Michael Bruce, â??Pastoral Songâ?•

Description

MICHAEL BRUCE

â??Pastoral Songâ?•

To the tune of the Yellow-hairâ??d Laddie.

In May, when the gowans appear on the green,
And flowâ??rs in the field and the forest are seen;
Where lilies bloomâ??d bonny, and hawthorns unsprung
The yellow-hairâ??d laddie oft whistled and sung.

II.

But neither the shades, nor the sweets of the flowâ??rs,
Nor the blackbirds that warbled on blossoming bowâ??rs,
Could pleasure his eye, or his ear entertain;
For love was his pleasure, and love was his pain.

III.

The shepherd thus sung, while his flocks all around
Drew nearer and nearer, and sighâ??d to the sound:
Around, as in chains, lay the beasts of the wood,
With pity disarmed, and music subduâ??d.

IV.

Young Jessy is fair as the springâ??s early flower,
And Mary sings sweet as the bird in her bower:
But Peggy is fairer and sweeter than they;
With looks like the morning, with smiles like the day.

V.

In the flower of her youth, in the bloom of eighteen,
Of virtue the goddess, of beauty the queen:
One hour in her presence an aera excels
Amid courts, where ambition with misery dwells.

VI.

Fair to the shepherd the new-springing flowâ??rs,
When May and when morning lead on the gay hours;
But Peggy is brighter and fairer than they;
Sheâ??s fair as the morning, and lovely as May.

VII.

Sweet to the shepherd the wild woodland found,
When larks sing above him, and lambs bleat around;
But Peggy far sweeter can speak and can sing,
Than the notes of the warblers that welcome spring.

VIII.

When in beauty she moves by the brook of the plain,
You would call her a Venus new sprung from the main:
When she sings, and the woods with their echoes reply,
You would think than an angel was warbling on high.

IX.

Ye Powâ??rs that preside over mortal estate!
Whose nod ruleth Nature, whose pleasure is Fate,
O grant me, O grant me the heavâ??n of her charms!
May I live in her presence, and die in her arms!

NOTES:

Title *Laddie* A term of endearment for a young male in the eighteenth century. (*OED)*

1 *gowans A* general term for white or yellow flowers *(OED).*

3 *bonny* â??From a Yorkshire dialect meaning â??prettyâ?• *(*Grose*); hawthorn* A thorny bush or small tree *(OED).*

6 *warbled* To sing softly *(OED), bowâ??rs* Shady place within the trees *(OED).*

14 *bower* A young ladies room or cabin *(OED).*

19 *aera* Archaic form for â??eraâ?• *(OED).*

26 *lark* General term for a bird *(OED); bleat* The crying of a lamb or goat *(OED).*

30 *Venus R*oman goddess of love and beauty *(OED).*

Source: *Poems on Several Occasions* (London, 1770), pp. 14-17. [Google Books]

Edited by Christopher Lara