

The background of the cover is a classical painting. The upper portion shows the lower face and neck of a woman with pale skin and red lips. She is wearing a dark, textured garment with a large, ornate jewel at the collar. In the foreground, a large, detailed rose in shades of pink and red is the central focus. The painting style is visible with brushstrokes and a rich color palette.

Centifolia
100 ROSE POEMS

introduced by
EVA DEVERELL

CENTIFOLIA

100 ROSE POEMS

anthologised & introduced by
EVA DEVERELL

INTRODUCTION

"Won't you come into my garden? I would like my roses to see you."
-Richard B. Sheridan

Centifolia means "hundred-leaved" and is a species of rose famous for its full petals and rich perfume, also known as the "cabbage" or "provenance" rose. Although the poems in this anthology span more than a hundred pages, and reference many different roses, it seemed an apt title. The English word, *anthology* has floral roots too; it comes from the Ancient Greek ἀνθολογία (*anthologia*) meaning, "flower-gathering". The Turkish equivalent is *güldeste*, "rose bouquet". *Gül* ("rose") will be familiar to many readers; the sweet songs of the oriental *bülbül* ("nightingale") have paired her with him for many ages in both love and rhyme. This vein is represented not only in Hafiz and Omar Khayyam, but has also been adopted by western poets, William Thackeray, Henry Newbolt, and William Henley among them.

There is a further Turkish literary tradition called the *gül-i sad berk* (from the Persian for *centifolia*) in which pieces of prose or poetry are collated into hundred-fold anthologies. Such is the long-standing love affair between literature and flower arrangement.

My criteria for choosing these poems has been fairly loosely-tied, allowing for personal taste more than literary concerns, and not being too stringent in distinguishing between poems that mention roses, and poems that are about roses. "Old Herrick" as Robert Frost calls him, has no fewer than six poems included in this

centifolia, and I could not behead a single one. Several other poets are similarly over-represented (though not overblown) but I have spread them artfully (I hope) through my arrangement so that they won't offend.

Many of the poems begin in the rosy-fingered dawn, perhaps suggested as much by the English "arose" or "uprose" as the morning's association with youth and newness. The sun is more prevalent than the moon and light than dark, and the poems cycle swiftly the full round of the seasons. It's **time** that hardly skips a poem, and Edgar Lee Masters sums it up beautifully in his "tick tick tick" of "the same old thought":

The snows and the roses of yesterday are vanished;
And what is love but a rose that fades?

Those who come to this anthology looking for love poems will find them, of course, but it is striking how the short-lived but brilliant beauty of the rose has driven poets again and again through the ages to belabour the theme of the beauty of youth and the passing of time. Reading through the poems in quick succession gives one the impression of being smothered under the rose petals of Heliogabalus: individuality disappears and what is left is one single, urgent expression of transience made real by intense emotions of regret and longing. Which is to say, all is not rosy in rose poetry, and one might, after all, be better off reading prose.

EVA DEVERELL
February 2015

TAGS

I've made some attempt to categorise the poems with the use of tags. This solved the difficulty of placing a piece in only one section, and allows for easy searching of the digital edition. You will find a full list of tags in the index at the end of the book, and appending a hashtag (#) to the word you're looking up will exclude instances of it from within the texts. My particular favourites have been tagged, #favourite.

ERRATA

I've tried to ensure that all poems are in the public domain, but if you notice any errors either legal or orthographic, please let me know by writing to the following address:

[eva.deverell\[AT\]gmail.com](mailto:eva.deverell[AT]gmail.com)

SHARING

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<http://bit.ly/centifolia>

Thank you.

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#love, #worm

THE SICK ROSE by William Blake

O Rose thou art sick.
The invisible worm,
That flies in the night
In the howling storm:

Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy:
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

#time

ASKING FOR ROSES by Robert Frost

A house that lacks, seemingly, mistress and master,
With doors that none but the wind ever closes,
Its floor all littered with glass and with plaster;
It stands in a garden of old-fashioned roses.

I pass by that way in the gloaming with Mary;
'I wonder,' I say, 'who the owner of those is.'
'Oh, no one you know,' she answers me airy,
'But one we must ask if we want any roses.'

So we must join hands in the dew coming coldly
There in the hush of the wood that reposes,
And turn and go up to the open door boldly,
And knock to the echoes as beggars for roses.

'Pray, are you within there, Mistress Who-were-you?'
'Tis Mary that speaks and our errand discloses.
'Pray, are you within there? Bestir you, bestir you!
'Tis summer again; there's two come for roses.

'A word with you, that of the singer recalling —
Old Herrick: a saying that every maid knows is
A flower unplucked is but left to the falling,
And nothing is gained by not gathering roses.'

We do not loosen our hands' intertwining
(Not caring so very much what she supposes),
There when she comes on us mistily shining
And grants us by silence the boon of her roses.

#death, #frailty, #worm

A LITTLE BUDDING ROSE by Emily Brontë

It was a little budding rose,
Round like a fairy globe,
And shyly did its leaves uncloze
Hid in their mossy robe,
But sweet was the slight and spicy smell
It breathed from its heart invisible.

The rose is blasted, withered, blighted,
Its root has felt a worm,
And like a heart beloved and slighted,
Failed, faded, shrunk its form.
Bud of beauty, bonnie flower,
I stole thee from thy natal bower.

I was the worm that withered thee,
Thy tears of dew all fell for me;
Leaf and stalk and rose are gone,
Exile earth they died upon.
Yes, that last breath of balmy scent
With alien breezes sadly blent!

#frailty, #time

SEA ROSE by Hilda Doolittle

Rose, harsh rose,
marred and with stint of petals,
meagre flower, thin,
sparse of leaf,

more precious
than a wet rose
single on a stem —
you are caught in the drift.

Stunted, with small leaf,
you are flung on the sand,
you are lifted
in the crisp sand
that drives in the wind.

Can the spice-rose
drip such acrid fragrance
hardened in a leaf?

#love

ROSES by George Eliot

You love the roses — so do I. I wish
The sky would rain down roses, as they rain
From off the shaken bush. Why will it not?
Then all the valley would be pink and white
And soft to tread on. They would fall as light
As feathers, smelling sweet; and it would be
Like sleeping and like waking, all at once!

#death, #bee, #love, #time

A DEAD ROSE by Elizabeth Barrett Browning

O Rose! who dares to name thee?
No longer roseate now, nor soft, nor sweet;
But pale, and hard, and dry, as stubble-wheat, —
Kept seven years in a drawer — thy titles shame thee.

The breeze that used to blow thee
Between the hedgerow thorns, and take away
An odour up the lane to last all day, —
If breathing now, — unsweetened would forego thee.

The sun that used to smite thee,
And mix his glory in thy gorgeous urn,
Till beam appeared to bloom, and flower to burn, —
If shining now, — with not a hue would light thee.

The dew that used to wet thee,
And, white first, grow incarnadined, because
It lay upon thee where the crimson was, —
If dropping now, — would darken where it met thee.

The fly that lit upon thee,
To stretch the tendrils of its tiny feet,
Along thy leaf's pure edges, after heat, —
If lighting now, — would coldly overrun thee.

The bee that once did suck thee,
And build thy perfumed ambers up his hive,
And swoon in thee for joy, till scarce alive, —
If passing now, — would blindly overlook thee.

The heart doth recognise thee,
Alone, alone! The heart doth smell thee sweet,
Doth view thee fair, doth judge thee most complete, —
Though seeing now those changes that disguise thee.

Yes, and the heart doth owe thee
More love, dead rose! than to such roses bold
As Julia wears at dances, smiling cold! —
Lie still upon this heart — which breaks below thee!

#bee, #death, #love, #thorn, #time

WOMEN AND ROSES by Robert Browning

I.

I dream of a red-rose tree.
And which of its roses three
Is the dearest rose to me?

II.

Round and round, like a dance of snow
In a dazzling drift, as its guardians, go
Floating the women faded for ages,
Sculptured in stone, on the poet's pages.
Then follow women fresh and gay,
Living and loving and loved to-day.
Last, in the rear, flee the multitude of maidens,
Beauties yet unborn. And all, to one cadence,
They circle their rose on my rose tree.

III.

Dear rose, thy term is reached,
Thy leaf hangs loose and bleached:
Bees pass it unimpeached.

IV.

Stay then, stoop, since I cannot climb,
You, great shapes of the antique time!
How shall I fix you, fire you, freeze you,

Break my heart at your feet to please you?
Oh, to possess and be possessed!
Hearts that beat 'neath each pallid breast!
Once but of love, the poesy, the passion,
Drink but once and die! — In vain, the same fashion,
They circle their rose on my rose tree.

V.

Dear rose, thy joy's undimmed,
Thy cup is ruby-rimmed,
Thy cup's heart nectar-brimmed.

VI.

Deep, as drops from a statue's plinth
The bee sucked in by the hyacinth,
So will I bury me while burning,
Quench like him at a plunge my yearning,
Eyes in your eyes, lips on your lips!
Fold me fast where the cincture slips,
Prison all my soul in eternities of pleasure,
Girdle me for once! But no — the old measure,
They circle their rose on my rose tree.

VII.

Dear rose without a thorn,
Thy bud's the babe unborn:
First streak of a new morn.

VIII.

Wings, lend wings for the cold, the clear!
What is far conquers what is near.
Roses will bloom nor want beholders,
Sprung from the dust where our flesh moulders.
What shall arrive with the cycle's change?
A novel grace and a beauty strange.
I will make an Eve, be the artist that began her,
Shaped her to his mind! — Alas! in like manner
They circle their rose on my rose tree.

#bee, #death, #frailty, #love, #time

NOBODY KNOWS THIS LITTLE ROSE by Emily Dickinson

Nobody knows this little Rose —
It might a pilgrim be
Did I not take it from the ways
And lift it up to thee.
Only a Bee will miss it —
Only a Butterfly,
Hastening from far journey —
On its breast to lie —
Only a Bird will wonder —
Only a Breeze will sigh —
Ah Little Rose — how easy
For such as thee to die!

#love, #sun, #worship

SUN-WORSHIP by James Russell Lowell

If I were the rose at your window,
Happiest rose of its crew,
Every blossom I bore would bend inward,
They'd know where the sunshine grew.

#autumn, #death, #frailty, #love, #thorn #time, #winter

THE YEAR OF THE ROSE by Algernon Charles Swinburne

From the depths of the green garden-closes
Where the summer in darkness dozes
Till autumn pluck from his hand
An hour-glass that holds not a sand;
From the maze that a flower-belt encloses
To the stones and sea-grass on the strand
How red was the reign of the roses
Over the rose-crowned land!

The year of the rose is brief;
From the first blade blown to the sheaf,
From the thin green leaf to the gold,
It has time to be sweet and grow old,
To triumph and leave not a leaf
For witness in winter's sight
How lovers once in the light
Would mix their breath with its breath,
And its spirit was quenched not of night,
As love is subdued not of death.

In the red-rose land not a mile
Of the meadows from stile to stile,
Of the valleys from stream to stream,
But the air was a long sweet dream
And the earth was a sweet wide smile

Red-mouthed of a goddess, returned
From the sea which had borne her and burned,
That with one swift smile of her mouth
Looked full on the north as it yearned,
And the north was more than the south.

For the north, when winter was long,
In his heart had made him a song,
And clothed it with wings of desire,
And shod it with shoon as of fire,
To carry the tale of his wrong
To the south-west wind by the sea,
That none might bear it but he
To the ear of the goddess unknown
Who waits till her time shall be
To take the world for a throne.

In the earth beneath, and above
In the heaven where her name is love,
She warms with light from her eyes
The seasons of life as they rise,
And her eyes are as eyes of a dove,
But the wings that lift her and bear
As an eagle's, and all her hair
As fire by the wind's breath curled,
And her passage is song through the air,
And her presence is spring through the world.

So turned she northward and came,
And the white-thorn land was aflame
With the fires that were shed from her feet,
That the north, by her love made sweet,
Should be called by a rose-red name;
And a murmur was heard as of doves,
And a music beginning of loves
In the light that the roses made,
Such light as the music loves,
The music of man with maid.

But the days drop one upon one,
And a chill soft wind is begun
In the heart of the rose-red maze
That weeps for the roseleaf days
And the reign of the rose undone
That ruled so long in the light,
And by spirit, and not by sight,
Through the darkness thrilled with its breath,
Still ruled in the viewless night,
As love might rule over death.

The time of lovers is brief;
From the fair first joy to the grief
That tells when love is grown old,
From the warm wild kiss to the cold,
From the red to the white-rose leaf,
They have but a season to seem
As rose-leaves lost on a stream

That part not and pass not apart
As a spirit from dream to dream,
As a sorrow from heart to heart.

From the bloom and the gloom that encloses
The death-bed of Love where he dozes
Till a relic be left not of sand
To the hour-glass that breaks in his hand;
From the change in the grey garden-closes
To the last stray grass of the strand,
A rain and ruin of roses
Over the red-rose land.

#royalty, #spring, #summer, #time

SONG OF THE ROSE by Edith Nesbit

The lilac-time is over,
Laburnum's day is past,
The red may-blossoms cover
The white ones, fallen too fast.
And guelder-roses hang like snow,
Where purple flag-flowers grow.

And still the tulip lingers,
The wall-flower's red like blood
The ivy spreads pale fingers,
The rose is in the bud.
Good-bye, sweet lilac, and sweet may!
The Rose is on the way.

You were but heralds sent us —
All April's buds, and May's —
But painted missals lent us
That we might learn her praise,
Might cast down every bud that blows
Before our Queen, the Rose!

#love, #message

TO THE ROSE: SONG by Robert Herrick

Go, happy Rose, and interweave
With other flowers, bind my Love.
Tell her, too, she must not be
Longer flowing, longer free,
That so oft has fetter'd me.

Say, if she's fretful, I have bands
Of pearl and gold, to bind her hands;
Tell her, if she struggle still,
I have myrtle rods at will,
For to tame, though not to kill.

Take thou my blessing thus, and go
And tell her this,--but do not so!--
Lest a handsome anger fly
Like a lightning from her eye,
And burn thee up, as well as I!

#favourite, #love, #spring, #sun

THE FURL OF FRESH-LEAVED DOGROSE DOWN

by Gerard Manley Hopkins

The furl of fresh-leaved dogrose down
His cheeks the forth-and-flaunting sun
Had swarthed about with lion-brown
Before the Spring was done.

His locks like all a ravel-rope's-end,
With hempen strands in spray—
Fallow, foam-fallow, hanks—fall'n off their ranks,
Swung down at a disarray.

Or like a juicy and jostling shock
Of bluebells sheaved in May
Or wind-long fleeces on the flock
A day off shearing day.

Then over his turnèd temples—here—
Was a rose, or, failing that,
Rough-Robin or five-lipped campion clear
For a beauty-bow to his hat,
And the sunlight sidled, like dewdrops, like dandled diamonds
Through the sieve of the straw of the plait.

#death, #favourite, #love, #winter

BLUE ROSES by Rudyard Kipling

Roses red and roses white
Plucked I for my love's delight.
She would none of all my posies —
Bade me gather her blue roses.

Half the world I wandered through,
Seeking where such flowers grew.
Half the world unto my quest
Answered me with laugh and jest.

Home I came at wintertide,
But my silly love had died
Seeking with her latest breath
Roses from the arms of Death.

It may be beyond the grave
She shall find what she would have.
Mine was but an idle quest —
Roses white and red are best!

#death, #perfume, #summer, #time, #work

LONDON ROSES by Willa Cather

'Rowses, Rowses! Penny a bunch!' they tell you —
Slattern girls in Trafalgar, eager to sell you.
Roses, roses, red in the Kensington sun,
Holland Road, High Street, Bayswater, see you and smell you —
Roses of London town, red till the summer is done.

Roses, roses, locust and lilac, perfuming
West End, East End, wondrously budding and blooming
Out of the black earth, rubbed in a million hands,
Foot-trod, sweat-sour over and under, entombing
Highways of darkness, deep gutted with iron bands.

'Rowses, rowses! Penny a bunch!' they tell you,
Ruddy blooms of corruption, see you and smell you,
Born of stale earth, fallowed with squalor and tears —
North shire, south shire, none are like these, I tell you,
Roses of London perfumed with a thousand years.

#favourite, #innocence, #work

LONDON TYPES: FLOWER-GIRL by William Ernest Henley

There's never a delicate nurseling of the year
But our huge London hails it, and delights
To wear it on her breast or at her ear,
Her days to colour and make sweet her nights.
Crocus and daffodil and violet,
Pink, primrose, valley-lily, close-carnation,
Red rose and white rose, wall-flower, mignonette,
The daisies all-these be her recreation,
Her gaudies these! And forth from Drury Lane,
Trapesing in any of her whirl of weathers,
Her flower-girls foot it, honest and hoarse and vain,
All boot and little shawl and wilted feathers:
Of populous corners right advantage taking,
And, where they squat, endlessly posy-making.

#love, #worship

TO HAFIZ by Thomas Bailey Aldrich

Though gifts like thine the fates gave not to me,
One thing, O Hafiz, we both hold in fee—
Nay, it holds us; for when the June wind blows
We both are slaves and lovers to the rose.
In vain the pale Circassian lily shows
Her face at her green lattice, and in vain
The violet beckons, with unveil'd face—
The bosom's white, the lip's light purple stain,
These touch our liking, yet no passion stir.
But when the rose comes, Hafiz—in that place
Where she stands smiling, we kneel down to her!

#death, #garden, #love

FROM 'THE DIVAN OF HAFIZ' translated by Gertrude Bell

II.

The bird of gardens sang unto the rose,
New blown in the clear dawn: "Bow down thy head!
As fair as thou within this garden close,
Many have bloomed and died." She laughed and said:
"That I am born to fade grieves not my heart;
But never was it a true lover's part
To vex with bitter words his love's repose."

#death, #love, #perfume, #thorn

SONNEY LIV by William Shakespeare

O! how much more doth beauty beauteous seem
By that sweet ornament which truth doth give.
The rose looks fair, but fairer we it deem
For that sweet odour, which doth in it live.
The canker blooms have full as deep a dye
As the perfumed tincture of the roses,
Hang on such thorns, and play as wantonly
When summer's breath their masked buds discloses:
But, for their virtue only is their show,
They live unwoo'd, and unrespected fade;
Die to themselves. Sweet roses do not so;
Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odours made:
And so of you, beauteous and lovely youth,
When that shall vade, my verse distills your truth.

#death, #innocence, #perfume, #spring, #sun, #thorn, #time

ODE XXXVIII by Anacreon

While we invoke the wreathed spring,
Resplendent rose! to thee we'll sing;
Resplendent rose, the flower of flowers,
Whose breath perfumes Olympus' bowers;
Whose virgin blush of chasten'd dye,
Enchants so much our mortal eye.
When pleasure's bloomy season glows,
The Graces love to twine the rose;
The rose is warm Dione's bliss,
And flushes like Dione's kiss!
Oft has the poet's magic tongue
The rose's fair luxuriance sung;
And long the Muses, heavenly maids,
Have rear'd it in their tuneful shades.
When, at the early glance of morn,
It sleeps upon the glittering thorn,
'Tis sweet to dare the tangled fence,
To cull the timid flowret thence,
And wipe with tender hand away
The tear that on its blushes lay!
'Tis sweet to hold the infant stems,
Yet dropping with Aurora's gems,

And fresh inhale the spicy sighs
That from the weeping buds arise.
When revel reigns, when mirth is high,

And Bacchus beams in every eye,
Our rosy fillets scent exhale,
And fill with balm the fainting gale!
Oh! there is nought in nature bright,
Where roses do not shed their light!
When morning paints the orient skies,
Her fingers burn with roseate dyes;
The nymphs display the rose's charms,
It mantles o'er their graceful arms;
Through Cytherea's form it glows,
And mingles with the living snows.
The rose distils a healing balm,
The beating pulse of pain to calm;
Preserves the cold inurned clay,
And mocks the vestige of decay:
And when at length, in pale decline,
Its florid beauties fade and pine,
Sweet as in youth, its balmy breath
Diffuses odour e'en in death!
Oh! whence could such a plant have sprung?
Attend—for thus the tale is sung.

#favourite, #summer, #sun, #time

IN A KENTISH ROSE GARDEN by Mathilde Blind

Beside a Dial in the leafy close,
Where every bush was burning with the rose,
With million roses falling flake by flake
Upon the lawn in fading summer snows:
I read the Persian Poet's rhyme of old,
Each thought a ruby in a ring of gold?
Old thoughts so young, that, after all these years,
They're writ on every rose-leaf yet unrolled.
You may not know the secret tongue aright
The Sunbeams on their rosy tablets write;
Only a poet may perchance translate
Those ruby-tinted hieroglyphs of light.

#death, #innocence, #time

TO THE VIRGINS, TO MAKE MUCH OF TIME

by **Robert Herrick**

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying:
And this same flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
The higher he's a-getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he 's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And while ye may, go marry:
For having lost but once your prime,
You may for ever tarry.

#death, #time

GIVE ME MY ROSES NOW by Thomas F. Healey

Don't strew me with roses after I'm dead.
When Death claims the light of my brow,
No flowers of life will cheer me: instead
You may give me my roses now!

#garden, #loneliness, #love, #sleep, #time

THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER by Thomas Moore

'Tis the last rose of summer,
Left blooming alone;
All her lovely companions
Are faded and gone;
No flower of her kindred,
No rosebud is nigh,
To reflect back her blushes,
Or give sigh for sigh.

I'll not leave thee, thou lone one!
To pine on the stem;
Since the lovely are sleeping,
Go, sleep thou with them.
Thus kindly I scatter,
Thy leaves o'er the bed,
Where thy mates of the garden
Lie scentless and dead.

So soon may I follow,
When friendships decay,
And from Love's shining circle
The gems drop away.
When true hearts lie withered,
And fond ones are flown,
Oh! who would inhabit
This bleak world alone?

#favourite, #love, #message, #moon, #perfume, #royalty, #time
FROM 'MAUD: A MONODRAMA' by Alfred Lord Tennyson

Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, Night, has flown,
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone;
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the roses blown.
For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of Love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
To faint in his light, and to die.

All night have the roses heard
The flute, violin, bassoon;
All night has the casement jessamine stirr'd
To the dancers dancing in tune;
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
And a hush with the setting moon.

I said to the lily, 'There is but one
With whom she has heart to be gay.
When will the dancers leave her alone?
She is weary of dance and play.'
Now half to the setting moon are gone,
And half to the rising day;

Low on the sand and loud on the stone
The last wheel echoes away.

I said to the rose, 'The brief night goes
In babble and revel and wine.
O young lord-lover, what sighs are those
For one that will never be thine?
But mine, but mine,' so I sware to the rose,
'For ever and ever, mine.'

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,
As the music clash'd in the hall;
And long by the garden lake I stood,
For I heard your rivulet fall
From the lake to the meadow and on to the wood,
Our wood, that is dearer than all;

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet
That whenever a March-wind sighs
He sets the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes,
To the woody hollows in which we meet
And the valleys of Paradise.

The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree;
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake,
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,

Knowing your promise to me;
The lilies and roses were all awake,
They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one;
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls.
To the flowers, and be their sun.

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear;
She is coming, my life, my fate;
The red rose cries, 'She is near, she is near;'
And the white rose weeps, 'She is late;'
The larkspur listens, 'I hear, I hear;'
And the lily whispers, 'I wait.'

She is coming, my own, my sweet;
Were it ever so airy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthy bed;
My dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead;
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red.

#death, #love, #thorn

NOT MEAGRE, LATENT BOUGHS ALONE

by Walt Whitman

Not meagre, latent boughs alone, O songs! (scaly and bare, like
eagles' talons,
But haply for some sunny day (who knows?) some future spring,
some summer—bursting forth,
To verdant leaves, or sheltering shade—to nourishing fruit,
Apples and grapes—the stalwart limbs of trees emerging—the fresh,
free, open air,
And love and faith, like scented roses blooming.

#innocence, #love, #spring

ARDOUR AND MEMORY by Dante Gabriel Rossetti

The cuckoo-throb, the heartbeat of the Spring;
The rosebud's blush that leaves it as it grows
Into the full-eyed fair unblushing rose;
The summer clouds that visit every wing
With fires of sunrise and of sunseting;
The furtive flickering streams to light re-born
'Mid airs new-fledged and valorous lusts of morn,
While all the daughters of the daybreak sing:—
These ardour loves, and memory: and when flown
All joys, and through dark forest-boughs in flight
The wind swoops onward brandishing the light,
Even yet the rose-tree's verdure left alone
Will flush all ruddy though the rose be gone;
With ditties and with dirges infinite.

#death, #love, #royalty, #time

THE SPELL OF THE ROSE by Thomas Hardy

'I mean to build a hall anon,
And shape two turrets there,
And a broad newelled stair,
And a cool well for crystal water;
Yes; I will build a hall anon,
Plant roses love shall feed upon,
And apple trees and pear.'

He set to build the manor-hall,
And shaped the turrets there,
And the broad newelled stair,
And the cool well for crystal water;
He built for me that manor-hall,
And planted many trees withal,
But no rose anywhere.

And as he planted never a rose
That bears the flower of love,
Though other flower's thrive
A frost-wind moved our souls to sever
Since he had planted never a rose;
And misconceits raised horrid shows,
And agonies came thereof.

'I'll mend these miseries,' then said I,
And so, at dead of night,
I went and, screened from sight,
That nought should keep our souls in severance,
I set a rose-bush. 'This,' said I,
'May end divisions dire and wry,
And long-drawn days of blight.'

But I was called from earth — yea, called
Before my rose-bush grew;
And would that now I knew
What feels he of the tree I planted,
And whether, after I was called
To be a ghost, he, as of old,
Gave me his heart anew!

Perhaps now blooms that queen of trees
I set but saw not grow,
And he, beside its glow —
Eyes couched of the mis-vision that blurred me —
Ay, there beside that queen of trees
He sees me as I was, though sees
Too late to tell me so!

#summer

FROM 'THE FAERIE QUEENE', BOOK III, CANTO VI
by Edmund Spenser

vi

But wondrously they were begot, and bred
Through influence of th'heavens fruitfull ray,
As it in antique bookes is mentioned.
It was upon a Sommers shynie day,
When Titan faire his beames did display,
In a fresh fountaine, farre from all mens vew,
She bath'd her brest, the boyling heat t'allay;
She bath'd with roses red, and violets blew,
And all the sweetest flowres, that in the forrest grew.

#favourite, #garden, #sun, #love, #time

NO ROSE THAT IN A GARDEN EVER GREW

by **Edna St. Vincent Millay**

No rose that in a garden ever grew,
In Homer's or in Omar's or in mine,
Though buried under centuries of fine
Dead dust of roses, shut from sun and dew
Forever, and forever lost from view,
But must again in fragrance rich as wine
The grey aisles of the air incarnadine
When the old summers surge into a new.
Thus when I swear, 'I love with all my heart,'
'Tis with the heart of Lilith that I swear,
'Tis with the love of Lesbia and Lucrece;
And thus as well my love must lose some part
Of what it is, had Helen been less fair,
Or perished young, or stayed at home in Greece.

#friendship, #garden, #love, #message, #perfume, #royalty, #time

TO A FRIEND WHO SENT ME SOME ROSES

by **John Keats**

As late I rambled in the happy fields,
What time the skylark shakes the tremulous dew
From his lush clover covert;—when anew
Adventurous knights take up their dinted shields;
I saw the sweetest flower wild nature yields,
A fresh-blown musk-rose; 'twas the first that threw
Its sweets upon the summer: graceful it grew
As is the wand that Queen Titania wields.
And, as I feasted on its fragrancy,
I thought the garden-rose it far excelled;
But when, O Wells! thy roses came to me,
My sense with their deliciousness was spelled:
Soft voices had they, that with tender plea
Whispered of peace, and truth, and friendliness unquelled.

#favourite, #love, #time

WHERE BE THE ROSES GONE by Sir Philip Sidney

Where be those roses gone, which sweeten'd so our eyes?
Where those red cheeks, which oft with fair increase did frame
The height of honor in the kindly badge of shame?
Who hath the crimson weeds stol'n from my morning skies?

How did the color fade of those vermilion dyes
Which Nature self did make, and self engrain'd the same?
I would know by what right this paleness overcame
That hue, whose force my heart still unto thraldom ties.

Galen's adoptive sons, who by a beaten way
Their judgments hackney on, the fault of sickness lay,
But feeling proof makes me say they mistake it furre:

It is but Love, which makes his paper perfect white
To write therein more fresh the story of delight,
While Beauty's reddest ink Venus for him doth stir.

#love

THE ROSE OF FLORA by William Makepeace Thackeray

On Brady's tower there grows a flower,
It is the loveliest flower that blows, —
At Castle Brady there lives a lady,
(And how I love her no one knows);
Her name is Nora, and the goddess Flora
Presents her with this blooming rose.

'O Lady Nora,' says the goddess Flora,
'I've many a rich and bright parterre;
In Brady's towers there's seven more flowers,
But you're the fairest lady there:
Not all the county, nor Ireland's bounty,
Can projuice a treasure that's half so fair!'

What cheek is redder? sure roses fed her!
Her hair is maregolds, and her eye of blew.
Beneath her eyelid, is like the vi'let,
That darkly glistens with gentle jew!
The lily's nature is not surely whiter
Than Nora's neck is, — and her arrums too.

'Come, gentle Nora,' says the goddess Flora,
'My dearest creature, take my advice,
There is a poet, full well you know it,
Who spends his lifetime in heavy sighs, —
Young Redmond Barry, 'tis him you'll marry,
If rhyme and raisin you'd choose likewise.'

#bee, #garden, #innocence, #love, #perfume

TWO ROSES by Ella Wheeler Wilcox

A humble wild-rose, pink and slender,
Was plucked and placed in a bright bouquet,
Beside a Jacqueminot's royal splendour,
And both in my lady's boudoir lay.

Said the haughty bud, in a tone of scorning,
'I wonder why you are called a rose?
Your leaves will fade in a single morning;
No blood of mine in your pale cheek glows.

'Your course green stalk shows dust of the highway,
You have no depths of fragrant bloom;
And what could you learn in a rustic byway
To fit you to lie in my lady's room?

'If called to adorn her warm, white bosom,
What have you to offer for such a place,
Beside my fragrant and splendid blossom,
Ripe with colour and rich with grace?

Said the sweet wild-rose, 'Despite your dower
Of finer breeding and deeper hue,
Despite your beauty, fair, high-bred flower,
It is I who should lie on her breast, not you.

'For small account is your hot-house glory
Beside the knowledge that came to me
When I heard by the wayside love's old story
And felt the kiss of the amorous bee.'

#love, #thorn

FROM 'DON JUAN', CANTO SIX by Lord Byron

LXXXVII.

With the first ray, or rather grey of morn,
Gulbeyaz rose from restlessness; and pale
As Passion rises, with its bosom worn,
Arrayed herself with mantle, gem, and veil.
The Nightingale that sings with the deep thorn,
Which fable places in her breast of wail,
Is lighter far of heart and voice than those
Whose headlong passions form their proper woes.

#love, #thorn

A SONG OF LOVE by Sidney Lanier

'Hey, rose, just born
Twin to a thorn;
Was't so with you, O Love and Scorn?

'Sweet eyes that smiled,
Now wet and wild;
O Eye and Tear — mother and child.

'Well: Love and Pain
Be kinsfolk twain:
Yet would, Oh would I could love again.'

#love, #royalty

SONG OF THE ROSE by Sappho

If Zeus chose us a King of the flowers in his mirth,
He would call to the rose, and would royally crown it;
For the rose, ho, the rose! is the grace of the earth,
Is the light of the plants that are growing upon it!
For the rose, ho, the rose! is the eye of the flowers,
Is the blush of the meadows that feel themselves fair,
Is the lightning of beauty that strikes through the bowers
On pale lovers that sit in the glow unaware.
Ho, the rose breathes of love! ho, the rose lifts the cup
To the red lips of Cypris invoked for a guest!
Ho, the rose having curled its sweet leaves for the world
Takes delight in the motion its petals keep up,
As they laugh to the wind as it laughs from the west.

#innocence, #love, #perfume, #spring, #sun, #winter

THE ROSE UPON MY BALCONY

by William Makepeace Thackeray

The rose upon my balcony the morning air perfuming,
Was leafless all the winter time and pining for the spring;
You ask me why her breath is sweet, and why her cheek is
 blooming,
It is because the sun is out and birds begin to sing.

The nightingale, whose melody is through the greenwood ringing,
Was silent when the boughs were bare and winds were blowing
 keen:
And if, Mamma, you ask of me the reason of his singing,
It is because the sun is out and all the leaves are green.

Thus each performs his part, Mamma; the birds have found their
 voices,
The blowing rose a flush, Mamma, her bonny cheek to dye;
And there's sunshine in my heart, Mamma, which wakens and
 rejoices,
And so I sing and blush, Mamma, and that's the reason why.

#autumn, #bee, #garden, #love, #royalty, #sleep, #summer, #time
THE ROSE by James Whitcomb Riley

It tossed its head at the wooing breeze;
And the sun, like a bashful swain,
Beamed on it through the waving trees
With a passion all in vain, —
For my rose laughed in a crimson glee,
And hid in the leaves in wait for me.

The honey-bee came there to sing
His love through the languid hours,
And vaunt of his hives, as a proud old king
Might boast of his palace-towers:
But my rose bowed in a mockery,
And hid in the leaves in wait for me.

The humming-bird, like a courtier gay,
Dipped down with a dalliant song,
And twanged his wings through the roundelay
Of love the whole day long:
Yet my rose turned from his minstrelsy
And hid in the leaves in wait for me.

The firefly came in the twilight dim
My red, red rose to woo—
Till quenched was the flame of love in him,
And the light of his lantern too,
As my rose wept with dewdrops three
And hid in the leaves in wait for me.

And I said: I will cull my own sweet rose—
Some day I will claim as mine
The priceless worth of the flower that knows
No change, but a bloom divine—
The bloom of a fadeless constancy
That hides in the leaves in wait for me!

But time passed by in a strange disguise,
And I marked it not, but lay
In a lazy dream, with drowsy eyes,
Till the summer slipped away,
And a chill wind sang in a minor key:
'Where is the rose that waits for thee?'

.....

I dream to-day, o'er a purple stain
Of bloom on a withered stalk,
Pelted down by the autumn rain
In the dust of the garden-walk,
That an Angel-rose in the world to be
Will hide in the leaves in wait for me.

#garden, #love, #royalty, #time

THE ROSE by Samuel Taylor Coleridge

As late each flower that sweetest blows
I pluck'd, the Garden's pride!
Within the petals of a Rose
A sleeping Love I 'spied.

Around his brows a beamy wreath
Of many a lucent hue;
All purple glow'd his cheek, beneath,
Inebriate with the dew.

I softly seiz'd th' unguarded Power,
Nor scar'd his balmy rest:
And plac'd him, cag'd within the flower,
On spotless Sara's breast.

But when unweeting of the guile
Awoke the pris'ner sweet,
He struggled to escape awhile
And stamp'd his faery feet.

Ah! soon the soul entrancing sight
Subdued th' impatient boy!
He gaz'd! he thrill'd with deep delight!
Then clapp'd his wings for joy.

'And O!' he cried — 'Of magic kind
What charms this Throne endear!
Some other Love let Venus find
I'll fix my empire here.'

TO LIVE MERRILY, AND TO TRUST TO GOOD VERSES
by Robert Herrick

Now is the time for mirth;
Nor cheek or tongue be dumb;
For with the flowery earth
The golden pomp is come.

The golden pomp is come;
For now each tree does wear,
Made of her pap and gum,
Rich beads of amber here.

Now reigns the Rose, and now
Th' Arabian dew besmears
My uncontrolled brow,
And my retorted hairs.

Homer, this health to thee!
In sack of such a kind,
That it would make thee see,
Though thou wert ne'er so blind

Next, Virgil I'll call forth,
To pledge this second health
In wine, whose each cup's worth
An Indian commonwealth.

A goblet next I'll drink
To Ovid; and suppose
Made he the pledge, he'd think
The world had all one nose.

Then this immense cup
Of aromatic wine,
Catullus! I quaff up
To that terse muse of thine.

Wild I am now with heat:
O Bacchus! cool thy rays;
Or frantic I shall eat
Thy Thyrses, and bite the Bays!

Round, round, the roof does run;
And being ravish'd thus,
Come, I will drink a tun
To my Propertius.

Now, to Tibullus next,
This flood I drink to thee;
--But stay, I see a text,
That this presents to me.

Behold! Tibullus lies
Here burnt, whose small return
Of ashes scarce suffice
To fill a little urn.

Trust to good verses then;
They only will aspire,
When pyramids, as men,
Are lost i' th' funeral fire.

And when all bodies meet
In Lethe to be drown'd;
Then only numbers sweet
With endless life are crown'd.

#garden, #innocence, #loneliness, #love, #time, #winter

WINTER ROSES by John Greenleaf Whittier

My garden roses long ago
Have perished from the leaf-strewn walks;
Their pale, fair sisters smile no more
Upon the sweet-brier stalks.

Gone with the flower-time of my life,
Spring's violets, summer's blooming pride,
And Nature's winter and my own
Stand, flowerless, side by side.

So might I yesterday have sung;
To-day, in bleak December's noon,
Come sweetest fragrance, shapes, and hues,
The rosy wealth of June!

Bless the young bands that culled the gift,
And bless the hearts that prompted it;
If undeserved it comes, at least
It seems not all unfit.

Of old my Quaker ancestors
Had gifts of forty stripes save one;
To-day as many roses crown
The gray head of their son.

And with them, to my fancy's eye,
The fresh-faced givers smiling come,
And nine and thirty happy girls
Make glad a lonely room.

They bring the atmosphere of youth;
The light and warmth of long ago
Are in my heart, and on my cheek
The airs of morning blow.

O buds of girlhood, yet unblown,
And fairer than the gift ye chose,
For you may years like leaves unfold
The heart of Sharon's rose.

#favourite, #love, #summer, #sun, #time, #winter, #worm

O GATHER ME THE ROSE by William Ernest Henley

O gather me the rose, the rose,
While yet in flower we find it,
For summer smiles, but summer goes,
And winter waits behind it.

For with the dream foregone, foregone,
The deed foreborn forever,
The worm Regret will canker on,
And time will turn him never.

So were it well to love, my love,
And cheat of any laughter
The fate beneath us, and above,
The dark before and after.

The myrtle and the rose, the rose,
The sunshine and the swallow,
The dream that comes, the wish that goes
The memories that follow!

#death, #favourite, #spring, #time

VIRTUE by George Herbert

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright
The bridal of the earth and sky:
The dew shall weep thy fall tonight,
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue, angry and brave,
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eyes:
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie:
My music shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber, never gives;
But though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives.

#autumn, #love, #summer, #time

THE ROSE AND THE FERN by Oliver Wendell Holmes

Lady, life's sweetest lesson wouldst thou learn,
Come thou with me to Love's enchanted bower
High overhead the trellised roses burn;
Beneath thy feet behold the feathery fern, —
A leaf without a flower.

What though the rose leaves fall? They still are sweet,
And have been lovely in their beauteous prime,
While the bare frond seems ever to repeat,
'For us no bud, no blossom, wakes to greet
The joyous flowering time!'

Heed thou the lesson. Life has leaves to tread
And flowers to cherish; summer round thee glows;
Wait not till autumn's fading robes are shed,
But while its petals still are burning red
Gather life's full-blown rose!

#love, #moon, #royalty #work

TWO RED ROSES ACROSS THE MOON by William Morris

There was a lady lived in a hall,
Large of eyes and slim and tall;
And ever she sang from noon to noon,
Two red roses across the moon.

There was a knight came riding by
In early spring, when the roads were dry;
And he heard that lady sing at the noon,
Two red roses across the moon.

Yet none the more he stopped at all,
But he rode a-gallop past the hall;
And left that lady singing at noon,
Two red roses across the moon.

Because, forsooth, the battle was set,
And the scarlet and gold had got to be met,
He rode on the spur till the next warm noon;
Two red roses across the moon.

But the battle was scattered from hill to hill,
From the windmill to the watermill;
And he said to himself, as it neared the noon,
Two red roses across the moon.

You scarce could see for the scarlet and blue
A golden helm or a golden shoe;

So he cried, as the fight grew thick at the noon,
Two red roses across the moon.

Verily then the gold bore through
The huddled spears of the scarlet and blue;
And they cried, as they cut them down at the noon,
Two red roses across the moon.

I trow he stopped when he rode again
By the hall, though draggled sore with the rain;
And his lips were pinched to kiss at the noon
Two red roses across the moon.

Under the may she stooped to the crown,
All was gold, there was nothing of brown,
And the horns blew up in the hall at noon,
Two red roses across the moon.

#death, #love, #sun, #time

DEAD ROSES by Eugene Field

He placed a rose in my nut-brown hair—
A deep red rose with a fragrant heart
And said: 'We'll set this day apart,
So sunny, so wondrous fair.'

His face was full of a happy light,
His voice was tender and low and sweet,
The daisies and the violets grew at our feet—
Alas, for the coming of night!

The rose is black and withered and dead!
'Tis hid in a tiny box away;
The nut-brown hair is turning to gray,
And the light of the day is fled!

The light of the beautiful day is fled,
Hush'd is the voice so sweet and low--
And I—ah, me! I loved him so—
And the daisies grow over his head!

#death, #moon, #spring

THE ROSE OF MIDNIGHT by Vachel Lindsay

The moon is now an opening flower,
The sky a cliff of blue.
The moon is now a silver rose;
Her pollen is the dew.

Her pollen is the mist that swings
Across her face of dreams:
Her pollen is the April rain,
Filling the April streams.

Her pollen is eternal life,
Endless ambrosial foam.
It feeds the swarming stars and fills
Their hearts with honeycomb.

The earth is but a passion-flower
With blood upon his crown.
And what shall fill his failing veins
And lift his head, bowed down?

This cup of peace, this silver rose
Bending with fairy breath
Shall lift that passion-flower, the earth
A million times from Death!

#favourite, #love, #time, #winter

PETIT, THE POET by Edgar Lee Masters

Seeds in a dry pod, tick, tick, tick,
Tick, tick, tick, like mites in a quarrel—
Faint iambics that the full breeze wakens—
But the pine tree makes a symphony thereof.
Triolets, villanelles, rondels, rondeaus,
Ballades by the score with the same old thought:
The snows and the roses of yesterday are vanished;
And what is love but a rose that fades?
Life all around me here in the village:
Tragedy, comedy, valor and truth,
Courage, constancy, heroism, failure—
All in the loom, and oh what patterns!
Woodlands, meadows, streams and rivers—
Blind to all of it all my life long.
Triolets, villanelles, rondels, rondeaus,
Seeds in a dry pod, tick, tick, tick,
Tick, tick, tick, what little iambics,
While Homer and Whitman roared in the pines?

#favourite, #love, #moon, #sun, #winter

THE EVENING SKY John Freeman

Rose-bosom'd and rose-limb'd
With eyes of dazzling bright
Shakes Venus mid the twined boughs of the night;
Rose-limb'd, soft-stepping
From low bough to bough,
Shaking the wide-hung starry fruitage — dimmed
Its bloom of snow
By that sole planetary glow.

Venus, avers the astronomer,
Not thus idly dancing goes
Flushing the eternal orchard with wild rose.
She through ether burns
Outpacing planetary earth,
And ere two years triumphantly returns,
And again wave-like swelling flows,
And again her flashing apparition comes and goes.

This we have not seen,
No heavenly courses set,
No flight unpausing through a void serene:
But when eve clears,
Arises Venus as she first uprose
Stepping the shaken boughs among,
And in her bosom glows
The warm light hidden in sunny snows.

She shakes the clustered stars
Lightly, as she goes
Amid the unseen branches of the night,
Rose-limb'd, rose-bosom'd bright.

She leaps: they shake and pale; she glows —
And who but knows
How the rejoiced heart aches
When Venus all his starry vision shakes;

When through his mind
Tossing with random airs of an unearthly wind,
Rose-bosom'd, rose-limb'd,
The mistress of his starry vision arises,
And the boughs glittering sway
And the stars pale away,
And the enlarging heaven glows
As Venus light-foot mid the twined branches goes.

#death, #love, #message, #shyness, #time

GO, LOVELY ROSE by Edmund Waller

Go, lovely Rose!
Tell her, that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young,
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung
In deserts, where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired:
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die! that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee:
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair!

#love, #moon, #winter

TO CONSTANTIA by Percy Bysshe Shelley

1.

The rose that drinks the fountain dew
In the pleasant air of noon,
Grows pale and blue with altered hue—
In the gaze of the nightly moon;
For the planet of frost, so cold and bright, —
Makes it wan with her borrowed light.

2.

Such is my heart—roses are fair,
And that at best a withered blossom;
But thy false care did idly wear
Its withered leaves in a faithless bosom; —
And fed with love, like air and dew,
Its growth—

#death, #love

ASHES OF ROSES by Elaine Goodale Eastman

Soft on the sunset sky
Bright daylight closes,
Leaving, when light doth die,
Pale hues that mingling lie,—
Ashes of roses.

When love's warm sun is set,
Love's brightness closes;
Eyes with hot tears are wet,
In hearts there linger yet
Ashes of roses.

#garden, #love

THE SHADOW ROSE by Robert Cameron Rogers

A noisette on my garden path
An ever-swaying shadow throws;
But if I pluck it strolling by,
I pluck the shadow with the rose.
Just near enough my heart you stood
To shadow it, — but was it fair
In him, who plucked and bore you off,
To leave your shadow lingering there?

#death, #love, #summer

HAS SUMMER COME WITHOUT THE ROSE?

by Arthur O'Shaughnessy

Has summer come without the rose,
Or left the bird behind?
Is the blue changed above thee,
O world! or am I blind?
Will you change every flower that grows,
Or only change this spot,
Where she who said, I love thee,
Now says, I love thee not?
The skies seemed true above thee,
The rose true on the tree;
The bird seemed true the summer through,
But all proved false to me.
World, is there one good thing in you,
Life, love, or death—or what?
Since lips that sang, I love thee,
Have said, I love thee not?
I think the sun's kiss will scarce fall
Into one flower's gold cup;
I think the bird will miss me,
And give the summer up.
O sweet place, desolate in tall
Wild grass, have you forgot
How her lips loved to kiss me,
Now that they kiss me not?
Be false or fair above me;

Come back with any face,
Summer! —do I care what you do?
You cannot change one place, —
The grass, the leaves, the earth, the dew,
The grave I make the spot, —
Here, where she used to love me,
Here, where she loves me not.

#death, #love, #worm

THE TERM OF DEATH by Sarah Morgan Bryan Piatt

Between the falling leaf and rose-bud's breath;
The bird's forsaken nest and her new song
(And this is all the time there is for Death);
The worm and butterfly—it is not long!

THE PAINTER ON SILK by Amy Lowell

There was a man
Who made his living
By painting roses
Upon silk.

He sat in an upper chamber
And painted,
And the noises of the street
Meant nothing to him.

When he heard bugles, and fifes, and drums,
He thought of red, and yellow, and white roses
Bursting in the sunshine,
And smiled as he worked.

He thought only of roses,
And silk.
When he could get no more silk
He stopped painting
And only thought
Of roses.

The day the conquerors
Entered the city,
The old man
Lay dying.

He heard the bugles and drums,
And wished he could paint the roses
Bursting into sound.

#love, #message

WHERE ROSES WOULD NOT DARE TO DO
by Emily Dickinson

Where Roses would not dare to go,
What Heart would risk the way —
And so I send my Crimson Scouts
To sound the Enemy —

#innocence, #love

TO LUCASTA, THE ROSE by Richard Lovelace

I.

Sweet serene skye-like Flower,
Haste to adorn her Bower:
From thy long cloudy bed,
Shoot forth thy damaske head.

II.

New-startled blush of Flora!
The griefe of pale Aurora,
Who will contest no more;
Haste, haste, to strowe her floore.

III.

Vermilion Ball that's given
From lip to lip in Heaven;
Love's Couches cover-led:
Haste, haste, to make her bed.

IV.

Dear Offspring of pleas'd Venus,
And Jollie, plumpe Silenus;
Haste, haste, to decke the Haire
Of th' only, sweetly Faire.

V.

See! Rosie is her Bower,
Her floore is all this Flower;
Her Bed a Rosie nest
By a Bed of Roses prest.

VI.

But early as she dresses,
Why fly you her bright Tresses?
Ah! I have found I feare;
Because her Cheekes are neere.

#love, #spring, #time

UPON ROSES by Robert Herrick

Under a lawn, than skies more clear,
Some ruffled Roses nestling were,
And snugging there, they seem'd to lie
As in a flowery nunnery;
They blush'd, and look'd more fresh than flowers
Quickened of late by pearly showers;
And all, because they were possest
But of the heat of Julia's breast,
Which, as a warm and moisten'd spring,
Gave them their ever-flourishing.

#garden, #love, #thorn

IN THE ROSE GARDEN by Edith Nesbit

Red roses bright, pink roses and white
That bud and blossom and fall;
The very sight of my heart's delight
Is more than worth them all!
Is worth far more than the whole sweet store
That ever a garden grew —
She plucked the best to die at her breast,
But it laughed and it bloomed anew!

The red rose lay at her lips to-day,
And flushed with the joy thereof;
She said a word that the white rose heard,
And the white rose paled with love.
But the west wind blows, and my lady goes,
And she leaves the world forlorn;
And every rose that the garden grows,
Might just as well be a thorn!

#love, #thorn

LE PANNEAU by Oscar Wilde

Under the rose-tree's dancing shade
There stands a little ivory girl,
Pulling the leaves of pink and pearl
With pale green nails of polished jade.

The red leaves fall upon the mould,
The white leaves flutter, one by one,
Down to a blue bowl where the sun,
Like a great dragon, writhes in gold.

The white leaves float upon the air,
The red leaves flutter idly down,
Some fall upon her yellow gown,
And some upon her raven hair.

She takes an amber lute and sings,
And as she sings a silver crane
Begins his scarlet neck to strain,
And flap his burnished metal wings.

She takes a lute of amber bright,
And from the thicket where he lies
Her lover, with his almond eyes,
Watches her movements in delight.

And now she gives a cry of fear,
And tiny tears begin to start:
A thorn has wounded with its dart
The pink-veined sea-shell of her ear.

And now she laughs a merry note:
There has fallen a petal of the rose
Just where the yellow satin shows
The blue-veined flower of her throat.

With pale green nails of polished jade,
Pulling the leaves of pink and pearl,
There stands a little ivory girl
Under the rose-tree's dancing shade.

#friendship, #love, #spring, #summer, #winter

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP by Emily Brontë

Love is like the wild rose-briar,
Friendship like the holly-tree —
The holly is dark when the rose-briar blooms
But which will bloom most constantly?

The wild rose-briar is sweet in spring,
Its summer blossoms scent the air;
Yet wait till winter comes again
And who will call the wild-briar fair?

Then scorn the silly rose-wreath now
And deck thee with the holly's sheen,
That when December blights thy brow
He still may leave thy garland green.

#autumn, #time

THE PETALS TREMBLE by Matsuo Basho

The petals tremble
on the yellow mountain rose —
roar of the rapids

#autumn, #love, #thorn, #time

FROM 'FIRST LOVE' by John Freeman

O but what grace if I could but forget you!
You have made league with all familiar things —
The thrush that still, evening and morning, sings,
The aspen leaves that sigh
"My dear!" with your true voice when I pass by....
O, and that too-long-dying flush of tender sky
That minds me, and with sense too grave for tears,
Of those forever dead too-blissful years.

Yet 'twere a miracle could I forget you,
Since even dead things, once sensible of you,
Yield up your ghost; as all the garden through
Murmurs the rose, "'Twas she
Shook in her palm the dew that shone in me;"
And on the stairs your recent footstep echoingly
Sounds yet again, and each dark doorway speaks
Of you toward whom my sharpened longing seeks.

O that I could forget or not regret you!
Could I but see you as I have seen a fair
Child under apple-burdened boughs that bear
Morn's autumn beauty, and
Seeing her saw all heaven at my hand,
And all day long that happy child before me stand....
Not thus I see you, but as one drowning sees
Home, friends — and loves his very enemies!

#bee, #love, #time

THE ROSE DID CAPER ON HER CHEEK
by Emily Dickinson

The Rose did caper on her cheek —
Her Bodice rose and fell —
Her pretty speech — like drunken men —
Did stagger pitiful —

Her fingers fumbled at her work —
Her needle would not go —
What ailed so smart a little Maid —
It puzzled me to know —

Till opposite — I spied a cheek
That bore another Rose —
Just opposite — Another speech
That like the Drunkard goes —

A Vest that like her Bodice, danced —
To the immortal tune —
Till those two troubled — little Clocks
Ticked softly into one.

#favourite, #innocence, #love

LOVE-DOUBT by Archibald Lampman

Yearning upon the faint rose-curves that flit
About her child-sweet mouth and innocent cheek,
And in her eyes watching with eyes all meek
The light and shadow of laughter, I would sit
Mute, knowing our two souls might never knit;
As if a pale proud lily-flower should seek
The love of some red rose, but could not speak
One word of her blithe tongue to tell of it.
For oh, my Love was sunny-lipped and stirred
With all swift light and sound and gloom not long
Retained; I, with dreams weighed, that ever heard
Sad burdens echoing through the loudest throng
She, the wild song of some May-merry bird;
I, but the listening maker of a song.

#love, #thorn

THE ROSE by Christina Rossetti

The lily has a smooth stalk,
Will never hurt your hand;
But the rose upon her brier
Is lady of the land.

There's sweetness in an apple tree,
And profit in the corn;
But lady of all beauty
Is a rose upon a thorn.

When with moss and honey
She tips her bending brier,
And half unfolds her glowing heart,
She sets the world on fire.

#autumn, #favourite, #love, #perfume, #thorn, #time

ROSE AND ROOF-TREE by George Parsons Lathrop

O wayward rose, why dost thou wreathe so high,
Wasting thyself in sweet-breath'd ecstasy?

'The pulses of the wind my life uplift,
And through my sprays I feel the sunlight sift;

'And all my fibres, in a quick consent
Entwined, aspire to fill their heavenward bent.

'I feel the shaking of the far-off sea,
And all things growing blend their life with me:

'When men and women on me look, there glows
Within my veins a life not of the rose.

'Then let me grow, until I touch the sky,
And let me grow and grow until I die!'

So, every year, the sweet rose shooteth higher,
And scales the roof upon its wings of fire,

And pricks the air, in lovely discontent,
With thorns that question still of its intent.

But when it reached the roof-tree, there it clung,
Nor ever farther up its blossoms flung.

O wayward rose, why hast thou ceased to climb?
Hast thou forgot the ardor of thy prime?

'O hearken!'—thus the rose-spray, listening,—
'With what weird music sweet these full hearts ring!

'What mazy ripples of deep, eddy sound,
Rise, touch the roof-tree old, and drift around,

'Bearing aloft the burden musical
Of joys and griefs from human hearts that fall!

'Green stem and fair, flush'd circle I will lay
Along the roof, and listen here alway;

'For rose and tree, and every leafy growth
That toward the sky unfolds with spiry blowth,

'No purpose hath save this, to breathe a grace
O'er men, and in men's hearts to seek a place.

'Therefore, O poet, thou who gav'st to me
The homage of thy humble sympathy,

'No longer vest thy verse in rose-leaves frail:—
Let the heart's voice loud through thy pæan wail!'

* * * * *

Lo, at my feet the wind of autumn throws
A hundred turbulent blossoms of the rose,

Full of the voices of the sea and grove
And air, and full of hidden, murmured love,

And warm with passion through the roof-tree sent;
Dew-drenched with tears; — all in one wild gush spent!

#love, #spring, #time

MAY-ROSE (FOR A BIRTHDAY: MAY 20)

by George Parsons Lathrop

On this day to life she came —
May-Rose, my May-Rose!
With scented breeze, with flowered flame,
She touched the earth and took her name
Of May, Rose.

Here, to-day, she grows and flowers —
May-Rose, my May-Rose.
All my life with light she dowers,
And colors all the coming hours
With May, Rose!

#love, #time, #thorn

LOVE'S ROSE by Percy Bysshe Shelley

1.

Hopes, that swell in youthful breasts,
Live not through the waste of time!
Love's rose a host of thorns invests;
Cold, ungenial is the clime,
Where its honours blow.
Youth says, 'The purple flowers are mine,'
Which die the while they glow.

2.

Dear the boon to Fancy given,
Retracted whilst it's granted:
Sweet the rose which lives in Heaven,
Although on earth 'tis planted,
Where its honours blow,
While by earth's slaves the leaves are riven
Which die the while they glow.

3.

Age cannot Love destroy,
But perfidy can blast the flower,
Even when in most unwary hour
It blooms in Fancy's bower.
Age cannot Love destroy,
But perfidy can rend the shrine
In which its vermeil splendours shine.

ROSE-MORALS by Sidney Lanier

I. — Red.

Would that my songs might be
What roses make by day and night —
Distillments of my clod of misery
Into delight.

Soul, could'st thou bare thy breast
As yon red rose, and dare the day,
All clean, and large, and calm with velvet rest?
Say yea — say yea!

Ah, dear my Rose, good-bye;
The wind is up; so; drift away.
That songs from me as leaves from thee may fly,
I strive, I pray.

II. — White.

Soul, get thee to the heart
Of yonder tuberose: hide thee there —
There breathe the meditations of thine art
Suffused with prayer.

Of spirit grave yet light,
How fervent fragrances arise
Pure-born from these most rich and yet most white
Virginites!

Mulched with unsavory death,
Grow, Soul! unto such white estate,
That virginal-prayerful art shall be thy breath,
Thy work, thy fate.

#death, #innocence, #loneliness, #love, #moon, #work

THE ROSE: A BALLAD by James Russell Lowell

I
In his tower sat the poet
Gazing on the roaring sea,
'Take this rose,' he sighed, 'and throw it
Where there's none that loveth me.
On the rock the billow bursteth
And sinks back into the seas,
But in vain my spirit thirsteth
So to burst and be at ease.
Take, O sea! the tender blossom
That hath lain against my breast;
On thy black and angry bosom
It will find a surer rest.
Life is vain, and love is hollow,
Ugly death stands there behind,
Hate and scorn and hunger follow
Him that toileth for his kind.'
Forth into the night he hurled it,
And with bitter smile did mark
How the surly tempest whirled it
Swift into the hungry dark.
Foam and spray drive back to leeward,
And the gale, with dreary moan,
Drifts the helpless blossom seaward,
Through the breakers all alone.

II

Stands a maiden, on the morrow,
Musing by the wave-beat strand,
Half in hope and half in sorrow,
Tracing words upon the sand:
'Shall I ever then behold him
Who hath been my life so long,
Ever to this sick heart told him,
Be the spirit of his song?
Touch not, sea, the blessed letters
I have traced upon thy shore,
Spare his name whose spirit fetters
Mine with love forevermore!'
Swells the tide and overflows it,
But, with omen pure and meet,
Brings a little rose, and throws it
Humbly at the maiden's feet.
Full of bliss she takes the token,
And, upon her snowy breast,
Soothes the ruffled petals broken
With the ocean's fierce unrest.
'Love is thine, O heart! and surely
Peace shall also be thine own,
For the heart that trusteth purely
Never long can pine alone.'

III

In his tower sits the poet,
Blisses new and strange to him
Fill his heart and overflow it
With a wonder sweet and dim.
Up the beach the ocean slideth
With a whisper of delight,
And the moon in silence glideth
Through the peaceful blue of night.
Rippling o'er the poet's shoulder
Flows a maiden's golden hair,
Maiden lips, with love grown bolder,
Kiss his moon-lit forehead bare.
'Life is joy, and love is power,
Death all fetters doth unbind,
Strength and wisdom only flower
When we toil for all our kind.
Hope is truth, — the future giveth
More than present takes away,
And the soul forever liveth
Nearer God from day to day.'
Not a word the maiden uttered,
Fullest hearts are slow to speak,
But a withered rose-leaf fluttered
Down upon the poet's cheek.

#love, #perfume

XXVI I RECALL THY WHITE GOWN, CINCTURED...

by Sappho

I recall thy white gown, cinctured
With a linen belt, whereon
Violets were wrought, and scented
With strange perfumes out of Egypt.

And I know thy foot was covered
With fair Lydian broidered straps;
And the petals from a rose-tree
Fell within the marble basin.

#innocence, #love, #message

THE WHITE ROSE by John Boyle O'Reilly

The red rose whispers of passion,
And the white rose breathes of love;
O, the red rose is a falcon,
And the white rose is a dove.

But I send you a cream-white rosebud
With a flush on its petal tips;
For the love that is purest and sweetest
Has a kiss of desire on the lips.

#favourite, #frailty, #love

THE ROSE by William Cowper

The rose had been wash'd, just wash'd in a shower,
Which Mary to Anna convey'd,
The plentiful moisture incumber'd the flower,
And weigh'd down its beautiful head.

The cup was all fill'd, and the leaves were all wet,
And it seem'd to a fanciful view,
To weep for the buds it had left with regret,
On the flourishing bush where it grew.

I hastily seiz'd it, unfit as it was,
For a nosegay, so dripping and drown'd,
And swinging it rudely, too rudely, alas!
I snapp'd it, it fell to the ground.

And such, I exclaim'd, is the pitiless part
Some act by the delicate mind,
Regardless of wringing and breaking a heart
Already to sorrow resign'd.

This elegant rose, had I shaken it less,
Might have bloom'd with its owner awhile,
And the tear that is wip'd with a little address,
May be follow'd perhaps by a smile.

#love, #royalty, #spring

HYMNE VII - TO THE ROSE by Sir John Davies

E ye of the Garden, Queene of flowres,
L ove's cup wherein he nectar powres,
I ngendered first of nectar;
S weet nurse-child of the Spring's young howres,
A nd Beautie's faire character.

B est iewell that the Earth doth weare,
E uen when the braue young sunne draws neare,
T o her hot Loue pretending;
H imselfe likewise like forme doth beare,
A t rising and descending.

R ose of the Queene of Loue belou'd;
E ngland's great Kings diuinely mou'd,
G ave Roses in their banner;
I t shewed that Beautie's Rose indeed,
N ow in this age should them succeed,
A nd raigne in more sweet manner.

#friendship, #garden, #love, #royalty

**FROM THE DESCRIPTION OF A MASKE IN HONOUR OF
LORD HAYES by Thomas Campion.**

Song.

Now hath Flora rob'd her bowers
To befrend this place with flowers:
Strowe aboute, strowe aboute.
The Skye rayn'd neuer kindlyer Showers.
Flowers with Bridalls well agree,
Fresh as Brides, and Bridgromes be:
Strowe aboute, strowe aboute;
And mixe them with fit melodie.
Earth hath no Princelier flowers
Then Roses white, and Roses red,
But they must still be mingled:
And as a Rose new pluckt from Venus thorne,
So doth a Bride her Bride-groomes bed adorne.

Diuers diuers Flowers affect
For some priuate deare respect:
Strowe about, strow about,
Let euery one his owne protect;
But hees none of Floras friend
That will not the Rose commend.
Strow about, strow about;
Let Princes Princely flowers defend:
Roses, the Gardens pride,
Are flowers for loue and flowers for Kinges,

In courts desir'd and Weddings:
And as a Rose in Venus bosome worne,
So doth a Bridegroom his Brides bed adorne.

#bee, #love

ODE XXX by Anacreon

Cupid once upon a bed
Of roses laid his weary head;
Luckless urchin, not to see
Within the leaves a slumbering bee!
The bee awaked — with anger wild
The bee awaked, and stung the child.
Loud and piteous are his cries;
To Venus quick he runs, he flies!
'Oh, mother! — I am wounded through —
I die with pain — in sooth I do!
Stung by some little angry thing,
Some serpent on a tiny wing —
A bee it was — for once, I know

I heard a rustic call it so.'
Thus he spoke, and she the while
Heard him with a soothing smile;
Then said, 'My infant, if so much
Thou feel the little wild-bee's touch,
How must the heart, ah, Cupid! be,
The hapless heart that's stung by thee?'

#favourite, #garden, #perfume, #time, #work

THE SUFI IN THE CITY by Henry Newbolt

I.

When late I watched the arrows of the sleet
Against the windows of the Tavern beat,
I heard a Rose that murmured from her Pot:
'Why trudge thy fellows yonder in the Street?'

II.

'Before the phantom of False Morning dies,
Choked in the bitter Net that binds the skies,
Their feet, bemired with Yesterday, set out
For the dark alleys where To-morrow lies.

III.

'Think you, when all their petals they have bruised,
And all the fragrances of Life confused,
That Night with sweeter rest will comfort these
Than us, who still within the Garden mused?

IV.

'Think you the Gold they fight for all day long
Is worth the frugal Peace their clamours wrong?
Their Titles, and the Name they toil to build—
Will they outlast the echoes of our Song?'

V.

O Sons of Omar, what shall be the close
Seek not to know, for no man living knows:
But while within your hands the Wine is set
Drink ye—to Omar and the Dreaming Rose!

#loneliness, #perfume, #time

SONG FROM LALLA-ROOKH by Thomas Moore

There's a bower of roses by BENDEMEER's stream,
And the nightingale sings round it all the day long;
In the time of my childhood 'twas like a sweet dream,
To sit in the roses and hear the bird's song.
That bower and its music, I never forget,
But oft when alone in the bloom of the year
I think-- is the nightingale singing there yet?
Are the roses still bright by the calm BENDEMEER?

No, the roses soon withered that hung o'er the wave,
But some blossoms were gathered while freshly they shone.
And a dew was distilled from their flowers that gave
All the fragrance of summer when summer was gone.

Thus memory draws from delight ere it dies
An essence that breathes of it many a year;
Thus bright to my soul, as 'twas then to my eyes,
Is that bower on the banks of the calm BENDEMEER!

#spring, #perfume

FROM 'THE RUBAIYAT OF KHAYYAM'
translated by Edward FitzGerald

LXX.

Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before
I swore — but was I sober when I swore?
And then and then came Spring, and Rose-in-hand
My thread-bare Penitence a-pieces tore.

LXXI.

And much as Wine has play'd the Infidel,
And robb'd me of my Robe of Honour — well,
I often wonder what the Vintners buy
One half so precious as the Goods they sell.

LXXII.

Alas, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
That Youth's sweet-scented Manuscript should close!
The Nightingale that in the Branches sang,
Ah, whence, and whither flown again, who knows!

#love, #spring, #worship

ANACREON'S ODE V translated by Lord Byron

Mingle with the genial bowl
The Rose, the 'flow'ret' of the Soul,
The Rose and Grape together quaff'd,
How doubly sweet will be the draught!
With Roses crown our jovial brows,
While every cheek with Laughter glows;
While Smiles and Songs, with Wine incite,
To wing our moments with Delight.
Rose by far the fairest birth,
Which Spring and Nature cull from Earth —
Rose whose sweetest perfume given,
Breathes our thoughts from Earth to Heaven.
Rose whom the Deities above,
From Jove to Hebe, dearly love,
When Cytherea's blooming Boy,
Flies lightly through the dance of Joy,
With him the Graces then combine,
And rosy wreaths their locks entwine.
Then will I sing divinely crown'd,
With dusky leaves my temples bound —
Lyaeus! in thy bowers of pleasure,
I'll wake a wildly thrilling measure.
There will my gentle Girl and I,
Along the mazes sportive fly,
Will bend before thy potent throne —
Rose, Wine, and Beauty, all my own.

#spring, #winter

FROM 'THE INVITATION' by Anna Laetitia Barbauld

The first pale blossom of th' unripen'd year;
As FLORA'S breath, by some transforming power,
Had chang'd an icicle into a flower:
Its name, and hue, the scentless plant retains,
And winter lingers in its icy veins.
To these succeed the violet's dusky blue,
And each inferior flower of fainter hue;
Till riper months the perfect year disclose,
And FLORA cries exulting, See my Rose!

#favourite, #moon, #spring, #summer

FROM 'SUNDAY AT HAMPSTEAD' by James Thomson

XI

Day after day of this azure May
The blood of the Spring has swelled in my veins;
Night after night of broad moonlight
A mystical dream has dazzled my brains.

A seething might, a fierce delight,
The blood of the Spring is the wine of the world;
My veins run fire and thrill desire,
Every leaf of my heart's red rose uncurled.

A sad sweet calm, a tearful balm,
The light of the Moon is the trance of the world;
My brain is fraught with yearning thought,
And the rose is pale and its leaves are furled.

O speed the day, thou dear, dear May,
And hasten the night I charge thee, O June,
When the trance divine shall burn with the wine
And the red rose unfurl all its fire to the Moon!

#favourite, #spring

MEMORY by Thomas Bailey Aldrich

My mind lets go a thousand things
Like dates of wars and deaths of kings,
And yet recalls the very hour--
'T was noon by yonder village tower,
And on the last blue noon in May--
The wind came briskly up this way,
Crisping the brook beside the road;
Then, pausing here, set down its load
Of pine-scents, and shook listlessly
Two petals from that wild-rose tree.

#death, #favourite, #perfume, #spring, #summer, #thorn, #winter
MY WINTER ROSE by Alfred Austin

Why did you come when the trees were bare?
Why did you come with the wintry air?
When the faint note dies in the robin's throat,
And the gables drip and the white flakes float?

What a strange, strange season to choose to come,
When the heavens are blind and the earth is dumb:
When nought is left living to dirge the dead,
And even the snowdrop keeps its bed!

Could you not come when woods are green?
Could you not come when lambs are seen?
When the primrose laughs from its childlike sleep,
And the violets hide and the bluebells peep?

When the air as your breath is sweet, and skies
Have all but the soul of your limpid eyes,
And the year, growing confident day by day,
Weans lusty June from the breast of May?

Yet had you come then, the lark had lent
In vain his music, the thorn its scent,
In vain the woodbine budded, in vain
The rippling smile of the April rain.

Your voice would have silenced merle and thrush,
And the rose outbloomed would have blushed to blush,
And Summer, seeing you, paused, and known
That the glow of your beauty outshone its own.

So, timely you came, and well you chose,
You came when most needed, my winter rose.
From the snow I pluck you, and fondly press
Your leaves 'twixt the leaves of my leaflessness.

#bee, #death, #love

FROM CALDERON'S 'CISMA DE INGLATERRA'

translated by Thomas Medwin

1.

Hast thou not seen, officious with delight,
Move through the illumined air about the flower
The Bee, that fears to drink its purple light,
Lest danger lurk within that Rose's bower?
Hast thou not marked the moth's enamoured flight
About the Taper's flame at evening hour;
'Till kindle in that monumental fire
His sunflower wings their own funereal pyre?

2.

My heart, its wishes trembling to unfold.
Thus round the Rose and Taper hovering came,
'And Passion's slave, Distrust, in ashes cold.
Smothered awhile, but could not quench the flame,' —
Till Love, that grows by disappointment bold,
And Opportunity, had conquered Shame;
And like the Bee and Moth, in act to close,
'I burned my wings, and settled on the Rose.'

#favourite, #love

UPON THE NIPPLES OF JULIA'S BREAST
by Robert Herrick

Have ye beheld (with much delight)
A red rose peeping through a white?
Or else a cherry (double graced)
Within a lily? Centre placed?
Or ever marked the pretty beam
A strawberry shows half drowned in cream?
Or seen rich rubies blushing through
A pure smooth pearl, and orient too?
So like to this, nay all the rest,
Is each neat niplet of her breast.

FLOWERS by Thomas Hood

I will not have the mad Clytie,
Whose head is turned by the sun;
The tulip is a courtly queen,
Whom, therefore, I will shun;
The cowslip is a country wench,
The violet is a nun; —
But I will woo the dainty rose,
The queen of everyone.

The pea is but a wanton witch,
In too much haste to wed,
And clasps her rings on every hand
The wolfsbane I should dread; —
Nor will I dreary rosemary
That always mourns the dead; —
But I will woo the dainty rose,
With her cheeks of tender red.

The lily is all in white, like a saint,
And so is no mate for me —
And the daisy's cheek is tipped with blush,
She is of such low degree;
Jasmine is sweet, and has many loves,
And the broom's betrothed to the bee; —
But I will plight with the dainty rose,
For fairest of all is she.

#autumn, #bee, #garden, #perfume, #royalty, #sun

THE TRANSPLANTED ROSE TREE

by Rosanna Eleanor Leprohon

Amid the flowers of a garden glade
A lovely rose tree smiled,
And the sunbeams shone, the zephyrs played,
'Round the gardens favorite child;
And the diamond dew-drops glistening fell
On each rose's silken vest,
Whilst light winged bee and butterfly gay
On the soft leaves loved to rest.

But one morn while a sunbeam bright
Lit up its delicate bloom,
And a zephyr lightly hovered 'round,
On wings of sweet perfume,
A strong hand came, and ruthlessly
Tore up the parent tree,
And bore it off, with each fair young rose,
From butterfly, zephyr and bee.

What mattered it that an antique vase
Of Sèvres costly and old,
Was destined, henceforth, in royal State,
Its fair young form to hold?
What mattered it that the richest silks
Of the far famed Indian loom,
With priceless marbles paintings rare,
Adorned its prison room?

It even pined for the garden free,
For its pleasant friends of yore,
And brooded over the bitter thought,
It would never see them more:
And its young head daily lowlier drooped
Upon its sorrowing breast,
While it chafed against the kindly hand
That tended and caressed.

But Autumn came with angry storms,
With clouded and wintry skies —
Rudely it touched the lovely flowers,
And withered their brilliant dyes;
The sunbeam false hid its glowing glance,
Or with chilling coldness shone;
The zephyr fled to Southern climes,
And the flowers died alone

Then the rose tree looked on the gloomy earth,
On each withered tree and flower,
And it warmly blessed the loving care
Of its new, protecting power: —
No more it mourned past Summer joys,
But brightly blossomed on,
With beauty brighter than when once,
The garden's queen, it shone.

#love, #perfume

A MEANING LEARNT by Lesbia Harford

I'm not his wife. I am his paramour:
His wayside love, picked up in journeying:
Rose of the hedgerows; fragrant, till he fling
Me down beside the ditch, a drooped thing
Some country boy may stick into his hat.
A paramour has no more use than that.

#death, #moon, #time

THE TOKEN by James Russell Lowell

It is a mere wild rosebud,
Quite sallow now, and dry,
Yet there's something wondrous in it,
Some gleams of days gone by,
Dear sights and sounds that are to me
The very moons of memory,
And stir my heart's blood far below
Its short-lived waves of joy and woe.

Lips must fade and roses wither,
All sweet times be o'er;
They only smile, and, murmuring 'Thither!'
Stay with us no more:
And yet ofttimes a look or smile,
Forgotten in a kiss's while,
Years after from the dark will start,
And flash across the trembling heart.

Thou hast given me many roses,
But never one, like this,
O'erfloods both sense and spirit
With such a deep, wild bliss;
We must have instincts that glean up
Sparse drops of this life in the cup,
Whose taste shall give us all that we
Can prove of immortality.

Earth's stablest things are shadows,
And, in the life to come.
Haply some chance-saved trifle
May tell of this old home:
As now sometimes we seem to find,
In a dark crevice of the mind,
Some relic, which, long pondered o'er,
Hints faintly at a life before.

THE CAIQUE by William Makepeace Thackeray

Yonder to the kiosk, beside the creek,
Paddle the swift caique.
Thou brawny oarsman with the sunburnt cheek,
Quick! for it soothes my heart to hear the Bulbul speak.

Ferry me quickly to the Asian shores,
Swift bending to your oars.
Beneath the melancholy sycamores,
Hark! what a ravishing note the lovelorn Bulbul pours.

Behold, the boughs seem quivering with delight,
The stars themselves more bright,
As mid the waving branches out of sight
The Lover of the Rose sits singing through the night.

Under the boughs I sat and listened still,
I could not have my fill.
'How comes,' I said, 'such music to his bill?
Tell me for whom he sings so beautiful a trill.'

'Once I was dumb,' then did the Bird disclose,
'But looked upon the Rose;
And in the garden where the loved one grows,
I straightway did begin sweet music to compose.'

'O bird of song, there's one in this caique
The Rose would also seek,
So he might learn like you to love and speak.'
Then answered me the bird of dusky beak,
'The Rose, the Rose of Love blushes on Leilah's cheek.'

#innocence, #shyness, #sun

THE ROSE-BUD by William Shenstone

'See, Daphne, see!' Florelia cried,
'And learn the sad effects of pride;
Yon shelter'd rose, how safe conceal'd!
How quickly blasted when reveal'd!

'The sun with warm attractive rays
Tempt it to wanton in the blaze;
A gale succeeds from eastern skies,
And all its blushing radiance dies.

'So you, my Fair! of charms divine,
Will quit the plains, too fond to shine
Where Fame's transporting rays allure,
Though here more happy, more secure.

'The breath of some neglected maid
Shall make you sigh you left the shade;
A breath to beauty's bloom unkind,
As, to the rose, an eastern wind.'

The nymph replied! — 'You first, my Swain!
Confine your sonnets to the plain;
One envious tongue alike disarms
You of your wit, me of my charms.

'What is, unknown, the poet's skill?
Or what, unheard, the tuneful thrill?
What, unadmired, a charming mien?
Or what the rose's blush unseen?'

#love, #message

TO __, WITH A ROSE by Sidney Lanier

I asked my heart to say
Some word whose worth my love's devoir might pay
Upon my Lady's natal day.

Then said my heart to me:
'Learn from the rhyme that now shall come to thee
What fits thy Love most lovingly.'

This gift that learning shows;
For, as a rhyme unto its rhyme-twin goes,
I send a rose unto a Rose.

#favourite, #garden, #love, #summer, #sun, #winter

THE DECEMBER ROSE by Edith Nesbit

Here's a rose that blows for Chloe,
Fair as ever a rose in June was,
Now the garden's silent, snowy,
Where the burning summer noon was.

In your garden's summer glory
One poor corner, shelved and shady,
Told no rosy, radiant story,
Grew no rose to grace its lady.

What shuts sun out shuts out snow too;
From his nook your secret lover
Shows what slighted roses grow to
When the rose you chose is over.

#death, #loneliness, #love, #perfume, #sun, #winter

POT-POURRI by Helen Hay Whitney

All my dead roses! Now I lay them here,
Shrined in a beryl cup. The mysteries
Of their sweet hauntings and their witcheries
Are not more subtle than this jewel clear,
Are not more cold and dead. The winter's spear
Has fallen on their heart, a heart so wise
With lore of love. Dead roses. Beauty lies
Hid in a perfume still supremely dear.
Roses of love, time killed you one by one,
Laughed at my pains as sad I gathered up
All the fair petals banished from the sun.
Witness my triumph—how the dead loves bless
Life—from my heart, which is their beryl cup,
Crowning the winter of my loneliness.

#death, #love, #perfume

THE FUNERAL RITES OF THE ROSE by Robert Herrick

The Rose was sick, and smiling died;
And, being to be sanctified,
About the bed, there sighing stood
The sweet and flowery sisterhood.
Some hung the head, while some did bring,
To wash her, water from the spring;
Some laid her forth, while others wept,
But all a solemn fast there kept.
The holy sisters some among,
The sacred dirge and trental sung;
But ah! what sweets smelt everywhere,
As heaven had spent all perfumes there!
At last, when prayers for the dead,
And rites, were all accomplished,
They, weeping, spread a lawny loom,
And closed her up as in a tomb.

#death, #favourite, #frailty, #love

FROM THE BREAK THE NIGHTINGALE

by **William Ernest Henley**

From the brake the Nightingale
Sings exulting to the Rose;
Though he sees her waxing pale
In her passionate repose,
While she triumphs waxing frail,
Fading even while she glows;
Though he knows
How it goes —
Knows of last year's Nightingale
Dead with last year's Rose.

Wise the enamoured Nightingale,
Wise the well-beloved Rose!
Love and life shall still prevail,
Nor the silence at the close
Break the magic of the tale
In the telling, though it shows —
Who but knows
How it goes! —
Life a last year's Nightingale,
Love a last year's Rose.

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