' Hall unequal to his spoils,  
The British soldier from his high command  
Glorious, and Gaul thrice vanquish'd by his hand.  
Let her at least perform what I desire,  
With second breath the vocal brass inspire,  
And tell the nations in no vulgar strain,  
What wars I manage, and what wreaths I gain,  
And when thy tumults and thy fights are past,  
And when thy laurels at my feet are cast;  
Faithful may'st thou, like British Henry prove,  
And Emma-like let me return thy love.

Renown'd for truth let all thy sons appear,  
And constant beauty shall reward their care.

Mars smiled, and bow'd: the Cyprian deity  
Turn'd to the glorious ruler of the sky;  
And thou, she smiling said, great god of days  
And verse, behold my deed and sing my praise;  
As on the British earth, my favourite isle,  
Thy gentle rays and kindest influence smile,  
Through all her laughing fields and verdant groves  
Proclaim with joy these memorable loves:  
From every annual course let one great day  
To celebrate sports and floral play  
Be set aside; and in the softest lays  
Of thy poetic sons, be solemn praise  
And everlasting marks of honour paid  
To the true lover and the Nut-brown Maid.

Matthew Prior

# Her Right Name

As Nancy at her toilette sat,  
Admiring this, and blaming that,  
Tell me, she said, but tell me true,  
The nymph who could your heart subdue.  
What sort of charms does she possess?  
Absolve me, fair one, I'll confess  
With pleasure, I replied: Her hair,  
In ringlets rather dark than fair,  
Does down her ivory bosom roll,  
And hiding half adorns the whole,  
In her high forehead's fair half round  
Love sits, in open triumph crown'd;  
He, in the dimple of her chin,  
In private state, by friends is seen.  
Her eyes are neither black nor grey,  
Nor fierce nor feeble is their ray;  
Their dubious lustre seems to show  
Something that speaks nor yes nor no.  
Her lips no living bard, I weet,  
May say how red, how round, how sweet:  
Old Homer only could indite  
Their vagrant grace and soft delight:  
They stand recorded in his book,  
When Helen smiled, and Hebe spoke -  
The gypsy, turning to her glass,  
Too plainly show'd she knew the face;  
And which am I most like, she said,  
Your Cloe or your Nut-brown Maid!

Matthew Prior

# Hymn To The Sun

Light of the World, and Ruler of the Year,  
With happy Speed begin Thy great Career;  
And, as Thou dost thy radiant Journeys run,  
Through every distant Climate own,  
That in fair Albion Thou hast seen  
The greatest Prince, the brightest Queen,  
That ever sav'd a Land, or blest a Throne,  
Since first Thy Beams were spread, or Genial Power was known.

II.

So may Thy Godhead be confest;  
So the returning Year be blest;  
As His Infant Months bestow  
Springing Wreaths for William's Brow;  
As His Summer's Youth shall shed  
Eternal Sweets around Maria's Head.  
From the Blessings They bestow,  
Our Times are dated, and our Æra's move:  
They govern, and enlighten all Below,  
As Thou dost all Above.

III.

Let our Hero in the War  
Active and fierce, like Thee, appear:  
Like Thee, great Son of Jove, like Thee,  
When clad in rising Majesty,  
Thou marchest down o'er Delos' Hills confest,  
With all Thy Arrows arm'd, in all Thy Glory drest.  
Like Thee, the Hero does his Arms imploy,  
The raging Python to destroy,  
And give the injur'd Nations Peace and Joy.

IV.

From fairest Years, and Time's more happy Stores,  
Gather all the smiling Hours;  
Such as with friendly Care have guarded  
Patriots and Kings in rightful Wars;  
Such as with Conquest have rewarded  
Triumphant Victors happy Cares;

Such as Story has recorded  
Sacred to Nassau's long Renown,  
For Countries sav'd, and Battels won.

V.

March Them again in fair Array,  
And bid Them form the happy Day,  
The happy Day design'd to wait  
On William's Fame, and Europe's Fate.  
Let the happy Day be crown'd  
With great Event, and fair Success;  
No brighter in the Year be found,  
But That which brings the Victor home in Peace.

VI.

Again Thy Godhead We implore,  
Great in Wisdom as in Power;  
Again, for good Maria's Sake, and Our's,  
Chuse out other smiling Hours,  
Such as with Joyous Wings have fled,  
When happy Counsels were advising;  
Such as have lucky Omens shed  
O'er forming Laws, and Empires rising;  
Such as many Courses ran,  
Hand in Hand, a goodly Train,  
To bless the great Eliza's Reign;  
And in the Typic Glory show,  
What fuller Bliss Maria shall bestow.

VII.

As the solemn Hours advance,  
Mingled send into the Dance  
Many fraught with all the Treasures,  
Which Thy Eastern Travels views;  
Many wing'd with all the Pleasures,  
Man can ask, or Heav'n diffuse:  
That great Maria all those Joys may know,  
Which, from Her Cares, upon Her Subjects flow.

VIII.

For Thy own Glory sing our Sovereign's Praise,  
God of Verses and of Days:

Let all Thy tuneful Sons adorn  
Their lasting Work with William's Name:  
Let chosen Muses yet unborn  
Take great Maria for their future Theme:  
Eternal Structures let Them raise,  
On William's and Maria's Praise:  
Nor want new Subject for the Song;  
Nor fear they can exhaust the Store;  
'Till Nature's Musick lyes unstrung;  
'Till Thou, great God, shalt lose Thy double Pow'r;  
And touch Thy Lyre, and shoot Thy Beams no more.

Matthew Prior

## In Imitation Of Anacreon

Let 'em Censure: what care I?  
The Herd of Criticks I defie.  
Let the Wretches know, I write  
Regardless of their Grace, or Spight.  
No, no: the Fair, the Gay, the Young  
Govern the Numbers of my Song.  
All that They approve is sweet:  
And All is Sense, that They repeat.  
Bid the warbling Nine retire:  
Venus, String thy Servant's Lyre:  
Love shall be my endless Theme:  
Pleasure shall triumph over Fame:  
And when these Maxims I decline,  
Apollo, may Thy Fate be Mine:  
May I grasp at empty Praise;  
And lose the Nymph, to gain the Bays.

Matthew Prior



# Jinny The Just

Releas'd from the noise of the butcher and baker  
Who, my old friends be thanked, did seldom forsake her,  
And from the soft duns of my landlord the Quaker,

From chiding the footmen and watching the lasses,  
From Nell that burn'd milk, and Tom that broke glasses  
(Sad mischiefs thro' which a good housekeeper passes!)

From some real care but more fancied vexation,  
From a life parti-colour'd half reason half passion,  
Here lies after all the best wench in the nation.

From the Rhine to the Po, from the Thames to the Rhone,  
Joanna or Janneton, Jinny or Joan,  
'Twas all one to her by what name she was known.

For the idiom of words very little she heeded,  
Provided the matter she drove at succeeded,  
She took and gave languages just as she needed.

So for kitchen and market, for bargain and sale,  
She paid English or Dutch or French down on the nail,  
But in telling a story she sometimes did fail;

Then begging excuse as she happen'd to stammer,  
With respect to her betters but none to her grammar,  
Her blush helped her out and her jargon became her.

Her habit and mien she endeavor'd to frame  
To the different gout of the place where she came;  
Her outside still chang'd, but her inside the same:

At the Hague in her slippers and hair as the mode is,  
At Paris all falbalow'd fine as a goddess,  
And at censuring London in smock sleeves and bodice.

She order'd affairs that few people could tell  
In what part about her that mixture did dwell  
Of Frow, or Mistress, or Mademoiselle.

For her surname and race let the herald's e'en answer;  
Her own proper worth was enough to advance her,  
And he who liked her, little value her grandsire.

But from what house so ever her lineage may come  
I wish my own Jinny but out of her tomb,  
Tho' all her relations were there in her room.

Of such terrible beauty she never could boast  
As with absolute sway o'er all hearts rules the roast  
When J\_\_\_\_ bawls out to the chair for a toast;

But of good household features her person was made,  
Nor by faction cried up nor of censure afraid,  
And her beauty was rather for use than parade.

Her blood so well mix't and flesh so well pasted  
That, tho' her youth faded, her comeliness lasted;  
The blue was wore off, but the plum was well tasted.

Less smooth than her skin and less white than her breast  
Was this polished stone beneath which she lies pressed:  
Stop, reader, and sigh while thou thinkst on the rest.

With a just trim of virtue her soul was endued,  
Not affectedly pious nor secretly lewd  
She cut even between the coquette and the prude.

Her will with her duty so equally stood  
That, seldom oppos'd, she was commonly good,  
And did pretty well, doing just what she would.

Declining all power she found means to persuade,  
Was then most regarded when most she obey'd,  
The mistress in truth when she seem'd but the maid.

Such care of her own proper actions she took  
That on other folk's lives she had not time to look,  
So censure and praise were struck out of her book.

Her thought still confin'd to its own little sphere,

She minded not who did excel or did err  
But just as the matter related to her.

Then too when her private tribunal was rear'd  
Her mercy so mix'd with her judgment appear'd  
That her foes were condemn'd and her friends always clear'd.

Her religion so well with her learning did suit  
That in practice sincere, and in controverse mute,  
She showed she knew better to live than dispute.

Some parts of the Bible by heart she recited,  
And much in historical chapters delighted,  
But in points about Faith she was something short sighted;

So notions and modes she refer'd to the schools,  
And in matters of conscience adher'd to two rules,  
To advise with no bigots, and jest with no fools.

And scrupling but little, enough she believ'd,  
By charity ample small sins she retriev'd,  
And when she had new clothes she always receiv'd.

Thus still whilst her morning unseen fled away  
In ord'ring the linen and making the tea  
That scarce could have time for the psalms of the day;

And while after dinner the night came so soon  
That half she propos'd very seldom was done;  
With twenty God bless me's, how this day is gone! --

While she read and accounted and paid and abated,  
Eat and drank, play'd and work'd, laugh'd and cried, lov'd and hated,  
As answer'd the end of her being created:

In the midst of her age came a cruel disease  
Which neither her juleps nor receipts could appease;  
So down dropp'd her clay -- may her Soul be at peace!

Retire from this sepulchre all the profane,  
You that love for debauch, or that marry for gain,  
Retire lest ye trouble the Manes of J\_\_\_\_\_.

But thou that know'st love above int'rest or lust,  
Strew the myrle and rose on this once belov'd dust,  
And shed one pious tear upon Jinny the Just.

Tread soft on her grave, and do right to her honor,  
Let neither rude hand nor ill tongue light upon her,  
Do all the small favors that now can be done her.

And when what thou lik'd shall return to her clay,  
For so I'm persuaded she must do one day  
-- Whatever fantastic John Asgill may say --

When as I have done now, thou shalt set up a stone  
For something however distinguished or known,  
May some pious friend the misfortune bemoan,  
And make thy concern by reflexion his own.

Matthew Prior

## Lisetta's Reply

Sure Cloe Just, and Cloe Fair  
Deserves to be Your only Care:  
But when You and She to-day  
Far into the Wood did stray,  
And I happen'd to pass by;  
Which way did You cast your Eye?  
But when your Cares to Her You sing,  
Yet dare not tell Her whence they spring;  
Does it not more afflict your Heart,  
That in those Cares She bears a Part?  
When You the Flow'rs for Cloe twine,  
Why do You to Her Garland join  
The meanest Bud that falls from Mine?  
Simplest of Swains! the World may see,  
Whom Cloe loves, and Who loves Me.

Matthew Prior

# Love Disarmed

Beneath a Myrtle's verdant Shade  
As Cloe half asleep was laid,  
Cupid perch'd lightly on Her Breast,  
And in That Heav'n desir'd to rest:  
Over her Paps his Wings He spread:  
Between He found a downy Bed,  
And nestl'd in His little Head.

Still lay the God: The Nymph surpriz'd,  
Yet Mistress of her self, devis'd,  
How She the Vagrant might inthral,  
And Captive Him, who Captives All.

Her Boddice half way She unlac'd:  
About his Arms She sily cast  
The silken Bond, and held Him fast.

The God awak'd; and thrice in vain  
He strove to break the cruel Chain;  
And thrice in vain He shook his Wing,  
Incumber'd in the silken String.

Flutt'ring the God, and weeping said,  
Pity poor Cupid, generous Maid,  
Who happen'd, being Blind, to stray,  
And on thy Bosom lost his Way:  
Who stray'd, alas! but knew too well,  
He never There must hope to dwell.  
Set an unhappy Pris'ner free,  
Who ne'er intended Harm to Thee.

To Me pertains not, She replies,  
To know or care where Cupid flies;  
What are his Haunts, or which his Way;  
Where He would dwell, or whither stray:  
Yet will I never set Thee free:  
For Harm was meant, and Harm to Me.

Vain Fears that vex thy Virgin Heart!

I'll give Thee up my Bow and Dart:  
Untangle but this cruel Chain,  
And freely let Me fly again.

Agreed: Secure my Virgin Heart:  
Instant give up thy Bow and Dart:  
The Chain I'll in Return unty;  
And freely Thou again shalt fly.

Thus She the Captive did deliver:  
The Captive thus gave up his Quiver.

The God disarm'd, e'er since that Day  
Passes his Life in harmless Play;  
Flies round, or sits upon her Breast,  
A little, flutt'ring, idle Guest.

E'er since that Day the beauteous Maid  
Governs the World in Cupid's stead;  
Directs his Arrow as She wills;  
Gives Grief, or Pleasure; spares, or kills.

Matthew Prior

# Mercury And Cupid

In sullen Humour one Day Jove  
Sent Hermes down to Ida's Grove,  
Commanding Cupid to deliver  
His Store of Darts, his total Quiver;  
That Hermes shou'd the Weapons break,  
Or throw 'em into Lethe's Lake.

Hermes, You know, must do his Errand:  
He found his Man, produc'd his Warrant:  
Cupid, your Darts-this very Hour-  
There's no contending against Power.

How sullen Jupiter, just now  
I think I said: and You'll allow,  
That Cupid was as bad as He:  
Hear but the Youngster's Repartee.

Come Kinsman (said the little God)  
Put off your Wings; lay by your Rod;  
Retire with Me to yonder Bower;  
And rest your self for half an Hour:  
'Tis far indeed from hence to Heav'n:  
And You fly fast: and 'tis but Seven.  
We'll take one cooling Cup of Nectar;  
And drink to this Celestial Hector-

He break my Darts, or hurt my Pow'r!  
He, Leda's Swan, and Danae's Show'r!  
Go, bid him his Wife's Tongue restrain;  
And mind his Thunder, and his Rain.-

My Darts? O certainly I'll give 'em:  
From Cloe's Eyes He shall receive 'em.  
There's One, the Best in all my Quiver,  
Twang! thro' his very Heart and Liver.  
He then shall Pine, and Sigh, and Rave:  
Good Lord! what Bustle shall We have!  
Neptune must straight be sent to Sea;  
And Flora summon'd twice a-day:



One must find Shells, and t'other Flow'rs,  
For cooling Grotts, and fragrant Bow'rs,  
That Cloe may be serv'd in State:  
The Hours must at Her Toilet wait:  
Whilst all the reasoning Fools below,  
Wonder their Watches go too slow.  
Lybs must fly South, and Eurus East,  
For Jewels for Her Hair and Breast:  
No Matter tho' their cruel Haste  
Sink Cities, and lay Forrests waste.  
No Matter tho' This Fleet be lost;  
Or That lie wind-bound on the Coast.  
What whis'pring in my Mother's Ear!  
What Care, that Juno shou'd not hear!  
What Work among You Scholar Gods!  
Phoebus must write Him am'rous Odes:  
And Thou, poor Cousin, must compose  
His Letters in submissive Prose:  
Whilst haughty Cloe, to sustain  
The Honour of My mystic Reign,  
Shall all his Gifts and Vows disdain;  
And laugh at your Old Bully's Pain.  
Dear Couz, said Hermes in a Fright,  
For Heav'n sake keep Your Darts: Good Night.

Matthew Prior

# Merry Andrew

Sly Merry Andrew, the last Southwark fair;  
(At Bartholomew he did not much appear,  
So peevish was the dict of the Mayor)  
At Southwark, therefore, as his tricks he show'd,  
To please our masters, and his friends the crowd,  
A huge neat's tongue he in his right hand held,  
His left was with a good black pudding fill'd.  
With a grave look, in this odd equipage,  
The clownish mimic traverses the stage:  
Why, how now, Andrew! cries his brother droll,  
To-day's conceit methinks is something dull.  
Come on, Sir, to our worthy friends explain  
What does your emblematic Worship mean?  
Quoth Andrew, honest English let us speak;  
Your emble - (what d'ye call it?) is Heathen Greek.  
To tongue or pudding thou hast no pretence;  
Learning thy talent is, but mine is sense.  
That busy fool I was which thou art now,  
Desirous to correct, not knowing how,  
Blaming or praising things as I thought fit:  
I for this conduct had what I deserved.  
And dealing honestly was almost starved.  
But thanks to my indulgent stars, I eat,  
Since I have found the secret to be great.  
O dearest Andrew, says the humble droll,  
Henceforth may I obey and thou control;  
Provided thou impart thy useful skill -  
Bow then, says Andrew, and for once I will.-  
Be of your patron's mind, whate'er he says;  
Sleep very much; think little, and talk less:  
Mind neither good nor bad, nor right nor wrong,  
But eat your pudding, slave, and hold your tongue.

A reverend prelate stopp'd his couch-and-six  
To laugh a little at our Andrew's tricks:  
But when he heard him give this golden rule,  
Drive on (he cried) this fellow is no fool.



## Nell And John

When Nell, given o'er by the doctor, was dying,  
And John at the chimney stood decently crying,  
'Tis in vain said the woman to make such ado,  
For to our long home we must all of us go.

True, Nell, replied John; but what yet is the worst  
For us that remain, the best always go first;  
Remember, dear wife, that I said so last year,  
When you lost your white heifer, and I my brown mare.

Matthew Prior

# Nonpareil

Let others from the Town retire,  
And in the fields seek new delight;  
My Phillis does such joys inspire,  
No other objects please my sight.

In her alone I find whate'er  
Beauties a country landscape grace;  
No shade so lovely as her hair,  
Nor plain so sweet as is her face.

Lilies and roses there combine,  
More beautiful than in flowery field;  
Transparent is her skin so fine,  
To this each crystal stream must yield.

Her voice more sweet than warbling sound,  
Though sung by nightingale or lark;  
Her eyes such lustre dart around,  
Compared to them the sun is dark.

Both light and vital heat they give,  
Cherish'd by them my love takes root;  
From her kind looks does life receive,  
Grows a fair plant, bears flowers and fruit.

Such fruit I ween did once deceive  
The common parent of mankind,  
And made transgress our mother Eve,  
Poison its core, though fair its rind.

Yet so delicious is its taste,  
I cannot from the bait abstain,  
But to th' enchanting pleasure haste,  
Though I were sure 'twould end in pain.

Matthew Prior

# Ode - Promesse De L'Amour

Hier, l'Amour touche du son  
Que rendoit ma lire qu'il aime,  
Me promet pour une chanson,  
Deux baisers de sa mere mesme.

Non, luy dis-je, tu scals mes voeux,  
Tu connois quel penchant m'entraîne,  
Au lieu d'un j'en offre deux,  
Pour un seul baiser de Climene.

Il me promet ce deux retour,  
Ma lire en eut plus de tendresse;  
Mais vous, Climene, de l'amour  
Aquiterez-vous la promesse?

Matthew Prior

## On A Fart - Let In The House Of Commons

Reader, I was born, and cried;  
I crack'd, I smelt, and so I died.  
Like Julius Caesar's was my death,  
Who in the senate lost his breath.  
Much alike entomb'd does lie  
The noble Romulus and I:  
And when I died, like Flora fair,  
I left the commonwealth my heir.

Matthew Prior

## On A Picture Of Seneca Dying In A Bath, By Jordain

While cruel Nero only drains  
The moral Spaniard's ebbing veins,  
By study worn, and slack with age,  
How dull, how thoughtless is his rage!  
Heighten'd revenge he should have took,  
He should have burnt his tutor's book;  
And long have reign's supreme in vice;  
One noble wretch can only rise;  
'Tis he whose fury shall deface  
The Stoic's Image in this piece,  
For, while unhurt, divine Jordain,  
Thy work and Seneca's remain,  
He still has body, still has soul,  
And lives and speaks restored and whole.

Matthew Prior



## On Beauty. A Riddle

Resolve Me, Cloe, what is This:  
Or forfeit me One precious Kiss.  
'Tis the first Off-spring of the Graces;  
Bears diff'rent Forms in diff'rent Places;  
Acknowledg'd fine, where-e'er beheld;  
Yet fancy'd finer, when conceal'd.  
'Twas Flora's Wealth, and Circe's Charm;  
Pandora's Box of Good and Harm:  
'Twas Mars's Wish, Endymion's Dream;  
Apelles' Draught, and Ovid's Theme.  
This guided Theseus thro' the Maze;  
And sent Him home with Life and Praise.  
But This undid the Phrygian Boy;  
And blew the Flames that ruin'd Troy.  
This shew'd great Kindness to old Greece,  
And help'd rich Jason to the Fleece.  
This thro' the East just Vengeance hurl'd,  
And lost poor Anthony the World.  
Injur'd, tho' Lucrece found her Doom;  
This banish'd Tyranny from Rome.  
Appeas'd, tho' Lais gain'd her Hire;  
This set Persepolis on Fire.  
For This Alcides learn'd to Spin;  
His Club laid down, and Lion's Skin.  
For This Apollo deign'd to keep,  
With servile Care, a Mortal's Sheep.  
For This the Father of the Gods,  
Content to leave His high Abodes,  
In borrow'd Figures loosely ran,  
Europa's Bull, and Leda's Swan.  
For This He reassumes the Nod;  
(While Semele commands the God)  
Launces the Bolt, and shakes the Poles;  
Tho' Momus laughs, and Juno scolds.

Here list'ning Cloe smil'd, and said;  
Your Riddle is not hard to read:  
I Guess it—Fair one, if You do;  
Need I, alas! the Theme pursue?

For This, Thou see'st, for This I leave,  
Whate'er the World thinks Wise or Grave,  
Ambition, Business, Friendship, News,  
My useful Books, and serious Muse.  
For This I willingly decline  
The Mirth of Feasts, and Joys of Wine;  
And chuse to sit and talk with Thee,  
(As Thy great Orders may decree)  
Of Cocks and Bulls, of Flutes and Fiddles,  
Of Idle Tales, and foolish Riddles.

Matthew Prior

# On Bishop Atterbury's Burying The Duke Of Buckingham, 1721

I have no hopes, the Duke he says, and dies.  
In sure and certain hopes - the prelate cries:  
Of these two learned peers, I pr'ythee say, man,  
Who is the lying knave, the priest or layman?  
The Duke he stands an infidel confess'd:  
He's our dear brother, quoth the lordly priest.  
The Duke, though knave, still brother dear he cries  
And who can say the reverend Prelate lies?

Matthew Prior

# On My Birthday, July 21

I, MY dear, was born to-day--  
So all my jolly comrades say:  
They bring me music, wreaths, and mirth,  
And ask to celebrate my birth:  
Little, alas! my comrades know  
That I was born to pain and woe;  
To thy denial, to thy scorn,  
Better I had ne'er been born:  
I wish to die, even whilst I say--  
'I, my dear, was born to-day.'  
I, my dear, was born to-day:  
Shall I salute the rising ray,  
Well-spring of all my joy and woe?  
Clotilda, thou alone dost know.  
Shall the wreath surround my hair?  
Or shall the music please my ear?  
Shall I my comrades' mirth receive,  
And bless my birth, and wish to live?  
Then let me see great Venus chase  
Imperious anger from thy face;  
Then let me hear thee smiling say--  
'Thou, my dear, wert born to-day.'

Matthew Prior

## On The Same Person (Who Wrote Ill, And Spake Worse, Against Me)

While faster than his costive brain indites  
Philo's quick hand in flowing letters writes;  
His case appears to me like honest Teague's,  
When he was run away with by his legs.  
Phoebus, give Philo o'er himself command;  
Quicken his senses, or restrain his hand;  
Let him be kept from paper, pen, and ink;  
So he may cease to write, and learn to think.

Matthew Prior

## Pallas And Venus. An Epigram

The Trojan swain had judged the great dispute,  
And beauty's power obtain'd the golden fruit,  
When Venus, loose in all her naked charms,  
Met Jove's great daughter clad in shining arms,  
The wanton goddess view'd the warlike maid  
From head to foot, and tauntingly she said;

Yield sister; rival, yield: naked, you see,  
I vanquish: guess how potent I should be,  
If to the field I came in armour dress'd,  
Dreadful like thine my shield, and terrible my crest!

The warrior goddess with disdain replied,  
Thy folly, child, is equal to thy pride:  
Let a brave enemy for once advise,  
And Venus (if 'tis possible) be wise:  
Thou to be strong must put off every dress;  
Thy only armour is thy nakedness;  
And more than once (or thou art much belied)  
By Mars himself that armour has been tried.

Matthew Prior

## Partial Fame

The sturdy man, if he in love obtains,  
In open pomp and triumph reigns:  
The subtle woman, if she should succeed,  
Disowns the honour of the deed.  
Though he for all his boast is forced to yield,  
Though she can always keep the field,  
He vaunts his conquests, she conceals her shame:  
How partial is the voice of Fame!

Matthew Prior

## Paulo Purganti And His Wife: An Honest, But A Simple Pair

Beyond the fix'd and settl'd Rules  
Of Vice and Virtue in the Schools,  
Beyond the Letter of the Law,  
Which keeps our Men and Maids in Awe,  
The better Sort should set before 'em  
A Grace, a Manner, a Decorum;  
Something, that gives their Acts a Light;  
Makes 'em not only just, but bright;  
And sets 'em in that open Fame,  
Which witty Malice cannot blame.

For 'tis in Life, as 'tis in Painting:  
Much may be Right, yet much be Wanting:  
From Lines drawn true, our Eye may trace  
A Foot, a Knee, a Hand, a Face:  
May justly own the Picture wrought  
Exact to Rule, exempt from Fault:  
Yet if the Colouring be not there,  
The Titian Stroke, the Guido Air;  
To nicest Judgment show the Piece;  
At best 'twill only not displease:  
It would not gain on Jersey's Eye:  
Bradford would frown, and set it by.  
Thus in the Picture of our Mind  
The Action may be well design'd;  
Guided by Law, and bound by Duty;  
Yet want this *Je ne sçay* quoy of Beauty:  
And tho' it's Error may be such,  
As Knags and Burgess cannot hit;  
It yet may feel the nicer Touch  
Of Wicherley's or Congreve's Wit.

What is this Talk? replies a Friend:  
And where will this dry Moral end?  
The Truth of what You here lay down  
By some Example should be shown.-  
With all my Heart,-for once;—read on.



An Honest, but a Simple Pair  
(And Twenty other I forbear)  
May serve to make this Thesis clear.

A Doctor of great Skill and Fame,  
Paulo Purganti was his Name,  
Had a good, comely, virtuous Wife:  
No Woman led a better Life:  
She to Intrigues was ev'n hard-hearted:  
She chuckl'd when a Bawd was carted:  
And thought the Nation ne'er wou'd thrive,  
'Till all the bunnys were burnt alive.

On marry'd Men, that dare be bad,  
She thought no Mercy should be had;  
They should be hang'd, or starv'd, or flead,  
Or serv'd like Romish Priests in Swede.-  
In short, all Lewdness She defy'd:  
And stiff was her Parochial Pride.

Yet in an honest Way, the Dame  
Was a great Lover of That same;  
And could from Scripture take her Cue,  
That Husbands should give Wives their Due.

Her Prudence did so justly steer  
Between the Gay and the Severe,  
That if in some Regards She chose  
To curb poor Paulo in too close;  
In others She relax'd again,  
And govern'd with a looser Rein.

Thus tho' She strictly did confine  
The Doctor from Excess of Wine;  
With Oysters, Eggs, and Vermicelli  
She let Him almost burst his Belly:  
Thus drying Coffee was deny'd;  
But Chocolate that Loss supply'd:  
And for Tobacco (who could bear it?)  
Filthy Concomitant of Claret!  
(Blest Revolution!) one might see  
Eringo Roots, and Bohé Tea.

She often set the Doctor's Band,  
And strok'd his Beard, and squeez'd his Hand:  
Kindly complain'd, that after Noon  
He went to pore on Books too soon:  
She held it wholesomer by much,  
To rest a little on the Couch:—  
About his Waste in Bed a-nights  
She clung so close—for fear of Sprites.

The Doctor understood the Call;  
But had not always wherewithal.

The Lion's Skin too short, you know,  
(As Plutarch's Morals finely show)  
Was lengthen'd by the Fox's Tail:  
And Art supplies, where Strength may fail.

Unwilling then in Arms to meet  
The Enemy, He could not beat;  
He strove to lengthen the Campaign,  
And save his Forces by Chicane.  
Fabius, the Roman Chief, who thus  
By fair Retreat grew Maximus,  
Shows us, that all that Warrior can do  
With Force inferior, is Cunctando.

One Day then, as the Foe drew near,  
With Love, and Joy, and Life, and Dear;  
Our Don, who knew this Tittle Tattle  
Did, sure as Trumpet, call to Battel;  
Thought it extreamly à propos,  
To ward against the coming Blow:  
To ward: but how? Ay, there's the Question:  
Fierce the Assault, unarm'd the Bastion.

The Doctor feign'd a strange Surprise:  
He felt her Pulse: he view'd her Eyes:  
That beat too fast: These rowl'd too quick:  
She was, He said, or would be Sick:  
He judg'd it absolutely good,  
That She should purge and cleanse her Blood.

Spaw Waters for that end were got:  
If they past easily or not,  
What matters it? the Lady's Feaver  
Continu'd violent as ever.

For a Distemper of this Kind,  
(Blackmore and Hans are of my Mind)  
If once it youthful Blood infects,  
And chiefly of the Female Sex;  
Is scarce remov'd by Pill or Potion;  
What-e'er might be our Doctor's Notion.

One luckless Night then, as in Bed  
The Doctor and the Dame were laid;  
Again this cruel Feaver came,  
High Pulse, short Breath, and Blood in Flame.  
What Measures shall poor Paulo keep  
With Madam, in this piteous taking?  
She, like Macbeth, has murder'd Sleep,  
And won't allow Him Rest, tho' waking.  
Sad State of Matters! when We dare  
Nor ask for Peace, nor offer War:  
Nor Livy nor Comines have shown,  
What in this Juncture may be done.  
Grotius might own, that Paulo's Case is  
Harder, than any which He places  
Amongst his Belli and his Pacis.

He strove, alas! but strove in vain,  
By dint of Logic to maintain,  
That all the Sex was born to grieve,  
Down to her Ladyship from Eve.  
He rang'd his Tropes, and preach'd up Patience;  
Back'd his Opinion with Quotations,  
Divines and Moralists; and run ye on  
Quite thro' from Seneca to Bunyan.  
As much in vain He bid Her try  
To fold her Arms, to close her Eye;  
Telling Her, Rest would do Her Good;  
If any thing in Nature cou'd:  
So held the Greeks quite down from Galen,  
Masters and Princes of the Calling:

So all our Modern Friends maintain  
(Tho' no great Greeks) in Warwick-Lane.

Reduce, my Muse, the wand'ring Song:  
A Tale should never be too long.

The more He talk'd, the more She burn'd,  
And sigh'd, and tost, and groan'd, and turn'd:  
At last, I wish, said She, my Dear-  
(And whisper'd something in his Ear)  
You wish! wish on, the Doctor cries:  
Lord! when will Womankind be wise?  
What, in your Waters? are You mad?  
Why Poyson is not half so bad.  
I'll do it-But I give You Warning:  
You'll die before To-morrow Morning.-  
'Tis kind, my Dear, what You advise;  
The Lady with a Sigh replies:  
But Life, You know, at best is Pain:  
And Death is what We should disdain  
So do it therefore, and Adieu:  
For I will die for Love of You:-  
Let wanton Wives by Death be scar'd:  
But, to my Comfort, I'm prepar'd.

Matthew Prior

## Phyllis's Age

How old may Phyllis be, you ask,  
Whose beauty thus all hearts engages?  
To answer is no easy task;  
For she has really two ages.

Stiff in brocard, and pinch'd in stays,  
Her patches, paint, and jewels on;  
All day let envy view her face;  
And Phyllis is but twenty-one.

Paint, patches, jewels laid aside,  
At night astronomers agree,  
The evening has the day belied;  
And Phyllis is some forty-three.

Matthew Prior

# Presented To The King, At His Arrival In Holland, After The Discovery Of The Conspiracy. 1696

Ye careful Angels, whom eternal Fate  
Ordains, on Earth and human Acts to wait;  
Who turn with secret Pow'r this restless Ball,  
And bid predestin'd Empires rise and fall:  
Your sacred Aid religious Monarchs own;  
When first They merit, then ascend the Throne:  
But Tyrants dread Ye, lest your just Decree  
Transfer the Pow'r, and set the People free:  
See rescu'd Britain at your Altars bow:  
And hear her Hymns your happy Care avow:  
That still her Axes and her Rods support  
The Judge's Frown, and grace the awful Court:  
That Law with all her pompous Terror stands,  
To wrest the Dagger from the Traitor's Hands;  
And rigid Justice reads the fatal Word;  
Poises the Ballance first, then draws the Sword.

Britain Her Safety to your Guidance owns,  
That She can sep'rate Parricides from Sons;  
That, impious Rage disarm'd, She lives and Reigns,  
Her Freedom kept by Him, who broke Her Chains.

And Thou, great Minister, above the rest  
Of Guardian Spirits, be Thou for ever blest:  
Thou, who of old wert sent to Israel's Court,  
With secret Aid great David's strong Support;  
To mock the frantick Rage of cruel Saul;  
And strike the useless Jav'lin to the Wall.  
Thy later Care o'er William's Temples held,  
On Boyn's propitious Banks, the heav'nly Shield;  
When Pow'r Divine did Sov'reign Right declare;  
And Cannons mark'd, Whom They were bid to spare.

Still, blessed Angel, be thy Care the same;  
Be William's Life untouch'd, as is his Fame:  
Let Him own Thine, as Britain owns His Hand:  
Save Thou the King, as He has sav'd the Land.

We Angels Forms in pious Monarchs view:  
We reverence William; for He acts like You;  
Like You, Commission'd to chastize and bless,  
He must avenge the World, and give it Peace.

Indulgent Fate our potent Pray'r receives;  
And still Britannia smiles, and William lives:  
The Hero dear to Earth, by Heav'n belov'd,  
By Troubles must be vex'd, by Dangers prov'd:  
His Foes must aid to make his Fame compleat,  
And fix his Throne secure on their Defeat.

So, tho' with sudden Rage the Tempest comes;  
Tho' the Winds roar; and tho' the Water foams;  
Imperial Britain on the Sea looks down,  
And smiling sees her Rebel Subject frown:  
Striking her Cliff the Storm confirms her Pow'r:  
The Waves but whiten her Triumphant Shore:  
In vain They wou'd advance, in vain retreat:  
Broken They dash, and perish at her Feet.

For William still new Wonders shall be shown:  
The Pow'rs that rescu'd, shall preserve the Throne.  
Safe on his Darling Britain's joyful Sea,  
Behold, the Monarch plows his liquid Way:  
His Fleets in Thunder thro' the World declare,  
Whose Empire they obey, whose Arms they bear.  
Bless'd by aspiring Winds He finds the Strand  
Blacken'd with Crowds; He sees the Nations stand  
Blessing his Safety, proud of his Command.  
In various Tongues He hears the Captains dwell  
On their great Leader's Praise: by Turns They tell,  
And listen, each with emulous Glory fir'd,  
How William conquer'd, and how France retir'd;  
How Belgia freed the Hero's Arm confess'd,  
But trembl'd for the Courage which She blest.

O Louis, from this great Example know,  
To be at once a Hero, and a Foe:  
By sounding Trumpets, Hear, and rat'ling Drums,  
When William to the open Vengeance comes:

And See the Soldier plead the Monarch's Right,  
Heading His Troops, and Foremost in the Fight.

Hence then, close Ambush and perfidious War,  
Down to your Native Seats of Night repair.  
And Thou, Bellona, weep thy cruel Pride  
Restrain'd, behind the Victor's Chariot ty'd  
In brazen Knots, and everlasting Chains.  
(So Europe's Peace, so William's Fate ordains.)  
While on the Iv'ry Chair, in happy State  
He sits, Secure in Innocence, and Great  
In regal Clemency; and views beneath  
Averted Darts of Rage, and pointless Arms of Death.

Matthew Prior



# Protogenes And Apelles

When poets wrote and painters drew  
As Nature pointed out the view,  
Ere Gothic forms were known in Greece  
To spoil the well-proportion'd piece;  
And in our verse ere Monkish rhymes  
Had jangled their fantastic chimes;  
Ere on the flowery lands of Rhodes  
Those knights had fix'd their dull abodes,  
Who knew not much to paint or write,  
Nor cared to pray, nor dared to fight;  
Protogenes, historians note,  
Lived there, a burgess, scot and lot;  
And as old Pliny's writings show  
Apelles did the same at Co.  
Agreed these points of time and place,  
Proceed we in the present case.

Piqued by Protogenes's fame,  
From Co to Rhodes Apelles came  
To see a rival and a friend,  
Prepared to censure or commend;  
Here to absolve, and there object,  
As art with candour might direct.  
He sails, he lands, he comes, he rings;  
His servants follow with the things:  
Appears the governante of the house,  
For such in Greece were much in use;  
If young or handsome, yea or no,  
Concerns not me or thee to know.

Does Squire Protogenes live here?  
Yes Sir, says he, with gracious air,  
And curtesy low, but just call'd out  
By lords peculiarly devout,  
Who came on purpose, Sir, to borrow  
Our Venus for the feast to-morrow  
To grace the church: 'tis Venus day;  
I hope Sir you intend to stay  
To see our Venus: 'tis the piece

The most renown'd throughout all Greece  
So like th' original they say;  
But I have no great skill that way.  
But, Sir, at six ('tis now past three)  
Dromo must make my master's tea:  
At six, Sir, if you please to come,  
You'll find my master, Sir, at home.

Tea, says a critic, big with laughter,  
Was found some twenty years ages after.  
Authors, before they write, should read,  
'Tis very true; but we'll proceed.  
And, Sir, at present would you please  
To leave your name - Fair maiden, yes.  
Reach me that board. No sooner spoke  
But done. With one judicious stroke  
On the plain ground Appelles drew  
A circle regularly true.  
And will you please, Sweet-heart, said he,  
To show your master this from me?  
By it he presently will know  
How painters write their names at Co.

He gave the pannel to the maid.  
Smiling and curtesying, Sir, she said,  
I shall not fail to tell my master:  
And, Sir, for fear of all disaster  
I'll keep it my own self : Safe bind,  
Says the old proverb and safe find.  
So, Sir, as sure as a key or lock -  
Your servant, Sir, - at six o'clock.

Again at six Apelles came,  
Found the same prating civil dame.  
Sir, that my master has been here  
Will by the board itself appear:  
If from the perfect line be found  
He has presumed to swell the round,  
Or colours on the draught to lay,  
'Tis thus, (he order'd me to say)  
Thus write the painters of this isle;  
Let those of Co remark the style.

She said; and to his hand restored  
The rival pledge, the missive board.  
Upon the happy line were laid  
Such obvious light and easy shade,  
That Paris' apple stood confest,  
Or Leda's egg, or Cloe's breast.

Apelles view'd the finish'd piece;  
And live, said he, the arts of Greece!  
Howe'er Protogenes and I  
May in our rival talents vie;  
Howe'er our works may have exprest  
Who truest drew or colour'd best,  
When he beheld my flowing line  
He found at least I could design;  
And from his artful round I grant  
That he with perfect skill can paint.

The dullest genius cannot fail  
To find the moral of my tale;  
That the distinguish'd part of men,  
With compass, pencil, sword, or pen,  
Should in life's visit leave their name  
In characters which may proclaim  
That they with ardour strove to raise  
At once their arts and country's praise;  
And in their working took great care  
That all was full, and round, and fair.

Matthew Prior

# Seeing The Duke Of Ormond's Picture, At Sir Godfrey Kneller's

Out from the injured canvas, Kneller, strike  
These lines too faint; the picture is not like.  
Exalt thy thought, and try thy toil again:  
Dreadful in arms, on Landen's glorious plain  
Place Ormond's Duke: impendent in the air  
Let his keen sabre, comet-like, appear,  
Where'er it points denouncing death: below  
Draw routed squadrons, and the numerous foe  
Falling beneath, or flying from his blow;  
Till weak with wounds, and cover'd o'er with blood,  
Which from the patriot's breast in torrents flow'd,  
He faints: he steed no longer hears the rein,  
But stumbles o'er the heap his hand had slain.  
And now exhausted, bleeding, pale he lies,  
Lovely, sad object! in his half-closed eyes  
Stern Vengeance yet and hostile Terror stand:  
His front yet threatens, and his frowns command.  
The Gallic chiefs their troops around him call,  
Fear to approach him, though they see him fall.

O Kneller! could thy shades and lights express  
The perfect hero in that glorious dress,  
Ages to come might Ormond's picture know,  
And palms for thee beneath his laurels grow;  
In spite of time thy work might ever thine,  
Nor Homer's colours last so long as thine.

Matthew Prior

# Solomon On The Vanity Of The World, A Poem. In Three Books. - Knowledge. Book I.

The bewailing of man's miseries hath been elegantly and copiously set forth by many, in the writings as well of philosophers as divines; and it is both a pleasant and a profitable contemplation.

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Lord Bacon's Advancement of Learning.

## The Argument

Solomon, seeking happiness from knowledge, convenes the learned men of his kingdom; requires them to explain to him the various operations and effects of Nature; discourses of vegetables, animals and man; proposes some questions concerning the origin and situation of the habitable earth: proceeds to examine the system of the visible heaven: doubts if there may not be a plurality of worlds; inquires into the nature of spirits and angels, and wishes to be more fully informed as to the attributes of the Supreme Being. He is imperfectly answered by the Rabbins and Doctors; blames his own curiosity: and concludes that, as to human science, All Is Vanity.

Ye sons of men with just regard attend,  
Observe the preacher, and believe the friend,  
Whose serious muse inspires him to explain  
That all we act and all we think is vain:  
That in this pilgrimage of seventy years,  
O'er rocks of perils and through vales of tears  
Destined to march, our doubtful steps we tend,  
Tired with the toil, yet fearful of its end:  
That from the womb we take our fatal shares  
Of follies, passions, labours, tumults, cares;  
And at approach of death shall only know  
The truths which from these pensive numbers flow,  
That we pursue false joy and suffer real wo.

Happiness! object of that waking dream  
Which we call life, mistaking; fugitive theme  
Of my pursuing verse: ideal shade,

Notional good; by fancy only made,  
And by tradition nursed; fallacious fire,  
Whose dancing beams mislead our fond desire;  
Cause of our care, and error of our mind:  
Oh! hadst thou ever been by Heaven design'd  
To Adam, and his mortal race, the boon  
Entire had been reserved for Solomon;  
On me the partial lot had been bestow'd,  
And in my cup the golden draught had flow'd.

But, O! ere yet original man was made,  
Ere the foundations of this earth were laid,  
It was opponent to our search ordain'd,  
That joy still sought should never be attain'd:  
This sad experience cites me to reveal,  
And what I dictate is from what I feel.

Born, as I as, great David's favourite son,  
Dear to my people on the Hebrew throne,  
Sublime my court, with Ophir's treasures bless'd.  
My name extended to the farthest east,  
My body clothed with every outward grace,  
Strength in my limbs, and beauty in my face,  
My shining thought with fruitful notions crown'd,  
Quick my invention, and my judgement sound:  
Arise, (I communed with myself) arise,  
Think to be happy; to be great be wise;  
Content of spirit must from science flow,  
For 'tis a godlike attribute to know.

I said, and sent my edict through the land;  
Around my throne the letter'd Rabbins stand,  
Historic leaves revolve, long volumes spread,  
The old discoursing as the younger read!  
Attend I heard, proposed my doubts, and said:

The vegetable world, each plant and tree,  
Its seed, its name, its nature, its degree,  
I am allow'd, as Fame reports, to know,  
From the fair cedar on the craggy brow  
Of Lebanon nodding supremely tall,  
To creeping moss, and hyssop on the wall;

Yet just and conscious to myself, I find  
A thousand doubts oppose the searching mind.

I know not why the beach delights the glade,  
With boughs extended and a rounder shade,  
Whilst towering firs in conic forms arise,  
And with a pointed spear divide the skies:  
Nor why again the changing oak should shell  
The yearly honour of his stately head,  
Whilst the distinguish'd yew is ever seen  
Unchanged his branch, and permanent his green;  
Wanting the sun why does the caltha fade?  
Why does the cypress flourish in the shade?  
The fig and date, why love they to remain  
In middle station and an even plain,  
While in the lower marsh the gourd is found,  
And while the hill with olive shade is crown'd?  
Why does one climate and one soil endue  
The blushing poppy with a crimson hue,  
Yet leave the lily pale, and tinge the violet blue?  
Why does the fond carnation love to shoot  
A various colour from one parent root,  
While the fantastic tulip strives to break  
In twofold beauty and a parted streak?  
The twining jasmine and the blushing rose  
With lavish grace their morning scents disclose;  
The smelling tuberose and jonquil declare,  
The stronger impulse of an evening air.  
Whence has the tree (resolve me) or the flower  
A various instinct or a different power?  
Why should one earth, one clime, one stream, one breath,  
Raise this to strength, and sicken that to death?  
Whence does it happen that the plant, which well  
We name the sensitive, should move and feel?  
Whence know her leaves to answer her command,  
And with quick horror fly the neighbouring hand?

Along the sunny bank or watery mead  
Ten thousand stalks their various blossoms spread;  
Peaceful and lowly, in their native soil,  
They neither know to spin nor care to toil,  
Yet with confess'd magnificence deride

Our vile attire and impotence of pride.  
The cowslip smiles in brighter yellow dress'd  
Than that which veils the nubile virgin's breast;  
A fairer red stands blushing in the rose  
Than that which on the bridegroom's vestment flows.  
Take but the humblest lily of the field,  
And if our pride will to our reason yield,  
It must by sure comparison be shown,  
That on the regal seat great David's son,  
Array'd in all his robes and types of power,  
Shines with less glory than that simple flower.

Of fishes next, my friends, I would inquire:  
How the mute race engender or respire,  
From the small fry that glide on Jordan's stream  
Unmark'd a multitude without a name,  
To that leviathan, who o'er the seas  
Immense rolls onward his impetuous ways,  
And mocks the wind, and in the tempest plays?  
How they in warlike bands march greatly forth,  
To southern climes directing their career,  
Their station changing with th' inverted year?  
How all with careful knowledge are endued,  
To choose their proper bed, and wave, and food;  
To guard their spawn, and educate their brood?

Of birds, how each, according to her kind,  
Proper materials for her nest can find,  
And build a frame which deepest thought in man  
Would or amend or imitate in vain?  
How in small flights they know to try their young,  
And teach the callow child her parent's song?  
Why these frequent the plain, and those the wood?  
Why every land has her specific brood?  
Where the tall crane or winding swallow goes,  
Fearful of gathering winds and falling snows;  
If into rocks or hollow trees they creep,  
In temporary death confined to sleep,  
Or, conscious of the coming evil, fly  
To milder regions and a southern sky?

Of beasts and creeping insects shall we trace;



The wondrous nature and the various race;  
Or wild or tame, or friend to man or foe,  
Of us what they or what of them we know?

Tell me, ye Studious! who pretend to see  
Far into Nature's bosom, whence the bee  
Was first inform'd her venturous flight to steer  
Through trackless paths and an abyss of air?  
Whence she avoids the slimy marsh, and knows  
The fertile hills, where sweeter herbage grows,  
And honey-making flowers their opening buds disclose?

How, from the thicken'd mist and setting sun  
Finds she the labour of her day is done?  
Who taught her against the winds and rains to strive,  
To bring her burden to the certain hive,  
And through the liquid fields again to pass  
Duteous, and hearkening to the sounding brass?

And, O thou Sluggard! tell me why the ant,  
'Midst summer's plenty, thinks of winter's want,  
By constant journeys careful to prepare  
Her stores, and bringing home the corny ear,  
By what instruction does she bite the grain,  
Lest hid in earth, and taking root again,  
It mighty elude the foresight of her care?  
Distinct in either insect's deed appear  
The marks of thought, contrivance, hope, and fear.

Fix thy corporeal and internal eye  
On the young gnat or new-engender'd fly,  
Or the vile worm, that yesterday began  
To crawl, thy fellow-creatures, abject man!  
Like thee they breathe, they move, they taste, they see,  
They show their passions by their acts like thee;  
Darting their stings, they previously declare  
Design'd revenge, and fierce intent of war:  
Laying their eggs, they evidently prove  
The genial power and full effect of love.  
Each then has organs to digest his his food,  
One to beget, and one receive the brood;  
Has limbs and sinews, blood, and heart, and brain,

Life and her proper functions to sustain,  
Though the whole fabric smaller than a grain.  
What more can our penurious reason grant  
To the large whale or castled elephant?  
To those enormous terrors of the Nile,  
The crested snake and long-tail'd crocodile,  
Than that all differ but in shape and name,  
Each destined to a less or larger frame?

For potent Nature loves a various act,  
Prone to enlarge, or studious to contract;  
Now forms her work too small, now too immense,  
And scorns the measures of our feeble sense.  
The object, spread too far, or raised too high,  
Denies its real image to the eye;  
Too little, it eludes the dazzled sight,  
Becomes mix'd blackness or unparted light.  
Water and air the varied form confound;  
The straight looks crooked, and the square grows round.

Thus while with fruitless hope and weary pain  
We seek great nature's power, but seek in vain,  
Safe sits the goddess in her dark retreat,  
Around her myriads of ideas wait,  
And endless shapes, which the mysterious queen  
Can take or quit, can alter or retain,  
As from our lost pursuit she wills to hide  
Her close decrees, and chasten human pride.

Untamed and fierce the tiger still remains:  
He tires his life in biting of his chains:  
For the kind gifts of water and of food  
Ungrateful, and returning ill for good,  
He seeks his keeper's flesh and thirsts his blood:  
While the strong camel and the generous horse,  
Restrain'd and awed by man's inferior force,  
Do to the rider's will their rage submit,  
And answer to the spur, and own the bit;  
Stretch their glad mouths to meet the feeder's hand,  
Pleased with his weight, and proud of his command.

Again: the lonely fox roams far abroad,

On secret rapine bent and midnight fraud;  
Now haunts the cliff, now traverses the lawn,  
And flies the hated neighbourhood of man;  
While the kind spaniel and the faithful hound,  
Likest that fox in shape and species found,  
Refuses through these cliffs and lawns to roam,  
Pursues the noted path, and covets home,  
Does with kind joy domestic faces meet,  
Takes what the glutton child denies to eat,  
And dying, licks his long-loved master's feet.

By what immediate cause they are inclined,  
In many acts, 'tis hard I own to find.  
I see in others, or I think I see,  
That strict their principles and ours agree.  
Evil, like us, they shun, and covet good,  
Abhor the poison, and receive the food:  
Like us they love or hate; like us they know  
To joy the friend, or grapple with the foe,  
With seeming thought their action they intend,  
And use the means proportion'd to the end.  
Then vainly the philosopher avers  
That reason guides our deed and instinct theirs.  
How can we justly different causes frame,  
When the effects entirely are the same?  
Instinct and reason how can we divide?  
'Tis the fool's ignorance and the pedant's pride.

With the same folly sure man vaunts his sway  
If the brute beast refuses to obey.  
For, tell me, when the empty boaster's word  
Proclaims himself the universal lord,  
Does he not tremble lest the lion's paw  
Should join his plea against the fancy'd law?  
Would not the learned coward leave the chair,  
If in the schools or porches should appear  
The fierce hyaena or the foaming bear?

The combatant too late the field declines  
When now the sword is girded to his loins.  
When the swift vessel flies before the wind,  
Too late the sailor views the land behind:

And 'tis too late now back again to bring  
Inquiry, raised and towering on the wing;  
Forward she strives, averse to be withheld  
From nobler objects and a larger field.

Consider with me his ethereal space,  
Yielding to earth and sea the middle place:  
Anxious I ask ye how the pensile ball  
Should never strive to rise nor never fear to fall?  
When I reflect how the revolving sun  
Does round our globe his crooked journeys run,  
I doubt of many lands if they contain  
Or herd or beast, or colonies of man:  
If any nation pass their destined days  
Beneath the neighbouring sun's directer rays;  
If any suffer on the polar coast  
The rage of Arctos and eternal frost.

May not the pleasure of Omnipotence  
To each of these some secret good dispense?  
Those who amidst the torrid regions live  
May they not gales unknown to us receive?  
See daily showers rejoice the thirsty earth,  
And bless the glowery buds' succeeding birth?  
May they not pity us condemn'd to bear  
The various heaven of an obliquer sphere,  
While, by fix'd laws, and with a just return,  
They feel twelve hours that shade for twelve that burn,  
And praise the neighbouring sun whose constant flame  
Enlightens them with seasons still the same?  
And may not those whose distant lot is cast  
North, beyond Tartary's extended waste,  
Where through the plains of one continual day  
Six shining months pursue their even way,  
And six succeeding urge their dusky flight,  
Obscured with vapours, and o'erwhelm'd in night.  
May not, I ask, the natives of these climes  
(As annals may inform succeeding times)  
To our quotidian change of heaven prefer  
Their own vicissitude and equal share  
Of day and night disparted through the year?  
May they not scorn our sun's repeated race,

To narrow bounds prescribed and little space,  
Hastening from morn, and headlong driven from noon,  
Half of our daily toil yet scarcely done?  
May they not justly to our climes upbraid  
Shortness of night and penury of shade,  
That ere our wearied limbs are justly bless'd  
With wholesome sleep and necessary rest,  
Another sun demands return of care,  
The remnant toil of yesterday to bear?  
Whilst, when the solar beams salute their sight,  
Bold and secure in half a year of light,  
Uninterrupted voyages they take  
To the remotest wood and farthest lake,  
Manage the fishing, and pursue the course  
With more extended nerves and more continued force;  
And when declining day forsakes their sky,  
When gathering clouds speak gloomy winter nigh,  
With plenty for the coming season bless'd,  
Six solid months (an age) they live, released  
From all the labour, process, clamour, wo,  
Which our sad scenes of daily action know;  
They light the shining lamps, prepare the feast,  
And with full mirth receive the welcome guest,  
Or tell their tender loves (the only care  
Which now they suffer) to the listening fair,  
And raised in pleasure, or reposed in ease,  
(Grateful alternates of substantial peace)  
They bless the long nocturnal influence shed  
On the crown'd goblet and the genial bed.

In foreign isles which our discoverers find,  
Far from this length of continent disjoin'd,  
The rugged bear's or spotted lynx's brood  
Frighten the valleys and infest the wood,  
The hungry crocodile and hissing snake  
Lurk in the troubled stream and fenny brake;  
And man untaught, and ravenous as the beast,  
Does valley, wood, and brake, and stream infest;  
Derived these men and animals their birth  
From trunk of oak or pregnant womb of earth?  
Whence then the old belief, that all began  
In Eden's shade and one created man?

Or grant this progeny was wafted o'er  
By coasting boats from next adjacent shore,  
Would those, from whom we will suppose they spring,  
Slaughter to harmless lands and poison bring?  
Would they on board or bears or lynxes take,  
Fed the she-adder and the brooding snake?  
Or could they think the new-discover'd isle  
Pleased to receive a pregnant crocodile?

And since the savage lineage we must trace  
From Noah saved and his distinguish'd race,  
How should their fathers happen to forget  
The arts which Noah taught, the rules he set,  
To sow the glebe, to plant the generous vine,  
And load with grateful flames the holy shrine?  
While the great sire's unhappy sons are found,  
Unpress'd their vintage, and untill'd their ground,  
Straggling o'er dale and hill in quest of food,  
And rude of arts, of virtue, and of God.

How shall we next o'er earth and seas pursue  
The varied forms of every thing we view;  
That all is changed, though all is still the same  
Fluid the parts, yet durable the frame?  
Of those materials which have been confess'd  
The pristine springs and parents of the rest,  
Each becomes other. Water stopp'd gives birth  
To grass and plants, and thickens into earth;  
Diffused it rises in a higher sphere,  
Dilates its drops, and softens into air:  
Those finer parts of air again aspire,  
Move into warmth, and brighten into fire;  
That fire once more, by thicker air o'ercome,  
And downward forced in earth's capacious womb,  
Alters its particles, is fire no more,  
But lies resplendent dust and shining ore;  
Or, running through the mighty mother's veins,  
Changes its shape, puts off its old remains;  
With watery parts its lessen'd force divides,  
Flows into waves, and rises into tides.

Disparted streams shall from their channels fly,

And deep surcharged by sandy mountains lie  
Obscurely sepulchred. By beating rain  
And furious wind, down to the distant plain  
The hill that hides his head above the skies  
Shall fall: the plain by slow degrees shall rise  
Higher than erst had stood the summit hill;  
For Time must Nature's great behest fulfil.

Thus by a length of years and change of fate  
All things are light or heavy, small or great;  
Thus Jordan's waves shall future clouds appear,  
And Egypt's pyramids refine to air;  
Thus later age shall ask for Pison's flood,  
And travellers inquire where Babel stood.

Now, where we see these changes often fall,  
Sedate we pass them by as natural;  
Where to our eye more rarely they appear,  
The pompous name of prodigy they bear:  
Let active thought these close meanders trace,  
Let human wit their dubious boundaries place.  
Are all things miracle, or nothing such?  
And prove we not too little or too much?

For that a branch cut off, a wither'd rod,  
Should at a word pronounced revive and bud,  
Is this more strange than that the mountain's brow,  
Stripp'd by December's frost, and white with snow,  
Should push in spring ten thousand thousand buds,  
And boast returning leaves and blooming woods?  
That each successive night from opening heaven  
The food of angels should to man be given?  
Is this more strange than that with common bread  
Our fainting bodies every day are fed?  
Than that each grain and seed consumed in earth,  
Raises its store, and multiplies its birth!  
And from the handful which the tiller sows  
The labour'd fields rejoice, and future harvest flows?

Then from whate'er we can to sense produce  
Common and plain, or wondrous and abstruse,  
From Nature's constant or eccentric laws,

The thoughtful soul this general influence draws,  
That an effect must pre-suppose a cause;  
And while she does her upward flight sustain,  
Touching each link of the continued chain,  
At length she is obliged and forced to see  
A first, a source, a life, a Deity;  
What has for ever been, and must for ever be.

This great existence thus by reason found,  
Bless'd by all power, with all perfection crown'd,  
How can we bind or limit his decree  
By what our ear has heard, or eye may see?  
Say then is all in heaps of water lost,  
Beyond the islands and the midland coast?  
Or has that God who gave our world its birth  
Severed those waters by some other earth,  
Countries by future ploughshares to be torn,  
And cities raised by nations yet unborn!  
Ere the progressive course of restless age  
Performs three thousand times its annual stage,  
May not our power and learning be suppress'd,  
And arts and empire learn to travel west?

Where, by the strength of this idea charm'd,  
Lighten'd with glory, and with rapture warm'd,  
Ascends my soul! what sees she white and great  
Amidst subjected seas? An isle, the seat  
Of power and plenty, her imperial throne,  
For justice and for mercy sought and known;  
Virtues sublime, great attributes of heaven,  
From thence to this distinguish'd nation given:  
Yet farther west the western isle extends  
Her happy fame; her armed fleets she sends  
To climates folded yet from human eye,  
And lands which we imagine wave and sky;  
From pole to pole she hears her acts resound,  
And rules an empire by no ocean bound;  
Knows her ships anchor'd, and her sails unfurl'd,  
In other Indies and a second world.

Long shall Britannia (that must be her name)  
Be first in conquest, and preside in fame:



Long shall her favour'd monarchy engage  
The teeth of Envy and the force of Age;  
Revered and happy, she shall long remain  
Of human things least changeable, least vain;  
Yet all must with the general doom comply,  
And this great glorious power though last must die.

Now let us leave this earth, and lift our eye  
To the large convex of yon azure sky:  
Behold it like an ample curtain spread,  
Now streak'd and glowing with the morning red;  
Anon at noon in flaming yellow bright,  
And choosing sable for the peaceful night.  
Ask Reason now whence light and shade were given,  
And whence this great variety of heaven?  
Reason our guide, what can she more reply,  
Than that the sun illuminates the sky?  
Than that night rises from his absent ray,  
And his returning lustre kindles day?

But we expect the morning red in vain,  
'Tis hid in vapours or obscured in rain;  
The noontide yellow we in vain require,  
'Tis black in storm, or red in lightning fire.  
Pitchy and dark the night sometimes appears,  
Friend to our wo, and parent of our fears;  
Our joy and wonder sometimes she excites,  
With stars unnumber'd and eternal lights.  
Send forth, ye wise, send forth your labouring thought,  
Let it return, with empty notions fraught  
Of airy columns every moment broke,  
Of circling whirlpools, and of spheres of smoke;  
Yet this solution but once more affords  
New change of terms and scaffolding of words;  
In other garb my question I receive,  
And take the doubt the very same I gave.  
Lo! as a giant strong, the lusty sun  
Multiplied rounds in one great round does run,  
Two-fold his course, yet constant his career,  
Changing the day, and finishing the year:  
Again, when his descending orb retires,  
And earth perceives the absence of his fires,

The moon affords us her alternate ray,  
And with kind beams distributes fainter day,  
Yet keeps the stages of her monthly race.  
Various her beams, and changeable her face;  
Each planet shining in his proper sphere  
Does with just speed his radiant voyage steer;  
Each sees his lamp with different lustre crown'd;  
Each knows his course with different periods bound,  
And in his passage through the liquid space,  
Nor hastens nor retards his neighbour's race.  
Now shine these planets with substantial rays?  
Does innate lustre gild their measured days?  
Or do they (as your schemes I think have shown)  
Dart furtive beams and glory not their own,  
All servants to that source of light, the sun?

Again: I see ten thousand thousand stars,  
Nor cast in lines, in circles, nor in squares,  
(Poor rules with which our bounded mind is fill'd  
When we would plant, or cultivate, or build)  
But shining with such vast, such various light,  
As speaks the hand that form'd them infinite.  
How mean the order and perfection sought  
In the best product of the human thought,  
Compared to the great harmony that reigns  
In what the Spirit of the world ordains!

Now if the sun to earth transmits his ray,  
Yet does not scorch us with too fierce a day,  
How small a portion of his power is given  
To orbs more distant and remoter heaven?  
And of those stars which our imperfect eye  
Has doom'd and fix'd to one eternal sky,  
Each by native stock of honour great,  
Itself a sun and with transmissive light  
Enlivens worlds denied to human sight;  
Around the circles of their ancient skies  
New moons may grow or wane, may set or rise,  
And other stars may to those suns be earths,  
Give their own elements their proper births,  
Divide their climes, or elevate their pole,  
See their lands flourish, and their oceans roll;

Yet these great orbs, thus radically bright,  
Primitive founts, and origins of light,  
May each to other (as their different sphere  
Makes or their distance or their height appear  
Be seen a nobler or inferior star,  
Myriads of earths, and moons, and suns may lie  
Unmeasured, and unknown by human eye.

In vain we measure this amazing sphere,  
And find and fix its centre here or there,  
Whilst its circumference, scorning to be brought  
E'en into fancied space, illudes our vanquish'd thought.

Where then are all the radiant monsters driven  
With which your guesses fill'd the frighten'd heaven?  
Where will their fictitious images remain?  
In paper schemes, and the Chaldean's brain?

This problem yet, this offspring of a guess,  
Let us for once a child of Truth confess;  
That these fair stars, these objects of delight  
And terror to our searching dazzled sight,  
Are worlds immense, unnumber'd, infinite;  
But do these worlds display their beams, or guide  
Their orbs, to serve thy use, to please thy pride?  
Thyself but dust, thy stature but a span,  
A moment thy duration, foolish man?  
As well may the minutest emmet say  
That Caucasus was raised to pave his way;  
That snail, that Lebanon's extended wood  
Was destined only for his walk and food;  
The vilest cockle gaping on the coast,  
That rounds the ample seas, as well may boast  
The craggy rock projects above the sky,  
That he in safety at its foot may lie;  
And the whole ocean's confluent waters swell,  
Only to quench his thirst, or move and blanch his shell,

A higher flight the venturous goddess tries,  
Leaving material worlds and local skies;  
Inquires what are the beings, where the space,  
That form'd and held the angels' ancient race?

For rebel Lucifer with Michael fought,  
(I offer only what Tradition taught)  
Embattled cherub against cherub rose,  
Did shield to shield and power to power oppose;  
Heaven rung with triumph, hell was fill'd with woes.  
What were these forms, of which your volumes tell  
How some fought great, and others recreant fell?  
These bound to bear an everlasting load,  
Durance of chain, and banishment of God;  
By fatal turns their wretched strength to tire,  
To swim in sulphurous lakes, or land on solid fire;  
While those, exalted to primeval light,  
Excess of blessing, and supreme delight,  
Only perceive some little pause of joys,  
In those great moments when their god employs  
Their ministry to pour his threaten'd hate  
On the proud king or the rebellious state;  
Or to reverse Jehovah's high command,  
And speak the thunder falling from his hand,  
When to his duty the proud king returns,  
And the rebellious state in ashes mourns?  
How can good angels be in heaven confined,  
Or view that Presence which no space can bind?  
Is God above, beneath, or yon', or here?  
He who made all, is he not every where?  
Oh! how can wicked angels find a night  
So dark to hide them from that piercing light  
Which form'd the eye, and gave the power of sight?

What mean I now of angel, when I near  
Firm body, spirit pure, or fluid air?  
Spirits, to action spiritual confined,  
Friends to our thought, and kindred to our mind,  
Should only act and prompt us from within,  
Nor by external eye be ever seen.  
Was it not therefore to our fathers known  
That these had appetite, and limb, and bone?  
Else how could Abram wash their wearied feet,  
Or Sarah please their taste with savoury meat?  
Whence should they fear? or why did Lot engage  
To save their bodies from abusive rage?  
And how could Jacob, in a real fight,

Feel or resist the wrestling angel's might?  
How could a form its strength with matter try?  
Or how a spirit touch a mortal's thigh?

Now are they air condensed, or gather'd rays?  
How guide they then our prayer or keep our ways,  
By stronger blasts still subject to be toss'd,  
By tempests scatter'd, and in whirlwinds lost?

Have they again (as sacred song proclaims)  
Substances real, and existing frames?  
How comes it, since with them we jointly share  
The great effect of one Creator's care,  
That whilst our bodies sicken and decay,  
Theirs are for ever healthy, young, and gay?  
Why, whilst we struggle in this vale beneath  
With want and sorrow, with disease and death,  
Do they more bless'd perpetual life employ  
On songs of pleasure and in scenes of joy?

Now, when my mind has all this world survey'd,  
And found that nothing by itself was made;  
When thought has raised itself by just degrees,  
From valleys crown'd with flowers, and hills with trees,  
From smoking minerals, and from rising streams,  
From fattening Nilus, or victorious Thames;  
From all the living that four-footed move  
Along the shore, the meadow, or the grove;  
From all that can with fins or feathers fly  
Through the aerial or the watery sky;  
From the poor reptile with a reasoning soul,  
That miserable master of the whole;  
From this great object of the body's eye,  
This fair half-round, this ample azure sky,  
Terribly large, and wonderfully bright,  
With stars unnumber'd, and unmeasured light:  
From essences unseen, celestial names,  
Enlightening spirits, and ministerial flames,  
Angels, Dominions, Potentates, and Thrones,  
All that in each decree the name of creature owns:  
Lift we our reason to that sovereign cause  
Who bless'd the whole with life and bounded it with laws;

Who forth from nothing call'd this comely frame,  
His will and act, his word and work the same;  
To whom a thousand years are but a day;  
Who bade the Light her genial beams display,  
And set the moon, and taught the sun his way;  
Who waking Time, his creature, from the source  
Primeval, order'd his predestined course,  
Himself, as in the hollow of his hand,  
Holding obedient to his high command,  
The deep abyss, the long continued store,  
Where months, and days, and hours, and minutes, pour  
Their floating parts, and thenceforth are no more:  
This Alpha and Omega, First and Last,  
Who, like the potter, in a mould has cast  
The world's great frame, commanding it to be  
Such as the eyes of Sense and Reason see:  
Yet if he wills may change or spoil the whole,  
May take yon beauteous, mystic, starry roll,  
And burn it like a useless parchment scroll;  
May from its basis in one moment pour  
This melted earth -  
Like liquid metal, and like burning ore;  
Who, sole in power, at the beginning said,  
Let sea, and air, and earth, and heaven, be made,  
And it was so - And when he shall ordain  
In other sort, has but to speak again,  
And they shall be no more: of this great theme,  
This glorious, hallow'd, everlasting Name,  
This God, I would discourse-

The learned Elders sat appall'd, amazed,  
And each with mutual look on other gazed;  
Nor speech they meditate, nor answer frame;  
Too plain, alas! their silence spake their shame  
Till one in whom an outward mien appear'd  
And turn superior to the vulgar herd,  
Began: That human learning's furthest reach  
Was but to note the doctrines I could teach;  
That mine to speak, and theirs was to obey,  
For I in knowledge more than your power did sway,  
And the astonish'd world in me beheld  
Moses eclipsed, and Jesse's son excell'd.

Humble a second bow'd, and took the word,  
Foresaw my name by future age adored;  
O live, said he, thou wisest of the wise;  
As none has equall'd, none shall ever rise  
Excelling thee -

Parent of wicked, bane of honest deeds,  
Pernicious Flattery! thy malignant seeds  
In an ill hour, and by a fatal hand,  
Sadly diffused o'er Virtue's gleby land,  
With rising pride amidst the corn appear,  
And choke the hopes and harvest of the year.

And now the whole perplex'd ignoble crowd,  
Mute to my questions, in my praises loud,  
Echo'd the word: whence things arose, or how  
They thus exist, the aptest nothing know:  
What yet is not, but is ordain'd to be,  
All veil of doubt apart, the dullest see.

My Prophets and my Sophists finish'd here  
Their civil efforts of the verbal war:  
Not so my Rabbins and Logicians yield;  
Retiring, still they combat: from the field  
Of open arms unwilling they depart,  
And sculk behind the subterfuge of art.  
To speak one thing mix'd dialects they join,  
Divide the simple, and the plain define:  
Fix fancied laws, and form imagined rules,  
Terms of their art, and jargon of their schools,  
Ill-ground maxims, by false gloss enlarged,  
And captious science against reason charged.

O wretched impotence of human mind!  
We, erring, still excuse for error find,  
And darkling grope, not knowing we are blind.

Vain man! Since first the blushing sire essay'd  
His folly with connected leaves to shade,  
How does the crime of thy resembling race,  
With like attempt, that pristine error trace?  
Too plain thy nakedness of soul espied,

Why dost thou strive the conscious shame to hide,  
By masks of eloquence and veils of pride?

With outward smiles their flattery I received,  
Own'd my sick mind by their discourse relieved;  
But bent, and inward to myself, again  
Perplex'd, these matters I resolved in vain.  
My search still tired, my labour still renew'd,  
At length I Ignorance and Knowledge view'd  
Impartial; both in equal balance laid,  
Light flew the knowing scale, the doubtful heavy weigh'd.

Forced by reflective reason, I confess  
That human science is uncertain guess.  
Alas! we grasp at clouds, and beat the air,  
Vexing that spirit we intend to clear.  
Can thought beyond the bounds of matter climb?  
Or who shall tell me what is space or time?  
In vain we lift up our presumptuous eyes  
To what our Maker to their ken denies:  
The searcher follows fast, the object faster flies.  
The little which imperfectly we find  
Seduces only the bewildered mind  
To fruitless search of something yet behind.  
Various discussions tear our heated brain:  
Opinions often turn; still doubts remain;  
And who indulges thought increases pain.

How narrow limits were to Wisdom given?  
Earth she surveys; she thence would measure heaven:  
Through mists obscure now wings her tedious way  
Now wanders, dazzled with too bright a day,  
And from the summit of a pathless coast  
Sees infinite, and in that sight is lost.

Remember that the cursed desire to know,  
Offspring of Adam, was thy source of wo;  
Why wilt thou then renew the vain pursuit,  
And rashly catch at the forbidden fruit?  
With empty labour and eluded strife  
Seeking by knowledge to attain to life,  
For ever from that fatal tree debarr'd,



Which flaming swords and angry cherubs guard.

Matthew Prior

# Solomon On The Vanity Of The World, A Poem. In Three Books. - Pleasure. Book II.

## The Argument

Solomon, again seeking happiness, inquires if wealth and greatness can produce it: begins with the magnificence of gardens and buildings; the luxury of music and feasting; and proceeds to the hopes and desires of love. In two episodes are shown the follies and troubles of that passion. Solomon, still disappointed, falls under the temptations of libertinism and idolatry; recovers his thought; reasons aright; and concludes that, as to the pursuit of pleasure and sensual delight, All Is Vanity and Vexation of Spirit.

Try then, O man, the moments to deceive  
That from the womb attend thee to the grave:  
For wearied Nature find some apter scheme;  
Health be thy hope, and pleasure be thy theme;  
From the perplexing and unequal ways  
Where Study brings thee from the endless maze  
Which Doubt persuades o run, forewarn'd, recede  
To the gay field, and flowery path, that lead  
To jocund mirth, soft joy, and careless ease:  
Forsake what my instruct for what may please:  
Essay amusing art and proud expense,  
And make thy reason subject to thy sense.

I communed thus: the power of wealth I tried,  
And all the various luxe of costly pride;  
Artists and plans relieved my solemn hours:  
I founded palaces and planted bowers,  
Birds, fishes, beasts, of exotic kind  
I to the limits of my court confined,  
To trees transferr'd I gave a second birth,  
And bade a foreign shade grace Judah's earth.  
Fish-ponds were made where former forests grew  
And hills were levell'd to extend the view.  
Rivers, diverted from their native course,  
And bound with chains of artificial force,

From large cascades in pleasing tumult roll'd,  
Or rose through figured stone or breathing gold.  
From furthest Africa's tormented womb  
The marble brought, erects the spacious dome,  
Or forms the pillars' long-extended rows,  
On which the planted grove and pensile garden grows.

The workmen here obey the master's call,  
To gild the turret and to paint the wall;  
To mark the pavement there with various stone,  
And on the jasper steps to rear the throne:  
The spreading cedar, that an age had stood,  
Supreme of trees, and mistress of the wood,  
Cut down and carved, my shining roof adorns,  
And Lebanon his ruin'd honour mourns.

A thousand artists show their cunning powers  
To raise the wonders of the ivory towers:  
A thousand maidens ply the purple loom  
To weave the bed and deck the regal room;  
Till Tyre confesses her exhausted store,  
That on her coast the murex is no more;  
Till from the Paian isle and Liby's coast  
The mountains grieve their hopes of marble lost  
And India's woods return their just complaint,  
Their brood decay'd, and want of elephant.

My full design with vast expense achieved,  
I came, beheld, admired, reflected, grieved:  
I chid the folly of my thoughtless haste,  
For, the work perfected, the joy was past.

To my new courts sad Thought did still repair,  
And round my gilded roofs hung hovering Care.  
In vain on silken beds I sought repose,  
And Restless oft from purple couches rose;  
Vexatious Thought still found my flying mind,  
Nor bound by limits nor to place confined:  
Haunted my nights, and terrified my days,  
Stalk'd through my gardens, and pursued my ways,  
Nor shut from artful bower, nor lost in winding maze.

Yet take thy bent, my soul; another sense  
Indulge: add music to magnificence:  
Essay if harmony may grief control,  
Or power of sound prevail upon the soul.  
Often our seers and poets have confess'd  
That music's force can tame the furious beast;  
Can make the wolf or foaming boar restrain  
His rage, the lion drop his crested main,  
Attentive to the song; the lynx forget  
His wrath to man, and lick the minstrel's feet.  
Are we, alas! less savage yet than these?  
Else music sure may human cares appease.

I spake my purpose, and the cheerful choir  
Parted their shares of harmony: the lyre  
Soften'd the timbrel's noise; the trumpet's sound  
Provoked the Dorian flute, (both sweeter found  
When mix'd) the fife the viol's notes refined,  
And every strength with every grace was join'd:  
Each morn they waked me with a sprightly lay;  
Each evening their repeated skill express'd  
Scenes of repose and images of rest;  
Yet still in vain; for music gather'd thought;  
But how unequal the effects it brought?  
The soft ideas of the cheerful note,  
Lightly received, were easily forgot;  
The solemn violence of the graver sound  
Knew to strike deep, and leave a lasting wound.

And now reflecting, I with grief descry  
The sickly lust of the fantastic eye;  
How the weak organ is with seeing cloy'd,  
Flying ere night what it at noon enjoy'd.  
And now (unhappy search of thought!) I found  
The fickle ear soon glutted with the sound,  
Condemn'd eternal changes to pursue,  
Tired with the last and eager of the new.

I bade the virgins and the youth advance,  
To temper music with the sprightly dance.  
In vain! too low the mimic motions seem;  
What takes our heart must merit our esteem.

Nature, I thought, perform'd too mean a part,  
Forming her movements to the rules of art;  
And vex'd I found that the musician's hand  
Had o'er the dancer's mind too great command.

I drank; I liked it not: 'twas rage, 'twas noise;  
An airy scene of transitory joys,  
In vain I trusted that the flowing bowl  
Would banish sorrow and enlarge the soul.  
To the late revel and protracted feast  
Wild dreams succeeded and disorder'd rest;  
And as at dawn of morn fair reason's light  
Broke through the fumes and phantoms of the night,  
What had been said, I ask'd my soul, what done?  
How flow'd our mirth, and whence the source begun?  
Perhaps the jest that charm'd the sprightly crowd,  
And made the jovial table laugh so loud,  
To some false notion owed its poor pretence,  
To an ambiguous word's percorted sense,  
To a wild sonnet, or a wanton air,  
Offence and torture to the sober ear,  
Perhaps, alas! the pleasing stream was brought  
From this man's error, from another's fault;  
From topics which good-nature would forget,  
And prudence mention with the last regret.

Add yet unnumber'd ills that lie unseen  
In the pernicious draught; the word obscene  
Or harsh, which once elanced must ever fly  
Irrevocable: the too prompt reply,  
Seed of severe distrust and fierce debate,  
What we should shun, and what we ought to hate.

Add, too, the blood impoverish'd, and the course  
Of health suppress'd by wine's continued course.

Unhappy man! whom sorrow thus and rage  
To different ills alternately engage;  
Who drinks, alas! but to forget; nor sees  
That melancholy sloth, severe disease,  
Memory confused, and interrupted thought,  
Death's harbingers, lie latent in the draught;

And in the flowers that wreath the sparkling bowl  
Fell adders hiss, and poisonous serpents roll.

Remains there ought untried that may remove  
Sickness of mind, and heal the bosom? - Love!  
Love yet remains; indulge his genial fire,  
Cherish fair Hope, solicit young Desire,  
And boldly bid thy anxious soul explore  
This last great remedy's mysterious power.

Why, therefore, hesitates my doubtful breast?  
Why ceases it one moment to be bless'd?  
Fly swift, my Friends; my Servants fly; employ  
Your instant pains to bring our master joy.  
Let all my wives and concubines be dress'd;  
Let them to-night attend the royal feast;  
All Israel's beauty, all the foreign fair,  
The gifts of princes, or the spoils of war:  
Before their monarch they shall singly pass,  
And the most worthy shall obtain the grace.

I said: the feast was served; the bowl was crown'd;  
To the King's pleasure went the mirthful round.  
The women came: as custom wills they pass'd:  
On one (O that distinguish'd one!) I cast  
The favourite glance? O! yet my mind retains  
That fond beginning of my infant pains.  
Mature the virgin was, of Egypt's race,  
Grace shaped her limbs and beauty deck'd her face:  
Easy her motion seem'd, serene her air;  
Full, though unzoned, her bosom rose; her hair  
Untied, and, ignorant of artful aid,  
Adown her shoulders loosely lay display'd,  
And in the jetty curls ten thousand cupids play'd.

Fix'd on her charms, and pleased that I could love,  
Aid me, my Friends, contribute to improve  
Your monarch's bliss, I said: fresh roses bring  
To strew my bed, till the impoverish'd Spring  
Confess her want: around my amorous head  
Be dropping myrrh and liquid amber shed  
Till Arab has no more; from the soft lyre,

Sweet flute, and ten-string'd instrument require  
Sounds of delight: and thou, fair Nymph, draw nigh,  
Thou in whose graceful form and potent eye,  
Thy master's joy, long sought, at length is found,  
And, as thy brow, let my desires be crown'd.  
O favourite virgin, that hast warm'd the breast,  
Whose sovereign dictates subjugate the East!

I said: and sudden from the golden throne,  
With a submissive step, I hasted down.  
The glowing garland from my hair I took,  
Love in my heart, obedience in my look,  
Prepared to place it on her comely head,  
O favourite Virgin! (yet again I said)  
Receive the honours destined to thy brow;  
And O, above thy fellows, happy thou!  
Their duty must thy sovereign word obey.  
Rise up, my love, my fair one, come away.

What pang, alas! what ecstasy of smart  
Tore up my senses and transfix'd my heart,  
When she with modest scorn the wreath return'd,  
Reclined her beauteous neck, and inward mourn'd!

Forced by my pride, I my concern suppress'd,  
Pretended drowsiness and wish of rest;  
And sullen, I forsook th' imperfect feast:  
Ordering the eunuchs, to whose proper care  
Our Eastern gradneur gives th' imprison'd fair,  
To lead her forth to a distinguish'd bower,  
And bid her dress the bed, and wait the hour.

Restless I follow'd this obdurate maid,  
(Swift are the steps that Love and Anger tread)  
Approach'd her person, courted her embrace,  
Renew'd my flame, repeated my disgrace:  
By turns put on the suppliant and the lord:  
Threaten'd this moment, and the next implored,  
Offer'd again the unaccepted wreath,  
And choice of happy love, or instant death.

Averse to all her amorous King desired,

Far as she might she decently retired,  
And darting scorn and sorrow from her eyes,  
What means, said she, King Solomon the wise?

This wretched body trembles at your power;  
Thus far could Fortune, but she can no more.  
Free to herself my potent mind remains,  
Nor fears the victor's rage, nor feels his chains.

'Tis said that thou canst plausibly dispute,  
Supreme of seers, of angel, man, and brute:  
Canst plead, with subtle wit and fair discourse,  
Of passion's folly and of reason's force;  
That to the tribes attentive, thou canst know  
Whence their misfortunes or their blessings flow:  
That thou in science as in power art great,  
And truth and honour on thy edicts wait.  
Where is that knowledge now, that regal thought,  
With just advice and timely counsel fraught?  
Where now, O Judge of Israel, does it rove? -  
What in one moment dost thou offer? - Love!  
Love? why, 'tis joy or sorrow, peace or strife;  
'Tis all the colour of remaining life,  
And human misery must begin or end  
As he becomes a tyrant or a friend.  
Would David's son, religious, just, and grave,  
To the first bride-bed of the world receive  
A foreigner, a Heathen, and a slave?  
Or grant thy passion has these names destroy'd,  
That Love, like Death, makes all distinction void,  
Yet in his empire o'er thy abject breast  
His flames and torments only are exprest,  
His rage can in my smiles alone relent,  
And all his joys solicit my consent.

Soft love, spontaneous tree, its parted root  
Must from two hearts with equal vigour shoot,  
Whilst each delighted, and delighting, gives  
The pleasing ecstasy which each receives:  
Cherish'd with hope, and fed with joy, it grows,  
Its cheerful buds their opening bloom disclose,  
And round the happy soul diffusive odour flows.



If angry fate that mutual care denies,  
The fading plant bewails its due supplies;  
Wild with despair, or sick with grief, it dies.

By force beasts act, and are by force restrain'd;  
The human mind by gentle means is gain'd.  
Thy useless strength mistaken King employ:  
Sated with rage, and ignorant of joy,  
Thou shalt not gain what I deny to yield,  
Nor reap the harvest, though thou spoil'st the field.  
Know, Solomon, thy poor extent of sway;  
Contract thy brow, and Israel shall obey;  
But wilful Love thou must with smiles appease,  
Approach his awful throne by just degrees,  
And if thou wouldst be happy, learn to please.

Not that those arts can here successful prove,  
For I am destined to another's love.  
Beyond the cruel bounds of thy command,  
To my dear equal, in my native land,  
My plighted vow I gave; I his received:  
Each swore with truth, with pleasure each believed  
The mutual contract was to heaven convey'd;  
In equal scales thy busy angels weigh'd  
Its solemn force, and clapp'd their wings, and spread  
The lasting roll, recording what we said.

Now in my heart behold thy poniard stain'd;  
Take the sad life which I have long disdain'd;  
End, in a dying virgin's wretched fate,  
Thy ill-starr'd passion and my steadfast hate:  
For long as blood informs these circling veins,  
Or fleeting breath its latest power retains,  
Hear me to Egypt's vengeful gods declare  
Hate is my part; be thine O King despair.

Now strike, she said, and open'd bare her breast,  
Stand it in Judah's Chronicles confest  
That David's son, by impious passion moved,  
Smote a she-slave, and murder'd what he loved.

Ashamed, confused, I started from the bed,

And to my soul, yet uncollected, said,  
Into thyself fond Solomon return;  
Reflect again, and thou again shalt mourn.  
When I through number'd years have pleasure sought,  
And in vain hope the wanton phantom caught,  
To mock my sense and mortify my pride,  
'Tis in another's power and is denied.  
Am I a king, great Heaven? does life or death  
Hang on the wrath or mercy of my breath,  
While kneeling I my servant's smiles implore,  
And one mad damsel dares dispute my power?

To ravish her? that thought was soon depress'd,  
Which must debase the monarch to the beast.  
To send her back? O whither, and to whom?  
To lands where Solomon must never come?  
To that insulting rival's happy arms  
For whom, disdain me, she keeps her charms?

Fantastic tyrant of the amorous heart,  
How hard thy yoke! how cruel is thy dart?  
Those 'scape thy anger who refuse thy sway,  
And those are punish'd most who most obey,  
See Judah's king revere thy greater power;  
What canst thou covet, or how triumph more;  
Why, then, O Love, with an obdurate ear,  
Does this proud nymph reject a monarch's prayer?  
Why to some simple shepherd does she run  
Where wealth and pleasure may thy reign support,  
To some poor cottage on the mountain's brow,  
Now bleak with winds, and cover'd now with snow,  
And household cares suppress thy genial fires!

Too aptly the afflicted Heathens prove  
The force, while they erect the shrines of Love.  
His mystic form the artisans of Greece  
In wounded stone or molten gold express;  
And Cyprus to his godhead pays her vow,  
Fast in his hand the idol holds his bow;  
A quiver by his side sustains his store  
Of pointed darts, sad emblems of his power;  
A pair of wings he has, which he extends

Now to be gone, which now again he bends,  
Prone to return, as best may serve his wanton ends.  
Entirely thus I find the fiend portray'd,  
Since first, alas! I saw the beauteous maid;  
I felt him strike, and now I see him fly:  
Cursed daemon! O! for ever broken lie  
Those fatal shafts by which I inward bleed!  
O! can my wishes yet o'ertake thy speed!  
Tired mayst thou turn'st thy course, resolved to bring  
Except thou turn'st thy course, resolved to bring  
The damsel back, and save the love-sick king.

My soul thus struggling in the fatal net,  
Unable to enjoy or to forget,  
I reason'd much, alas! but more I loved,  
Sent and recall'd, ordain'd and disapproved,  
Till hopeless plunged in an abyss of grief,  
I from necessity received relief;  
Time gently aided to assuage my pain  
And wisdom took once more the slacken'd rein.

But O how short my interval of wo!  
Our griefs how swift, our remedies how slow!  
Another nymph, (for so did Heaven ordain,  
To change the manner but renew the pain)  
Another nymph, amongst the many fair  
That made my softer hours their solemn care,  
Before the rest affected still to stand,  
And watch'd my eye, preventing my command,  
Abra, she so was call'd, did sooner haste  
To grace my presence; Abra went the last;  
Abra was ready ere I call'd her name,  
And though I call'd another, Abra came.

Her equals first observed her growing zeal,  
And laughing gloss'd, that Abra served so well.  
To me her actions did unheeded die,  
Or were remark'd but with a common eye,  
Till more apprized of what the rumour said,  
More I observed peculiar in the maid.

The sun declined had shot his western ray,

When, tired with business of the solemn day,  
I purposed to unbend the evening hours,  
And banquet private in the women's bowers.  
I call'd before I sat to wash my hands,  
for so the precept of the law commands;  
Love had ordain'd that it was Abra's turn  
To mix the sweets, and minister the urn.

With awful homage and submissive dread  
The maid approach'd, on my declining head  
To pour the oils: she trembled as she pour'd:  
With an unguarded look she now devour'd  
My nearer face; and now recall'd her eye,  
And heaved, and strove to hide a sudden sigh.  
And whence, said I, canst thou have dread or pain?  
What can thy imag'ry of sorrow mean?  
Secluded from the world and all its care,  
Hast thou to grieve or joy, to hope or fear?  
For sure, I added, sure thy little heart  
Ne'er felt Love's anger or received his dart.

Abash'd she blush'd, and with disorder spoke;  
Her rising shame adorn'd the words it broke.

If the great master will descend to hear  
The humble series of his handmaid's care,  
O! while she tells it, let him not put on  
The look that awes the nations from the throne;  
O! let not death severe in glory lie  
In the king's frown and terror of his eye.

Mine to obey, thy part is to ordain:  
And though to mention be to suffer pain,  
If the king smiles whilst I my wo recite  
If weeping I find favour in his sight,  
Flow fast my tears, full rising his delight.

O! witness earth beneath and heaven above,  
For can I hide it? I am sick of love!  
If madness may the name of passion bear,  
Or love be call'd what is indeed despair.

Thou sovereign Power, whose secret will controls  
The inward bent and motion of our souls!  
Why hast thou placed such infinite degrees  
Between the cause and cure of my disease?  
The mighty object of that raging fire  
In which unpitied Abra must expire,  
Had he born some simple shepherd's heir,  
The lowing herd or fleecy sheep his care,  
At morn with him I o'er the hills had run,  
Scornful of winter's frost and summer's run,  
Still asking here he made his flock to rest at noon.  
For him at night, the dear expected guest,  
Had with hasty joy prepared the feast,  
And from the cottage, o'er the distant plain,  
Sent forth my longing eye to meet the swain,  
Wavering, impatient, toss'd by hope and fear,  
Till he and joy together should appear,  
And the loved dog declare his master near.  
On my declining neck and open breast  
I should have lull'd the lovely youth to rest,  
And from beneath his head at dawning day,  
With softest care, have stolen my arm away,  
To rise, and from the fold release the sheep,  
Fond of his flock, indulgent to his sleep.

Or if kind Heaven, propitious to my flame,  
(For sure from Heaven the faithful ardour came)  
Had blest my life, and deck'd my natal hour  
With height of title and extent of power,  
Without a crime my passion had aspired,  
Found the loved prince, and told what I desired  
Then I had come, preventing Sheba's queen,  
To see the comeliest of the sons of men:  
To hear the charming poet's amorous song,  
And gather honey falling from his tongue;  
To take the fragrant kisses of his mouth,  
Sweeter than breezes of her native south,  
Likening his grace, his person, and his mien,  
To all that great or beautiful I had seen.  
Serene and bright his eyes, as solar beams,  
Reflecting temper'd light from crystal streams;  
Ruddy as gold his cheek; his bosom fair

As silver the curled ringlets of his hair  
Black as the raven's wing; his lips more red  
Than eastern coral or the scarlet thread;  
Even his teeth, and white like a young flock,  
Coeval, newly shorn, from the clear brook  
Recent, and blanching on the sunny rock.  
Ivory with sapphires interspersed, explains  
How white his hands, how blue the manly veins;  
Columns of polish'd marble, firmly set  
On golden bases, are his legs and feet:  
His stature all majestic, all divine,  
Strait as the palm tree, strong as is the pine;  
Saffron and myrrh are on his garments shed,  
And everlasting sweets bloom round his head,  
What utter I! where am I! wretched maid!  
Die, Abra, die; too plainly thou hast said  
Thy soul's desire to meet his high embrace,  
And blessing stamp'd upon thy future race;  
To bid attentive nations bless thy womb,  
With unborn monarchs charged, and Solomon to come.

Here o'er her speech her flowing eyes prevail.  
O foolish maid! and O unhappy tale!  
My suffering heart for ever shall defy  
New wounds and danger from a future eye.  
O! yet my tortured senses deep retain  
The wretched memory of my former pain,  
The dire affront, and my Egyptian chain.

As time, I said, may happily efface  
That cruel image of the King's disgrace,  
Imperial Reason shall resume her seat,  
And Solomon, once fall'n again be great.  
Betray'd by passion, as subdued in war,  
We wisely should exert a double care,  
Nor ever ought a second time to err.

This Abra then -----  
I saw her; 'twas humanity; it gave  
Some respite to the sorrows of my slave.  
Her fond excess proclaim'd her passion true,  
And generous pity to that truth was due.

Well I entreated her who well deserved;  
I call'd her often, for she always served:  
Use made her person easy to my sight,  
And ease insensibly produced delight.

Whene'er I revell'd in the women's bowers  
(For first I sought her but at looser hours)  
The apples she had gather'd smelt most sweet,  
The cake she kneaded was the savoury meat;  
But fruits their odour lost, and meats their taste,  
If gentle Abra had not deck'd the feast:  
Dishonour'd did the sparkling goblet stand,  
Unless received from gentle Abra's hand;  
And when the virgins form'd the evening choir,  
Raising their voices to the master-lyre,  
Too that I thought this voice, and that too shrill;  
One show'd too much, and one too little skill;  
Nor could my soul approve the music's tone,  
Till all was hush'd, and Abra sung alone.  
Fairer she seem'd distinguish'd from the rest,  
And better mien disclosed, as better drest:  
A bright tiara round her forehead tied,  
To juster bounds confined its rising pride:  
The blushing ruby on her snowy breast  
Render'd its panting whiteness more confest;  
Bracelets of pearl gave roundness to her arm,  
And every gem augmented every charm:  
Her senses pleased, her beauty still improved,  
And she more lovely grew as more beloved.

And now I could behold, avow, and blame,  
The several follies of my former flame,  
Willing my heart for recompence to prove  
The certain joys that lie in prosperous love.  
For what, said I, from Abra can I fear,  
Too humble to insult, too soft to be severe?  
The damsel's sole ambition is to please;  
With freedom I may like, and quit with ease;  
She soothes, but never can enthral my mind:  
Why may not peace and love for once be join'd?

Great Heaven! how frail thy creature man is made!

How by himself insensibly betray'd!  
In our own strength unhappily secure,  
Too little cautious of the adverse power,  
And by the blast of self-opinion moved,  
We wish to charm, and seek to be beloved.  
On pleasure's flowing brink we idly stray,  
Masters as yet of our returning way;  
Seeing no danger we disarm our mind,  
And give our conduct to the waves and wind;  
Then in the flowery mead or verdant shade  
To wanton dalliance negligently laid,  
We weave the chaplet and we crown the bowl,  
And smiling see the nearer waters roll,  
Till the strong gusts of raging passion rise,  
Till the dire tempest mingles earth and skies,  
And swift into the boundless ocean borne,  
Our foolish confidence too late we mourn;  
Round our devoted heads the billows beat,  
And from our troubled view the lessen'd lands retreat.

O mighty Love! from thy unbounded power  
How shall the human bosom rest secure?  
How shall our thought avoid the various snare,  
Or wisdom to our caution'd soul declare  
The different shapes thou pleasest to employ  
When bent to hurt, and certain to destroy;

The haughty nymph, in open beauty drest,  
To-day encounters our unguarded breast;  
She looks with majesty, and moves with state:  
Unbent her soul, and in misfortune great,  
She scorns the world, and dares the rage of Fate.

Here whilst we take stern manhood for our guide,  
And guard our conduct with becoming pride,  
Charm'd with the courage in her action shown,  
We praise her mind, the image of our own,  
She that can please is certain to persuade;  
To-day beloved, to-morrow is obey'd.  
We think we see through Reason's optics right,  
Nor find how Beauty's rays elude our sight:  
Struck with her eye whilst we applaud her mind,



And when we speak her great we wish her kind.

To-morrow, cruel Power! thou arm'st the fair  
With flowing sorrow and dishevell'd hair.  
Sad her complaint, and humble is her tale,  
Her sighs explaining where her accents fail;  
Here generous softness warms the honest breast;  
We raise the sad, and succour the distrest,  
And whilst our wish prepares the kind relief,  
Whilst pity mitigates her rising grief,  
We sicken soon from her contagious care,  
Grieve for her sorrows, groan for her despair,  
And against love, too late, those bosoms arm,  
Which tears can soften, and which sighs can warm.

Against this nearest, cruelest of foes,  
What shall wit meditate, or force oppose?  
Whence, feeble Nature, shall we summon aid,  
If by our pity and our pride betray'd?  
External remedy shall we hope to find,  
When the close fiend has gain'd our treacherous mind,  
Insulting there does Reason's power deride,  
And, blind himself, conducts the dazzled guide?

My conqueror now, my lovely Abra, held  
My freedom in her chains; my heart was fill'd  
With her, with her alone, in her alone  
It sought its peace and joy: while she was gone  
It sigh'd, and grieved, impatient of her stay:  
Return'd she chased those sighs, that grief, away;  
Her absence made the night, her presence brought the day.

The ball, the play, the mask, by turns succeed:  
For her I make the song; the dance with her I lead:  
I court her, various, in each shape and dress  
That luxury may form or thought express.

To-day beneath the palm-tree, on the plains,  
In Deborah's arms and habit Abra reigns:  
The wreath, denoting conquest, guides her brow,  
And low, like Barak, at her feet I bow.  
The mimic Chorus sings her prosperous hand,

As she had slain the foe and saved the land.

To-morrow she approves a softer air,  
Forsakes the pomp and pageantry of war,  
The form peaceful Abigail assumes,  
And from the village with the present comes:  
The youthful band depose their glittering arms,  
Receive her bounties and recite her charms,  
Whilst I assume my father's step and mien,  
To meet with due regard my future queen.

If hap'ly Abra's will be now inclined  
To range the woods or chase the flying hind,  
Soon as the sun awakes, the sprightly court  
Leave their repose, and hasten to the sport.  
In lessen'd royalty, and humble state,  
Thy king, Jerusalem! descends to wait  
Till Abra comes. She comes; a milk-white steed  
Mixture of Persia's and Arabia's breed,  
Sustains the nymph: her garments flying loose,  
(As the Sidonian maids or Thracian use)  
And half her knee and half her breast appear  
By art, like negligence disclosed and bare.  
Her left hand guides the hunting courser's flight,  
A silver bow she carries in her right,  
And from the golden quiver at her side  
Rustles the ebon arrow's feather'd pride;  
Sapphires and diamonds on her front display  
An artificial moon's increasing ray.  
Diana, huntress, mistress of the groves,  
The favourite Abra speaks, and looks, and moves.  
Her as the present goddess, I obey,  
Beneath her feet the captive game I lay;  
The mingled Chorus sing Diana's fame,  
Clarions and horns in louder peals proclaim  
Her mystic praise, the vocal triumphs bound  
Against the hills; the hills reflect the sound.

If tired this evening with the hunted woods,  
To the large fish-pools or the glassy floods  
Her mind to-morrow points a thousand hands  
To-night employ'd obey the king's commands;

Upon the wat'ry beach an artful pile  
Of planks is join'd, and forms a moving isle;  
A golden chariot in the midst is set,  
And silver cygnets seem to feel its weight.  
Abra, bright queen, ascends her gaudy throne,  
In semblance of the Grecian Venus known;  
Tritons and sea-green naiads round her move,  
And sing in moving strains the force of love;  
Whilst, as th' approaching pageant does appear,  
And echoing crowds speak mighty Venus near,  
I, her adorer, too devoutly stand  
Fast on the utmost margin of the land,  
With arms and hopes extended, to receive  
The fancied goddess rising from the wave.

O subject Reason! O imperious Love!  
Whither yet further would my folly rove?  
Is it enough that Abra should be great  
In the wall'd palace or the rural seat;  
That masking habits and a borrow'd name  
Contrive to hide my plenitude of shame?  
No, no: Jerusalem combined must see  
My open fault and regal infamy.  
Solemn a month is destined for the feast;  
Abra invites; the nation is the guest.  
To have the honour of each day sustain'd  
The woods are travers'd, and the lakes are drain'd:  
Arabia's wilds and Egypt's are explored;  
The edible creation decks the board:  
Hardly the phenix 'scapes -----  
The men their lyres, the maids their voices raise,  
To sing my happiness and Abra's praise,  
And slavish bards our mutual loves rehearse  
In lying strains and ignominious verse;  
While from the banquet leading forth the bride,  
Whom prudent love from public eyes should hide,  
I show her to the world, confess'd and known  
Queen of my heart, and partner of my throne.

And now her friends and flatterers fill the court;  
From Dan and from Beersheba they resort;  
They barter places and dispose of grants,

Whole provinces unequal to their wants;  
They teach her to recede or to debate;  
With toys of love to mix affairs of state;  
By practised rules her empire to secure,  
And in my pleasure make my ruin sure.  
They gave and she transferr'd the cursed advice,  
That monarchs should their inward soul disguise,  
Dissemble and command, be false and wise;  
By ignominious arts, for servile ends,  
Should compliment their foes and shun their friends.  
And now I leave the true and just supports  
Of legal princes and of honest courts,  
Barzillai's and the fierce Benaiah's heirs,  
Whose sires, great partners in my father's cares,  
Saluted their young king, at Hebron crown'd,  
Great by their toil, and glorious by their wound:  
And now unhappy counsel, I prefer  
Those whom my follies only made me fear,  
Old Corah's brood and taunting Shimei's race,  
Miscreants who owed their lives to David's grace,  
Though they had spurn'd his rule and cursed him to his face.

Still Abra's power, my scandal, still increased;  
Justice submitted to what Abra pleased:  
Her will alone could settle or revoke,  
And law was fixt by what she latest spoke.

Israel neglected, Abra was my care;  
I only acted, thought, and lived for her,  
I durst not reason with my wounded heart;  
Abra possess'd; she was its better part.  
O! had I now review'd the famous cause  
Which gave my righteous youth so just applause,  
In vain on the dissembled mother's tongue  
Had cunning art and sly persuasion hung,  
And real care in vain, and native love,  
And real care in vain, and native love,  
In the true parent's panting breast had strove,  
While both deceived had seen the destined child  
Or slain, or saved, as Abra frown'd or smiled.

Uknowing to command, proud to obey,

A lifeless king, a royal shade I lay.  
Unheard the injured orphans now complain;  
The widow's cries address the throne in vain.  
Causes unjudged disgrace the loaded file,  
And sleeping laws the king's neglect revile.  
No more the Elders throng'd around my throne  
To hear my maxims, and reform their own;  
No more the young nobility were taught  
How Moses govern'd and how David fought.  
Loose and undisciplined the soldier lay,  
Or lost in drink and game the solid day;  
Porches and schools, design'd for public good,  
Uncover'd, and with scaffolds cumber'd stood,  
Or nodded, threatening ruin --  
Half pillars wanted their expected height,  
And roofs imperfect prejudiced the sight.  
The artists grieve; the labouring people droop;  
My father's legacy, my country's hope,  
God's temples, lie unfinish'd -

The wise and grave deplored their monarch's fate,  
And future mischiefs of a sinking state.  
In this the serious said, is this the man,  
Whose active soul through every science ran?  
Who by just rule and elevated skill  
Prescribed the dubious bounds of good and ill?  
Whose golden sayings and immortal wit  
On large phylacteries expressive writ,  
Were to the forehead of the Rabbins tied,  
Our youth's instruction and our age's pride?  
Could not the wise his wild desires restrain?  
Then was our hearing and his preaching vain!  
What from his life and letters were we taught  
But that his knowledge aggravates his fault?

In lighter mood, the humorous and the gay  
(As crown'd with roses at their feasts they lay)  
Sent the full goblet charged with Abra's name,  
And charms superior to the master's fame.  
Laughing, some praise the king, who let them see  
How aptly luxe and empire might agree:  
Some gloss'd how love and wisdom were at strife,

And brought my proverbs to confront my life.  
However, friend, here's to the king, one cries  
To him who was the king, the friend replies.  
The king, for Judah's and for wisdom's curse  
To Abra yields; could I or thou do worse?  
Our looser lives let Chance or Folly steer,  
If thus the prudent and determined err.  
Let Dinah bind with flowers her flowing hair,  
And touch the lute and sound the wanton air,  
Let us the bliss without the sting receive,  
Free as we will or to enjoy or leave.  
Pleasures on levity's smooth surface flow;  
Thought brings the weight that sinks the soul to wo.  
Now be this maxim to the king convey'd,  
And added to the thousand he has made.

Sadly, O Reason, is thy power express'd,  
Thou gloomy tyrant of the frightened beast!  
And harsh the rules which we from thee receive,  
If for our wisdom we our pleasure give,  
And more to think be only more to grieve:  
If Judah's king, at thy tribunal tried,  
Forsakes his joy to vindicate his pride,  
And, changing sorrows, I am only found  
Loosed from the chains of love, in thine more strictly bound.

But do I call thee tyrant, or complain  
How hard thy laws, how absolute thy reign?  
While thou, alas! art but an empty name,  
To no two men who e'er discoursed the same;  
The idle product of a troubled thought,  
In borrow'd shapes and airy colours wrought,  
A fancied line, and a reflected shade;  
A chain which man to fetter man has made,  
By artifice imposed, by fear obey'd.

Yet, wretched name, or arbitrary thing,  
Whence-ever I thy cruel essence bring,  
I own thy influence, for I feel thy sting.  
Reluctant I perceive thee in my soul,  
Form'd to command, and destined to control,  
Yes, thy insulting dictates shall be heard;

Virtue for once shall be her own reward:  
Yes, rebel Israel, this unhappy maid  
Shall be dismiss'd; the crowd shall be obey'd:  
The king his passion and his rule shall leave,  
No longer Abra's but the people's slave:  
My coward soul shall bear its wayward fate;  
I will, alas! be wretched to be great,  
And sigh in royalty, and grieve in state.

I said, resolved to plunge into my grief  
At once, so far as to expect relief  
From my despair alone --  
To her I loved, to her I must forsake.  
How inconsistent majesty and love.  
I always should, it said, esteem her well,  
But never see her more: it bid her feel  
No future pain for me; but instant wed  
A lover more proportion'd to her bed,  
And quiet dedicate her remnant life  
To the just duties of an humble wife.

She read, and forth to me she wildly ran,  
To me, the ease of all her former pain.  
She kneel'd, entreated, struggled, threaten'd, cried,  
And with alternate passion lived and died;  
Till now denied the liberty to mourn,  
And by rude fury from my presence torn,  
This only object of my real care  
Cut off from hope, abandon'd to despair,  
In some few posting fatal hours is hurl'd  
From wealth, from power, from love, and from the world.

Here tell me, if thou darest, my conscious soul,  
What different sorrows did within thee roll?  
What pangs, what fires, what racks, did thou sustain?  
What sad vicissitudes of smarting pain?  
How oft from pomp and state did I remove,  
To feed despair, and cherish hopeless love?  
How oft all day recall'd I Abra's charms,  
Her beauties press'd, and panting in my arms?  
How oft with sighs view'd every female face  
Where mimic Fancy might her likeness trace?

How oft desired to fly from Isreal's throne,  
And live in shades with her and love alone?  
How oft all night pursued her in my dreams,  
O'er flowery valleys and through crystal streams,  
And waking, view'd with grief the rising sun,  
And fondly mourn'd the dear delusion gone?

When thus the gather'd storms of wretched love  
In my swollen bosom with long war had strove,  
At length they broke their bounds; at length their force  
Bore down whatever met its stronger course;  
Laid all the civil bonds of manhood waste,  
And scatter'd ruin as the torrent pass'd.  
So from the hills, whose hollow caves contain  
The congregated snow and swelling rain,  
Till the full stores their ancient bounds disdain,  
Precipitate the furious torrent flows:  
In vain would speed avoid or strength oppose:  
Towns, forests, herds, and men, promiscuous drown'd,  
With one great death deform the dreary ground;  
The echoed woes from distant rocks resound.  
And now what impious ways, my wishes took,  
How they the monarch and the man forsook,  
And how I follow'd an abandon'd will  
Through crooked paths and sad retreats of ill;  
By turns my prostituted bed receives,  
Through tribes of women how I loosely ranged  
Impatient, liked to-night, to-morrow changed,  
And by the instinct of capricious lust  
Enjoy'd, disdain'd, was grateful or unjust;  
O, be these scenes from human eyes conceal'd,  
In clouds of decent silence justly veil'd!  
O, be the wanton images convey'd  
To black oblivion and eternal shade!  
Or let their sad epitome alone  
And outward lines to future ages be known,  
Enough to propagate the sure belief  
That vice engenders shame, and folly broods o'er grief.

Buried in sloth and lost in ease I lay;  
The night I revell'd, and I slept the day.  
New heaps of fuel damp'd my kindling fires,



And daily change extinguish'd young desires,  
By its own force destroy'd, fruition ceased;  
And always wearied, I was never pleased.  
No longer now does my neglected mind  
Its wonted stores and old ideas find.  
Fix'd judgement there no longer does abide  
To take the true or set the false aside,  
No longer does swift Memory trace the cells  
Where springing Wit or young Invention dwells,  
Frequent debauch to habitude prevails;  
Patience of toil and love of virtue fails.  
By sad degrees impair'd my vigour dies,  
Till I command no longer e'en in vice.  
The women on my dotage build their sway:  
In regal garments now I gravely stride,  
Awed by the Persian damsels' haughty pride;  
Now with the looser Syrian dance and sing,  
In robes tuck'd up, opprobrious to the king.

Charm'd by their eyes, their manners I acquire,  
And shape my foolishness to their desire;  
Seduced and awed by the Philistine dame,  
At Dagon's shrine I kindle impious flame.  
With the Chaldean's charms her rites prevail,  
And curling frankincense ascends to Baal.  
To each new harlot I new altars dress,  
And serve her god whose person I caress.

Where, my deluded sense, was reason flown?  
Where the high majesty of David's throne?  
Where all the maxims of eternal truth,  
With which the living God inform'd my youth,  
When with the lewd Egyptian I adore  
Vain idols, deities that ne'er before  
In Isreal's land had fix'd their dire abodes,  
Beastly divinities, and droves of gods;  
Osiris, Apis, powers that chew the cud,  
And dog Anubis, flatterer for his food?  
When in the woody hill's forbidden shade  
I carved the marble and invoked its aid:  
When in the fens to snake and flies, with zeal  
Unworthy human thought, I prostrate fell;

To shrubs and plants my vile devotion paid,  
And set the bearded leek to which I pray'd;  
When to all beings sacred rites were given,  
forgot the Arbiter of earth and heaven?

Through these sad shades, this chaos in my soul,  
Some seeds of light at length began to roll:  
The rising motion of an infant ray  
Shot glimmering through the cloud, and promised day.  
And now one moment able to reflect,  
I found the king abandon'd to neglect,  
Seen without awe, and served without respect.  
I found my subjects amicably join  
To lessen their defects by citing mine.  
The priest with pity prays for David's race,  
And left his text to dwell on my disgrace.  
The father, whilst he warn'd his erring son,  
The sad examples which he ought to shun,  
Described, and only named not, Solomon.  
Each bard, each sire, did to his pupil sing,  
A wise child better than a foolish king.

Into myself my reason's eye I turn'd,  
And as I much reflected much I mourn'd.  
A mighty king I am, an earthly god;  
Nations obey my word and wait my nod:  
I raise or sink, imprison or set free,  
And life or death, depends on my decree.  
Fond of the idea, and the thought is vain;  
O'er Judah's king ten thousand tyrants reign,  
Legions of lust and various powers of ill  
Insult the master's tributary will;  
And he from whom the nations should receive  
Justice and freedom, lies himself a slave,  
Tortured by cruel change of wild desires,  
Lash'd by mad rage, and scorch'd by brutal fires.

O Reason! once again to thee I call;  
Accept my sorrow and retrieve my fall.  
Wisdom, thou say'st, from heaven received her birth,  
Her beams transmitted to the subject earth:  
Yet thi great empress of the human soul

Does only with the imagined power control,  
If restless passion, by rebellious sway,  
Compels the weak usurper to obey.

O troubled, weak, and coward, as thou art,  
Without thy poor advice the labouring heart  
To worse extremes with swifter steps would run,  
Not saved by virtue, yet vice undone.

Oft have I said, the praise of doing well  
Is to the ear as ointment to the smell.  
Now if some flies perchance, however small,  
Into the alabaster urn should fall,  
The odours of the sweets enclosed would die,  
And stench corrupt (sad change) their place supply:  
So the least faults, if mixed with fairest deed,  
Of future ill become the fatal seed;  
Into the balm of purest virtue cast,  
Annoy all life with one contagious blast.

Lost Solomon! pursue this thought no more;  
Of thy past errors recollect the store;  
And silent weep, that while the deathless Muse  
Shall sing the just, shall o'er their head diffuse  
Perfumes with lavish hand, she shall proclaim  
Thy crimes alone, and to thy evil fame  
Impartial, scatter damps and poisons on thy name.  
Awaking therefore, as who long had dream'd,  
Much of my women and their gods ashamed,  
From this abyss of exemplary vice  
Resolved, as time might aid my thought, to rise,  
Again I bid the mournful goddess write  
Of human hope by cross event destroy'd,  
Of useless wealth and greatness enjoy'd;  
Of lust and love, with their fantastic train,  
Their wishes, smiles, and looks, deceitful all and vain.

Matthew Prior

# Solomon On The Vanity Of The World, A Poem. In Three Books. - Power. Book Iii.

## The Argument

Solomon considers man through the several stages and conditions of life, and concludes, in general, that we are all miserable. He reflects more particularly upon the trouble and uncertainty of greatness and power; gives some instances thereof from Adam down to himself; and still concludes that All Is Vanity. He reasons again upon life, death, and a future being; finds human wisdom too imperfect to resolve his doubts; has recourse to religion; is informed by an angel what shall happen to himself, his family, and his kingdom, till the redemption of Israel; and, upon the whole, resolves to submit his inquiries and anxieties to the will of his Creator.

Come then, my soul: I call thee by that name,  
Thou busy thing, from whence I know I am;  
For, knowing that I am, I know thou art,  
Since that must needs exist which can impart:  
But how thou camest to be, or whence thy spring,  
For various of thee priests and poets sing.

Hearst thou submissive, but a lowly birth,  
Some secret particles of finer earth,  
A plain effect which Nature must beget,  
As motion orders, and as atoms meet,  
Companion of the body's good or ill,  
From force of instinct more than choice of will,  
Conscious of fear or valour, joy or pain,  
As the wild courses of the blood ordain;  
Who, as degrees of heat and cold prevail,  
In youth dost flourish, and with age shalt fail,  
Till, mingled with thy partner's latest breath,  
Thou fliest, dissolved in air and lost in death.

Or, if thy great existence would aspire  
To causes more sublime, of heavenly fire  
Wert thou a spark struck off, a separate ray,

Ordain'd to mingle with terrestrial clay,  
With it condemn'd for certain years to dwell,  
To grieve its frailties, and its pains to feel,  
To teach it good and ill, disgrace or fame,  
Pale it with rage, or redden it with shame,  
To guide its actions with informing care,  
In peace to judge, to conquer in the war;  
Render it agile, witty, valiant, sage,  
As fits the various course of human age,  
Till, as the earthly part decays and falls,  
The captive breaks her prison's mouldering walls,  
Hovers awhile upon the sad remains,  
Which now the pile or sepulchre contains,  
And thence, with liberty unbounded, flies,  
Impatient to regain her native skies?

Whate'er thou art, where'er ordain'd to go,  
(Points which we rather may dispute than know)  
Come on, thou little inmate of this breast,  
Which for thy sake from passions'I divest  
For these, thou say'st, raise all the stormy strife,  
Which hinder thy repose, and trouble life;  
Be the fair level of thy actions laid  
As temperance wills and prudence may persuade  
By thy affections undisturb'd and clear,  
Guided to what may great or good appear,  
And try if life be worth the liver's care.

Amass'd in man, there justly is beheld  
What through th whole creation has excell'd,  
The angel's forecast and intelligence:  
Say, from these glorious seeds what harvest flows?  
Recount our blessings, and compare our woes:  
In its true light let clearest reason see  
The man dragg'd out to act, and forced to be;  
Helpless and naked, on a woman's knees,  
To be exposed or rear'd as she may please,  
Feel her neglect, and pine from her disease:  
His tender eye by too direct a ray  
Wounded, and flying from unpractised day;  
His heart assaulted by invading air,  
And beating fervent to the vital war;

To his young sense how various forms appear,  
That strike this wonder, and excite his fear;  
By his distortions he reveals his pains;  
He by his tears and by his sighs complains,  
Till time and use assist the infant wretch,  
By broken words, and rudiments of speech,  
His wants in plainer characters to show,  
And paint more perfect figures of his wo,  
Condemn'd to sacrifice his childish years  
To babbling ignorance, and to empty fears;  
To pass the riper period of his age,  
Acting his part upon a crowded stage;  
To lasting toils exposed, and endless cares,  
To open dangers, and to secret snares;  
To malice which the vengeful foe intends,  
And the more dangerous love of seeming friends:  
His deeds examined by the people's will.  
Prone to forget the good, and blame the ill;  
Or, sadly censured in their cursed debate,  
Who, in the scorner's or the judge's seat  
Dare to condemn the virtue which they hate:  
Or would he rather leave this frantic scene,  
And trees and beasts prefer to courts and men,  
In the remotest wood and lonely grot  
Certain to meet that worst of evils, thought,  
Different ideas to his memory brought,  
Some intricate, as are the pathless woods,  
Impetuous some, as the descending floods;  
With anxious doubts, with raging passions torn,  
No sweet companion near with whom to mourn,  
He hears the echoing rock return his sighs,  
And from himself the frightened hermit flies.

Thus, through what path soe'er of life we rove,  
Rage companies our hate, and grief our love;  
Vex'd with the present moment's heavy gloom,  
Why seek we brightness from the years to come?  
Disturb'd and broken, like a sick man's sleep,  
Our troubled thoughts to distant prospects leap,  
Desirous still what flies us to o'ertake;  
For hope is but the dream of those that wake:  
But looking back we see the dreadful train

Of woes, anew, which, were we to sustain,  
We should refuse to tread the path again:  
Still adding grief, still counting from the first,  
Judging the latest evil still the worst,  
And sadly finding each progressive hour  
Heighten their number and augment their power,  
Till by one countless sum of woes oppress'd,  
Hoary with cares, and ignorant of rest,  
We find the vital springs relax'd and worn,  
Compell'd our common impotence to mourn:  
Thus, through the round of age, to childhood we return;  
Reflecting find, that naked, from the womb  
We yesterday came forth; that in the tomb  
Naked again we must to-morrow lie,  
Born to lament, to labour, and to die.

Pass we the ills which each man feels or dreads,  
The weight or fall'n or hanging o'er our heads;  
The bear, the lion, terrors of the plain,  
The sheepfold scatter'd, and the shepherd slain;  
The frequent errors of the pathless wood,  
The giddy precipice, and the dangerous flood;  
The noisome pestilence, that in open war  
Terrible, marches through the mid-way air,  
And scatters death; the arrow that by night  
Cuts the dank mist, and fatal wings its flight;  
The billowing snow, and violence of the shower,  
That from the hills disperse their dreadful store,  
And o'er the vales collected ruin pour;  
The worm that gnaws the ripening fruit, sad guest,  
Canker or locust, hurtful to infest  
The blade; while husks elude the tiller's care,  
And eminence of want distinguishes the year.

Pass we the slow disease, and subtile pain  
Which our weak frame is destined to sustain;  
The cruel stone with congregated war,  
Tearing his bloody way; the cold catarrh,  
With frequent impulse, and continued strife  
Weakening the wasted seeds of irksome life;  
The gout's fierce rack, the burning fever's rage,  
The sad experience of decay and age,

Herself the sorest ill, while death and ease,  
Oft and in vain invoked, or to appease  
Or end the grief, with hasty wings recede  
From the vex'd patient and the sickly bed.

Nought shall it profit that the charming fair,  
Angelic, softest work of Heaven, draws near  
To the cold shaking paralytic hand,  
Senseless of Beauty's touch, or Love's command,  
No longer apt or able to fulfil  
The dictates of its feeble master's will.  
Nought shall the psaltery and the harp avail,  
The pleasing song, or well-repeated tale,  
When the quick spirits their warm march forbear,  
And numbing coldness has unbraced the ear.

The verdant rising of the flowery hill,  
The vale enamell'd, and the crystal rill,  
The ocean rolling, and the shelly shore,  
Beautiful objects, shall delight no more,  
When the lax'd sinews of the weaken'd eye  
Day follows night; the clouds return again  
After the falling of the latter rain;  
But to the aged blind shall ne'er return  
Grateful vicissitude; he still must mourn,  
The sun, and moon, and every starry light,  
Eclipsed to him, and lost in everlasting night.

Behold where Age's wretched victim lies;  
See his head trembling, and his half-closed eyes;  
Frequent for breath his panting bosom heaves;  
To broken sleeps his remnant sense he gives,  
And only by his pains awaking finds he lives.

Loosed by devouring Time, the silver cord  
Dissever'd lies; unhonour'd from the board  
The crystal urn, when broken, is thrown by,  
And apter utensils their place supply.  
These things and thou must share one equal lot;  
Die and be lost, corrupt and be forgot;  
While still another and another race  
Shall now supply and now give up the place.



From earth all came, to earth must all return,  
Frail as the cord, and brittle as the urn.

But the terror of these ills suppress'd,  
And view we man with health and vigour bless'd.  
Home he returns with the declining sun,  
His destined task of labour hardly done;  
Goes forth again with the ascending ray,  
Again his travail for his bread to pay,  
And find the ill sufficient to the day.  
Haply at night he does with honour shun  
A widow'd daughter, or a dying son;  
His neighbour's offspring he to-morrow sees,  
And doubly feels his want in their increase:  
The next day, and the next, he must attend  
His foe triumphant, or his buried friend.  
In every act and turn of life he feels  
Public calamities, or household ills;  
The due reward to just desert refused,  
The trust betray'd, the nuptial bed abused:  
The judge corrupt, the long-depending cause,  
And doubtful issue of misconstrued laws:  
The crafty turns of a dishonest state,  
And violent will of the wrong-doing great;  
The venom'd tongue, injurious to his fame,  
Which nor can wisdom shun nor fair advice reclaim.

Esteem we these, my friend, event and chance,  
Produced as atoms form their fluttering dance?  
Or higher yet their essence may we draw  
From destined order and eternal law?  
Again, my Muse, the cruel doubt repeat?  
Spring they, I say, from accident or fate?  
Yet such we find they are, as can control  
The servile actions of our wavering soul;  
Can fright, can alter, or can chain the will;  
Their ills all built on life, that fundamental ill.

O fatal search! in which the labouring mind,  
Still press'd with weight of wo, still hopes to find  
A shadow of delight, a dream of peace,  
From years of pain one moment of release;

Hoping, at least, she may herself deceive,  
Against experience willing to believe,  
Desirous to rejoice, condemn'd to grieve,

Happy the mortal man who now at last  
Has through this doleful vale of misery pass'd,  
Who to his destined stage has carried on  
The tedious load, and laid his burden down;  
Whom the cut brass or wounded marble shows  
Victor o'er Life, and all her train of woes:  
He happier yet, who privileged by Fate  
To shorter labour and a lighter weight,  
Received but yesterday the gift of breath,  
Order'd to-morrow to return to death:  
But, O! beyond description happiest he  
Who ne'er must roll on life's tumultuous sea;  
Exempt, must never force the teeming womb,  
Nor see the sun, nor sink into the tomb.

Who breathes must suffer, and who thinks must mourn!  
And he alone is bless'd who ne'er was born.

'Yet in thy turn, thou frowning Preacher, hear;  
Are not these general maxims too severe?  
Say, cannot power secure its owner's bliss?  
Are victors bless'd with fame, or kings with ease?'

I tell thee, life is but one common care,  
And man was born to suffer and to fear.

'But is no rank, no station, no degree,  
From this contagious taint of sorrow free?'

None, mortal, none: yet in a bolder strain  
Let me this melancholy truth maintain:  
But hence, ye worldly and profane, retire,  
For I adapt my voice and raise my lyre  
To notions not by vulgar ear received;  
Yet still must covet life, and be deceived;  
Your very fear of death shall make you try  
To catch the shade of immortality,  
Wishing on earth to linger, and to save

Part of its prey from the devouring grave;  
To those who may survive ye to bequeath  
Something entire, in spite of time and death;  
A fancied kind of being to retrieve,  
And in a book, or from a building live.  
False hope! vain labour! let some ages fly,  
The dome shall moulder, and the volume die.  
Wretches, still taught! still will ye think it strange  
That all the parts of this great fabric change.  
Quit their high station and primeval frame,  
And lose their shape, their essence and their name?

Reduce the song; our hopes, our joys, are vain;  
Our lot is sorrow, and our portion pain.

What pause from wo, what hopes of comfort bring  
The name of wise or great, of judge or king?  
What is a king? a man condemn'd to bear  
The public burden of the nation's care;  
Now crown'd, some angry faction to appease,  
Now falls a victim to the people's ease;  
From the first blooming of his ill-taught youth  
Nourish'd flattery, and estranged from truth:  
At home surrounded by a servile crowd,  
Prompt to abuse, and in detraction loud;  
Abroad begirt with men, and swords and spears,  
His very state acknowledging his fears;  
Marching amidst a thousand guards, he shows  
His secret terror of a thousand foes;  
In war, however prudent, great, or brave,  
To blind events and fickle chance a slave;  
Seeking to settle what for ever flies,  
Sure of the toil, uncertain of the prize.

But he returns with conquest on his brow,  
Brings up the triumph, and absolves the vow:  
The captive generals to his car are tied;  
The joyful citizens, tumultuous tide,  
Echoing his glory, gratify his pride.  
What is this triumph? madness, shouts, and noise,  
One great collection of the people's voice.  
The wretches he brings back, in chains relate

What may to-morrow be the victor's fate.  
The spoils and trophies borne before him show  
National loss and epidemic wo,  
Various distress which he and his may know.  
Does he not mourn the valiant thousands slain,  
The heroes, once the glory of the plain,  
Left in the conflict of the fatal day,  
Or the wolf's portion, or the vulture's prey?  
Does he not weep the laurel which he wears,  
Wet with the soldiers' blood and widows tears?

See where he comes, the darting of the war!  
See millions crowding round the gilded car!  
In the vast joys of this ecstatic hour,  
And full fruition of successful power,  
One moment and one thought might let him scan  
The various turns of life, and fickle state of man.  
Are the dire images of sad distrust,  
And popular change, obscured amid the dust  
That rises from the victor's rapid wheel?  
Can the loud clarion or shrill life repel  
The inward cries of Care? can Nature's voice,  
Plaintive, be drown'd, or lessen'd in the noise,  
Though shouts, as thunder loud, afflict the air,  
Stun the birds, now released, and shake the ivory chair?

Yon crowd, (he might reflect) yon joyful crowd,  
Pleased with my honours, in my praise loud,  
(Should fleeting victory to the vanquish'd go,  
Should she depress my arms and raise the foe)  
Would for that foe with equal ardour wait,  
At the high palace or the crowded gate,  
With restless rage would pull my statues down,  
And cast the brass anew to his renown.

O impotent desire of worldly sway!  
That I who make the triumph of to-day,  
May of to-morrow's pomp one part appear,  
Ghastly with wounds, and lifeless on the bier!  
Then, (vileness of mankind!) then of all these  
Whom my dilated eye with labour sees,  
Would one, alas! repeat me good or great,

Wash my pale body, or bewail my fate?  
Or, march'd I chain'd behind the hostile car,  
The victor's pastime, and the sport of war,  
Would one, would one his pitying sorrow lend,  
Or be so poor to own he was my friend?

Avails it then, O Reason, to be wise?  
To see this cruel scene with quicker eyes?  
To know with more distinction to complain,  
And have superior sense in feeling pain?

Let us resolve, that roll with strictest eye,  
Where safe from time distinguish'd actions lie,  
And judge if greatness be exempt from pain,  
Or pleasure ever may with power remain.  
Adam, great type, for whom the world was made,  
The fairest blessing to his arms convey'd,  
A charming wife; and air, and sea, and land,  
And all that move therein, to his command  
Render'd obedient: say, my pensive Muse,  
What did these golden promises produce?  
Scarce tasting life he was of joy bereaved;  
One day I think in Paradise he lived,  
Destined the next his journey to pursue  
Where wounding thorns and cursed thistles grew.  
Ere yet he earns his bread, adown his brow,  
Inclined to earth, his labouring sweat must flow;  
His limbs must ache, with daily toils oppress'd,  
Ere long-wish'd night brings necessary rest:  
Still viewing with regret his darling Eve,  
He for her follies and his own must grieve.  
Bewailing still afresh their hapless choice,  
His ear oft frightened with the imaged voice,  
Of Heaven when first it thundere'd, oft his view,  
Aghast, as when the infant lightning flew,  
And the stern cherub stopp'd the fatal road,  
Arm'd with the flames of an avenging God,  
His younger son on the polluted ground,  
First fruit of death, lies plaintive of a wound  
Given by a brother's hand; his eldest birth  
Flies, mark'd by Heaven, a fugitive o'er earth:  
Yet why these sorrows heap'd upon the sire,

Becomes nor man nor angel to inquire.

Each age sinn'd on, and guild advanced with time;  
The son still added to the father's crime;  
Till God arose, and, great in anger, said,  
Lo! it repenteth me that man was made.  
And from your deep abyss, ye waters, rise!  
The frightened angels heard th' Almighty Lord,  
And o'er the earth from wrathful vials pour'd  
Tempests and storm, obedient to his word.  
Meantime his providence to Noah gave  
The guard of all that he design'd to save:  
Exempt from general doom the patriarch stood,  
Contemn'd the waves, and triumph'd o'er the flood.

The winds fall silent and the waves decrease;  
The dove brings quiet, and the clive peace;  
Yet still his heart does inward sorrow feel,  
Which faith alone forbids him to reveal.  
If on the backward world his views are cast,  
'Tis death diffused, and universal waste.  
Present, (sad prospect!) can he ought descry  
But (what affects his melancholy eye)  
The beauties of the ancient fabric lost,  
In chains of craggy hill, or lengths of dreary coast?  
While to high heaven his pious breathings turn'd,  
Weeping he hoped, and sacrificing mourn'd;  
When of God's image only eight he found  
Snatch'd from the watery grave, and saved from nations drown'd;  
And of three sons, the future hopes of earth,  
The seed whence empires must receive their birth,  
One he foresees excluded heavenly grace,  
And mark'd with curses fatal to his race.

Abraham, potent prince, the friend of God,  
Of human ills must bear the destined load,  
By blood and battles must his power maintain,  
And slay the monarchs ere he rules the plain;  
Must deal just portions of a servile life  
To a proud handmaid and a peevish wife;  
Must with the mother leave the weeping son,  
In want to wander and in wilds to groan;

Must take his other child, his age's hope,  
To trembling Moriah's melancholy top,  
Order'd to drench his knife in filial blood,  
Destroy his heir, or disobey his God.

Moses beheld that God; but how beheld  
The Deity, in radiant beams conceal'd,  
And clouded in a deep abyss of light!  
While present too severe for human sight,  
Nor staying longer than one swift-wing'd night  
The following days, and months, and years, decreed  
To fierce encounter, and to toilsome deed:  
His youth with wants and hardships must engage,  
Plots and rebellions must disturb his age:  
Some Corah still arose, some rebel slave,  
Prompter to sink the state than he to save,  
And Israel did his rage so far provoke,  
That what the Godhead wrote the prophet broke.  
His voice scarce heard, his dictates scarce believed,  
In camps, in arms, in pilgrimage, he lived,  
And died obedient to severest law,  
Forbid to tread the Promised land he saw.

My father's life was one long line of care,  
A scene of danger and a state of war.  
The bear's rough gripe and foaming lion's rage,  
By various turns his threaten'd youth must fear  
Goliath's lifted sword and Saul's emitted spear.  
Forlorn he must, and persecuted, fly,  
Climb the steep mountain, in the cavern lie,  
And often ask, and be refused to die.

For ever from his manly toils are known  
The weight of power and anguish of a crown.  
What tongue can speak the restless monarch's woes,  
When God and Nathan were declared his foes?  
When every object his offence reviled,  
The husband murder'd and the wife defiled,  
The parent's sins impress'd upon the dying child!  
What heart can think the grief which he sustain',d  
When the King's crime brought vengeance on the land,  
And the inexorable prophet's voice

Give famine, plague, or war, and bid him fix his choice?

He died; and, oh! may no reflection shed  
Its poisonous venom on the royal dead:  
Yet the unwilling truth must be express'd  
Which long has labour'd in this pensive breast;  
Dying he added to my weight of care;  
He made me to his crimes undoubted heir;  
Left his unfinish'd murder to his son,  
And Joab's blood entail'd on Judah's crown.

Young as I was, I hasted to fulfil  
The cruel dictates of my parent's will:  
Of his fair deeds a distant view I took,  
But turn'd the tube upon his faults to look;  
Forgot his youth spent in his country's cause,  
His care of right, his reverence to the laws,  
But could with joy his years of folly trace,  
Broken and old in Bathsheba's embrace  
Could follow him where'er he stray'd from good,  
And cite his sad example, whilst I trod  
Paths open to deceit, and track'd with blood.  
With smiles I could betray, with temper kill;  
Soon in a brother could a rival view,  
Watch all his acts, and all his ways pursue:  
In vain for life he to the altar fled;  
Ambition and Revenge have certain speed.  
Even there, my soul, even there he should have fell,  
But that my interest did my rage conceal:  
Doubling my crime I promise and deceive,  
Purpose to slay, whilst swearing to forgive.  
Treaties, persuasions, sighs, and tears, are vain  
With a mean lie cursed vengeance I sustain.  
Join fraud to force, and policy to power,  
Till of the destined fugitive secure,  
In solemn state to parricide I rise,  
And, as God lives, this day my brother dies.

Be witness to my tears, celestial Muse!  
In vain I would forget, in vain excuse,  
Fraternal blood by my direction spilt;  
In vain on Joab's head transfer the guilt:



The deed was acted by the subject's hand,  
The sword was pointed by the King's command:  
Mine was the murder; it was mine alone;  
Years of contrition must the crime atone:  
Nor can my guilty soul expect relief  
But from a long sincerity of grief.

With an imperfect hand and trembling heart,  
Her love of truth superior to her art,  
Already the reflecting Muse has traced  
The mournful figures of my actions past,  
The pensive goddess has already taught  
How vain is hope, and how vexatious thought;  
From growing childhood to declining age,  
How tedious every step, how gloomy every stage,  
This course of vanity almost complete,  
Tired in the field of life, I hope retreat  
In the still shades of death; for dread, and pain,  
And grief, will find their shafts elanced in vain,  
And their points broke, retorted from the head,  
Safe in the grave, and free among the dead.

Yet tell me, frightened reason! what is death?  
Blood only stopp'd, and interrupted breath?  
The utmost limit of a narrow span,  
And end of motion, which with life began?  
As smoke that rises from the kindling fires  
Is seen this moment, and the next expires;  
As empty clouds by rising winds are lost,  
Their fleeting forms scarce sooner found than lost,  
So vanishes our state, so pass our days,  
So life but opens now, and now decays;  
The cradle and the tomb, alas! so nigh,  
To live is scarce distinguish'd from to die.

Cure of the miser's wish and coward's fear,  
Death only shows us what we knew was near,  
With courage therefore view the pointed hour,  
Dread not Death's anger, but expect his power,  
Nor Nature's law with fruitless sorrow mourn,  
But die, O mortal man! for thou wast born.

Cautious through doubt, by want of courage wise,  
To such advice the reasoner still replies.

Yet measuring all the long continued space,  
Every successive day's repeated race,  
Since Time first started from his pristine goal,  
Till he had reach'd that hour wherein my soul  
Join'd to my body swell'd the womb, I was  
(At least I think so) nothing; must I pass  
Again to nothing when this vital breath  
Ceasing, consigns me o'er to rest and death?  
Must the whole man, amazing thought! return  
To the cold marble or contracted urn?  
And never shall those particles agree  
That were in life this individual he?  
But sever'd, must they join the general mass,  
Through other forms and shapes ordain'd to pass,  
Nor thought nor image kept of what he was?  
Does the great word that gave him sense ordain  
That life shall never wake that sense again?  
And will no power his sinking spirits save  
From the dark caves of death, and chambers of the grave?

Each evening I behold the setting sun  
With downward speed into the ocean run;  
Yet the same light (pass but some fleeting hours)  
Exerts his vigour and renews his powers;  
Starts the bright race again: his constant flame  
Rises and sets, returning still the same.  
I mark the various fury of the winds;  
These neither seasons guide nor order binds;  
They now dilate, and now contract their force;  
Various their speed, but endless is their course,  
From his first fountain and beginning ooze,  
Down to the sea each brook and torrent flows;  
Though sundry drops or leave or swell the stream,  
The whole still runs, with equal pace the same;  
Still other waves supply the rising urns,  
And the eternal flood no want of water mourns.

Why then must man obey the sad decree,  
Which subjects neither sun, nor wind, nor sea?

A flower that does with opening morn arise,  
And flourishing the day at evening dies;  
A winged eastern blast, just skimming o'er  
The ocean's brow, and sinking on the shore;  
A fire, whose flames through crackling stubbles fly;  
A meteor shooting from the summer sky;  
A bowl adown the bending mountain roll'd;  
A bubble breaking, and a fable told;  
A noontide shadow, and a midnight dream,  
Are emblems which with semblance apt proclaim  
Our earthly course; but, O my Soul! so fast  
Must life run off, and death for ever last!

This dark opinion sure is too confined,  
Else whence this hope and terror of the mind?  
Does something still, and somewhere, yet remain,  
Reward or punishment, delight or pain?  
Say, shall our relics second birth receive?  
Sleep we to wake, and only die to live?  
When the sad wife has closed her husband's eyes,  
And pierced the echoing vault with doleful cries,  
Lies the pale corpse not yet entirely dead,  
The spirit only from the body fled,  
The grosser part of heat and motion void,  
To be by fire, or worm, or time, destroy'd;  
The soul, immortal substance, to remain  
Conscious of joy and capable of pain?  
And if her acts have been directed well,  
While with her friendly clay she deign'd to dwell,  
Shall she with safety reach her pristine seat,  
Find her rest endless, and her bliss complete?  
And while the buried man we idly mourn,  
Do angels joy to see his better half return?  
But if she has deform'd this earthly life  
With murderous rapine and seditious strife,  
Amazed, repulsed, and by those angels driven  
From the ethereal seat and blissful heaven,  
In everlasting darkness must she lie,  
Still more unhappy that she cannot die?  
Amid two seas, on one small point of land,  
Wearied, uncertain, and amazed, we stand;

On either side our thoughts incessant turn,  
Forward we dread, and looking back we mourn,  
Losing the present in this dubious haste,  
And lost ourselves betwixt the future and the past.

These cruel doubts contending in my breast,  
My reason staggering and my hopes oppress'd,  
Once more I said, once more I will inquire,  
What is this little, agile, pervious fire,  
This flattering motion which we call the Mind,  
How does she act? and where is she confined?  
Have we the power to give her as we please?  
Whence then those evils that obstruct our ease?  
We happiness pursue: we fly from pain;  
Yet the pursuit and yet the flight is vain;  
And while poor Nature labours to be bless'd,  
By day with pleasure, and by night with rest,  
Some stronger power eludes our sickly will,  
Dashes our rising hope with certain ill,  
And makes us, with reflective trouble, see  
That all is destined which we fancy free.

That power superior then which rules our mind,  
Is his decree by human prayer inclined?  
Will he for sacrifice our sorrows ease!  
And can our tears reverse his firm decrees?  
Then let religion aid where reason fails,  
Throw loads of incense in to turn the scales,  
And let the silent sanctuary show,  
What from the babbling schools we may not know,  
How man may shun or bear his destined part of wo.

What shall amend, or what absolve our fate?  
Anxious we hover in a mediate state  
Betwixt infinity and nothing; bounds,  
Or boundless terms, whose doubtful sense confounds:  
Unequal thought, whilst all we apprehend  
Is, that our hopes must rise, our sorrows end,  
As our Creator deigns to be our friend.

I said, - and instant bade the priests prepare  
The ritual sacrifice and solemn prayer.

Select from vulgar herds, with garlands gay,  
A hundred bulls ascend the sacred way:  
The artful youth proceed to form the choir,  
They breathe the flute, or strike the vocal wire.  
The maids in comely order next advance,  
They beat the timbrel and instruct the dance:  
Follows the chosen tribe, from Levi sprung,  
Chanting by just return the holy song.  
Along the choir in solemn state they pass'd,  
- The anxious King came last.  
The sacred hymn perform'd, my promised vow  
I paid, and, bowing at the altar low.

Father of heaven! I said, and Judge of earth!  
Whose word call'd out this universe to birth,  
By whose kind power and influencing care  
The various creatures move, and live, and are;  
But ceasing once that care, withdrawn that power,  
They move (alas!) and live, and are no more;  
Omniscient Master, omnipresent King,  
To thee, to thee my last distress I bring.

Thou that canst still the raging of the seas,  
Chain up the winds, and bid the tempests cease,  
Redeem my shipwreck'd soul from raging gusts  
Of cruel passion and deceitful lusts;  
From storms of rage and dangerous rocks of pride,  
Let thy strong hand this little vessel guide,  
(It was thy hand that made it) through the tide  
Impetuous of this life, let thy command  
Direct my course, and bring me safe to land.

If, while this wearied flesh draws fleeting breath,  
Not satisfied with life, afraid of death,  
It haply be thy will that I should know  
Glimpse of delight, or pause from anxious wo,  
From now, from instant now, great Sire! dispel  
The clouds that press my soul; from now reveal  
A gracious beam of light; from now inspire  
My tongue to sing, my hand to touch the lyre;  
My open'd thought to joyous prospects raise,  
And for thy mercy let me sing thy praise:

Or, if thy will ordains, I still shall wait  
Some new hereafter and a future state,  
Permit me strength my weight of wo to bear,  
And raise my mind superior to my care.  
Let me, howe'er unable to explain  
The secret lab'rinth of thy ways to man,  
With humble zeal confess thy awful power,  
Still weeping hope, and wondering, still adore:  
So in my conquest be thy might declared,  
And for thy justice be thy name revered.

My prayer scarce ended, a stupendous gloom  
Darkens the air; loud thunder shakes the dome:  
To the beginning miracle succeed  
An awful silence and religious dread.  
Sudden breaks forth a more than common day,  
The sacred wood, which on the altar lay  
Untouch'd, unlighted glows -  
Ambrosial odour, such as never flows  
From Arab's gum or the Sabaean rose,  
Does round the air evolving scents diffuse:  
The holy ground is wet with heavenly dews:  
Celestial music (such Jessides' lyre,  
Such Miriam's timbrel would in vain require)  
Strikes to my thought through admiring ear,  
With ecstasy too fine, and pleasure hard to bear:  
And, lo! what sees my ravish'd eye? what feels  
My wondering soul? an opening cloud reveals  
A heavenly form embodied and array'd  
With robes of light, I heard; the angel said,

Cease, Man, of women born, to hope relief  
From daily trouble and continued grief.  
Thy hope of joy deliver to the wind:  
Suppress thy passions, and prepare thy mind.  
Free and familiar with misfortune grow;  
Be used to sorrow, and inured to wo.  
By weakening toil and hoary age o'ercome,  
See thy decrease, and hasting to thy tomb.  
Leave to thy children tumult, strife, and war,  
Portions of toil, and legacies of care:  
Send the successive ills through ages down,

And let each weeping father tell his son  
That, deeper struck, and more distinctly grieved,  
He must augment the sorrows he received.

The child to whose success thy hope is bound,  
Ere thou art scarce interr'd or he is crown'd,  
To lust of arbitrary sway inclined,  
(That cursed poison to the prince's mind!)  
Shall from thy dictates and his duty rove,  
And lose his great defence, his people's love:  
Ill counsell'd, vanquish'd, fugitive, disgraced,  
Shall mourn the fame of Jacob's strength effaced:  
Shall sigh the King diminish'd, and the crown  
With lessen'd rays descending to his son:  
Shall see the wreaths his grandsire knew to reap  
By active toil and military sweat,  
Rining incline their sickly leaves, and shed  
Their falling honours from his giddy head:  
By arms or prayer unable to assuage  
Domestic horror and intestine rage,  
Shall from the victor and the vanquish'd fear,  
From Israel's arrow and from Judah's spear:  
Shall cast his wearied limbs on Jordan's flood,  
By brothers' arms disturb'd, and stain'd with kindred blood.

Hence labouring years shall weep their destined race,  
Charged with ill omens, sully'd with disgrace;  
Time, by necessity compell'd, shall go  
Through scenes of war, and epochas of wo:  
The empire lessen'd in a parted stream  
Shall lose its course -  
Indulge thy tears; the Heathen shall blaspheme;  
Judah shall fall, oppress'd by grief and shame,  
And men shall from her ruins know her fame.

New Egypts yet and second bonds remain,  
A harsher Pharaoh, and a heavier chain.  
Again, obedient to a dire command,  
Thy captive sons shall leave the promised land;  
Their name more low, their servitude more vile,  
Shall on Euphrates' bank renew the grief of Nile.

These pointed spires that wound the ambient sky,  
Inglorious change shall in destruction lie  
Low, levell'd with the dust, their heights unknown,  
Or measured by their ruin. Yonder throne,  
For lasting glory built, design'd the seat  
Of kings for ever bless'd, for ever great,  
Removed by the invader's barbarous hand,  
Shall grace his triumph in a foreign land:  
The tyrant shall demand yon' sacred load  
Of gold and vessels set apart to God,  
Then by vile hands to common use debased,  
Shall send them flowing round his drunken feast,  
With sacrilegious taunt and impious jest.

Twice fourteen ages shall their way complete,  
Empires by various turns shall rise and set,  
While thy abandon'd tribes shall only know  
A different master and a change of wo;  
With downcast eyelids, and with looks aghast,  
Shall dread the future or bewail the past.  
Afflicted Israel shall sit weeping down,  
Fast by the streams where Babel's waters run,  
Their harps upon the neighbouring willows hung,  
Nor joyous hymn encouraging their tongue,  
Nor cheerful dance their feet; with toil oppress'd,  
Their wearied limbs aspiring but to rest.  
In the reflective stream the sighing bride,  
Viewing her charms impair'd, abash'd shall hide  
Her pensive head, and in her languid face  
The bridegroom shall foresee his sickly race,  
While ponderous fetters vex their close embrace  
With irksome anguish then your priests shall mourn  
Their long neglected feasts despair'd return,  
And sad oblivion of their solemn days:  
Thenceforth their voices they shall only raise,  
Louder to weep. By day your frightened seers  
Shall call for fountains to express their tears,  
And wish their eyes were floods: by night, from dreams  
Of opening gulfs, black storms, and raging flames,  
Starting amazed, shall to the people show  
Emblems of heavenly wrath, and mystic types of wo.



The captives, as their tyrant shall require  
That they should breathe the song and touch the lyre,  
Shall say, Can Jacob's servile race rejoice,  
Untuned the music, and disused the voice?  
What can we play, (they shall discourse) how sing  
In foreign lands, and to a barbarous king?  
We and our fathers, from our childhood bred  
To watch the cruel victor's eye, to dread  
The arbitrary lash, to bend, to grieve,  
(Outcast of mortal race) can we conceive  
Image of ought delightful, soft, or gay?  
Alas! when we have toil the longsome day,  
The fullest bliss our hearts aspire to know,  
Is but some interval from active wo;  
In broken rest and startling sleep to mourn,  
Till morn the tyrant and the scourge return:  
Bred up in grief, can pleasure be our theme?  
Our endless anguish does not nature claim?  
Reason and sorrow are to us the same.  
Alas! with wild amazement we require  
If idle Folly was not Pleasure's sire?  
Madness, we fancy, gave an ill-timed birth.

This is the series of perpetual wo  
Which thou, alas! and thine, are born to know.  
Illustrious wretch! repine not nor reply;  
View not what Heaven ordains with reason's eye;  
Too bright the object is, the distance is too high.  
The man who would resolve the work of fate  
May limit number and make crooked straight:  
Stop thy inquiry, then, and curb thy sense,  
'Tis God who must dispose and man sustain,  
Born to endure, forbidden to complain:  
Thy sum of life must his decrees fulfil;  
What derogates from his command is ill,  
And that alone is good which centres in his will.

Yet that thy labouring senses may not droop,  
Lost to delight, and destitute of hope,  
Remark what I, God's messenger, aver  
From him who neither can deceive nor err.  
The land, at length redeem'd, shall cease to mourn,

Shall from her sad captivity return:  
Sion shall raise her long-dejected head,  
And in her courts the law again be read,  
Again the glorious temple shall arise,  
And with now lustre pierce the neighbouring skies:  
The promised seat of empire shall again  
Cover the mountain and command the plain;  
And from thy race distinguish'd, One shall spring  
Greater in act than victor, more than king;  
In dignity and power sent down from heaven  
To succour earth. To him, to him, 'tis given  
Passion, and care, and anguish, to destroy;  
Through him soft peace and plenitude of joy  
Perpetual o'er the world redeem'd shall flow;  
No more may man inquire or angel know.

Now, Solomon, remembering who thou art,  
Act through thy remnant life a decent part:  
Go forth; be strong; with patience and with care  
Perform and suffer; to thyself severe,  
Gracious to others, thy desires suppress'd,  
Diffused thy virtues, first of men, be best.  
Thy sum of duty let two words contain,  
O may they graven in thy heart remain!  
Be humble and be just. The angel said:  
With upward speed his agile wings he spread,  
Whilst on the holy ground I prostrate lay,  
By various doubts impell'd, or to obey  
Or to object; at length (my mournful look  
Heavenward erect) determined, thus I spoke:

Supreme, all-wise, eternal Potentate!  
Sole author, sole disposer, of our fate!  
Enthroned in light and immortality,  
Whom no man fully sees, and none can see!  
Original of Beings! Power divine!  
Since that I live, that I think, is thine;  
Benign Creator! let thy plastic hand  
Dispose its own effect: let thy command  
Restore, great Father, thy instructed son,  
And in my act may thy great will be done.





## Songs Set To Music: 1. Set By Mr. Abel

Reading ends in melancholy,  
Wine breeds vices and diseases,  
Wealth is but care, and love but folly,  
Only friendship truly pleases.  
My wealth, my books, my flask, my Molly,  
Farewell all if friendship ceases.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 10. Set By Mr. Smith

Why, Harry, what ails you? why look you so sad?  
To think and ne'er drink will make you stark mad.  
'Tis the mistress, the friend, and the bottle, old boy,  
Which create all the pleasure poor mortals enjoy;  
But wine of the three's the most cordial brother,  
For one it relieves, and it strengthens the other.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 11. Set By Mr. De Fesch

Morella, charming without art,  
And kind without design,  
Can never lose the smallest part  
Of such a heart as mine.

Obliged a thousand several ways,  
It ne'er can break her chains,  
While passion which her beauties raise  
My gratitude maintains.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 12. Set By Mr. Smith

Since my words, though ne'er so tender,  
With sincerest truth express'd,  
Cannot make your heart surrender,  
Nor so much as warm your breast;

What will move the springs of Nature  
What will make you think me true?  
Tell me, thou mysterious creature,  
Tell poor Strephon what will do.

Do not, Charmion, rack your lover  
Thus, by seeming not to know  
What so plainly all discover,  
What his eyes so plainly show.

Fair one, 'tis yourself deceiving,  
'Tis against your reason's laws;  
Atheist-like (th' effect perceiving)  
Still to disbelieve the cause.

Matthew Prior



## Songs Set To Music: 13. Set By Mr. De Fesch

Love! inform thy faithful creature  
How to keep his fair one's heart;  
Must it be by truth of nature,  
Or by poor dissembling art?  
Tell the secret, show the wonder,  
How we both may gain our ends;  
I am lost if we're asunder,  
Ever tortured if we're friends.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 14. Set By Mr. Smith

Once I was unconfined and free,  
Would I had been so still!  
Enjoying sweetest liberty,  
And roving at my will.

But now, not master of my heart,  
Cupid does so decide,  
That two she tyrants shall it part,  
And so poor me divide.

Victoria's will I must obey,  
She acts without control;  
Phyllis has such a taking way  
She charms my very soul.

Deceived by Phyllis' looks and smiles,  
Into her snares I run;  
Victoria shows me all her wiles,  
Which yet I dare not shun.

From one I fancy every kiss  
Has something in't divine,  
And awful taste the balmy bliss  
That joins her lips with mine.

But when with th' other I embrace,  
Though she be not a queen,  
Methinks 'tis sweet with such a lass  
To tumble on the green.

Thus here you see a shared heart,  
But I meanwhile the fool;  
Each in it has an equal part,  
But neither yet the whole.

Nor will it, if I right forecast,  
To either wholly yield;  
I find the time approaches fast  
When both must quit the field.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 15. Set By Mr. De Fesch

Farewell, Amynta, we must part;  
The charm has lost its power  
Which held so fast my captived heart  
Until this fatal hour.

Hadst thou not thus my love abused,  
And used me ne'er so ill,  
Thy cruelty I had excused,  
And I had loved thee still.

But know, my soul disdain'd thy sway,  
And scorns thy charms and thee,  
To which each fluttering coxcomb may  
As welcome be as me.

Think in what perfect bliss you reign'd,  
How loved before thy fall,  
And now, alas! how much disdain'd  
By me, and scorn'd by all.

Yet thinking of each happy hour,  
Which I with thee have spent,  
So robs my rage of all its power,  
That I almost relent.

But pride will never let me bow;  
No more thy charms can move;  
Yet thou art worth my pity now,  
Because thou hadst my love.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 16. Set By Mr. Smith

Accept, my Love, as true a heart  
As ever lover gave;  
'Tis free (it vows) from my art,  
And proud to be your slave.

Then take it kindly, as 'twas meant,  
And let the giver live,  
Who with it would the world have sent  
Had it been his to give.

And that Dorinda may not fear  
I e'er will prove untrue,  
My vows shall, ending with the year,  
With it begin a new.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 17. Set By Mr. De Fesch

Nanny blushes when I woo her,  
And with kindly chiding eyes  
Faintly says I shall undo her;  
Faintly, O, forbear! she cries.

But her breasts while I am pressing,  
While to hers my lips I join,  
Warm'd, she seems to taste the blessing,  
And her kisses answer mine.

Undebauch'd by rules of honour,  
Innocence with Nature charms;  
One bids gently push me from her,  
The other take me in her arms.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 18. Set By Mr. Smith

Since we your husband daily see  
So jealous out of season,  
Phillis, let you and I agree  
To make him so with reason.

I'm vex'd to think that every night  
A sot, within thy arms,  
Tasting the most divine delight,  
Should sully all your charms.

While, fretting, I must lie alone,  
Cursing the powers divine,  
That undeservedly have thrown  
A pearl unto a swine.

Then, Phillis, heal my wounded heart,  
My burning passion cool;  
Let me at least in thee have part  
With thy insipid fool.

Let him by night his joys pursue,  
And blunder in the dark,  
While I by day enjoying you,  
Can see to hit the mark.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 19. Set By Mr. C. R.

Phillis, give this humour over,  
We too long have time abused;  
I shall turn an errant rover  
If the favour's still refused.

Faith 'tis nonsense out of measure,  
Without ending thus to see  
Women forced to taste a pleasure  
Which they love as well as we.

Let not pride and folly share you,  
We were made but to enjoy;  
Ne'er will Age or Censure spare you  
E'er the more for being coy.

Never fancy time's before you;  
Youth believe me will away;  
Then, alas! who will adore you,  
Or to wrinkles tribute pay?

All the swains on you attending  
Show how much your charms deserve;  
But, miser-like, for fear of spending  
You amidst your plenty starve.

While a thousand freer lasses,  
Who their youth and charms employ,  
Though your beauty theirs surpasses,  
Live in far more perfect joy.

Matthew Prior



## Songs Set To Music: 2. Set By Mr. Purcell

Whither would my passion run?  
Shall I fly her, or pursue her?  
Losing her I am undone,  
Yet would not gain her to undo her.

Ye tyrants of the human breast,  
Love and Reason, cease your war,  
And order Death to give me rest,  
So each will equal triumph share.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 20. Set By Mr. De Fesch

Since by ill fate I'm forced away,  
And snatch'd so soon from those dear arms,  
Against my will I must obey,  
And leave those sweet endearing charms.

Yet still love on, and never fear  
But you and constancy will prove  
Enough my present flame to bear,  
And make me, though in absence, love.

For though your presence Fate denies,  
I feel, alas! the killing smart,  
And can with undiscerned eyes  
Behold your picture in my heart.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 21. Set By Mr. De Fesch

Touch the lyre, touch every string;  
Touch it, Orpheus; I will sing  
A song which shall immortal be,  
Since she I sing's a deity;  
A Leonora, whose bless'd birth  
Has no relation to this earth.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 22. Set By Mr. De Fesch

In vain, alas! poor Strephon tries  
To ease his tortured breast,  
Since Amoret the cure denies,  
And makes his pain a jest.

Ah! fair one, why to me so coy,  
And why to him so true?  
Who with more coldness slights the joy  
Than I with love pursue.

Die, then, unhappy lover, die;  
For since she gives thee death,  
The world has nothing that can buy  
A minute more of breath.

Yet though I could your scorn outlive,  
'Twere folly, since to me  
Not love itself a joy can give,  
But, Amoret, in thee.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 23. Set By Mr. De Fesch

Well, I will never more complain,  
Or call the Fates unkind;  
Alas! how fond it is, how vain!  
But self-conceitedness does reign  
I nevery mortal mind.

'Tis true, they long did me deny,  
Nor would permit a sight;  
I raged, for I could not espy,  
Or think that any harm could lie  
Disguised in that delight.

At last, my wishes to fulfil,  
They did their power resign,  
I saw her, but I wish I still  
Had been obedient to their will,  
And they not unto mine.

Yet I by this have learn'd the wit  
Never to grieve or fret;  
Contentedly I will submit,  
And think that best which they think fit,  
Without the least regret.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 24. Set By Mr. C. R.

Cloe beauty has, and wit,  
And an air that is not common;  
Every charm in her does meet,  
Fit to make a handsome woman.

But we do not only find  
Here a lovely face or feature,  
For she's merciful and kind;  
Beauty's answer'd by good-nature.

She is always doing good,  
Of her favours never sparing,  
And, as all good Christians should,  
Keeps poor mortals from despairing.

Jove the power knew of her charms,  
And that no man could endure 'em,  
So providing 'gainst all harms,  
Gave to her the power to cure 'em,

And 'twould be a cruel thing,  
When her black eyes have raised desire,  
Should she not her bucket bring,  
And kindly help to quench the fire.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 25.

Since, Moggy, I mun bid adieu,  
How can I help despairing?  
Let cruel Fate us still pursue,  
There's nought more worth my caring.

'Twas she alone could calm my soul  
When racking thoughts did grieve me;  
Her eyes my trouble could control,  
And into joys deceive me.

Farewell ye brooks! no more along  
Your banks mun I be walking;  
No more you'll hear my pipe or song,  
Or pretty Moggy's talking.

But I by death an end will give  
To grief since we mun sever;  
For who can after parting live,  
Ought to be wretched ever.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 26.

Some kind angel, gently flying,  
Moved with pity at my pain,  
Tell Corinna I am dying  
Till with joy we meet again.

Tell Corinna, since we parted  
I have never known delight,  
And shall soon be broken-hearted  
If I longer want her sight.

Tell her how her lover, mourning,  
Thinks each lazy day a year,  
Cursing every morn returning,  
Since Corinna is not here.

Tell her, too, not distant places,  
Will she be but true and kind,  
Join'd with time and change of faces,  
E'er shall shake my constant mind.

Matthew Prior



## Songs Set To Music: 27.

Haste, my Nannette,  
My lovely maid,  
Haste to the bower  
Thy swain has made.  
For thee alone  
I made the bower,  
And strew'd the couch  
With many a flower.  
None but my sheep  
Shall near us come;  
Venus be praised  
My sheep are dumb.  
Great god of love  
Take thou my crook,  
To keep the wolf  
From Nannette's flock.  
Guard thou the sheep  
To her so dear;  
My own, alas!  
Are less my care.  
But of the wolf  
If thou'rt afraid,  
Come not to us  
To call for aid;  
For with her swain  
My love shall stay,  
Though the wolf stroll  
And the sheep stray.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 28. Nelly.

Whilst others proclaim  
This nymph or that swain,  
Dearest Nelly the lovely I'll sing:  
She shall grace every verse,  
I'll her beauties rehearse,  
Which lovers can't think an ill thing.

Her eyes shine as bright  
As stars in the night;  
Her complexion's divinely fair;  
Her lips red as a cherry,  
Would a hermit make merry,  
And black as a coal is her hair.

Her breath, like a rose,  
Its sweets does disclose,  
Whenever you ravish a kiss  
Like ivory inchas'd,  
Her teeth are well placed;  
And exquisite beauty she is.

Her plump breasts are white,  
Delighting the sight,  
There Cupid discovers her charms;  
Oh! spare then the rest,  
And think of the best;  
'Tis heaven to die in her arms.

She's blooming as May,  
Brisk, lively, and gay,  
The Graces all round about her;  
She's prudent and witty,  
Sings wondrously pretty,  
And there is no living without her.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 3. Set By Mr. De Fesch

Strephonetta, why d'ye fly me,  
With such rigour in your eyes:  
Oh! 'tis cruel to deny me,  
Since your charms I so much prize.

But I plainly see the reason  
Why in vain I you pursued,  
Her to gain 'twas out of season,  
Who before the chaplain woo'd.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 4. Set By Mr. Smith

Come, weep no more, for 'tis in vain;  
Torment not thus your pretty heart;  
Think, Flavia, we may meet again,  
As well as that we now must part.

You sigh and weep; the gods neglect  
That precious dew your eyes let fall;  
Our joy and grief with like respect  
They mind, and that is not at all.

We pray, in hopes they will be kind,  
As if they did regard our state;  
They hear, and the return we find  
Is, that no prayers can alter Fate.

Then clear your brow, and look more gay;  
Do not yourself to grief resign;  
Who knows but that those powers may  
The pair they now have parted join?

But since they have thus cruel been,  
And could such constant lovers sever,  
I dare not trust, lest, now they're in,  
They should divide us two for ever.

Then, Flavia, come, and let us grieve,  
Remembering, though, upon what score;  
This our last parting look believe,  
Believe we must embrace no more.

Yet should our sun shine out at last,  
And Fortune, without more deceit,  
Throw but one reconciling cast,  
To make two wandering lovers meet;

How great then would our pleasures be  
To find heaven kinder than believed,  
And we, who had no hopes to see  
Each other, to be thus deceived!

But say, should heaven bring no relief;  
Suppose our sun should never rise;  
Why, then, what's due to such a grief  
We've paid already with our eyes.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 5. Set By Mr. De Fesch

Let perjured fair Amynta know  
What for her sake I undergo;  
Tell her, for her how I sustain  
A lingering fever's wasting pain;  
Tell her the torments I endure,  
Which only, only she can cure.

But, oh! she scorns to hear or see  
The wretch that lies so low as me;  
Her sudden greatness turns her brain,  
And Strephon hopes, alas! in vain;  
For ne'er 'twas found (though often tried)  
That Pity ever dwelt with Pride.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 6. Set By Mr. Smith

Phillis, since we have both been kind,  
And of each other had our fill,  
Tell me what pleasure you can find  
In forcing Nature 'gainst her will.

'Tis true, you may, with art and pain,  
Keep in some glowings of desire,  
But still those glowings which remain  
Are only ashes of the fire.

Then let us free each other's soul,  
And laugh at the dull constant fool  
Who would Love's liberty control,  
And teach us how to whine by rule.

Let us no impositions set  
Or clogs upon each other's heart;  
But, as for pleasure first we met,  
So now for pleasure let us part.

We both have spent our stock of love,  
So consequently should be free;  
Thyrsis expects you in yon grove,  
And pretty Chloris stays for me.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 7. Set By Mr. De Fesch

Phillis, this pious talk give o'er,  
And modesty pretend no more,  
It is too plain an art:  
Surely you take me for a fool,  
And would by this prove me so dull  
As not to know your heart.

In vain you fancy to deceive;  
For truly I can ne'er believe  
But this is all a sham,  
Since any one may plainly see  
You'd only save yourself with me,  
And with another damn.

Matthew Prior



## Songs Set To Music: 8. Set By Mr. Smith

Still, Dorinda, I adore;  
Think I mean not to deceive you,  
For I loved you much before,  
And, alas! now love you more  
Though I force myself to leave you.

Staying I my vows shall fail,  
Virtue yields as love grows stronger;  
Fierce desires will prevail,  
You are fair and I am frail,  
And dare trust myself no longer.

You, my love, too nicely coy,  
Lest I should have gain'd the treasure,  
Made my vows and oaths destroy  
The pleasing hopes I did enjoy  
Of all my future peace and pleasure.

To my vows I have been true,  
And in silence hid my anguish,  
But I cannot promise too  
What my love may make me do  
While with her for whom I languish.

For in thee strange magic lies,  
And my heart is too, too tender;  
Nothing's proof against those eyes,  
Best resolves and strictest ties  
To their force must soon surrender.

But, Dorinda, you're severe,  
I much doting thus to sever:  
Since from all I hold most dear,  
That you may no longer fear,  
I divorce myself for ever.

Matthew Prior

## Songs Set To Music: 9. Set By Mr. De Fesch

Is it, O love, thy want of eyes,  
Or by the Fates decreed,  
That hearts so seldom sympathise,  
Or for each other bleed?

If thou wouldst make two youthful hearts  
One amorous shaft obey,  
'Twould save thee the expense of darts,  
And more extend thy sway.

Forbear, alas! thus to destroy  
Thyself, thy growing power,  
For that which would be stretch'd by joy  
Despair will soon devour.

Ah! wound then my relentless fair,  
For thy own sake and mine,  
That boundless may be my share,  
And double glory thine.

Matthew Prior

# The Chameleon

As the Chameleon, who is known  
To have no colours of his own,  
But borrows from his neighbour's hue  
His white or black, his green or blue,  
And struts as much in ready light,  
Which credit gives him upon sight,  
As if the rainbow were entail  
Settled on him and his heirs-male;  
So the young 'squire, when first he comes  
From country school to Will's or Tom's,  
And equally in truth is fit  
To be a statesman or a wit,  
Without one notion of his own,  
He saunters wildly up and down,  
Till some acquaintance good or bad,  
Takes notice of a staring lad,  
Admits him in among the gang;  
They jest, reply, dispute, harangue;  
He acts and talks as they befriend him,  
Smear'd with the colours which they lend him.

Thus merely as his fortune chances  
His merit or his vice advances.

If haply the sect pursues  
That read and comment upon news,  
He takes up their mysterious face;  
He drinks his coffee without lace:  
This week his mimic tongue runs o'er  
What they had said the week before;  
His wisdom sets all Europe right,  
And teaches Marlborough when to fight.

Or if it be his fate to meet  
With folks who have more wealth than wit,  
He loves cheap Port and double bub,  
And settles in the Humdrum club:  
He learns how stocks will fall or rise;  
Holds poverty the greatest vice;

Thinks wit the bane of conversation,  
And says that learning spoils a nation.

But if at first he minds his hits,  
And drinks Champaigne among the wits,  
Five deep he toasts the towering lasses,  
Repeats yon verse wrote on glasses:  
Is in the chair, prescribes the law,  
And lies with those he never saw.

Matthew Prior

## The Conversation. A Tale

It always has been a thought discreet  
To know the company you meet;  
And sure there may be secret danger  
In talking much before a stranger.  
Agreed: what then? Then drink your ale;  
I'll pledge you, and repeat my tale.

No matter where the scene is fix'd,  
The persons were but oddly mix'd;  
When sober Damon thus began,  
(And Damon is a clever man!)  
I now grow old, but still from youth  
Have held for modesty and truth;  
The men who by these sea-marks steer  
In life's great voyage never err:

Upon this point I dare defy  
The world; I pause for a reply.

Sir, either is a good assistant,  
Said one, who sat a little distant;  
Truth decks our speeches and our books,  
And modesty adorns our looks:  
But farther progress we must take;  
Not only born to look and speak,  
The man must act. The Stagirite  
Says thus, and says extremely right.  
Strict justice is the sovereign guide  
That o'er our actions should preside;  
This queen of virtues is confess'd  
To regulate and bind the rest.  
Thrice happy if you can but find  
Her equal balance poise your mind;  
All different graces soon will enter,  
Like lines concurrent to their centre.

'Twas thus, in short, these two went on,  
With yea and nay, and  
pro

and  
con

.  
Through many points divinely dark,  
And Waterland assaulting Clarke,  
Till, in theology half lost,  
Damon took up the Evening Post,  
Confounded Spain, composed the north,  
And deep in politics held forth.  
Methinks we're in the like condition  
As at the Treaty of Partition:  
That stroke, for all King William's care,  
Begot another tedious war.  
Matthew, who knew the whole intrigue,  
Ne'er much approved that mystic league:  
In the vile Utrecht treaty, too,  
Poor man, he found enough to do.  
Sometimes to me he did apply,  
But downright Dunstable was I,  
And told him where they were mistaken,  
And counsell'd him to save his bacon:  
But (pass his politics and prose)  
I never herded with his foes;  
Nay, in his verses, as a friend,  
I still found something to commend;  
Sir, I excused his Nut brown Maid,  
Whate'er severer critics said;  
Too far, I own, the girl was try'd;  
The women all were on my side.  
For Alma I return'd him thanks;  
I liked her with her little pranks:  
Indeed poor Solomon in rhyme  
Was much too grave to be sublime.

Pindar and Damon scorn transition,  
So on he ran a new division;  
Till out of breath he turn'd to spit;  
(Chance often helps us more than wit)  
Th' other that lucky moment took,  
Just nick'd the time, broke in, and spoke.

Of all the gifts the gods afford,

(If we may take old Tully's word)  
The greatest is a friend whose love  
Knows how to praise and when reprove:  
From such a treasure never part,  
But hang the jewel on your heart:  
And pray, Sir (it delights me) tell,  
You know this author mighty well -  
Know him! d'ye question it? odds fish!  
Sir, does a beggar know his dish?  
I loved him, as I told you, I  
Advised him - here a stander by  
Twitch'd Damon gently by the cloke,  
And thus, unwilling, silence broke:  
Damon, 'tis time we should retire,  
The man you talk with is Matt. Prior.

Patron through life, and from thy birth my friend,  
Dorset! to thee this fable let me send;  
With Damon's lightness weigh thy solid worth;  
The foil is known to set the diamond forth:  
Let the feign'd tale this real moral give,  
How many Damons how few Dorsets live.

Matthew Prior

# The Despairing Shepherd

Alexis shun'd his Fellow Swains,  
Their rural Sports, and jocund Strains:  
(Heav'n guard us all from Cupid's Bow!)  
He lost his Crook, He left his Flocks;  
And wand'ring thro' the lonely Rocks,  
He nourish'd endless Woe.  
The Nymphs and Shepherds round Him came:  
His Grief Some pity, Others blame:  
The fatal Cause All kindly seek.  
He mingled his Concern with Their's:  
He gave 'em back their friendly Tears:  
He sigh'd, but would not speak.  
Clorinda came among the rest:  
And She too kind Concern exprest,  
And ask'd the Reason of his Woe:  
She ask'd, but with an Air and Mein,  
That made it easily foreseen,  
She fear'd too much to know.  
The Shepherd rais'd his mournful Head:  
And will You pardon Me, He said,  
While I the cruel Truth reveal?  
Which nothing from my Breast should tear;  
Which never should offend Your Ear;  
But that You bid Me tell.  
'Tis thus I rove, 'tis thus complain;  
Since You appear'd upon the Plain:  
You are the Cause of all my Care:  
Your Eyes ten thousand Dangers dart:  
Ten thousand Torments vex My Heart:  
I love, and I despair.  
Too much, Alexis, I have heard:  
'Tis what I thought; 'tis what I fear'd:  
And yet I pardon You, She cry'd:  
But You shall promise ne'er again  
To breath your Vows, or speak your Pain:  
He bow'd, obey'd, and dy'd.

Matthew Prior



# The Dove

In Virgil's Sacred Verse we find,  
That Passion can depress or raise  
The Heav'nly, as the Human Mind:  
Who dare deny what Virgil says?  
But if They shou'd; what our Great Master  
Has thus laid down, my Tale shall prove.  
Fair Venus wept the sad Disaster  
Of having lost her Fav'rite Dove.  
In Complaisance poor Cupid mourn'd;  
His Grief reliev'd his Mother's Pain;  
He vow'd he'd leave no Stone unturn'd,  
But She shou'd have her Dove again.  
Tho' None, said He, shall yet be nam'd,  
I know the Felon well enough:  
But be She not, Mamma, condemn'd  
Without a fair and legal Proof.  
With that, his longest Dart he took,  
As Constable wou'd take his Staff:  
That Gods desire like Men to look,  
Wou'd make ev'n Heraclitus laugh.  
Loves Subaltern, a Duteous Band,  
Like Watchmen round their Chief appear:  
Each had his Lanthorn in his Hand:  
And Venus mask'd brought up the Rear.

Accouter'd thus, their eager Step  
To Cloe's Lodging They directed:  
(At once I write, alas! and weep,  
That Cloe is of Theft suspected.)  
Late They set out, had far to go:  
St. Dunstan's, as They pass'd, struck One.  
Cloe, for Reasons good, You know,  
Lives at the sober End o'th' Town.  
With one great Peal They rap the Door,  
Like Footmen on a Visiting-Day.  
Folks at Her House at such an Hour!  
Lord! what will all the Neighbours say?  
The Door is open'd: up They run:  
Nor Prayers, nor Threats divert their Speed:

Thieves, Thieves! cries Susan; We're undone;  
They'll kill my Mistress in her Bed.  
In Bed indeed the Nymph had been  
Three Hours: for all Historians say,  
She commonly went up at Ten,  
Unless Picquet was in the Way.  
She wak'd, be sure, with strange Surprise.  
O Cupid, is this Right or Law,  
Thus to disturb the brightest Eyes,  
That ever slept, or ever saw?  
Have You observ'd a sitting Hare,  
List'ning, and fearful of the Storm  
Of Horns and Hounds, clap back her Ear,  
Afraid to keep, or leave her Form?

Or have You mark'd a Partridge quake,  
Viewing the tow'ring Faulcon nigh?  
She cuddles low behind the Brake:  
Nor wou'd she stay: nor dares she fly.  
Then have You seen the Beauteous Maid;  
When gazing on her Midnight Foes,  
She turn'd each Way her frighted Head,  
Then sunk it deap beneath the Cloaths.  
Venus this while was in the Chamber  
Incognito: for Susan said,  
It smelt so strong of Myrrh and Amber—  
And Susan is no lying Maid.  
But since We have no present Need  
Of Venus for an Episode;  
With Cupid let us e'en proceed;  
And thus to Cloe spoke the God:  
Hold up your Head: hold up your Hand:  
Wou'd it were not my Lot to show ye  
This cruel Writ, wherein you stand  
Indicted by the Name of Cloe:  
For that by secret Malice stirr'd,  
Or by an emulous Pride invited,  
You have purloin'd the fav'rite Bird,  
In which my Mother most delighted.  
Her blushing Face the lovely Maid  
Rais'd just above the milk-white Sheet.  
A Rose-Tree in a Lilly Bed,

Nor glows so red, nor breathes so sweet.

Are You not He whom Virgins fear,  
And Widows court? Is not your Name  
Cupid? If so, pray come not near—  
Fair Maiden, I'm the very same.  
Then what have I, good Sir, to say,  
Or do with Her, You call your Mother?  
If I shou'd meet Her in my Way,  
We hardly court'sy to each other.  
Diana Chaste, and Hebe Sweet,  
Witness that what I speak is true:  
I wou'd not give my Paroquet  
For all the Doves that ever flew.  
Yet, to compose this Midnight Noise,  
Go freely search where-e'er you please:  
(The Rage that rais'd, adorn'd Her Voice)  
Upon yon' Toilet lie my Keys.  
Her Keys He takes; her Doors unlocks;  
Thro' Wardrobe, and thro' Closet bounces;  
Peeps into ev'ry Chest and Box;  
Turns all her Furbeloes and Flounces.  
But Dove, depend on't, finds He none;  
So to the Bed returns again:  
And now the Maiden, bolder grown,  
Begins to treat Him with Disdain.  
I marvel much, She smiling said,  
Your Poultry cannot yet be found:  
Lies he in yonder Slipper dead,  
Or, may be, in the Tea-pot drown'd?

No, Traytor, angry Love replies,  
He's hid somewhere about Your Breast;  
A Place, nor God, nor Man denies,  
For Venus' Dove the proper Nest.  
Search then, She said, put in your Hand,  
And Cynthia, dear Protectress, guard Me:  
As guilty I, or free may stand,  
Do Thou, or punish, or reward Me.  
But ah! what Maid to Love can trust?  
He scorns, and breaks all Legal Power:  
Into her Breast his Hand He thrust;

And in a Moment forc'd it lower.  
O, whither do those Fingers rove,  
Cries Cloe, treacherous Urchin, whither?  
O Venus! I shall find thy Dove,  
Says He; for sure I touch his Feather.

Matthew Prior

# The Dying Adrian To His Soul

Poor, little, pretty, fluttering thing,  
Must we no longer live together?  
And dost thou prune thy trembling wing,  
To take thy flight thou know'st not whither?  
Thy humorous vein, thy pleasing folly,  
Lies all neglected, all forgot:  
And pensive, wavering, melancholy,  
Thou dread'st and hop'st thou know'st not what.

Matthew Prior

# The English Padlock

Miss Danae, when Fair and Young  
(As Horace has divinely sung)  
Could not be kept from Jove's Embrace  
By Doors of Steel, and Walls of Brass.  
The Reason of the Thing is clear;  
Would Jove the naked Truth aver:  
Cupid was with Him of the Party;  
And show'd himself sincere and hearty:  
For, give That Whipster but his Errand;  
He takes my Lord Chief Justice' Warrant:  
Dauntless as Death away He walks;  
Breaks the Doors open; snaps the Locks;  
Searches the Parlour, Chamber, Study;  
Nor stops, 'till He has Culprit's Body.

Since This has been Authentick Truth,  
By Age deliver'd down to Youth;  
Tell us, mistaken Husband, tell us,  
Why so Mysterious, why so Jealous?  
Does the Restraint, the Bolt, the Bar  
Make Us less Curious, Her less Fair?

The Spy, which does this Treasure keep,  
Does She ne'er say her Pray'rs, nor sleep?  
Does She to no Excess incline?  
Does She fly Musick, Mirth, and Wine?  
Or have not Gold and Flatt'ry Pow'r,  
To purchase One unguarded Hour?

Your Care does further yet extend:  
That Spy is guarded by your Friend.—  
But has This Friend nor Eye, nor Heart?  
May He not feel the cruel Dart,  
Which, soon or late, all Mortals feel?  
May He not, with too tender Zeal,  
Give the Fair Pris'ner Cause to see,  
How much He wishes, She were free?  
May He not craftily infer  
The Rules of Friendship too severe,

Which chain Him to a hated Trust;  
Which make Him Wretched, to be Just?  
And may not She, this Darling She,  
Youthful and healthy, Flesh and Blood,  
Easie with Him, ill-us'd by Thee,  
Allow this Logic to be good?

Sir, Will your Questions never end?  
I trust to neither Spy nor Friend.  
In short, I keep Her from the Sight  
Of ev'ry Human Face.—She'll write.—  
From Pen and Paper She's debarr'd.—  
Has She a Bodkin and a Card?  
She'll bunny her Mind.—She will, You say:  
But how shall She That Mind convey?  
I keep Her in one Room: I lock it:  
The Key (look here) is in this Pocket.  
The Key-hole, is That left? Most certain.  
She'll thrust her Letter thro'—Sir Martin.

Dear angry Friend, what must be done?  
Is there no Way?—There is but One,  
Send Her abroad; and let Her see,  
That all this mingled Mass, which She  
Being forbidden longs to know,  
Is a dull Farce, an empty Show,  
Powder, and Pocket-Glass, and Beau;  
A Staple of Romance and Lies,  
False Tears, and real Perjuries:  
Where Sighs and Looks are bought and sold;  
And Love is made but to be told:  
Where the fat Bawd, and lavish Heir  
The Spoils of ruin'd Beauty share:  
And Youth seduc'd from Friends and Fame,  
Must give up Age to Want and Shame.  
Let Her behold the Frantick Scene,  
The Women wretched, false the Men:  
And when, these certain Ills to shun,  
She would to Thy Embraces run;  
Receive Her with extended Arms:  
Seem more delighted with her Charms:  
Wait on Her to the Park and Play:

Put on good Humour; make Her gay:  
Be to her Virtues very kind:  
Be to her Faults a little blind:  
Let all her Ways be unconfin'd:  
And clap your Padlock—on her Mind.

Matthew Prior



# The Female Phaeton

Thus Kitty, beautiful and young,  
And wild as colt untamed,  
Bespoke the fair from whence she sprung,  
With little rage inflamed.

Inflamed with rage at sad restraint  
Which wise mamma ordain'd,  
And sorely vex'd to play the saint  
Whilst wit and beauty reign'd.

Shall I thumb holy books, confined  
With Abigails, forsaken?  
Kitty's for other things design'd,  
Or I am much mistaken.

Must Lady Jenny frisk about,  
And visit with her cousins?  
At balls must she make all the rout,  
And bring home hearts by dozens?

What has she better, pray, than I?  
What hidden charms to boast,  
That all mankind for her should die,  
Whilst I am scarce a toast?

Dearest mamma, for once let me  
Unchain'd my fortune try:  
I'll have my earl as well as she,  
Or know the reason why.

I'll soon with Jenny's pride quit score,  
Make all her lovers fall:  
They'll grieve I was not loosed before;  
She I was loosed at all.

Fondness prevail'd, mamma gave way:  
Kitty, at heart's desire,  
Obtain'd the chariot for a day,  
And set the world on fire.

Matthew Prior

# The First Hymn Of Callimachus. To Jupiter

While we to Jove select the holy victim  
Whom apter shall we sing than Jove himself,  
The god for ever great, for ever king,  
Who slew the earthborn race, and measures right  
To heaven's great 'habitants? Dictaeon hear'st thou  
More joyful, or Lycaean, long dispute  
And various thought has traced. On Ida's mount,  
Or Dictae, studious of his country's praise,  
The Cretan boasts thy natal place; but oft  
He meets reproof deserved; for he, presumptuous,  
Has built a tomb for thee who never know'st  
To die, but liv'st the same to-day and ever.  
Arcadian therefore be thy birth: great Rhea,  
Pregnant, to high Parrhasia's cliffs retired,  
And wild Lycaeus, black with shading pines;  
Holy retreat! sithence no female hither,  
Conscious of social love and Nature's rites,  
Must dare approach, from the inferior reptile  
To woman, form divine. There the bless'd parent  
Ungirt her spacious bosom, and discharged  
The ponderous birth; she sought a neighbouring spring  
To wash the recent babe: in vain: Arcadia,  
(However streamy now) adust and dry,  
Denied the goddess water: where deep Melas  
And rocky Cratis flow, the chariot smoked  
Obscure with rising dust: the thirsty traveller  
In vain required the current, then imprison'd  
In subterranean caverns: forests grew  
Upon the barren hollows, high o'ershading  
The haunts of savage beasts, where now Iaon,  
And Erimanth incline their friendly urns.  
Thou, too, O Earth, great Rhea said, bring forth,  
And short shall be thy pangs. She said, and high  
She rear'd her arm, and with her sceptre struck  
The yawning cliff: from its disparted height  
Adown the mount the gushing torrent ran,  
And cheer'd the valleys: there the heavenly mother  
Bathed, mighty King, thy tender limbs; she wrapp'd them  
In purple bands; she gave the precious pledge

To prudent Neda, charging her to guard thee  
Careful and secret: Neda, of the nymphs  
That tended the great birth, next Philyre  
And Styx, the eldest. Smiling, she received the  
And, conscious of the grace, absolved her trust;  
Not unrewarded, since the river bore  
The favourite virgin's name; fair Neda rolls  
By Lepricon's ancient walls, a fruitful stream:  
Fast by her flowery bank the sons of Arcas,  
Favourites of Heaven, with happy care protect  
Their fleecy charge, and joyous drink her wave.  
Thee, god, to Gnosus Neda brought: the Nymphs  
And Corybantes thee, their sacred charge,  
Received: Adraste rock'd thy golden cradle:  
The Goat, now bright amidst her fellow stars,  
Kind Amalthea, reach'd her teat, distent  
With milk, thy early food: the sedulous bee  
Distill'd her honey on thy purple lips.  
Around, the fierce Curetes (order solemn  
To thy foreknowing mother!) trod tumultuous  
Their mystic dance, and clang'd their sounding arms,  
Industrious with the warlike din to quell  
Thy infant cries, and mock the ear of Saturn.  
Swift growth and wondrous grace, O heavenly Jove,  
Waited thy blooming years: inventive wit  
And perfect judgment crown'd thy youthful act.  
That Saturn's sons received the threefold empire  
Of heaven, of ocean, and deep hell beneath,  
As the dark urn and chance of lot determined,  
Old poets mention fabling. Things of moment,  
Well nigh equivalent and neighbouring value,  
By lot are parted; but high heaven, thy share,  
In equal balance laid 'gainst sea or hell,  
Flings up the adverse scale, and shuns proportion:  
Wherefore not Chance, but power above thy brethren,  
Exalted thee their king. When thy great will  
Commands thy chariot forth, impetuous strength  
And fiery swiftness wing the rapid wheels  
Incessant; high the eagle flies before thee.  
And, oh! as I and mine consult thy augur,  
Grant the glad omen; let thy favourite rise  
Propitious, ever soaring from the right.

Thou to the lesser gods hast well assign'd  
Their proper shares of power, thy own, great Jove,  
Boundless and universal. Those who labour  
The sweaty forge, who edge the crooked scythe,  
Bend stubborn steel, and harden gleaming armour,  
Acknowledge Vulcan's aid. The early hunter  
Blesses Diana's hand, who leads him safe  
O'er hanging cliffs, who spreads his net successful,  
And guides the arrow through the panther's heart.  
The soldier, from successful camps returning  
With laurel wreath'd, and rich with hostile spoil,  
Severs the bull to Mars. The skilful bard,  
Striking the Thracian harp, invokes Apollo,  
To make his hero and himself immortal.  
Those, mighty Jove, meantime thy glorious care,  
Who model nations, publish laws, announce  
Or life or death, and found or change the empire.  
Man owns the power of kings, and kings of Jove:  
And as their actions tend subordinate  
To what thy will designs, thou gav'st the means  
Proportion'd to the work; these only have  
To speak and be obey'd; to those are given  
To some whole months; revolving years to some:  
Others, ill-fated, are condemn'd to toil  
Their tedious life, and mourn their purpose, blasted  
With fruitless act and impotence of counsel.  
Hail! greatest son of Saturn, wise disposer  
Of every good; thy praise what man yet born  
Has sung? or who that may be born shall sing?  
Again, and often hail! indulge our prayer,  
Great Father! grant us virtue, grant us wealth  
For without virtue wealth to man avails not,  
And virtue without wealth exerts less power,  
And less diffuses good. Then grant us, Gracious,  
Virtue and wealth, for both are of thy gift.

Matthew Prior

# The Flies

Say, sire of insects, mighty Sol,  
(A fly upon the chariot-pole  
Cries out) What blue-bottle alive  
Did ever with such fury drive?  
Tell Beelzebub, great Father, tell,  
(Says th' other perch'd upon the wheel)  
Did ever any mortal fly  
Raise such a cloud of dust as I?  
My judgement turn'd the whole debate;  
My valour sayed the sinking state.  
To talk two idle buzzing things,  
Toss up their heads, and stretch their wings.  
But let the truth to light be brought,  
This neither spoke nor th' other fought;  
No merit in their own behaviour;  
Both raised but by their party's favour.

Matthew Prior

# The Garland

The pride of every grove I chose,  
The violet sweet and lily fair,  
The dappled pink and blushing rose,  
To deck my charming Cloe's hair.

At morn the nymph vouchsafed to place  
Upon her brow the various wreath;  
The flowers less blooming than her face,  
The scent less fragrant than her breath.

The flowers she wore along the day,  
And every nymph and shepherd said,  
That in her hair they look'd more gay  
Than glowing in their native bed.

Undress'd at evening, when she found  
Their odours lost, their colours past,  
She changed her look, and on the ground  
Her garland and her eyes she cast.

That eye dropp'd sense distinct and clear  
As any Muse's tongue could speak,  
When from its lid a pearly tear  
Ran trickling down her beauteous cheek.

Dissembling what I knew too well,  
My love, my life, said I, explain  
This change of humour; pr'ythee tell,  
That falling tear - what does it mean?

She sigh'd, she smiled; and to the flowers  
Pointing, the lovely moralist said,  
See, friend, in some few fleeting hours,  
See yonder what a change is made.

Ah me! the blooming pride of May  
And that of Beauty are but one;  
At morn both flourish bright and gay,  
Both fade at evening, pale, and gone.

At dawn poor Stella danced and sung,  
The amorous youth around her bow'd;  
At night her fatal knell was rung;  
I saw and kiss'd her in her shroud.

Such as she is who died to-day,  
Such I, alas! may be to-morrow;  
Go, Damon, bid thy Muse display  
The justice of thy Cloe's sorrow.

Matthew Prior



# The Honest Shepherd

When hungry wolves had trespass'd on the fold,  
And the robb'd shepherd his sad story told,  
'Call in Alcides,' said a crafty priest,  
'Give him one half and he'll secure the rest.'  
No, said the shepherd, if the Fates decree,  
By ravaging my flock to ruin me,  
To their commands I willingly resign,  
Power is their character, and patience mine;  
Though troth, to me there seems but little odds  
Who prove the greatest robbers - wolves or gods.

Matthew Prior

# The Judgement Of Venus

When Kneller's works, of various grace,  
Were to fair Venus shown,  
The Goddess spied in every face  
Some features of her own.

Just so, (and pointing with her hand)  
So shone, says she, my eyes,  
When from two goddesses I gain'd  
An apple for a prize.

When in the glass and river too  
My face I lately view'd,  
Such was I, if the glass be true,  
If true the crystal flood.

In colours of this glorious kind  
Apelles painted me;  
My hair, thus flowing with the wind  
Sprung from my native sea.

Like this disorder'd, wild, forlorn,  
Big with ten thousand fears,  
Thee, my Adonis, did I mourn  
E'en beautiful in tears.

But viewing Myra placed apart,  
I fear, says she, I fear,  
Appelles, that Sir Godfrey's art  
Has far surpass'd thine here:

Or I, a goddess of the skies,  
By Mary am undone,  
And must resign to her the prize,  
The apple, which I won.

But soon as she had Myra seen,  
Majestically fair,  
The sparkling eye, the look serene,  
The gay and easy air.

With fiery emulation fill'd  
The wondering goddess cried,  
Apelles must to Kneller yield,  
Or Venus must to Hyde.

Matthew Prior

# The Ladle. A Tale

The Sceptics think 'twas long ago  
Since gods came down  
incognito

To see who were their friends or foes,  
And how our actions fell or rose;  
That since they gave things their beginning,  
And set this whirligig a-spinning,  
Supine they in their heaven remain,  
Exempt from passion and from pain,  
And frankly leave us human elves  
To cut and shuffle for ourselves;  
To stand or walk, to rise or tumble,  
As matter and as motion jumble.

The poets now, and painters, hold  
This thesis both absurd and bold,  
And your good-natured gods, they say,  
Descend some twice or thrice a-day,  
Else all these things we toil so hard in  
Would not avail one single farthing;  
For when the hero we rehearse  
To grace his actions and our verse,  
'Tis not by dint of human thought  
That to his Latium he is brought;  
Iris descends by Fate's commands  
To guide his steps through foreign lands,  
And Amphitrite clears his way  
From rocks and quicksands in the sea.

And if you see him in a sketch  
(Though drawn by Paulo or Carache)  
He shows not half his force and strength  
Strutting in armour and at length;  
That he may make his proper figure  
The piece must yet be four yards bigger;  
The nymphs conduct him to the field,  
One holds his sword, and one his shield,  
Mars, standing by, asserts his quarrel,

And Fame flies after with a laurel.

These points, I say, of speculation,  
(As 'twere to save or sink the nation)  
Men idly learned will dispute,  
Assert, object, confirm, refute;  
Each mighty angry, mighty right,  
With equal arms sustains the fight,  
Till now no umpire can agree 'em,  
So both draw off and sing  
Te Deum

Is it in equilibrio  
If deities descend or no?  
Then let th' affirmative prevail,  
As requisite to form my Tale;  
For by all parties 'tis confess'd  
That those opinions are the best  
Which in their nature most conduce  
To present ends and private use.

Two gods came, therefore, from above,  
One Mercury, the other Jove;  
The humour was, it seems, to know  
If all the favours they bestow  
Could from our own perverseness ease us,  
And if our wish enjoy'd would please us,  
Discoursing largely on this theme,  
O'er hills and dales their godships came,  
Till well nigh tired, at almost night,  
They thought it proper to alight.

Not here, that it as true as odd is,  
That in disguise a god or goddess  
Exerts no supernatural powers,  
But acts on maxims much like ours.  
They spied at last a country farm,  
Where all was snug, and clean, and warm;  
For woods before and hills behind  
Secured it both from rain and wind:  
Large oxen in the field were lowing,

Good grain was sow'd, good fruit was growing:  
Of last year's corn in barns great store;  
Fat turkeys gobbling at the door;  
And Wealth in short, with Peace consented  
That people here should live contented;  
But did they in effect do so?  
Have patience friend, and thou shalt know.  
The honest farmer and his wife,  
To years declined from prime of life,  
Had struggled with the marriage noose,  
As almost every couple does:  
Sometimes my plague! sometimes my darling!  
Kissing to-day, to-morrow snarling!  
Jointly submitting to endure  
That evil which admits no cure.

Our gods the outward gates unbarr'd;  
Our farmer met 'em in the yard;  
Thought they were folks that lost their way,  
And ask'd them civilly to stay;  
Told 'em for supper or for bed  
They might go on and be worse sped. -

So said, so done; the gods consent:  
All three into the parlour went:  
They compliment, they sit, they chat;  
Fight o'er the wars, reform the state:  
A thousand knotty points they clear,  
Till supper and my wife appear.

Jove made his leg, and kiss'd the dame;  
Obsequious Hermes did the same.  
Jove kiss'd the farmer's wife, you say!  
He did - but in an honest way:  
Oh! not with half that warmth and life  
With which he kiss'd Amphitryon's wife. -

Well, then, things handsomely were served;  
My mistress for the strangers carved.  
How strong the beer, how good the meat,  
How loud they laughed, how much they eat,  
In epic sumptuous would appear,

Yet shall be pass'd in silence here;  
For I should grieve to have it said  
That, by a fine description led,  
I made my episode too long,  
Or tired my friend to grace my song.

The grace-cup served, the cloth away,  
Jove thought it time to show his play.  
Landlord and landlady, he cried,  
Folly and jesting laid aside,  
That ye thus hospitably live,  
And strangers with good cheer receive,  
Is mighty grateful to your betters  
And make e'en gods themselves your debtors.  
To give this thesis plainer proof,  
You have to-night beneath your roof  
A pair of gods: (nay, never wonder,)  
This youth can fly and I can thunder.  
I'm Jupiter, and he Mercurius,  
My page, my son indeed, but spurious.  
Form, then, three wishes, you and Madam,  
And, sure as you already had 'em,  
The things desired in half an hour  
Shall all be here and in your power.

Thank ye, great Gods, the woman says;  
Oh! may your altars ever blaze!  
A ladle for our silver dish  
Is what I want, is what I wish. -  
A ladle! cries the man, a ladle!  
'Odzooks, Corsica, you have pray'd ill!  
What should be great you turn to farce,  
I wish the ladle in your a--.

With equal grief and shame my Muse  
The sequel of the tale pursues.  
The ladle fell into the room,  
And struck in old Corsica's bum.  
Our couple weep two wishes past,  
And kindly join to form the last;  
To ease the woman's awkward pain,  
And get the ladle out again.

Moral.

This commoner has worth and parts,  
Is praised for arms, or loved for arts;  
His head aches for a coronet,  
And who is bless'd that is not great?

Some sense and more estate kind Heaven  
To this well-lotted peer has given:  
What then? he must have rule and sway,  
And all is wrong till he's in play.

The miser must make up his plum,  
And dares not touch the hoarded sum;  
The sickly dotard wants a wife  
To draw off his last dregs of life.

Against our peace we arm our will;  
Amidst our plenty something still  
For horses, houses, pictures, planting,  
To thee, to me, to him, is wanting;  
That cruel something unpossess'd,  
Corrodes, and leavens all the rest:  
That something if we could obtain  
Would soon create a future pain;  
And to the coffin from the cradle  
'Tis all a wish and all a Ladle.

Matthew Prior



# The Lady Who Offers Her Looking-Glass To Venus

VENUS, take my votive glass:  
Since I am not what I was,  
What from this day I shall be,  
Venus, let me never see.

Matthew Prior

# The Lady's Looking-Glass

Celia and I the other Day  
Walk'd o'er the Sand-Hills to the Sea:  
The setting Sun adorn'd the Coast,  
His Beams entire, his Fierceness lost:  
And, on the Surface of the Deep,  
The Winds lay only not asleep:  
The Nymph did like the Scene appear,  
Serenely pleasant, calmly fair:  
Soft fell her words, as flew the Air.  
With secret Joy I heard Her say,  
That She would never miss one Day  
A Walk so fine, a Sight so gay.

But, oh the Change! the Winds grow high:  
Impending Tempests charge the Sky:  
The Lightning flies: the Thunder roars:  
And big Waves lash the frighten'd Shoars.  
Struck with the Horror of the Sight,  
She turns her Head, and wings her Flight;  
And trembling vows, She'll ne'er again  
Approach the Shoar, or view the Main.

Once more at least look back, said I;  
Thy self in That large Glass descry:  
When Thou art in good Humour drest;  
When gentle Reason rules thy Breast;  
The Sun upon the calmest Sea  
Appears not half so bright as Thee:  
'Tis then, that with Delight I rove  
Upon the boundless Depth of Love:  
I bless my Chain: I hand my Oar;  
Nor think on all I left on Shoar.

But when vain Doubt, and groundless Fear  
Do That Dear Foolish Bosom tear;  
When the big Lip, and wat'ry Eye  
Tell Me, the rising Storm is nigh:  
'Tis then, Thou art yon' angry Main,  
Deform'd by Winds, and dash'd by Rain;

And the poor Sailor that must try  
Its Fury, labours less than I.

Shipwreck'd, in vain to Land I make;  
While Love and Fate still drive Me back:  
Forc'd to doat on Thee thy own Way,  
I chide Thee first, and then obey:  
Wretched when from Thee, vex'd when nigh,  
I with Thee, or without Thee, die.

Matthew Prior

# The Merchant, To Secure His Treasure

The merchant, to secure his treasure,  
Conveys it in a borrowed name:  
Euphelia serves to grace my measure,  
But Cloe is my real flame.

My softest verse, my darling lyre  
Upon Euphelia's toilet lay&mdash;  
When Cloe noted her desire  
That I should sing, that I should play.

My lyre I tune, my voice I raise,  
But with my numbers mix my sighs;  
And whilst I sing Euphelia's praise,  
I fix my soul on Cloe's eyes.

Fair Cloe blushed; Euphelia frowned:  
I sung, and gazed; I played, and trembled:  
And Venus to the Loves around  
Remarked how ill we all dissembled.

Matthew Prior

# The Modern Saint

Her time with equal prudence Silvia shares,  
First writes her billet-doux, then says her prayers,  
Her mass and toilette, vespers, and the play;  
Thus God and Ashtaroth divide the day:  
Constant she keeps her Ember-week and Lent,  
At Easter calls all Israel to her tent:  
Loose without bawd, and pious without zeal,  
She still repeats the sins she would conceal.  
Envy herself from Silvia's life must grant,  
An artful woman makes a modern saint.

Matthew Prior

# The New Year's Gift To Phyllis

The circling months begin this day  
To run their yearly ring,  
And long-breathed time, which ne'er will stay,  
Refits his wings and shoots away,  
It round again to bring.  
Who feels the force of female eyes  
And thinks some nymph divine,  
Now brings his annual sacrifice,  
Some pretty toy or neat device  
To offer at her shrine.  
But I can pay no offering  
To show how I adore,  
Since I have but a heart to bring —  
A downright foolish, faithful thing,  
And that you had before.  
Yet we may give, for custom sake,  
What will to both be new:  
My constancy a gift I'll make  
And in return of it will take  
Some levity from you.

Matthew Prior

# The Nut-Brown Maid. A Poem.

Written three hundred years since.

Be it right or wrong, these men among  
On women do complayne;  
Affyrmynge this, how that it is  
A labour spent in vaine  
To love them wele; for never a dele  
They love a man againe:  
For lete a man do what he can  
Ther favour to attayne,  
Yet yf a new do them pursue,  
Ther furst trew lover than  
Laboureth for nought; for from her thought  
He is a banishyd man.  
I say not nay, but that all day  
It is bothe writ and sayde  
That woman's fayth is as who saythe,  
All utterly decayed.  
But nevertheless right good witness  
I' this case might be layde,  
That they love trewe, and continew,  
Record the Nut-brown Mayde;  
Which from her love (whan her to prove  
He came to make his mone)  
Wold not depart, for in her herte  
She lovyd but him alone.  
Than betweene us lettens discusse,  
What was all the maner  
Between them two: we wyl also  
Telle all the peyne and fere  
That she was in. Now I begynne,  
So that ye me answer.  
Wherefore all ye that present be  
I pray ye give an eare.

Man.

I am the knyght, I come by nyght

As secret as I can,  
Saying, alas! thus standeth the case,  
I am a banishyd man.

Woman.

And I your wylle, for to fulfyll  
In this wyl not refuse,  
Trusting to show, in wordis fewe,  
That men have an ill use,  
(To ther own shame) women to blame,  
And causelese them accuse:  
Therefore to you I answere now,  
Alle women to excuse.  
Myn own herte dere, with you what chere,  
I pray you telle anone;  
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,  
I love but you alone.

Man.

It stondeth so; a dede is do,  
Wherefore moche harm shall growe;  
My desteny is for to-dey  
A shameful deth I trowe;  
Or ellis to flee: the one must be,  
None other way I knowe,  
But to withdrawe, as an outlawe,  
And take me to my bowe.  
Wherefore adew, my owne herte trewe,  
None other red I can;  
For I must to the grene wode goe,  
Alone, a banishyd man.

Woman.

O Lord! what is this worldis blysse,  
That chaungeth as the mone?  
My somer's day, in lusty May,  
Is derked before the none.  
I here you saye farewell: nay, nay,  
We departe not soo sone.



Why say ye so? wheder wyl ye goe?  
Alas! what have ye done?  
Alle my welfare to sorrow and care  
Shulde chaung yf ye were gone;  
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,  
I love but you alone.

Man.

I can beleve it shall you greeve,  
And shomwhat you distrayne,  
But aftyrwarde your paynes harde,  
Within a day or tweyne,  
Shal sone aslake, and ye shal take  
Comfort to you agayne.  
Why shuld ye nought? for to make thought  
Your labur were in vayne,  
And thus I do, and pray you too,  
As hertely as I can;  
For I muste to the greene wode goe,  
Alone, a banishyd man.

Woman.

Now sythe that ye have showed to me  
The secret of your mynde,  
I shal be plaine to you againe,  
Lyke as ye shal me fynde.  
Sythe it is so that ye wyl goe,  
I wol not leve behynde:  
Shal never be sayd the Nut-Brown Mayde  
Was to her love unkynde.  
Make you redy, for so am I,  
Although it were agone;  
For in my mynd, of all mankynde,  
I love but you alone.

Man.

Yet I you rede to take good hede  
What men wyl think and sey;  
Of yonge and olde it shall be tolde

That ye be gone away;  
Your wanton wylle for to fulfyll  
In grene wode you to play;  
And that ye myght from your delyte  
Noo longer make delay.  
Rather than ye shuld thus for me  
Be called an ylle woman,  
Yet wold I to the grene wode goe,  
Alone, a banishyd man.

Woman.

Though it be songe of olde and yonge  
That I shuld be to blame,  
Thers be the charge that speke so large  
In hurting of my name:  
For I wyll prove that feythful love  
It is devoyd of shame;  
In your distress and hevyness  
To parte wyth you the same.  
And sure all thoo that doo not so  
Trewelovers are they none;  
But in my mynde of al mankynde,  
I love but you alone.

Man.

I counsel you, remember how  
It is noo mayden's lawe  
Nothing to dought, but to renne out  
To wode with an outlawe:  
For ye must there in your hand bere  
O bowe redy to drawe;  
And as a theef, thus must ye lyve,  
Ever in drede and awe.  
Whereby to you gret harme myght growe  
Yet I had lever than  
That I had to the grene wode goe,  
Alone, a banishyd man.

Woman.

I think not nay; but as ye saye,  
It is noo mayden's lore;  
But love may make me for your sake,  
To com on fote to hunte and shote,  
To get us mete in store:  
For so that I your company  
May have, I ask noo more:  
From whiche to parte, it makith myn herte  
As colde as ony stone;  
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,  
I love but you alone.

Man.

For an outlawe, this is the lawe,  
That men hym take and binde,  
Wythout pytee, hanged to bee,  
And waver with the wynde.  
Yf I had neede, as God forbede,  
What resons coude ye finde?  
For sothe I trowe, ye and your bowe  
Shuld drawe for fere behynde.  
And noo merveyle; for lytel avayle  
Were in your council than:  
Wherefore I to the wode wyl goe,  
Alone, a banishyd man.

Woman.

Full well knowe ye that women be  
But febyl for to fyght:  
Noo woman hede it is in deede  
To be bold as a knyght:  
Yet in suche fere yf that ye were  
With enemys day and nyght,  
I wolde withstonde wyth bowe in honde  
To greve them as I myght;  
And you to save as women have  
From dethe many one;  
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,  
I love but you alone.

Man.

Yet take gude hede! for ever I drede  
That ye coude not sustein  
The thorney-weyes, the depe valeis,  
The snowe, the frost, the reyn;  
The cold, the hete: for drye, or wete,  
We must lodge on the playn,  
And us above noon other rofe,  
But a brake, bush, or twaine,  
Whiche sone shuld greve you, I beleve;  
And ye wolde gladely than,  
That I had to the grene wode goe,  
Alone, a banishyd man.

Woman.

Sythe I have here been partynere  
With you of joy and blysse,  
I must also parte of your woo  
Endure, as reson is:  
Yet am I sure of one pleasure,  
And, shortly, it is this,  
That where ye bee, me seemeth, par-dy  
I could not fare amyss.  
Without more speche I you beseche  
That we were soon a gone;  
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,  
I love but you alone.

Man.

Yf ye goo thedyr, ye must consyder,  
Whan ye have lust to dyne,  
Ther shal no mete be for to gete,  
Nor drink, bere, ale, ne wine;  
Ne shetis clean, to lye betwene,  
Made of thred and twyne;  
Noon other house but levys and bowes,  
To kever your head and myn.  
O myn herte swete, this ylle dyet  
Shuld make you pale and wan;

Wherefore I to the wode wyl goe,  
Alone, a banishyd man.

Woman.

Among the wylde dere, such an archier,  
As men say that ye bee,  
We may not fayle of good vitayle,  
Where is so grete plente:  
And watir cleere of the ryvere  
Shal be full swete to me,  
With whiche in hele, I shal right wele  
Endure, as ye shal see.  
And er we goe, a bed or two  
I can provide anone;  
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,  
I love but you alone.

Man.

Loo! yet before, ye must do more  
Yf ye wyl go with me;  
As cute your here up by your ere,  
Your curtel by the kneel:  
Wyth bowe in honde, for to wythstonde  
Your enemys yf nede be;  
And this same nyght, before daylyght,  
To wode-ward wyl I flee.  
And yf ye wylle al this fulfyllle,  
Do it shortly as ye can;  
Ellis wyl I to the grene wode goe,  
Alone, a banishyd man.

Woman.

I shall as now do more for you  
Than longeth to womanhede;  
To short my here, a bow to bere,  
To shote in tyme of nede.  
O my sweet moder, before al other,  
For you have I most drede;  
But now adew, I must ensue

Where Fortune duth me lede.  
All this make ye, and lete us flee,  
The day run fast upon;  
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,  
I love but you alone.

Man.

Nay, nay, not so: ye shal not goe,  
And I shal telle ye why;  
Your appetyte is to be light  
Of love I wele espie;  
For right as ye have sayde to me  
In lykewise hardely  
Ye wolde answer, whosoever it were,  
In way of company.  
It is sayd of olde, Sone hote, sone colde,  
And so is a woman;  
Wherefore I to the wode wyl goe,  
Alone, a banishyd man.

Woman.

Yf ye take hede yt is noo nede  
Such wordis to say bee me;  
For ofte ye prey'd, and longe assay'd,  
Er I you lovid, par-dy;  
And though that I of auncestry  
A baron's daughter bee,  
Yet have you proved how I you loved,  
A squyer of low degree;  
And ever shal, what so befalle,  
To dey therefore anone:  
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,  
I love but you alone.

Man.

A baron's childe to be begyled,  
It were a cursed dede:  
To be felawe with an outlawe  
Almighty God forbede!

Yt bettyr were the pore squyer  
Alone to forrest spede,  
Than ye shal saye another daye,  
That by that wycked dede  
Ye were betrayed. Wherefore good mayde,  
The best rede that I can,  
Is that I to the grene wode goe,  
Alone, a banishyd man.

Woman.

Whatsoever befalle, I never shale  
Of this thing you upbraid;  
But yf ye go and leve me so,  
Then have ye me betraid.  
Remember ye wele how that ye dele;  
For yf ye, as ye sayde,  
Be so unkynde to leve behynde  
Your love, the Nut-brown Mayde,  
Trust me truely, that I shal dey  
Some after ye be gone;  
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,  
I love but you alone.

Man.

Yf that ye went ye shulde repent;  
For in the forrest now  
I have purveid me of a mayde,  
Whom I love more than you.  
Another fayrer than e'er ye were,  
I dare it well avowe;  
And of you bothe eche shude be worthe  
Wyth other, as I trowe,  
It were myn ese to live in pese,  
So wyl I yf I can;  
Wherefore I to the wode wyl goe,  
Alone, a banishyd man.

Woman.

Though in the wode I understode

Ye had a paramour,  
All this may nought remove my thought,  
But that I will be your:  
And she shall fynde me soft and kynde,  
And curteis every hour,  
Glad to fulfyll all that she wylle  
Commaunde me to my power.  
For had ye loo an hundred moo,  
Yet wolde I be that one;  
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,  
I love but you alone.

Man.

Myne own dere love, I see the prove,  
That ye be kynde and trewe;  
Of mayde and wyfe, in al my lyfe,  
The best that ever I knewe.  
Be merey and glad, be no more sad,  
The case is chaunged newe;  
For it were ruthe, that for your trouth,  
Ye shulde have cause to rewe.  
Be not dismay'd whatsoever I sayd  
To you whan I began:  
I wyl not to the grene wode goe,  
I am no banishyd man.

Woman.

Theis tydingis be more glad to me  
Than to be made a quene,  
Yf I were sure they shulde endure;  
But it is often seene,  
When men wyle breke promyse, they speke  
The wordis on the splene.  
Ye shape some wyle, me to begyle,  
And stele fro me, I wene.  
Then were the case wurs than it was,  
And I more woo begone;  
For in my mynde, of al mankynde,  
I love but you alone.



Man.

Ye shal not nede further to drede;

I wyl not disparage

You. God defend, syth you descend

Of so grete a lynage.

Now understonde, to Westmerlande,

Which is my herytage

I wyl you bringe, and with a ryng,

By way of maryage,

I wyl you take, and lady make,

As shortly as I can.

Thus have ye wone an erlie's sone,

And not a banishyd man.

Matthew Prior

# The Old Gentry

That all from Adam first began,  
None but ungodly Whiston doubts,  
And that his son and his son's son  
Were all but ploughmen, clowns, and louts.

Each when his rustic pains began  
To merit pleaded equal right;  
'Twas only who left off at noon,  
Or who went on to work till night.

But coronets we owe to crowns,  
And favour to a court's affection;  
By nature we are Adam's sons,  
And sons of Anstis by election.

Kingsale! eight hundred years have roll'd  
Since thy forefathers had the plough;  
When this in story shall be told,  
Add, that my kindred do so now.

The man who by his labour gets  
His bread in independent state,  
Who never begs, and seldom eats,  
Himself can fix or change his fate.

Matthew Prior

# The Parallel

Prometheus, forming Mr. Day,  
Carved something like a man in clay:  
The mortal's work might well miscarry;  
He that does heaven and earth control  
Has only power to form a soul;  
His hand is evident in Harry,  
Since one is but a moving clod,  
Th' other the lively form of God.  
'Squire Wallis, you will scarce be able  
To prove all poetry but fable.

Matthew Prior

# The Pedant

Lysander talks extremely well;  
On any subject let him dwell  
His tropes and figures will content ye  
He should possess to all degrees  
The art of talk; he practises  
Full fourteen hours in four-and-twenty.

Matthew Prior

# The Question To Lisetta

WHAT nymph should I admire or trust,  
But Chloe beauteous, Chloe just?  
What nymph should I desire to see,  
But her who leaves the plain for me?  
To whom should I compose the lay,  
But her who listens when I play?  
To whom in song repeat my cares,  
But her who in my sorrow shares?  
For whom should I the garland make,  
But her who joys the gift to take,  
And boasts she wears it for my sake?  
In love am I not fully blest?  
Lisetta, prithee tell the rest.

## LISETTA'S REPLY

Sure Chloe just, and Chloe fair,  
Deserves to be your only care;  
But, when you and she to-day  
Far into the wood did stray,  
And I happen'd to pass by,  
Which way did you cast your eye?  
But, when your cares to her you sing,  
You dare not tell her whence they spring:  
Does it not more afflict your heart,  
That in those cares she bears a part?  
When you the flowers for Chloe twine,  
Why do you to her garland join  
The meanest bud that falls from mine?  
Simplest of swains! the world may see  
Whom Chloe loves, and who loves me.

Matthew Prior

# The Remedy Worse Than The Disease

I sent for Ratcliffe, was so ill,  
That other doctors gave me over,  
He felt my pulse, prescribed his pill,  
And I was likely to recover.

But when the wit began to wheeze,  
And wine had warm'd the politician,  
Cured yesterday of my disease,  
I died last night of my physician.

Matthew Prior

## The Second Hymn Of Callimachus. To Apollo

Hah! how the laurel, great Apollo's tree,  
And all the cavern shakes! Far off, far off,  
The man that is unhallow'd: for the god,  
The god approaches. Hark! he knocks; the gates  
Feel the glad impulse, and the sever'd bars  
Submissive clink against their brazen portals.  
Why do the Delian palms incline their boughs,  
Self-moved, and hovering swans, their throats released  
From native silence, carol sounds harmonious?  
Begin young men the hymn: let all your harps  
Break their inglorious silence, and the dance,  
In mystic numbers trod, explain the music,  
But first by ardent prayer and clear lustration  
Purge the contagious spots of human weakness:  
Impure no mortal can behold Apollo.  
So may ye flourish favour'd by the god,  
In youth with happy nuptials, and in age  
With silver hairs, and fair descent of children;  
So lay foundations for aspiring cities,  
And bless your spreading colonies' increase.  
Pay sacred reverence to Apollo's song,  
Lest wrathful the far-shooting god emit  
His fatal arrows. Silent Nature stands,  
And seas subside, obedient to the sound  
Of Iö, Iö Pean! nor dares Thetis  
Longer bewail her loved Achilles' death;  
For Phoebus was his foe. Nor must sad Niobe  
In fruitless sorrow persevere, or weep  
E'en through the Phrygian marble. Hapless mother!  
Whose fondness could compare her mortal offspring  
To those which fair Latona bore to Jove.  
Iö! again repeat ye, Iö Pean!  
Against the Deity 'tis hard to strive.  
He that resists the power of Ptolemy  
Resists the power of heaven; for power from heaven  
Derives, and monarchs rule by gods appointed.  
Recite Apollo's praise till night draws on,  
The ditty still unfinish'd, and the day  
Unequal to the godhead's attributes

Various, and matter copious of your songs.  
Sublime at Jove's right hand Apollo sits,  
And thence distributes honour, gracious king,  
And thence of verse perpetual. From his robe  
Flows light ineffable; his harp, his quiver,  
And Lictian bow, are gold: with golden sandals  
His feet are shod; how rich! how beautiful!  
Beneath his steps the yellow mineral rises,  
And earth reveals her treasures. Youth and beauty  
Eternal deck his cheeks; from his fair head  
Perfumes distil their sweets; and cheerful Health,  
His duteous handmaid, through the air improved,  
With lavish hand diffuses scents ambrosial.  
The spearman's arm, by thee, great god, directed,  
Sends forth a certain wound. The laurell'd bard,  
Inspired by thee, composes verse immortal.  
Taught by thy art divine, the sage physician  
Eludes the urn, and chains or exiles Death.  
Thee, Nomian, we adore, for that from heaven  
Descending, thou on fair Amphyrsus' banks  
Didst guard Admetus' herds. Sithence the vow  
Produced an ampler store of milk; the she-goat,  
Not without pain, dragg'd her distended udder;  
And ewes, that erst brought forth but single lambs,  
Now dropp'd their twofold burdens. Bless'd the cattle  
On which Apollo cast his favouring eye!  
But, Phoebus, thou to man beneficent  
Delight'st in building cities. Bright Diana,  
Kind sister to thy infant deity,  
New-wean'd, and just arising from the cradle,  
Brought hunted wild goats' heads and branching antlers  
Of stags, the fruit and honour of her toil;  
These with discerning hand thou knew'st to range,  
(Young as thou wast) and in the well-framed models,  
With emblematic skill and mystic order,  
Thou show'dst where towers or battlements should rise,  
Where gates should open, or where walls should compass;  
While from thy childish pastime, man received  
The future strength and ornament of nations.  
Battus, our great progenitor, now touch'd  
The Libyan strand, when the foreboding crow  
Flew on the right before the people, marking



The country destined the auspicious seat  
Of future kings, and favour of the god,  
Whose oath is sure, and promise stands eternal.  
Or Boedromian hear'st thou pleased, or Clarian  
Phoebus, great king? for different are thy names,  
As thy kind hand has founded many cities,  
Or dealt benign thy various gifts to man.  
Carnean let me call thee, for my country  
Calls thee Carnean: the fair colony  
Thrice by thy gracious guidance was transported  
Ere settled in Cyrene; there we appointed  
Thy annual feasts, kind god, and bless'd thy altars,  
Smoking with hecatombs of slaughter'd bulls,  
As Carnus, thy high priest and favour'd friend,  
Had erst ordain'd; and with mysterious rites  
Our great forefathers taught their sons to worship,  
Iö! Carnean Phoebus! Iö Pean!  
The yellow crocus there, and fair narcissus,  
Reserve the honours of their winter-store  
To deck thy temple, till returning spring  
Diffuses Nature's various pride, and flowers  
Innumerable, by the soft south-west  
Open'd, and gather'd by religious hands,  
Rebound their sweets from th' odoriferous pavement.  
Perpetual fires shine hallow'd on thy altars,  
When annual the Carnean feast is held:  
The warlike Libyans clad in armour lead  
The dance; with clanging swords and shields they beat  
The dreadful measure: in the chorus join  
Their women, brown, but beautiful: such rites  
To thee well pleasing. Nor had yet thy votaries,  
From Greece transplanted, touch'd Cyrene's banks,  
And lands determined for their last abodes,  
But wander'd through Azilis' horrid forest  
Dispersed, when from Myrtusa's craggy brow,  
Fond of the maid, auspicious to the city  
Which must hereafter bear her favour'd name,  
Thou gracious deign'd'st to let the fair one view  
Her typic people; thou with pleasure taught'st her  
To draw the bow, to slay the shaggy lion,  
And stop the spreading ruin of the plains.  
Happy the nymph who, honour'd by thy passion,

Was aided by thy power! the monstrous Python  
Durst tempt thy wrath in vain; for dead he fell,  
To thy great strength and golden arms unequal.  
Iö! while thy unerring hand elanced  
Another, and another dart, the people  
Joyful repeated Iö! Iö Pean!  
Elance the dart, Apollo; for the safety  
And health of man, gracious, thy mother bore thee.  
Envy, thy latest foe, suggested thus:  
Like thee I am a power immortal, therefore  
To thee dare speak. How canst thou favour partial  
Those poets who write little? vast and great  
Is what I love: the far extended ocean  
To a small rivulet I prefer. Apollo  
Spurn'd Envy with his foot, and thus the god:  
Daemon, the headlong current of Euphrates,  
Assyrian river, copious runs, but muddy,  
And carries forward with his stupid force  
Polluting dirt, his torrent still augmenting,  
His wave still more defiled; meanwhile the nymphs  
Melissan, sacred and recluse to Ceres,  
Studious to have their offerings well received,  
And fit for heavenly use, from little urns  
Pour streams select and purity of waters.  
Iö! Apollo, mighty king, let Envy,  
Ill judging and verbose, from Lethe's lake  
Draw tons unmeasurable, while thy favour  
Administers to my ambitious thirst  
The wholesome draught from Aganippe's spring  
Genuine, and with soft murmurs gently rilling  
Adown the mountains where thy daughters haunt.

Matthew Prior

# The Secretary

While with labour assiduous due pleasure I mix,  
And in one day atone for the business of six,  
In a little Dutch chaise, on a Saturday night,  
On my left hand my Horace, a W\* on my right  
No memoirs to compose, and no postboy to move,  
That on Sunday may hinder the softness of love;  
For her, neither visits, nor parties at tea,  
Nor the long-winded cant of a dull refugee:  
This night and the next shall be here, shall be mine,  
To good or ill fortune the third we resign:  
Thus scorning the world, and superior to fate,  
I drive on my car in processional state;  
So with Phia through Athens Pisistratus rode,  
Men thought her Minerva, and him a new god.  
But why should I stories of Athens rehearse,  
Where people knew love, and were partial to verse;  
Since none can with justice my pleasure oppose,  
In Holland half drown'd in interest and prose?  
By Greece and past ages what need I be tried,  
When the Hague and the present are both on my side?  
And is it enough for the joys of the day  
To think what Anacreon or Sappho would say?  
When good Vendergoes and his provident Vrow,  
As they gaze on my triumph, do freely allow  
That search all the province, you'll find no man dar is  
So bless'd as the  
English heer Secretar'  
is.

Matthew Prior

# The Thief And Cordelier. A Ballad

To the tune of King John and the Abbot of Canterbury.

Who has e'er been at Paris must needs know the Greve,  
The fatal retreat of th' unfortunate brave,  
Where honour and justice most oddly contribute  
To ease heroes' pains by a halter and gibbet.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

There death breaks the shackles which force had put on,  
And the hangman completes what the judge but begun;  
There the Squire of the Pad and the Knight of the Post  
Find their pains no more baulk'd and their hopes no more cross'd.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Great claims are there made, and great secrets are known,  
And the king, and the law, and the thief, has his own;  
But my hearers cry out, What a deuce dost thou ail?  
Cut off thy reflections, and give us thy tale.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

'Twas there then in civil respect to harsh laws,  
And for want of false witness to back a bad cause,  
A Norman, though late, was obliged to appear,  
And who to assist but a grave cordelier?

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

The Squire, whose good grace was to open the scene,  
Seem'd not in great haste that the show should begin,  
Now fitted the halter, now traversed the cart,  
And often took leave, but was loath to depart.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

What frightens you thus, my good son? says the priest?  
You murder'd, are sorry, and have been confest.  
O Father! my sorrow will scarce save my bacon,  
For 'twas not that I murder'd but that I was taken.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Pough! pr'ythee ne'er trouble thy head with such fancies;  
Rely on the aid you shall have from Saint Francis;  
If the money you promis'd be brought to the chest,  
You have only to die, let the Church do the rest.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

And what will folks say if they see you afraid?  
It reflects upon me as I knew not my trade:  
Courage, Friend, for to-day is your period of sorrow,  
And things will go better believe me to-morrow.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

To-morrow, our hero reply'd, in a fright,  
He that's hang'd before noon ought to think of to-night;  
Tell your beads, quoth the priest, and be fairly truss'd up,  
For you surely to-night shall in Paradise sup.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Alas! quoth the Squire, howe'er sumptuous the treat,  
Parbleu! I shall have little stomach to eat;  
I should therefore esteem it great favour and grace  
Would you be so kind as to go in my place.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

That I would, quoth the Father, and thank you to boot,  
But our actions, you know, with our must suit;  
The feast I proposed to you I cannot taste,  
For this night, by our Order, is marked for a fast.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Then turning about to the hangman, he said,  
Despatch me, I pr'ythee, this troublesome blade,  
For thy cord and my cord both equally tie,  
And we live by the gold for which other men die.

Derry down, down, hey derry down.

Matthew Prior

# The Turtle And Sparrow. An Elegiac Tale

Behind an unfrequented glade,  
Where yew and myrtle mix their shade,  
A widow Turtle pensive sat,  
And wept her murder'd lover's fate.  
The Sparrow chanced that way to walk,  
(A bird that loves to chirp and talk)  
Be sure he did the Turtle greet,  
She answer'd him as she thought meet.  
Sparrows and Turtles, by the bye,  
Can think as well as you or I;  
But how they did their thoughts express  
The margin shows by T. and S.

T. My hopes are lost, my joys are fled,  
Alas! I weep Columbo dead:  
Come, all ye winged Lovers, come,  
Drop pinks and daisies on his tomb;  
Sing, Philomel, his funeral verse,  
Ye pious Redbreasts deck his hearse;  
Fair Swans, extend your dying throats,  
Columbo's death requires your notes;  
For him, my friend, for him I moan,  
My dear Columbo, dead and gone.

Stretch'd on the bier Columbo lies,  
Pale are his cheeks, and closed his eyes;  
Those eyes, where beauty smiling lay,  
Those eyes, where Love was used to play;  
Ah! cruel Fate, alas how soon  
That beauty and those joys are flown!

Columbo is no more: ye floods,  
Bear the sad sound to distant woods;  
The sound let echo's voice restore,  
And say, Columbo is no more.  
Ye floods, ye woods, ye echoes, moan  
My dear Columbo, dead and gone.

The Dryads all forsook the wood,

And mournful Naiads round me stood,  
The tripping Fawns and Fairies came,  
All conscious of our mutual flame,  
To sigh for him, with me to moan,  
My dear Columbo, dead and gone.

Venus disdain'd not to appear,  
To lend my grief a friendly ear;  
But what avails her kindness now?  
She ne'er shall hear my second vow:  
The Loves that round their mother flow  
Did in her face her sorrows view;  
Their drooping wings they pensive hung,  
Their arrows broke, their bows unstrung;  
They heard attentive what I said,  
And wept, with me, Columbo dead:  
For him I sigh, for him I moan,  
My dear Columbo, dead and gone.

'Tis ours to weep, great Venus said,  
'Tis Jove's alone to be obey'd:  
Nor birds nor goddesses can move  
The just behests of fatal Jove;  
I saw thy mate with sad regret,  
And cursed the fowler's cruel net:  
Ah! dear Columbo, how he fell,  
Whom Turturella loved so well!  
I saw him bleeding on the ground,  
The sight tore up my ancient wound:  
And whilst you wept, alas! I cried,  
Columbo and Adonis died.

Weep, all ye streams, ye mountains, groan;  
I mourn Columbo, dead and gone;  
Still let my tender grief complain,  
Nor day nor night that grief restrain;  
I said, and Venus still replied,  
Columbo and Adonis died.

S. Poor Turturella, hard thy case,  
And just thy tears, alas, alas!  
T. And hast thou loved, and canst thou hear



With piteous heart a lover's care!  
Come, then, with me thy sorrows join,  
And ease my woes by telling thine;  
For thou, poor bird, perhaps may'st moan  
Some Passerelia, dead and gone.

S. Dame turtle, this runs soft in rhyme,  
But neither suits the place nor time;  
The fowler's hand, whose cruel care  
For dear Columbo set the snare,  
The snare again for thee may set;  
Two birds may perish in one net:  
Thou shouldst avoid this cruel field,  
And sorrow should to prudence yield.  
'Tis sad to die -

T. ---- It may be so;  
'Tis sadder yet to live in wo.  
S. When widows use their canting strain  
They seem resolved to wed again.  
T. When widowers would this truth disprove,  
They never tasted real love.  
S. Love is soft joy and gentle strife,  
His efforts all depend on life:  
When he has thrown two golden darts,  
And struck the lovers' mutual hearts,  
Of his black shafts let death send one,  
Alas! the pleasing game is done:  
Ill is the poor survivor sped,  
A corpse feels mighty cold in bed,  
Venus said right, Nor tears can move  
Nor plaints revoke the will of Jove.

All must obey the general doom,  
Down from Alcides to Tom Thumb.  
Grim Pluto will not be withstood  
By force or craft. Tall Robinhood,  
As well as little John, is dead.  
(You see how deeply I am read)  
With Fate's lean tipstaff non can dodge,  
He'll find you out where'er you lodge.  
Ajax, to shun his general power,

In vain absconded in a flower.  
An idle scene Tythonus acted,  
When to a grasshopper contracted;  
Death struck them in those shapes again,  
As once he did when they were men.

For reptiles perish, plants decay;  
Flesh is but grass, grass turns to hay,  
And hay is dung, and dung to clay.

Thus heads extremely nice discover  
That folks may die some ten times over;  
But oft by too refined a touch  
To prove things plain they prove too much,  
Whate'er Pythagoras may say,  
(For each you know will have his way)  
With great submission I pronounce  
That people die no more than once:  
But once is sure, and death is common  
To bird and man, including woman:  
From the spread eagle to the wren,  
Alas! no mortal fowl knows when.  
All that wear feathers, first or last,  
Must one day perch on Charon's mast;  
Must lie beneath the cypress shade,  
Where Strada's nightingale was laid.  
Those fowl who seem alive to sit,  
Assembled by Dan Chaucer's wit,  
In prose have slept three hundred years,  
Exempt from worldly hopes and fears,  
And, laid in state upon their hearse,  
Are truly but embalm'd in verse.  
As sure as Lesbia's Sparrow I,  
Thou sure as Prior's Dove, must die,  
And ne'er again from Lethe's streams  
Return to Adda or to Thames.

T. I therefore weep Columbo dead,  
My hopes bereaved, my pleasures fled;  
I therefore must for ever moan  
My dear Columbo, dead and gone.

S. Columbo never sees your tears,  
Your cries Columbo never hears;  
A wall of brass and one of lead  
Divide the living from the dead:  
Repell'd by this the gather'd rain  
Of tears beats back to earth again;  
In t'other the collected sound  
Of groans, when once received, is drown'd.  
'Tis therefore vain one hour to grieve  
What time itself can ne'er retrieve.  
By nature soft, I know a dove  
Can never live without her love;  
Then quit this flame, and light another,  
Dame, I advise you like a brother.

T. What, I do make a second choice!  
In other nuptials to rejoice!

S. Why not, my bird! -

T. --- No, Sparrow, no;  
Let me indulge my pleasing wo:  
Thus sighing, cooing, ease my pain,  
But never wish nor love again:  
Distress'd for ever let me moan  
My dear Columbo, dead and gone.

S. Our winged friends through all the grove  
Contemn thy mad excess of love:  
I tell thee, Dame, the other day,  
I met a parrot and a jay,  
Who mock'd thee in their mimic tone,  
And wept Columbo, dead and hone.

T. Whate'er thy jay or parrot said,  
My hopes are lost, my joys are fled,  
And I for ever must deplore  
Columbo, dead and gone. - S.  
Encore!

For shame, forsake this Byon-style;  
We'll talk an hour and walk a mile.  
Does it with sense or health agree  
To sit thus moping on a tree?

To throw away a widow's life,  
When you again may be a wife?  
Come on, I'll tell you my amours;  
Who knows but they may influence yours?  
Example draws when precept falls,  
And sermons are less read than tales.

T. Sparrow, I take thee for my friend;  
As such will hear thee: I descend;  
Hop on and talk; but, honest bird,  
Take care that no immodest word  
May venture to offend my ear.

S. Too saint-like Turtle, never fear;  
By method things are best discuss'd,  
Begin we then with wife the first:  
A handsome, senseless, awkward, fool,  
Who would not yield, and could not rule,  
Her actions did her charms disgrace,  
And still her tongue talk'd of her face;  
Count me the leaves of yonder tree,  
So many different wills had she,  
And, like the leaves, as chance inclined,  
Those wills were changed with every wind:  
She courted the  
beau-monde  
to-night,

L'assemblee  
her supreme delight;  
The next she sat immured, unseen,  
And in full health enjoy'd the spleen;  
She censured that, she alter'd this,  
And with great care set all amiss;  
She now could chide, now laugh, now cry,  
Now sing, now pout, all God knows why:  
Short was her reign, she cough'd and died.  
Proceed we to my second bride.  
Well-born she was, genteelly bred,  
And buxom both at board and bed;  
Glad to oblige, and pleased to please,  
And, as Tom Southern wisely says,

No other fault had she in life,  
But only that she was my wife.  
O widow Turtle! every she,  
(So nature's pleasure does decree)  
Appears a goddess till enjoy'd;  
But birds, and men, and gods, are cloy'd.  
Was Hercules one woman's man,  
Or Jove for ever Laeda's swan?  
Ah! Madam, cease to be mistaken,  
Few married fowl peck Dunmow bacon.  
Variety alone gives joy;  
The sweetest meats the soonest cloy.  
What sparrow, dame, what dove alive,  
Though Venus should the chariot drive,  
But would accuse the harness' weight,  
If always coupled to one mate,  
And often wish the fetter broke?  
'Tis freedom but to change the yoke.

T. Impious wish to wed again  
Ere death dissolved the former chain!  
S. Spare your remark, and hear the rest.  
She brought me sons, but Jove be bless'd  
She died in childbed on the nest.  
Well, rest her bones, quoth I, she's gone;  
But must I therefore lie alone?  
What, am I to her memory tied?  
Must I not live because she died?  
And thus I logically said,  
( 'Tis good to have a reasoning head )  
Is this my wife?  
Probatur  
not;  
For death dissolved the marriage knot;  
She was,  
concedo  
, during my life;  
But is a piece of clay a wife?  
Again, if not a wife, do ye see,  
Why them, no kin at all to me;  
And he who general tears can shed  
For folks that happen to be dead

May e'en with equal justice mourn  
For those who never yet were born.

T. Those points, indeed, you quaintly prove,  
But logic is no friend to love.

S. My children then were just pen-feather'd;  
Some little corn for them I gather'd,  
And sent them to my spouse's mother,  
So left that brood to get another;  
And as old Harry whilom said,  
Reflecting on Anne Boleyn dead,  
Cocksbones, I now again do stand  
The jolliest bachelor i' th' land.

T. Ah me! my joys, my hopes are fled;  
My first, my only love is dead;  
With endless grief let me bemoan  
Columbo's loss -----

S. ----- Let me go on.

As yet my fortune was but narrow;  
I woo'd my cousin, Philly Sparrow,  
O' th' elder house of Chirping-End,  
From whence the younger branch descend.  
Well seated in a field of pease  
She lived, extremely at her ease;  
But when the honey-moon was past,  
The following nights were soon o'ercast;  
She kept her own, could plead the law,  
And quarrel for a barley-straw:  
Both, you may judge, became less kind,  
As more we knew each other's mind.  
She soon grew sullen, I hard-hearted;  
We scolded, hated, fought, and parted.  
To London, blessed town, I went;  
She boarded at a farm in Kent:  
A magpie from the country fled,  
And kindly told me she was dead:  
I pruned my feathers, cock'd my tail,  
And set my heart again to sale.

My fourth, a mere coquette, or such  
I thought her, nor avails it much

If true or false; our troubles spring  
More from the fancy than the thing.  
Two staring horns, I often said,  
But ill become a sparrow's head;  
But then to set that balance even  
Your cuckold sparrow goes to heaven.  
The thing you fear, suppose it done,  
If you enquire you make it known;  
Whilst at the root your horns are sore,  
The more you scratch they ache the more.  
But turn the tables and reflect,  
All may not be that you suspect:  
By the mind's eye the horns we mean,  
Are only in ideas seen;  
'Tis from the inside of the head  
Their branches shoot, their antlers spread;  
Fruitful suspicions often bear 'em,  
You feel them from the time you fear 'em;  
Cuckoo! Cuckoo! that echo'd word  
Offends the ear of Vulgar bird;  
But those of finer taste have found  
There's nothing in't beside the sound.  
Preferment always waits on horns,  
And household peace the gift adorns:  
This way or that let factions tend,  
The spark is still the cuckold's friend:  
This way or that let madam roam,  
Well pleased and quiet she comes home.  
Now weigh the pleasure with the pain,  
The  
plus  
and  
minus  
, loss and gain,  
And what La Fontaine laughing says  
Is serious truth in such a case:  
'Who slights the evil finds it least:  
And who does nothing does the best.'  
I never strove to rule the roast,  
She ne'er refused to pledge my toast:  
In visits if we chanced to meet,  
I seem'd obliging, she discreet:

We neither much caress'd nor strove,  
But good dissembling past for love.

T. Whate'er of light our eye may know,  
'Tis only light itself can show;  
Whate'er of love our heart can feel,  
'Tis mutual love alone can tell.

S. My pretty amorous foolish bird,  
A moment's patience. In one word,  
The three kind sisters broke the chain;  
She died, I mourn'd, and woo'd again.

T. Let me with juster grief deplore  
My dear Columbo, now no more;  
Let me with constant tears bewail ----  
S. Your sorrow does but spoil my tale.  
My fifth she proved a jealous wife,  
Lord shield us all from such a life;  
'Twas doubt, complaint, reply, chit-chat,  
'Twas this to-day, to-morrow that.  
Sometimes, forsooth, upon the brook  
I kept a miss; an honest rook  
Told it a snipe, who told a steer,  
Who told it those who told it her.

One day a linnet and a lark  
Had met me strolling in the dark;  
The next a woodcock and an owl,  
Quick-sighted, grave, and sober fowl,  
Would on their corporal oath alledge  
I kiss'd a hen behind the hedge.  
Well, madam Turtle, to be brief,  
(Repeating but renews our grief)  
As once she watch'd me from a rail,  
Poor soul! her footing chanced to fail,  
And down she fell and broke her hip;  
The fever came, and then the pip:  
Dead did the only cure apply;  
She was at quiet, so was I.

T. Could Love unmoved these changes view?



His sorrows as his joys are true.  
S. My dearest Dove, one wise man says,  
Alluding to our present case,  
'We're here to-day and gone to-morrow;'  
Then what avails superfluous sorrow?  
Another, full as wise as he,  
Adds, 'that a married man may see  
Two happy hours;' and which are they?  
The first and last, perhaps you'll say:  
'Tis true, when blithe she goes to bed,  
And when she peaceably lies dead:  
'Women 'twixt sheets are best,' 'tis said,  
Be they of Holland or of lead.

Now cured of Hymen's hopes and fears,  
And sliding down the vale of years,  
I hoped to fix my future rest,  
And took a widow to my nest.  
Ah! Turtle! had she been like thee,  
Sober yet gentle, wise yet free;  
But she was peevish, noisy, bold,  
A witch ingrafted on a scold.  
Jove in Pandora's box confined  
A hundred ills to vex mankind;  
To vex one bird in her bandore  
He hid at least a hundred more,  
And soon as time that veil withdrew  
The plagues o'er all the parish flew;  
Her stock of borrow'd tears grew dry,  
And native tempests arm'd her eye;  
Black clouds around her forehead hung,  
And thunder rattled on her tongue.  
We, young or old, or cock or hen,  
All live in AEolus's den;  
The nearest her the more accursed,  
Ill-fared her friends, her husband worst;  
But Jove amidst his anger spares,  
Remarks our faults, but hears our prayers.  
In short she died. Why then she's dead,  
Quoth I, and once again I'll wed.  
Would Heaven this mourning year were past  
One may have better luck at last.

Matters at worst are sure to mend;  
The devil's wife was but a fiend.

T. Thy tale has raised a Turtle's spleen;  
Uxorious inmate, bird obscene,  
Dar'st thou defile these sacred groves,  
The silent seats of faithful loves?  
Begone; with flagging wings sit down  
On some old penthouse near the town;  
In brewers' stables peck thy grain,  
Then wash it down with puddled rain,  
And hear thy dirty offspring squall  
From bottles on a suburb-wall.  
Where thou hast been, return again,  
Vile bird! thou hast conversed with men:  
Notions like these from men are given,  
Those vilest creatures under heaven.

To cities and to courts repair,  
Flattery and falsehood flourish there;  
There all thy wretched arts employ  
Where riches triumph over joy,  
Where passions do with interest barter,  
And Hymen holds by Mammon's charter;  
Where truth by point of law is parried,  
And knaves and prudes are six times married.

Application.

O Dearest daughter of two dearest friends,  
To thee my Muse this little Tale commends.  
Loving and loved, regard thy future mate,  
Long love his person, though deplore his fate;  
Seem young when old in thy dear husband's arms,  
For constant virtue has immortal charms;  
And when I lie low sepulchred in earth,  
And the glad year returns thy day of birth,  
Vouchsafe to say, Ere I could write or spell,  
The bard who from my cradle wish'd me well  
Told me I should the prating Sparrow blame,  
And bid me imitate the Turtle's flame.

Matthew Prior

# The Viceroy. A Ballad.

Tune - 'Lady Isabella's Tragedy.' or 'The Stepmother's cruelty.'

Of Nero, tyrant, petty king,  
Who heretofore did reign  
In famed Hibernia, I will sing,  
And in a ditty plain.

He hated was by rich and poor  
For reasons you shall hear;  
So ill he exercised his power  
That he himself did fear.

Full proud and arrogant was he,  
And covetous withal;  
The guilty he would still set free,  
But guiltless men enthrall.

He with a haughty, impious nod  
Would curse and dogmatize,  
Nor fearing either man or God,  
Gold he did idolize.

A patriot of high degree,  
Who could no longer bear  
This upstart Viceroy's tyranny,  
Against him did declare.

And, arm'd with truth, impeach'd the Don  
Of his enormous crimes,  
Which I'll unfold to you anon  
In low but faithful rhymes.

The articles recorded stand  
Against this peerless peer;  
Search but the archives of the land  
You'll find them written there.

Attend and justly I'll recite  
His treasons to you all,

The heads set in their native light,  
(And sigh poor Gaphny's fall.)

That traitorously he did abuse  
The power in him reposed,  
And wickedly the same did use,  
On all mankind imposed.

That he contrary to all law,  
An oath did frame and make,  
Compelling the militia  
Th' illegal oath to take.

Free quarters for the army too  
He did exact and force;  
On Protestants his love to show,  
Than Papist used them worse.

On all provisions destined for  
The camp at Limerick,  
He laid a tar full hard and sore,  
Though many men were sick.

The sutlers, too, he did ordain  
For licenses should pay,  
Which they refused with just disdain,  
And fled the camp away.

By which provisions were so scant  
That hundreds there did die;  
The soldiers food and drink did want,  
Nor famine could they fly.

He so much loved his private gain  
He could not hear or see;  
They might or die or might complain  
Without relief  
pardie.

That above and against all right,  
By word of mouth did he,

In council sitting, hellish spite,  
The farmer's fate decree;

That he,  
O Ciel  
, without trial,  
Straightway should hanged be,  
Though then the courts were open all,  
Yet Nero judge would be.

No sooner said but it was done,  
The Bourreau did his worst;  
Gaphny, alas! is dead and gone,  
And left his judge accursed.

In this concise despotic way  
Unhappy Gaphny fell,  
Which did all honest men affray,  
As truly it might well.

Full two good hundred pounds a-year,  
This poor man's real estate,  
He settled on his favourite dear,  
And Culliford can say't.

Besides, he gave five hundred pound  
To Fielding his own scribe,  
Who was his bail; one friend he found;  
He owed him to the bribe.

But for his horrid murder vile  
None did him prosecute;  
His old friend help'd him o'er the stile;  
With Satan who dispute?

With France, fair England's mortal foe,  
A trade he carried on;  
Had any other done't, I trow,  
To tripos he had gone.

That he did likewise traitorously,  
To bring his ends to bear,

Enrich himself most knavishly;  
O thief without compare!

Vast quantities of stores did he  
Embezzle and purloin;  
Of the king's stores he kept a key,  
Converting them to coin.

Te forfeited estates also,  
Both real and personal,  
Did with the stores together go;  
Fierce Cerb'rus swallow'd all.

Meanwhile the soldiers sigh'd and sobb'd,  
For not one sous had they;  
His Excellence had each man fobb'd,  
For he had sunk their pay.

Nero without the least disguise,  
The Papists at all times  
Still favour'd, and their robberies  
Look'd on as trivial crimes.

The Protestants, whom they did rob  
During his government,  
Were forced with patience, like good Job,  
To rest themselves content.

For he did basely them refuse  
All legal remedy;  
The Romans still he well did use,  
Still screen'd their roguery.

Succinctly thus to you I've told  
How this Viceroy did reign,  
And other truths I shall unfold;  
For truth is always plain.

The best of queens he hath reviled  
Before and since her death,  
He, cruel and ungrateful, smiled  
When she resign'd her breath.

Forgetful of the favours kind  
She had on him bestow'd,  
Like Lucifer, his rancorous mind,  
He loved nor her nor God.

But listen, Nero, lend thy ears,  
As still thou hast them on;  
Hear what Britannia says, with tears,  
Of Anna dead and gone.

'Oh! sacred be her memory,  
For ever dear her name;  
There never was nor ere can be  
A brighter juster dame.

'Bless'd be my sons, and eke all those  
Who on her praises dwell;  
She conquer'd Britain's fiercest foes,  
She did all queens excel.

'All princes, kings, and potentates,  
Ambassadors did send;  
All nations, provinces, and states,  
Sought Anna for their friend.

'In Anna they did all confide,  
For Anna they could trust;  
Her royal faith they all had tried,  
For Anna still was just.

'Truth, mercy, justice, did surround  
Her awful judgement-seat;  
In her the Graces all were found,  
In Anna all complete.

'She held the sword and balance right,  
And sought her people's good;  
In clemency she did delight,  
Her reign not stain'd with blood.

'Her gracious goodness, piety,



In all her deeds did shine,  
And bounteous was her charity,  
All attributes divine.

'Consummate wisdom, meekness, all  
Adorn'd the words she spoke,  
When they from her fair lips did fall,  
And sweet her lovely look.

'Ten thousand glorious deeds to crown,  
She caused dire war to cease;  
A greater empress ne'er was known,  
She fix'd the world in peace.

'This last and godlike act achieved,  
To heaven she wing'd her flight;  
Her loss with tears all Europe grieved,  
Their strength and dear delight.

'Leave we in bliss this heavenly saint,  
Revere, ye just, her urn;  
Her virtues high and excellent,  
Astrea gone we mourn.

'Commemorate, my sons, the day  
Which gave great Anna birth;  
Keep it for ever and for aye,  
And annual be your mirth.'

Illustrious George now fills the throne,  
Our wise benign good king;  
Who can his wondrous deeds make known,  
Or his bright actions sing?

Thee, favourite Nero, he has deign'd  
To raise to high degree!  
Well thou thy honours hast sustain'd,  
Well vouch'd thy ancestry.

But pass - these honours on thee laid,  
Can they e'er make thee white?  
Don't Gaphny's blood, which thou hast shed,

Thy guilty soul affright?

Oh! is there not, grim mortal, tell,  
Places of bliss and wo?  
Oh! is there not a heaven, a hell?  
But whither wilt thou go?

Can nought change thy obdurate mind?  
Wilt thou for ever rail?  
The prophet on thee well refined,  
And set thy wit to sale.

How thou art lost to sense and shame  
Three countries witness be;  
Thy conduct all just men do blame

Lib'ra nos Domine.

Dame Justice waits thee, well I ween,  
Her sword is brandish'd high;  
Nought can thee from her vengeance screen,  
Nor can'st thou from her fly.

Heavy her ire will fall on thee,  
The glittering steel is sure;  
Sooner or later, all agree,  
She cuts off the impure.

To her I leave thee, gloomy peer,  
Think on thy crimes committed;  
Repent, and be for once sincere,  
Thou ne'er wilt be De-Witted.

Matthew Prior

# The Wandering Pilgrim

Will Piggot must to Coxwould go,  
To live, alas! in want,  
Unless Sir Thomas say, No, no,  
Th' allowance is too scant.

The gracious knight full well does weet  
Ten farthings ne'er will do  
To keep a man each day in meat;  
Some bread to meat is due.

A Rechabite poor Will must live,  
And drink of Adam's ale;  
Pure element no life can give,  
Or mortal soul regale.

Spare diet and spring-water clear  
Physicians hold are good:  
Who diets thus need never fear  
A fever in the blood.

Gramercy, Sirs, ye're in the right;  
Prescriptions all can sell,  
But he that does not eat can't sh\*  
Or piss if good drink fail.

But pass - The AEsculapian crew,  
Who eat and quaff the best,  
They seldom miss to bake and brew,  
Or lin to break their fast.

Could Yorkshire tyke but do the same,  
Then he like them might thrive;  
But Fortune, Fortune, cruel Dame,  
To starve thou dost him drive.

In Will's old master's plenteous days  
His memory e'er be bless'd,  
What need of speaking in his praise?  
His goodness stands confess'd.

At his famed gate stood Charity  
In lovely sweet array;  
Ceres and Hospitality  
Dwelt there both night and day.

But to conclude, and be concise,  
Truth must Will's voucher be;  
Truth never yet went in disguise,  
For naked still is she.

There is but one, but one alone,  
Can set the pilgrim free,  
And make him cease to pine and moan  
O Frankland, it is thee.

Oh! save him from a dreary way;  
To Coxwold he must hie,  
Bereft of thee he wends astray,  
At Coxwold he must die.

Oh! let him in thy hall but stand,  
And wear a porter's gown,  
Duteous to what thou may'st command,  
Thus William's wishes crown.

Matthew Prior



# To A Child Of Quality, Five Years Old, The Author Suppos'D Forty

Lords, knights, and squires, the num'rous band,  
That wear the fair Miss Mary's fetters,  
Were summon'd by her high command,  
To show their passions by their letters.

My pen amongst the rest I took,  
Lest those bright eyes that cannot read  
Should dart their kindling fires, and look  
The pow'r they have to be obey'd.

Nor quality, nor reputation,  
Forbid me yet my flame to tell,  
Dear Five-years-old befriends my passion,  
And I may write till she can spell.

For while she makes her silk-worms beds  
With all the tender things I swear;  
Whilst all the house my passion reads,  
In papers round her baby's hair;

She may receive and own my flame,  
For though the strictest prudes should know it,  
She'll pass for a most virtuous dame,  
And I for an unhappy poet.

Then too, alas! when she shall tear  
The lines some younger rival sends;  
She'll give me leave to write, I fear,  
And we shall still continue friends.

For as our different ages move,  
'Tis so ordain'd (would Fate but mend it)  
That I shall be past making love,  
When she begins to comprehend it.

Matthew Prior

## To A Friend On His Nuptials

When Jove lay bless'd in his Alcmaena's charms,  
Three nights in one he press'd her in his arms;  
The sun lay set, and conscious nature strove  
To shade her god, and to prolong his love.  
From that auspicious night Alcides came;  
What less could rise from Jove and such a dame?  
May this auspicious night with that compare,  
Nor less the joys, nor less the rising heir,  
He strong as Jove, she like Alcmaena fair.

Matthew Prior

# To A Lady

Spare, gen'rous victor, spare the slave,  
Who did unequal war pursue;  
That more than triumph he might have,  
In being overcome by you.

In the dispute whate'er I said,  
My heart was by my tongue belied;  
And in my looks you might have read  
How much I argued on your side.

You, far from danger as from fear,  
Might have sustain'd an open fight:  
For seldom your opinions err:  
Your eyes are always in the right.

Why, fair one, would you not rely  
On Reason's force with Beauty's join'd?  
Could I their prevalence deny,  
I must at once be deaf and blind.

Alas! not hoping to subdue,  
I only to the fight aspir'd:  
To keep the beauteous foe in view  
Was all the glory I desir'd.

But she, howe'er of vict'ry sure.  
Contemns the wreath too long delay'd;  
And, arm'd with more immediate pow'r,  
Calls cruel silence to her aid.

Deeper to wound, she shuns the fight:  
She drops her arms, to gain the field:  
Secures her conquest by her flight;  
And triumphs, when she seems to yield.

So when the Parthian turn'd his steed,  
And from the hostile camp withdrew;  
With cruel skill the backward reed  
He sent; and as he fled, he slew.



Matthew Prior

# To A Person Who Wrote Ill, And Spake Worse, Against Me

Lie Philo untouch'd, on my peaceable shelf,  
Nor take it amiss that so little I heed thee;  
I've no envy to thee, and some love to myself:  
Then why should I answer since first I must read thee?  
Drunk with Helicon's waters, and double-brew'd bub,  
Be a linguist, a poet, a critic, a wag;  
To the solid delight of thy well-judging club,  
To the damage alone of thy bookseller Brag.  
Pursue me with satire; what harm is there in't?  
But from all viva voce reflection forbear;  
There can be no danger from what thou shalt print,  
There may be a little from what thou may'st swear.

Matthew Prior

## To A Poet Of Quality. Praising The Lady Hinchinbroke

Of thy judicious Muse's sense,  
Young Hinchinbroke so very proud is,  
That Sacharissa and Hortense  
She looks henceforth upon as dowdies.

Yet she to one must still submit,  
To dear Mamma must pay her duty;  
She wonders, praising Wilmot's wit,  
Thou shouldst forget his daughter's beauty.

Matthew Prior

## To A Young Gentleman In Love. A Tale

From publick Noise and factious Strife,  
From all the busie Ills of Life,  
Take me, My Celia, to Thy Breast;  
And lull my wearied Soul to Rest:  
For ever, in this humble Cell,  
Let Thee and I, my Fair One, dwell;  
None enter else, but Love—and He  
Shall bar the Door, and keep the Key.

To painted Roofs, and shining Spires  
(Uneasie Seats of high Desires)  
Let the unthinking Many croud,  
That dare be Covetous and Proud:  
In golden Bondage let Them wait,  
And barter Happiness for State:  
But Oh! My Celia, when Thy Swain  
Desires to see a Court again;  
May Heav'n around This destin'd Head  
The choicest of it's Curses shed:  
To sum up all the Rage of Fate,  
In the Two Things I dread and hate;  
May'st Thou be False, and I be Great.

Thus, on his Celia's panting Breast,  
Fond Celadon his Soul exprest;  
While with Delight the lovely Maid  
Receiv'd the Vows, She thus repaid:  
Hope of my Age, Joy of my Youth,  
Blest Miracle of Love and Truth!  
All that cou'd e'er be counted Mine,  
My Love and Life long since are Thine:  
A real Joy I never knew;  
'Till I believ'd Thy Passion true:  
A real Grief I ne'er can find;  
'Till Thou prov'st Perjur'd or Unkind.  
Contempt, and Poverty, and Care,  
All we abhor, and all we fear,  
Blest with Thy Presence, I can bear.  
Thro' Waters, and thro' Flames I'll go,

Suff'rer and Solace of Thy Woe:  
Trace Me some yet unheard-of Way,  
That I Thy Ardour may repay;  
And make My constant Passion known,  
By more than Woman yet has done.

Had I a Wish that did not bear  
The Stamp and Image of my Dear;  
I'd pierce my Heart thro' ev'ry Vein,  
And Die to let it out again.  
No: Venus shall my Witness be,  
(If Venus ever lov'd like Me)  
That for one Hour I wou'd not quit  
My Shepherd's Arms, and this Retreat,  
To be the Persian Monarch's Bride,  
Part'ner of all his Pow'r and Pride;  
Or Rule in Regal State above,  
Mother of Gods, and Wife of Jove.

O happy these of Human Race!  
But soon, alas! our Pleasures pass.  
He thank'd her on his bended Knee;  
Then drank a Quart of Milk and Tea;  
And leaving her ador'd Embrace,  
Hasten'd to Court, to beg a Place.  
While She, his Absence to bemoan,  
The very Moment He was gone,  
Call'd Thyrsis from beneath the Bed;  
Where all this time He had been hid.

Moral

While Men have these Ambitious Fancies;  
And wanton Wenches read Romances;  
Our Sex will—What? Out with it. Lye;  
And Their's in equal Strains reply.  
The Moral of the Tale I sing  
(A Posy for a Wedding Ring)  
In this short Verse will be confin'd:  
Love is a Jest; and Vows are Wind.

Matthew Prior

# To A Young Lady, Who Was Fond Of Fortune-Telling

You, Madam, may, with safety go  
Decrees of destiny to know;  
For at your birth kind planets reign'd,  
And certain happiness ordain'd:  
Such charms as yours are only given  
To chosen favourites of Heaven.  
But such is my uncertain state  
'Tis dangerous to try my fate;  
For I would only know from art  
The future motions of your hert,  
And what predestinated doom  
Attends my love for years to come,  
No secrets else that mortals learn  
My cares deserve, or life concern;  
But this will so important be  
I dread to search the dark decree;  
For while the smallest hope remains  
Faint joys are mingled with my pains.  
Vain distant views my fancy please,  
And give some intermitting ease;  
But should the stars too plainly show  
That you have doom'd my endless wo,  
No human force or art could bear  
The torment of my wild despair.  
This secret then I dare not know,  
And other truths are useless now.  
What matters if, unblest'd in love,  
How long or short my life will prove?  
To gratify what low desire  
Should I with needless haste inquire,  
How great how wealthy I shall be?  
Oh, what is wealth or power to me!  
If I am happy or undone,  
It must proceed from you alone.

Matthew Prior

## To Chloe Jealous

Dear Chloe, how blubber'd is that pretty face;  
Thy cheek all on fire, and thy hair all uncurl'd:  
Prythee quit this caprice; and (as old Falstaff says)  
Let us e'en talk a little like folks of this world.

How canst thou presume, thou hast leave to destroy  
The beauties, which Venus but lent to thy keeping?  
Those looks were design'd to inspire love and joy:  
More ord'nary eyes may serve people for weeping.

To be vext at a trifle or two that I writ,  
Your judgment at once, and my passion you wrong:  
You take that for fact, which will scarce be found wit:  
Odds life! must one swear to the truth of a song?

What I speak, my fair Chloe, and what I write, shows  
The diff'rence there is betwixt nature and art:  
I court others in verse; but I love thee in prose:  
And they have my whimsies, but thou hast my heart.

The god of us verse-men (you know, child) the Sun,  
How after his journeys he sets up his rest:  
If at morning o'er earth 'tis his fancy to run;  
At night he declines on his Thetis's breast.

So when I am wearied with wand'ring all day,  
To thee my delight in the evening I come:  
No matter what beauties I saw in my way;  
They were but my visits, but thou art my home.

Then finish, dear Chloe, this pastoral war;  
And let us like Horace and Lydia agree:  
For thou art a girl as much brighter than her,  
As he was a poet sublimer than me.

Matthew Prior

# To Chloe Weeping

See, whilst Thou weep'st, fair Cloe, see  
The World in Sympathy with Thee.  
The chearful Birds no longer sing,  
Each drops his Head, and hangs his Wing.  
The Clouds have bent their Bosom lower,  
And shed their Sorrows in a Show'r.  
The Brooks beyond their Limits flow;  
And louder Murmurs speak their Woe.  
The Nymphs and Swains adopt Thy Cares:  
They heave Thy Sighs, and weep Thy Tears.  
Fantastic Nymph! that Grief should move  
Thy Heart, obdurate against Love.  
Strange Tears! whose Pow'r can soften All,  
But That dear Breast on which they fall.

Matthew Prior



## To Cloe

Whilst I am scorch'd with hot desire,  
In vain cold Friendship you return,  
Your drops of pity on my fire,  
Alas! but make it fiercer burn.

Ah! would you have the flame suppress'd,  
That kills the heart it heats too fast,  
Take half my passion to your breast,  
The rest in mine shall ever last.

Matthew Prior

## To Dr. Sherlock, On His Practical Discourse Concerning Death

Forgive the muse who, in unhallow'd strains,  
The saint one moment from his God detains;  
For sure whate'er you do, where'er you are,  
'Tis all but one good work, one constant prayer.  
Forgive her; and entreat that God to whom  
Thy favour'd vows with kind acceptance come,  
To raise her notes to that sublime degree  
Which suits a song of piety and thee.  
Wondrous good man! whose labours may repel  
The force of sin, may stop the rage of hell;  
Thou, like the Baptist, from thy God was sent,  
The crying voice to bid the world repent.  
Thee youth shall study, and no more engage  
Their flattering wishes for uncertain age,  
No more with fruitless care and cheated strife  
Chase fleeting pleasure through this maze of life;  
Finding the wretched all they there can have  
But present food, and but a future grave;  
Each, great as Philip's victor son, shall view  
This abject world, and weeping ask a new.  
Decrepit age shall read thee, and confess  
Thy labours can assuage where med'cines cease;  
Shall bless thy words, their wounded soul's relief,  
The drops that sweeten their last dregs of life:  
Shall look to heaven, and laugh at all beneath,  
Own riches gather'd trouble, fame a breath,  
And life an ill whose only cure is death.  
Thy even thoughts with so much plainness flow,  
Their sense untutor'd infancy may know;  
Yet to such height is all that plainness wrought,  
Wit may admire, and letter'd pride be taught.  
Easy in words thy style, in sense sublime,  
On its blest steps each age and sex may rise;  
'Tis like the ladder in the Patriarch's dream,  
Its foot on earth, its height above the skies.  
Diffused its virtue, boundless is its power;  
'Tis public health, and universal cure:

Of heavenly manna 'tis a second feast,  
A nation's food, and all to every taste.  
To its last height mad Britain's guilt was rear'd,  
And various death for various crimes she fear'd:  
With your kind work her drooping hopes revive;  
You bid her read, repent, adore, and live,  
You wrest the bolt from Heaven's avenging hand,  
Stop ready death, and save a sinking land.  
O! save us still; still bless us with thy stay:  
O! want thy heaven till we have learn'd the way:  
Refuse to leave thy destined charge too soon,  
And for the church's good defer thy own.  
O! live, and let thy works urge our belief;  
Live to explain thy doctrine by thy life;  
Till future infancy, baptized by thee,  
Grow ripe in years, and old in piety;  
Till christians yet unborn be taught to die.  
Then in full age and hoary holiness  
Retire, great teacher, to thy promised bliss;  
Untouch'd thy tomb, uninjured be thy dust,  
As thy own fame among the future just,  
Till in last sounds, the dreadful trumpet speaks;  
Till judgement calls, and quicken'd nature wakes;  
Till through the utmost earth and deepest sea  
Our scatter'd atoms find their destined way,  
In haste to clothe their kindred souls again,  
Perfect our state, and build immortal man:  
Then fearless thou, who well sustain'dst the fight,  
To paths of joy and tracks of endless light,  
Lead up all those who heard thee and believed;  
'Midst thy own flock, great shepherd, be received  
And glad all heaven with millions thou hast saved.

Matthew Prior

# To Fortune

Whilst I in prison or in court look down,  
Nor beg thy favour nor deserve thy frown,  
In vain malicious Fortune hast thou tried  
By taking from my state to quell my pride:  
Insulting girl, thy present rage abate,  
And wouldst thou have my humbled, make me great.

Matthew Prior

# To Mr. Harley - Wounded By Guiscard

In one great  
now  
, superior to an age,  
The full extremes of nature's force we find:  
How heavenly virtue can exalt, or rage  
Infernal how degrade the human mind.

While the fierce monk does at his trial stand,  
He chews revenge, abjuring his offence:  
Guile in his tongue, and murder in his hand,  
He stabs his judge, to prove his innocence.

The guilty stroke and torture of the steel  
Infix'd, our dauntless Briton scarce perceives:  
The wounds his country from his death must feel,  
The patriot views; for those alone he grieves.

The barbarous rage that durst attempt thy life,  
Harley, great counsellor, extends thy fame;  
And the sharp point of cruel Guiscard's knife,  
In brass and marble carves thy deathless name.

Faithful assertor of thy country's cause,  
Britain with tears shall bathe thy glorious wound;  
She for thy safety shall enlarge her laws,  
And in her statutes shall thy worth be found.

Yet 'midst her sighs she triumphs on the hand  
Reflecting, that diffused the public wo;  
A stranger to her altars, and her land;  
No son of hers could meditate this bow,

Meantime thy pain is gracious Anna's care:  
Our queen, our saint, with sacrificing breath,  
Softens thy anguish: in her powerful prayer  
She pleads thy service, and forbids thy death.

Great as thou art, thou canst demand no more,  
O breast bewail'd by earth, preserved by Heaven?

No higher can aspiring virtue soar:  
Enough to thee of grief and fame is given.

Matthew Prior

# To My Lord Buckhurst, Very Young, Playing With A Cat

The amorous youth, whose tender breast  
Was by his darling Cat possest,  
Obtain'd of Venus his desire,  
Howe'er irregular his fire:  
Nature the power of love obey'd,  
The Cat became a blushing maid,  
And on the happy change the boy  
Employ'd his wonder and his joy.  
Take care, O beauteous child, take care,  
Lest thou prefer so rash a prayer,  
Nor vainly hope the queen of love,  
Will e'er thy favourite's charms improve.  
O quickly from her shrine retreat,  
Or tremble for thy darling's fate.  
The queen of love, who soon will see  
Her own Adonis live in thee,  
Will lightly her first loss deplore,  
Will easily forgive the boar:  
Her eyes with tears no more will flow,  
With jealous rage her breast will glow,  
And on her tabby rival's face  
She deep will mark a new disgrace.

Matthew Prior

## To The Author Of The Foregoing Pastoral - (Love And Friendship)

By Sylvia if thy charming self be meant;  
If friendship be thy virgin vows' extent,  
O! let me in Aminta's praises join,  
Hers my esteem shall be, my passion thine.  
When for thy head the garland I prepare,  
A second wreath shall bind Aminta's hair;  
And when my choicest songs thy worth proclaim,  
Alternate verse shall bless Aminta's name;  
My heart shall own the justice of her cause,  
And Love himself submit to Friendship's laws.  
But if beneath thy numbers' soft disguise  
Some favour'd swain, some true Alexis, lies;  
If Amaryllis breathes thy secret pains,  
And thy fond heart beats measure to thy strains,  
May'st thou, howe'er I grieve, for ever find  
The flame propitious and the lover kind;  
May Venus long exert her happy power,  
And make thy beauty like thy verse endure:  
May every god his friendly aid afford,  
Pan guard thy flock, and Ceres bless thy board.  
But if, by chance, the series of thy joys  
Permit one thought less cheerful to arise,  
Piteous transfer it to the mournful swain,  
Who loving much, who not beloved again,  
Feels an ill-fated passion's last excess,  
And dies in wo that thou may'st live in peace.

Matthew Prior



## To The Countess Of Exeter. Playing On The Lute

What charms you have, from what high race you sprung,  
Have been the pleasing subjects of my song:  
Unskill'd and young, yet something still I writ  
Of Ca'ndish' beauty, join'd to Cecil's wit.  
But when you please to show the labouring muse  
What greater theme your music can produce,  
My babbling praises I repeat no more,  
But hear, rejoice, stand silent, and adore.  
The Persians thus, first gazing on the sun,  
Admired how high 'twas placed, how bright it shone;  
But as his power was known their thoughts were raised,  
And soon they worshipp'd what at first they praised.  
Eliza's glory lives in Spenser's song,  
And Cowley's verse keeps fair Orinda young;  
That as in birth and beauty you excel,  
The muse might dictate and the poet tell:  
Your art no other art can speak; and you  
To show how well you play, must play anew:  
Your music's power your music must disclose,  
For what light is 'tis only light that shows.  
Strange force of harmony that thus controls  
Our thoughts, and turns and sanctifies our souls.  
While with its utmost art your sex could move  
Our wonder only or at best our love,  
You far above both these your god did place,  
That your high power might worldly thoughts destroy,  
That with your numbers you our zeal might raise,  
And like himself communicate your joy.  
When to your native heaven you shall repair,  
And with your presence crown the blessings there,  
Your lute may wind its strings but little higher  
To tune their notes to that immortal quire.  
Your art is perfect here; your numbers do  
More than our books make the rude atheist know  
That there's a heaven by what he hears below.  
As in some piece while Luke his skill exprest,  
A cunning angel came and drew the rest,  
So when you play, some godhead does impart  
Harmonious aid; divinity helps art;

Some cherub finishes what you begun,  
And to a miracle improves a tune.  
To burning Rome when frantic Nero play'd,  
Viewing that face, no more he had survey'd  
The raging flames, but, struck with strange surprise,  
Confess'd them less than those of Anna's eyes;  
But, had he heard thy lute, he soon had found  
His rage eluded and his crime atoned:  
Thine, like Amphion's hand, had waked the stone  
And from destruction call'd the rising town;  
Malice to music had been forced to yield,  
Nor could he burn so fast as thou couldst build.

Matthew Prior

## To The Honourable Charles Montague, Esq.

Howe'er, 'tis well that, while mankind  
Through fate's perverse meander errs,  
He can imagined pleasures find  
To combat against real cares.

Fancies and notions he pursues,  
Which ne'er had being but in thought;  
Each, like the Grecian artist, woos,  
The image he himself has wrought.

Against experience he believes;  
He argues against demonstration:  
Pleased when his reason he deceives,  
And sets his judgement by his passion.

The hoary fool, who many days  
Has struggled with continued sorrow,  
Renew's his hope, and blindly lays  
The desperate bet upon to-morrow.

To-morrow comes: 'tis noon, 'tis night:  
This day like all the former flies;  
Yet on he runs to seek delight  
To-morrow, till to-night he dies.

Our hopes like towering falcons aim  
At objects in an airy height:  
The little pleasure of the game  
Is from afar to view the flight.

Our anxious pains we all the day  
In search of what we like employ;  
Scorning at night the worthless prey,  
We find the labour gave the joy.

At distance through an artful glass  
To the mind's eye things well appear;  
They lose their forms, and make a mass  
Confused and black, if brought too near.

If we see right we see our woes:  
Then what avails it to have eyes?  
From ignorance our comfort flows:  
The only wretched are the wise.

We weary'd should lie down in death:  
This cheat of life would take no more  
If you thought fame but empty breath,  
I Phillis but a perjured whore.

Matthew Prior

# To The Lady Dursley

Here reading how fond Adam was betray'd,  
And how by sin Eve's blasted charms decay'd,  
Our common loss unjustly you complain,  
So small that part of it which you sustain.

You still, fair mother, in your offspring trace  
The stock of beauty destined for the race;  
Kind Nature forming them, the pattern took  
From heaven's first work, and Eve's original look.

You, happy saint, the serpent's power control;  
Scarce any actual guilt defiles your soul;  
And hell does o'er that mind vain triumphs boast  
Which gains does o'er that mind vain triumphs boast

With virtue strong as yours had Eve been arm'd,  
In vain the fruit had blush'd, or serpent charm'd;  
Nor had our bliss by penitence been bought,  
Nor had frail Adam fall'n, nor Milton wrote.

Matthew Prior

# To The Lady Elizabeth Harley, Since Marchioness Of Carmarthen, On A Column Of Her Drawing

When future ages shall with wonder view  
These glorious lines which Harley's daughter drew,  
They shall confess that Britain could not raise  
A fairer column to the father's praise.

Matthew Prior

# To The Right Honourable The Countess Dowager Of Devonshire, On A Piece Of Wiessen's

Wiessen and nature held a long contest  
If she created or he painted best;  
With pleasing thought the wondrous combat grew,  
She still form'd fairer, he still liker drew.  
In these seven brethren they contended last;  
With art increased their utmost skill they tried,  
And both well pleased they had themselves surpass'd,  
The goddess triumph'd, and the painter died.  
That both their skill to this vast height did raise,  
Be ours the wonder, and be yours the praise:  
For here, as in some glass, is well descried  
Only yourself thus often multiply'd.  
When heaven had you and gracious Anna made,  
What more exalted beauty could it add?  
Having no nobler images in store,  
It but kept up to these, nor could do more  
Than copy well what it had framed before.  
If in dear Burghley's generous face we see  
Obliging truth and handsome honesty,  
With all that world of charms which soon will move  
Reverence in men, and in the fair ones love;  
His every grace his fair descent assures,  
He has his mother's beauty, she has yours.  
If every Cecil's face had every charm  
That thought can fancy or that heaven can form,  
Their beauties all become your beauty's due;  
They are all fair, because they're all like you.  
If every Ca'ndish great and charming look,  
From you that air, from you the charms, they took,  
In their each limb your image is exprest,  
But on their brow firm courage stands confest;  
There their great father, by a strong increase,  
Adds strength to beauty, and completes the piece.  
Thus still your beauty in your sons we view,  
Wiessen seven times one great perfection drew;  
Whoever sat, the picture still is you.  
So when the parent sun with genial beams

Has animated many goodly gems,  
He sees himself improved, while every stone,  
With a resembling light, reflects a sun.  
So when great Rhea many births had given,  
Such as might govern earth and people heaven,  
Her glory grew diffused; and, fuller known,  
She saw the Deity in every son;  
And to what god soe'er men altars raised,  
Honouring the offspring, they the mother praised.  
In short-lived charms let others place their joys,  
Which sickness blasts, and certain age destroys;  
Your stronger beauty time can ne'er deface,  
'Tis still renew'd and stamp'd in all your race.  
Ah! Wiessen, had thy art been so refined  
As with their beauty to have drawn their mind,  
Through circling years thy labours would survive,  
And living rules to fairest virtue give,  
To men unborn and ages yet to live:  
T'would still be wonderful, and still be new,  
Against what time, or spite, or fate could do,  
Till thine, confused with nature's pieces lie,  
And Ca'ndish's name and Cecil's honour die.

Matthew Prior



## Truth And Falsehood. A Tale

Once on a time, in sunshine weather,  
Falsehood and Truth walk'd out together,  
The neighbouring woods and lawns to view,  
As opposites will sometimes do:  
Through many a blooming mead they pass'd,  
And at a brook arrived at last:  
The purling stream, the margin green,  
With flowers bedeck'd, a vernal scene,  
Invited each itinerant maid  
To rest a while beneath the shade;  
Under a spreading beech they sat,  
And pass'd the time with female chat;  
While each her thoughts, the other feign'd.  
At length, quoth Falsehood, Sister Truth,  
For so she call'd her from her youth,  
What if, to shun yon sultry beam,  
We bathe in this delightful stream,  
The bottom smooth, the water clear,  
And there's no prying shepherd near?  
With all my heart, the nymph replied,  
And threw her snowy robes aside,  
Stripp'd herself naked to the skin,  
And with a spring leapp'd headlong in.  
Falsehood more leisurely undress'd,  
And laying by her tawdry vest,  
Trick'd herself out in Truth's array,  
And cross the meadows tripp'd away.

From this cursed hour the fraudulent dame  
Of sacred Truth usurps the name,  
And with a vile perfidious mind  
Roams far and near to cheat mankind;  
False sighs suborns, and artful tears,  
And starts with vain pretended fears,  
In visits vain still appears most wise,  
And rolls at church her saint-like eyes;  
Talks very much, plays idle tricks,  
While rising stock her conscience pricks;  
When being, poor thing, extremely gravell'd,

She secrets ope'd, and all unravell'd.  
But on she will, and secrets tell  
Of John and Joan, and Ned and Nell,  
Reviling every one she knows,  
As fancy leads, beneath the rose.  
Her tongue so voluble and kind  
It always runs before her mind;  
As times do serve she slily pleads,  
And copious tears still show her needs,  
With promises as thick as weeds -  
Speaks pro and con, is wondrous civil,  
To-day a saint, to-morrow devil.

Poor Truth she stripp'd, as has been said,  
And naked left the lovely maid,  
Who, scorning from her cause to wince,  
Has gone stark naked ever since,  
And ever naked will appear,  
Beloved by all who Truth revere.

Matthew Prior

## Two Riddles. -- 1710

Sphinx was a monster that would eat  
Whatever stranger she could get,  
Unless his ready wit disclosed  
The subtle riddle she proposed.

OEdipus was resolved to go  
And try what strength of parts would do;  
Says Sphinx, on this depends your fate;  
Tell me what animal is that  
Which has four feet at morning bright,  
Has two at noon, and three at night?  
'Tis Man, said he, who, weak by nature,  
At first creeps, like his fellow-creature,  
Upon all four; as years accrue,  
With sturdy steps he walks on two;  
In age at length grows weak and sick,  
For his third leg adopts the stick.

Now, in your turn, 'tis just, methinks,  
You should resolve me, Madam Sphinx,  
What greater stranger yet is he  
Who has four legs, then two, then three;  
Then loses one, then gets two more,  
And runs away at last on four?

Matthew Prior

## Upon Honour. A Fragment.

Honour, I say, or honest Fame,  
I mean the substance, not the name;  
(Not that light heap of tawdry wares,  
Ermin, Coronets, and Stars,  
Which often is by merit sought,  
By gold and flatt'ry oft'ner bought.  
The shade, for which Ambition looks,  
In Selden's or in Ashmole's books):  
But the true glory which proceeds,  
Reflected bright from honest deeds,  
Which we in our Own breast perceive,  
And Kings can neither take nor give.

Matthew Prior

## Upon Playing At Ombre With Two Ladies

I know that Fortune long has wanted sight,  
And therefore pardon'd when she did not right;  
But yet till then it never did appear  
That, as she wanted eyes, she could not hear.  
I begg'd that she would give me leave to lose,  
A thing she does not commonly refuse.  
Two matadores are out against my game,  
Yet still I play, and still my luck's the same:  
Unconquer'd in three suits it does remain,  
Whereas I only ask in one to gain;  
Yet she still contradicting gifts imparts,  
And gives success in every suit - but Hearts.

Matthew Prior

## Upon This Passage In Scaligeriana

When you with High-Dutch Heeren dine,  
Expect false Latin and stum'd wine:  
They never taste who always drink;  
They always talk who never think.

Matthew Prior

## Venus' Advice To The Muses

Thus to the Muses spoke the Cyprian Dame,  
Adorn my altars, and revere my name.  
My son shall else assume his potent darts;  
Twang goes the bow; my girls have at your hearts.  
The Muses answer'd Venus, We deride  
The Vagrant's malice and his mother's pride:  
Send him to nymphs who sleep on Ida's shade,  
To the loose dance and wanton masquerade:  
Our thoughts are settled, and intent our look  
On the instructive verse and moral book.  
On female idleness his power relies,  
But when he finds us studying hard he flies.

Matthew Prior

# Venus Mistaken

When Cloe's Picture was to Venus shown;  
Surpriz'd, the Goddess took it for Her own.  
And what, said She, does this bold Painter mean?  
When was I Bathing thus, and Naked seen?

Pleas'd Cupid heard, and check'd His Mother's Pride:  
And who's blind now, Mamma? the Urchin cry'd.  
'Tis Cloe's Eye, and Cheek, and Lip, and Breast:  
Friend Howard's Genius fancy'd all the rest.

Matthew Prior



# Verses - Spoken To Lady Henrietta Cavendish Holles-Harley, Countess Of Oxford

Madam, Since Anna visited the muse's seat,  
(Around her tomb let weeping angels wait)  
Hail, thou, the brightest of thy sex, and best,  
Most gracious neighbour and most welcome guest:  
Not Harley's self, to Cam and Isis dear,  
In virtues and in arts great Oxford's heir,  
Not he such present honour shall receive  
As to his consort we aspire to give.

Writings of men our thought to-day neglects,  
To pay due homage to the softer sex:  
Plato and Tully we forbear to read,  
And their great followers whom this house has bred,  
To study lessons from thy morals given,  
And shining characters impress'd by Heaven.  
Science in books no longer we pursue,  
Minerva's self in Harriet's face we view;  
For when with Beauty we can Virtue join,  
We paint the semblance of a form divine.

Their pious incense let our neighbours bring  
To the kind memory of some bounteous king:  
With grateful hand due altars let them raise  
To some good knight's or holy prelate's praise;  
We tune our voices to a nobler theme,  
Your eyes we bless, your praises we proclaim;  
Saint John's was founded in a woman's name.  
Enjoin'd by statute, to the fair we bow;  
In spite of time we keep our ancient vow;  
What Marg'ret Tudor was, in Harriet Harley now.

Matthew Prior

# Wives By The Dozen

O Death how thou spoil'st the best project of life,  
Said Gabriel, who still as he bury'd one wife,  
For the sake of her family married her cousin;  
And thus in an honest collateral line  
He still married on till his number was nine,  
Full sorry to die till he made up his dozen.

Matthew Prior

## Written At Paris, 1700. In The Beginning Of Robe's Geography

Of all that William rules, or robe  
Describes, great Rhea, of thy globe,  
When or on posthorse or in chaise,  
With much expense and little ease,  
My destin'd miles I shall have gone,  
By Thames, or Maese, by Po, or Rhone,  
And found no foot of earth my own;  
Great Mother, let me once be able  
To have a garden, house, and stable,  
That I may read, and ride, and plant,  
Superior to desire or want;  
And as health fails, and years increase,  
Sit down and think, and die in peace.  
Oblige thy favourite undertakers  
To throw me in but twenty acres;  
This number sure they may allow,  
For pasture ten, and ten for plough;  
'Tis all that I would wish or hope,  
For me, and John, and Nell, and Crop.

Then as thou wilt dispose the rest  
(And let not Fortune spoil the jest)  
To those who at the market-rate  
Can barter honour for estate.

Now if thou grant'st me my request,  
To make thy vot'ry truly bless'd,  
Let curs'd revenge and saucy pride  
To some bleak rock far off be tied,  
Nor e'er approach my rural seat,  
To tempt me to be base and great.

And, Goddess, this kind office done,  
Charge Venus to command her son  
(Wherever else she lets him rove)  
To shun my house, and field, and grove:  
Peace cannot dwell with Hate or Love.

Hear, gracious Rhea, what I say,  
And thy petitioner shall pray.

Matthew Prior

# Written In An Ovid

Ovid is the surest guide  
You can name to show the way  
To any woman, maid, or bride,  
Who resolves to go astray.

Matthew Prior

# Written In Montaignes Essays. Given To The Duke Of Shrewsbury In France, After The Peace

Dictate, O mighty judge, what thou hast seen  
Of cities and of courts, of books and men,  
And deign to let thy servant hold the pen.

Through ages, thus, I may presume to live,  
And from the transcript of thy prose receive  
What my own short-lived verse can never give.

Thus shall fair Britain, with a gracious smile,  
Accept the work, and the instructed isle  
For more than treaties made shall bless my toil.

Nor longer hence the Gallic style preferr'd,  
Wisdom in English idiom shall be heard,  
While Talbot tells the world where Montaigne err'd.

Matthew Prior

# Written In The Beginning Of Mezeray's History Of France

Whate'er thy countrymen have done  
By law and wit, by sword and gun,  
In thee is faithfully recited,  
And all the living world that view  
Thy work, give thee the praises due  
At once instructed and delighted.

Yet for the fame of all these deeds  
What beggar in the invalids,  
With lameness broke, with blindness smitten,  
Wish'd ever decently to die,  
To have been either Mezeray,  
Or any Monarch he has written?

It's strange, dear Author, yet it true is,  
That down from Pharamond to Louis  
All covet life, yet call it pain,  
And feel the ill, yet shun the cure:  
Can sense this paradox endure?  
Resolve me, Cambray, or Fontaine.

The man in graver tragic known  
(Though his best part long since was done)  
Still on the stage desires to tarry,  
And he who play'd the Harlequin,  
After the jest still loads the scene,  
Unwilling to retire though weary.

Matthew Prior

# Written In The Nouveaux Interests Des Princes De L'Europe

Bless'd be the princes who have fought  
For pompous names or wide dominion,  
Since by their error we are taught  
That happiness is but opinion.

Matthew Prior