

## Ann Yearsley, "To a Friend, on Valentine's Day"

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ANN YEARSLEY

### "To a Friend, on Valentine's Day"

Tho' blooming shepherds hail this day  
With love, the subject of each lay,  
To thee the grateful themes belong.

STREPHON, I never will repine, 5  
Tho' desin'd not thy Valentine;

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Strangers to Passion's tyrant reign,  
Careless, we'll range the happier plain, 10  
Where all those calmer joys we'll prove,

Yet I'll allow a future day,  
When friendship must at last give way;  
When thou, forgetful, shalt resign 15  
The maid who wrote this Valentine.

Think not, my friend, I dream of love ,  
That with some happier maid thou'lt prove;  
Friendship alone is my design  
In this officious Valentine. 20

Yet, when that victor God shall reign,  
And conquer'd Friendship quits the plain,  
This gentle whisperer captive take,

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But if its pleadings you deny, 25  
And fain wou'd have remembrance die,

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**NOTES:**

**1** *blooming* "In the bloom of health and beauty, in the prime of youth" (*OED*).

**5** *STREPHON* A typical male name used in pastoral poetry (*Oxford Reference*); *repine* "To feel or express discontent or dissatisfaction; to grumble, complain" (*OED*).

**12** *sublime* "perfect, consummate; supreme" (*OED*); *platonic* "Of love, affection, or friendship: intimate and affectionate but not sexual; spiritual rather than physical" (*OED*).

**26** *fain* "Gladly, willingly, with pleasure" (*OED*).

**Source:** *Poems on Several Occasions* (London, 1786), p. 21. [Google Books]

*Edited by Katherine Lowden*