

Benjamin Britten

How sweet the answer / Thomas Moore

How sweet the answer Echo makes
To music at night,
When, roused by lute or horn, she wakes,
And far away, o'er lawns and lakes,
Goes answering light.

Yet Love hath echoes truer far,
And far more sweet,
Than e'er beneath the moonlight's star,
Of horn or lute, or soft guitar,
The songs repeat.

'Tis when the sigh, in youth sincere,
And only then
The sigh that's breathed for one to hear,
Is by that one, that only dear,
Breathed back again!

L. V. Beethoven / Robert Burns (1759-1796)

Constancy

Tho' cruel fate should bid us part
As far's the pole and line,
Her dear idea round my heart
Would tenderly entwine.

Tho' mountains frown, and deserts howl,
And oceans roll between;
Yet, dearer than my deathless soul,
I still would love my Jean.



Down by the sally gardens / W. B. Yeats

Down by the sally gardens
My love and I did meet;
She passed the sally gardens
With little snow-white feet.
She bid me take love easy,
As the leaves grow on the tree;
But I, being young and foolish,
With her did not agree.

In a field by the river
My love and I did stand,
And on my leaning shoulder
She laid her snow-white hand.
She bid me take life easy,
As the grass grows on the weirs;
But I was young and foolish,
And now am full of tears.

Behold, my love

Behold, my love, how green the groves,
The primrose banks how fair;
The balmy gales awake the flowers,
And wave thy flowing hair.

The lav'rock shuns the palace gay,
And o'er the cottage sings;
For Nature smiles as sweet, I ween,
To Shepherds as to Kings.

Let minstrels sweep the skilfu' string,
In lordly lighted ha':
The Shepherd stops his simple reed,
Blythe in the birken shaw.

The Princely revel may survey
Our rustic dance wi' scorn;
But are their hearts as light as ours,
Beneath the milk-white thorn!

The shepherd, in the flowery glen;
In shepherd's phrase, will woo:
The courtier tells a finer tale,
But is his heart as true!

These wild-wood flowers I've pu'd, to deck
That spotless breast o' thine:
The courtiers' gems may witness love,
But, 'tis na love like mine.

