

Sir Thomas Wyatt

- poems -

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Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-1542)

Thomas Wyatt was born at Allington Castle in Kent, and educated at St John's College, Cambridge. While travelling as a diplomat for Henry VIII he developed his interest in Continental poetry; he was the first English poet to use the Italian forms of the sonnet and terza rima, and the French rondeau. His translation of the Penitential Psalms is based on a version by the Italian poet Pietro Aretino.

In the course of his career Wyatt served his King Henry in a variety of offices, including those of Marshal of Calais, Sheriff of Kent and Ambassador to Spain, and he was also jailed several times. His first imprisonment, in 1534, was for brawling; two years later his relationship with the disgraced Anne Boleyn resulted in a short spell in the Tower of London. Thomas and Anne had been lovers before her marriage to Henry, and his sense of loss at their separation forms the subject of the famous sonnet 'Whoso List To Hunt'.

Wyatt was restored to favour and knighted in 1537, and spent the next two years on his embassy to the court of Charles V of Spain. In 1540 however, his trusted patron Thomas Cromwell was executed, leaving him without an ally at court. The following year Wyatt was accused of treason by his enemies and imprisoned in the Tower once more. He managed to secure his own release but died of a fever soon afterwards.

A Revocation

WHAT should I say?
--Since Faith is dead,
And Truth away
From you is fled?
Should I be led
With doubleness?
Nay! nay! mistress.

I promised you,
And you promised me,
To be as true
As I would be.
But since I see
Your double heart,
Farewell my part!

Thought for to take
'Tis not my mind;
But to forsake
One so unkind;
And as I find
So will I trust.
Farewell, unjust!

Can ye say nay
But that you said
That I alway
Should be obeyed?
And--thus betrayed
Or that I wist!
Farewell, unkist!

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Abide and Abide and Better Abide

I abide and abide and better abide,
And after the old proverb, the happy day;
And ever my lady to me doth say,
"Let me alone and I will provide."
I abide and abide and tarry the tide,
And with abiding speed well ye may.
Thus do I abide I wot alway,
Nother obtaining nor yet denied.
Ay me! this long abiding
Seemeth to me, as who sayeth,
A prolonging of a dying death,
Or a refusing of a desir'd thing.
Much were it better for to be plain
Than to say "abide" and yet shall not obtain.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Alas Madam for Stealing of a Kiss

Alas, madam, for stealing of a kiss
Have I so much your mind there offended?
Have I then done so grievously amiss
That by no means it may be amended?

Then revenge you, and the next way is this:
Another kiss shall have my life ended,
For to my mouth the first my heart did suck;
The next shall clean out of my breast it pluck.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

And Wilt Thou Leave me Thus?

And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay, say nay, for shame,
To save thee from the blame
Of all my grief and grame;
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay, say nay!

And wilt thou leave me thus,
That hath loved thee so long
In wealth and woe among?
And is thy heart so strong
As for to leave me thus?
Say nay, say nay!

And wilt thou leave me thus,
That hath given thee my heart
Never for to depart,
Nother for pain nor smart;
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay, say nay!

And wilt thou leave me thus
And have no more pity
Of him that loveth thee?
Hélas, thy cruelty!
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay, say nay!

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Avising The Bright Beams

Avising the bright beams of these fair eyes
Where he is that mine oft moisteth and washeth,
The wearied mind straight from the heart departeth
For to rest in his worldly paradise
And find the sweet bitter under this guise.
What webs he hath wrought well he perceiveth
Whereby with himself on love he plaineth
That spurreth with fire and bridled with ice.
Thus is it in such extremity brought,
In frozen thought, now and now it standeth in flame.
Twixt misery and wealth, twixt earnest and game,
But few glad, and many diverse thought
With sore repentance of his hardness.
Of such a root cometh fruit fruitless.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Farewell Love and All Thy Laws Forever

Farewell love and all thy laws forever;
Thy baited hooks shall tangle me no more.
Senec and Plato call me from thy lore
To perfect wealth, my wit for to endeavour.
In blind error when I did persevere,
Thy sharp repulse, that pricketh aye so sore,
Hath taught me to set in trifles no store
And scape forth, since liberty is lever.
Therefore farewell; go trouble younger hearts
And in me claim no more authority.
With idle youth go use thy property
And thereon spend thy many brittle darts,
For hitherto though I have lost all my time,
Me lusteth no lenger rotten boughs to climb.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Farewell, Love

Farewell, Love, and all thy laws for ever:
Thy baited hooks shall tangle me no more.
Senec and Plato call me from thy lore,
To perfect wealth my wit for to endeavour.
In blind error when I did persevere,
Thy sharp repulse, that pricketh aye so sore,
Hath taught me to set in trifles no store,
And scape forth, since liberty is lever.
Therefore farewell, go trouble younger hearts,
And in me claim no more authority;
With idle youth go use thy property,
And thereon spend thy many brittle darts.
For, hitherto though I've lost my time,
Me lusteth no longer rotten boughs to climb.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Forget Not Yet

Forget not yet the tried intent
Of such a truth as I have meant
My great travail so gladly spent
Forget not yet.

Forget not yet when first began
The weary life ye knew, since when
The suit, the service, none tell can,
Forget not yet.

Forget not yet the great assays,
The cruel wrongs, the scornful ways,
The painful patience in denays
Forget not yet.

Forget not yet, forget not this,
How long ago hath been, and is,
The mind that never means amiss;
Forget not yet.

Forget not yet thine own approved,
The which so long hath thee so loved,
Whose steadfast faith yet never moved,
Forget not this.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Forget Not Yet The Tried Intent

Forget not yet the tried intent
Of such a truth as I have meant;
My great travail so gladly spent,
 Forget not yet.

Forget not yet when first began
The weary life ye know, since when
The suit, the service, none tell can;
 Forget not yet.

Forget not yet the great assays,
The cruel wrong, the scornful ways;
The painful patience in denays,
 Forget not yet.

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How long ago hath been and is
The mind that never meant amiss;
 Forget not yet.

Forget not then thine own approved,
The which so long hath thee so loved,
Whose steadfast faith yet never moved;
 Forget not this.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Forget not yet: The Lover Beseecheth his Mistress not to Forget his Steadfast Faith and True Intent

FORGET not yet the tried intent
Of such a truth as I have meant;
My great travail so gladly spent,
Forget not yet!

Forget not yet when first began
The weary life ye know, since when
The suit, the service, none tell can;
Forget not yet!

Forget not yet the great assays,
The cruel wrong, the scornful ways,
The painful patience in delays,
Forget not yet!

Forget not! O, forget not this!--
How long ago hath been, and is,
The mind that never meant amiss--
Forget not yet!

Forget not then thine own approved,
The which so long hath thee so loved,
Whose steadfast faith yet never moved:
Forget not this!

Sir Thomas Wyatt

I Abide and Abide and Better Abide

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And after the old proverb, the happy day;
And ever my lady to me doth say,
'Let me alone and I will provide.'
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And with abiding speed well ye may.
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Seemeth to me, as who sayeth,
A prolonging of a dying death,
Or a refusing of a desir'd thing.
Much were it better for to be plain
Than to say 'abide' and yet shall not obtain.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

I Find No Peace

I find no peace, and all my war is done.
I fear and hope. I burn and freeze like ice.
I fly above the wind, yet can I not arise;
And nought I have, and all the world I season.
That loseth nor locketh holdeth me in prison
And holdeth me not--yet can I scape no wise--
Nor letteth me live nor die at my device,
And yet of death it giveth me occasion.
Without eyen I see, and without tongue I plain.
I desire to perish, and yet I ask health.
I love another, and thus I hate myself.
I feed me in sorrow and laugh in all my pain;
Likewise displeaseth me both life and death,
And my delight is causer of this strife.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

In Spain

Tagus, farewell! that westward with thy streams
Turns up the grains of gold already tried
With spur and sail, for I go to seek the Thames
Gainward the sun that shewth her wealthy pride,
And to the town which Brutus sought by dreams,
Like bended moon doth lend her lusty side.
My king, my country, alone for whome I live,
Of mighty love the wings for this me give.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Is It Possible

Is it possible
That so high debate,
So sharp, so sore, and of such rate,
Should end so soon and was begun so late?
Is it possible?

Is it possible
So cruel intent,
So hasty heat and so soon spent,
From love to hate, and thence for to relent?
Is it possible?

Is it possible
That any may find
Within one heart so diverse mind,
To change or turn as weather and wind?
Is it possible?

Is it possible
To spy it in an eye
That turns as oft as chance on die,
The truth whereof can any try?
Is it possible?

It is possible
For to turn so oft,
To bring that lowest which was most aloft,
And to fall highest yet to light soft:
It is possible.

All is possible
Whoso list believe.
Trust therefore first, and after preve,
As men wed ladies by licence and leave.
All is possible.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Lux, My Fair Falcon

Lux, my fair falcon, and your fellows all,
How well pleasant it were your liberty.
Ye not forsake me that fair might ye befall,
But they that sometime liked my company,
Like lice away from dead bodies they crawl.
Lo, what a proof in light adversity.
But ye, my birds, I swear by all your bells,
Ye be my friends, and so be but few else.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Madam, Withouten Many Words

Madam, withouten many words
Once I am sure ye will or no ...
And if ye will, then leave your bourds
And use your wit and show it so,
And with a beck ye shall me call;
And if of one that burneth alway
Ye have any pity at all,
Answer him fair with & {.} or nay.
If it be &, {.} I shall be fain;
If it be nay, friends as before;
Ye shall another man obtain,
And I mine own and yours no more.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Madame, Withouten Many Words

Madame, withouten many words,
Once, I am sure, ye will, or no:
And if ye will, then leave your bourds,
And use your wit, and show it so,

And with a beck you shall me call,
And if of one that burneth alway
Ye have any pity at all,
Answer him fair with yea or nay.

If it be yea, I shall be fain;
If it be nay, friends as before;
Ye shall another man obtain,
And I mine own and yours no more.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Mine Own John Poynz

Mine own John Poynz, since ye delight to know
The cause why that homeward I me draw,
And flee the press of courts, whereso they go,
Rather than to live thrall under the awe
Of lordly looks, wrapped within my cloak,
To will and lust learning to set a law:
It is not for because I scorn or mock
The power of them, to whom fortune hath lent
Charge over us, of right, to strike the stroke.
But true it is that I have always meant
Less to esteem them than the common sort,
Of outward things that judge in their intent
Without regard what doth inward resort.
I grant sometime that of glory the fire
Doth twyche my heart. Me list not to report
Blame by honour, and honour to desire.
But how may I this honour now attain,
That cannot dye the colour black a liar?
My Poynz, I cannot from me tune to feign,
To cloak the truth for praise without desert
Of them that list all vice for to retain.
I cannot honour them that sets their part
With Venus and Bacchus all their life long;
Nor hold my peace of them although I smart.
I cannot crouch nor kneel to do so great a wrong,
To worship them, like God on earth alone,
That are as wolves these sely lambs among.
I cannot with my word complain and moan,
And suffer nought, nor smart without complaint,
Nor turn the word that from my mouth is gone.
I cannot speak and look like a saint,
Use willes for wit, and make deceit a pleasure,
And call craft counsel, for profit still to paint.
I cannot wrest the law to fill the coffer
With innocent blood to feed myself fat,
And do most hurt where most help I offer.
I am not he that can allow the state
Of him Caesar, and damn Cato to die,
That with his death did scape out of the gate
From Caesar's hands (if Livy do not lie)
And would not live where liberty was lost;
So did his heart the common weal apply.
I am not he such eloquence to boast
To make the crow singing as the swan;
Nor call the liond of cowardes beasts the most
That cannot take a mouse as the cat can;
And he that dieth for hunger of the gold
Call him Alexander; and say that Pan
Passeth Apollo in music many fold;
Praise Sir Thopias for a noble tale,
And scorn the story that the Knight told;
Praise him for counsel that is drunk of ale;

Grin when he laugheth that beareth all the sway,
 Frown when he frowneth and groan when is pale;
 On others' lust to hang both night and day:
 None of these points would ever frame in me.
 My wit is nought--I cannot learn the way.
 And much the less of things that greater be,
 That asken help of colours of device
 To join the mean with each extremity,
 With the nearest virtue to cloak alway the vice;
 And as to purpose, likewise it shall fall
 To press the virtue that it may not rise;
 As drunkenness good fellowship to call;
 The friendly foe with his double face
 Say he is gentle and courteous therewithal;
 And say that favel hath a goodly grace
 In eloquence; and cruelty to name
 Zeal of justice and change in time and place;
 And he that suffer'th offence without blame
 Call him pitiful; and him true and plain
 That railleth reckless to every man's shame.
 Say he is rude that cannot lie and feign;
 The lecher a lover; and tyranny
 To be the right of a prince's reign.
 I cannot, I; no, no, it will not be!
 This is the cause that I could never yet
 Hang on their sleeves that way, as thou mayst see,
 A chip of chance more than a pound of wit.
 This maketh me at home to hunt and to hawk,
 And in foul weather at my book to sit;
 In frost and snow then with my bow to stalk;
 No man doth mark whereso I ride or go:
 In lusty leas at liberty I walk.
 And of these news I feel nor weal nor woe,
 Save that a clog doth hang yet at my heel.
 No force for that, for it is ordered so,
 That I may leap both hedge and dyke full well.
 I am not now in France to judge the wine,
 With saffry sauce the delicates to feel;
 Nor yet in Spain, where one must him incline
 Rather than to be, outwardly to seem:
 I meddle not with wits that be so fine.
 Nor Flanders' cheer letteth not my sight to deem
 Of black and white; nor taketh my wit away
 With beastliness; they beasts do so esteem.
 Nor I am not where Christ is given in prey
 For money, poison, and treason at Rome--
 A common practice used night and day:
 But here I am in Kent and Christendom
 Among the Muses where I read and rhyme;
 Where if thou list, my Poinz, for to come,
 Thou shalt be judge how I do spend my time.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

My Galley Chargèd with Forgetfulness

My galley chargèd with forgetfulness
Through sharp seas in winter nights doth pass
'Twene rock and rock; and eke mine enemy, alas,
That is my lord, steereth with cruelty.
And every oar a thought in readiness
As though that death were light in such a case;
An endless wind doth tear the sail apace
Of forcèd sighs and trusty fearfulness.
A rain of tears, a cloud of dark disdain
Hath done the wearied cords great hindrance,
Wreathèd with error and eke with ignorance.
The stars be hid that led me to this pain,
Drownèd is reason that should me comfort,
And I remain despairing of the port.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

My Galley, Charged with Forgetfulness

My galley, chargèd with forgetfulness,
Thorough sharp seas in winter nights doth pass
'Tween rock and rock; and eke mine en'my, alas,
That is my lord, steereth with cruelty;
And every owre a thought in readiness,
As though that death were light in such a case.
An endless wind doth tear the sail apace
Of forced sighs and trusty fearfulness.
A rain of tears, a cloud of dark disdain,
Hath done the weared cords great hinderance;
Wreathèd with error and eke with ignorance.
The stars be hid that led me to this pain;
Drownèd is Reason that should me comfort,
And I remain despairing of the port.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

My Lute Awake

My lute awake! perform the last
Labour that thou and I shall waste,
And end that I have now begun;
For when this song is sung and past,
My lute be still, for I have done.

As to be heard where ear is none,
As lead to grave in marble stone,
My song may pierce her heart as soon;
Should we then sigh or sing or moan?
No, no, my lute, for I have done.

The rocks do not so cruelly
Repulse the waves continually,
As she my suit and affection;
So that I am past remedy,
Whereby my lute and I have done.

Proud of the spoil that thou hast got
Of simple hearts thorough Love's shot,
By whom, unkind, thou hast them won,
Think not he hath his bow forgot,
Although my lute and I have done.

Vengeance shall fall on thy disdain
That makest but game on earnest pain.
Think not alone under the sun
Unquit to cause thy lovers plain,
Although my lute and I have done.

Perchance thee lie wethered and old
The winter nights that are so cold,
Plaining in vain unto the moon;
Thy wishes then dare not be told;
Care then who list, for I have done.

And then may chance thee to repent
The time that thou hast lost and spent
To cause thy lovers sigh and swoon;
Then shalt thou know beauty but lent,
And wish and want as I have done.

Now cease, my lute; this is the last
Labour that thou and I shall waste,
And ended is that we begun.
Now is this song both sung and past:
My lute be still, for I have done.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

My Lute, Awake

My labor that thou and I shall waste
And end that I have now begun,
For when this song is sung and past,
My lute, be still, for I have done.

As to be heard where ear is none,
As lead to grave in marble stone,
My song may pierce her heart as soon.
Should we then sigh or sing or moan?
No, no, my lute, for I have done.

Proud of the spoil that thou hast got
Of simple hearts through love's shot,
By whom, unkind, thou hast them won,
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Care then who list, for I have done.

And then may chance thee to repent
The time that thou hast lost and spent
To cause thy lovers sigh and swoon;
Then shalt thou know beauty but lent,
And wish and want as I have done.

Now cease, my lute, this is the last
Labor that thou and I shall waste
And ended is that we begun.
Now is the song both sung and past;
My lute, be still, for I have done.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Of the Mean and Sure Estate

My mother's maids, when they did sew and spin,
They sang sometime a song of the field mouse,
That, for because her livelihood was but thin,

Would needs go seek her townish sister's house.
She thought herself endur'd too much pain;
The stormy blasts her cave so sore did souse

That when the furrows swimm'd with the rain,
She must lie cold and wet in sorry plight;
And worse than that, bare meat there did remain

To comfort her when she her house had dight;
Sometime a barley corn; sometime a bean;
For which she laboured hard both day and night

In harvest time whilst she might go and glean;
And where store was stroy'd with the flood,
Then well away! for she undone was clean.

Then was she fain to take instead of food
Sleep, if she might, her hunger to beguile.
"My sister," quod she, "hath a living good,

And hence from me she dwelleth not a mile.
In cold and storm she lieth warm and dry
In bed of down; the dirt doth not defile

Her tender foot, she laboureth not as I.
Richly she feedeth and at the richman's cost,
And for her meat she needs not crave nor cry.

By sea, by land, of the delicates, the most
Her cater seeks, and spareth for no peril.
She feedeth on boiled bacon meet and roast,

And hath thereof neither charge nor travail;
And when she list, the liquor of the grape
Doth glad her heart till that her belly swell."

And at this journey she maketh but a jape;
So forth she goeth, trusting of all this wealth
With her sister her part so for to shape,

That if she might keep herself in health,
To live a lady while her life doth last.
And to the door now is she come by stealth,

And with her foot anon she scrapeth full fast.
Th' other for fear durst not well scarce appear,
Of every noise so was the wretch aghast.

At last she askèd softly who was there.
And in her language, as well as she could,
"Peep!" quod the other. "Sister, I am here."

"Peace," quod the towny mouse, "why speakest thou so loud?"
And by the hand she took her fair and well.
"Welcome," quod she, "my sister, by the Rood!"

She feasted her, that joy it was to tell
The fare they had; they drank the wine so clear,
And as to purpose now and then it fell,

She cheerèd her with "How, sister, what cheer!"
Amids this joy befell a sorry chance,
That, well away! the stranger bought full dear

The fare she had, for, as she look askance,
Under a stool she spied two steaming eyes
In a round head with sharp ears. In France

Was never mouse so fear'd, for the unwise
Had not i-seen such a beast before,
Yet had nature taught her after her guise

To know her foe and dread him evermore.
The towny mouse fled, she know whither to go;
Th' other had no shift, but wonders sore

Feard of her life. At home she wished her tho,
And to the door, alas! as she did skip,
The Heaven it would, lo! and eke her chance was so,

At the threshold her silly foot did trip;
And ere she might recover it again,
The traitor cat had caught her by the hip,

And made her there against her will remain,
That had forgotten her poor surety and rest
For seeming wealth wherein she thought to reign.

Alas, my Poynz, how men do seek the best
And find the worst, by error as they stray!
And no marvail; when sight is so opprest.

And blind the guide; anon out of the way
Goeth guide and all in seeking quiet life.
O wretched minds, there is no gold that may

Grant that ye seek; no war, no peace, no strife.
No, no, although thy head were hooped with gold,
Sergeant with mace, hawbert, sword, nor knife,

Cannot repulse the care that follow should.
Each kind of life hath with him his disease.
Live in delight even as thy lust would,

And thou shalt find, when lust doth most thee please,
It irketh straight and by itself doth fade.
A small thing it is that may thy mind appease.

None of ye all there is that is so mad
To seek grapes upon brambles or breres;
Nor none, I trow, that hath his wit so bad

To set his hay for conies over rivers,
Ne ye set not a drag-net for an hare;
And yet the thing that most is your desire

Ye do mis-seek with more travail and care.
Make plain thine heart, that it be not knotted
With hope or dread, and see thy will be bare

From all affects, whom vice hath ever spotted.
Thyself content with that is thee assigned,
And use it well that is to thee allotted.

Then seek no more out of thyself to find
The thing that thou hast sought so long before,
For thou shalt feel it sitting in thy mind.

Mad, if ye list to continue your sore,
Let present pass and gape on time to come,
And deep yourself in travail more and more.

Henceforth, my Poynz, this shall be all and some,
These wretched fools shall have nought else of me;
But to the great God and to his high doom,

None other pain pray I for them to be,
But when the rage doth lead them from the right,
That, looking backward, Virtue they may see,

Even as she is, so goodly fair and bright;
And whilst they clasp their lusts in arms across,
Grant them, good Lord, as Thou mayst of Thy might
To fret inward for losing such a loss.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Of the Mean and Sure Estate Written to John Pains

My mother's maids, when they did sew and spin,
They sang sometime a song of the field mouse,
That, for because her livelihood was but thin,

Would needs go seek her townish sister's house.
She thought herself endured too much pain;
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She must lie cold and wet in sorry plight;
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Sleep, if she might, her hunger to beguile.
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So forth she goeth, trusting of all this wealth
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That if she might keep herself in health,
To live a lady while her life doth last.
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In a round head with sharp ears. In France

Was never mouse so fear'd, for the unwise
Had not i-seen such a beast before,
Yet had nature taught her after her guise

To know her foe and dread him evermore.
The towny mouse fled, she know whither to go;
Th' other had no shift, but wonders sore

Feard of her life. At home she wished her tho,
And to the door, alas! as she did skip,
The Heaven it would, lo! and eke her chance was so,

At the threshold her silly foot did trip;
And ere she might recover it again,
The traitor cat had caught her by the hip,

And made her there against her will remain,
That had forgotten her poor surety and rest
For seeming wealth wherein she thought to reign.

Alas, my Poynz, how men do seek the best
And find the worst, by error as they stray!
And no marvail; when sight is so opprest.

And blind the guide; anon out of the way
Goeth guide and all in seeking quiet life.
O wretched minds, there is no gold that may

Grant that ye seek; no war, no peace, no strife.
No, no, although thy head were hooped with gold,
Sergeant with mace, hawbert, sword, nor knife,

Cannot repulse the care that follow should.
Each kind of life hath with him his disease.
Live in delight even as thy lust would,

And thou shalt find, when lust doth most thee please,
It irketh straight and by itself doth fade.
A small thing it is that may thy mind appease.

None of ye all there is that is so mad
To seek grapes upon brambles or breres;
Nor none, I trow, that hath his wit so bad

To set his hay for conies over rivers,
Ne ye set not a drag-net for an hare;
And yet the thing that most is your desire

Ye do mis-seek with more travail and care.
Make plain thine heart, that it be not knotted
With hope or dread, and see thy will be bare

From all affects, whom vice hath ever spotted.
Thyself content with that is thee assigned,
And use it well that is to thee allotted.

Then seek no more out of thyself to find
The thing that thou hast sought so long before,
For thou shalt feel it sitting in thy mind.

Mad, if ye list to continue your sore,
Let present pass and gape on time to come,
And deep yourself in travail more and more.

Henceforth, my Poynz, this shall be all and some,
These wretched fools shall have nought else of me;
But to the great God and to his high doom,

None other pain pray I for them to be,
But when the rage doth lead them from the right,
That, looking backward, Virtue they may see,

Even as she is, so goodly fair and bright;
And whilst they clasp their lusts in arms across,
Grant them, good Lord, as Thou mayst of Thy might
To fret inward for losing such a loss.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Satire II: The Country Mouse and the Town Mouse

MY mother's maids, when they did sew and spin,
They sang sometime a song of the field mouse,
That for because her livelihood was but thin [livelihood]
Would needs go seek her townish sister's house.
She thought herself endured to much pain:
The stormy blasts her cave so sore did souse
That when the furrows swimm'd with the rain
She must lie cold and wet in sorry plight,
And, worse than that, bare meat there did remain
To comfort her when she her house had dight:
Sometime a barleycorn, sometime a bean,
For which she labored hard both day and night
In harvest time, whilst she might go and glean.
And when her store was 'stroyed with the flood,
Then well away, for she undone was clean.
Then was she fain to take, instead of food,
Sleep if she might, her hunger to beguile.
"My sister," quoth she, "hath a living good,
And hence from me she dwelleth not a mile.
In cold and storm she lieth warm and dry
In bed of down, and dirt doth not defile
Her tender foot, she laboreth not as I.
Richly she feedeth and at the rich man's cost,
And for her meat she needs not crave nor cry.
By sea, by land, of the delicacies the most
Her cater seeks and spareth for no peril.
She feedeth on boiled, baken meat, and roast,
And hath thereof neither charge nor travail.
And, when she list, the liquor of the grape
Doth goad her heart till that her belly swell."
And at this journey she maketh but a jape: [joke]
So forth she goeth, trusting of all this wealth
With her sister her part so far to shape
That, if she might keep herself in health,
To live a lady while her life doth last.
And to the door now is she come by stealth,
And with her foot anon she scrapeth full fast.
The other for fear durst not well scarce appear,
Of every noise so was the wretch aghast.
"Peace," quoth the town mouse, "why speakest thou so loud?"
And by the hand she took her fair and well.
"Welcome," quoth she, "my sister, by the rood."
She feasted her that joy it was to tell
The fare they had; they drank the wine so clear;
And as to purpose now and then it fell
She cheered her with: "How, sister, what cheer?"
Amids this joy there fell a sorry chance,
That, wellaway, the stranger bought full dear
The fare she had. For as she looks, askance,
Under a stool she spied two steaming eyes
In a round head with sharp ears. In France
was never mouse so feared, for though the unwise [afraid]

Had not yseen such a beast before,
 Yet had nature taught her after her guise
 To know her foe and dread him evermore.
 The town mouse fled; she knew whither to go.
 The other had no shift, but wondrous sore
 Feared of her life, at home she wished her, though.
 And to the door, alas, as she did skip
 (Th' heaven it would, lo, and eke her chance was so)
 At the threshold her silly foot did trip,
 And ere she might recover it again
 The traitor cat had caught her by the hip
 And made her there against her will remain
 That had forgotten her poor surety, and rest,
 For seeming wealth wherein she thought to reign.
 Alas, my Poynz, how men do seek the best [a friend of Wyatt]
 And find the worst, by error as they stray.
 And no marvel, when sight is so opprest
 And blind the guide. Anon out of the way
 Goeth guide and all in seeking quiet life.
 O wretched minds, there is no gold that may
 Grant that ye seek, no war, no peace, no strife,
 No, no, although thy head was hoopt with gold, [crowned]
 Sergeant with mace, haubert, sword, nor knife
 Cannot repulse the care that follow should.
 Each kind of life hath with him his disease:
 Live in delight even as thy lust would, [as you would desire]
 And thou shalt find when lust doth most thee please
 It irketh strait and by itself doth fade.
 A small thing it is that may thy mind appease.
 None of ye all there is that is so mad
 To seek grapes upon brambles or breers, [briars]
 Not none I trow that hath his wit so bad
 To set his hay for conies over rivers, [snares for rabbits]
 Ne ye set not a drag net for an hare. [nor]
 And yet the thing that most is your desire
 Ye do misseek with more travail and care.
 Make plain thine heart, that it be not notted
 With hope or dread, and see thy will be bare
 >From all effects whom vice hath ever spotted.
 Thyself content with that is thee assigned,
 And use it well that is to thee allotted,
 Then seek no more out of thyself to find
 The thing that thou hast sought so long before,
 For thou shalt find it sitting in thy mind.
 Mad, if ye list to continue your sore,
 Let present pass, and gape on time to come,
 And deep yourself in travail more and more.
 Henceforth, my Poynz, this shall be all and some:
 These wretched fools shall have nought else of me.
 But to the great God and to His high doom* [judgment]
 None other pain pray I for them to be
 But, when the rage doth lead them from the right,

That, looking backward, Virtue they may see
Even as She is, so goodly fair and bright.
And whilst they clasp their lusts in arms across
Grant them, good Lord, as Thou mayst of Thy might,
To fret inward for losing such a loss.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Since so Ye Please

Since so ye please to hear me plain,
And that ye do rejoice my smart,
Me list no lenger to remain
To such as be so overthwart.

But cursed be that cruel heart
Which hath procur'd a careless mind
For me and mine unfeigned smart,
And forceth me such faults to find.

More than too much I am assured
Of thine intent, whereto to trust;
A speedless proof I have endured,
And now I leave it to them that lust.

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Since so ye please to hear me plain,
And that ye do rejoice my smart,
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More than too much I am assured
Of thine intent, whereto to trust;
A speedless proof I have endured,
And now I leave it to them that lust.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

The Appeal: An Earnest Suit to his Unkind Mistress, not to Forsake him

AND wilt thou leave me thus!
Say nay, say nay, for shame!
--To save thee from the blame
Of all my grief and grame.
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay!

And wilt thou leave me thus,
That hath loved thee so long
In wealth and woe among:
And is thy heart so strong
As for to leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay!

And wilt thou leave me thus,
That hath given thee my heart
Never for to depart
Neither for pain nor smart:
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay!

And wilt thou leave me thus,
And have no more pitye
Of him that loveth thee?
Alas, thy cruelty!
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay!

Sir Thomas Wyatt

The Country Mouse and the Town Mouse

My mother's maids, when they did sew and spin,
They sang sometime a song of the field mouse,
That for because her livelihood was but thin
Would needs go seek her townish sister's house.
She thought herself endured to much pain:
The stormy blasts her cave so sore did souse
That when the furrows swimm'd with the rain
She must lie cold and wet in sorry plight,
And, worse than that, bare meat there did remain
To comfort her when she her house had dight:
Sometime a barleycorn, sometime a bean,
For which she labored hard both day and night
In harvest time, whilst she might go and glean.
And when her store was 'stroyed with the flood,
Then well away, for she undone was clean.
Then was she fain to take, instead of food,
Sleep if she might, her hunger to beguile.
"My sister," quoth she, "hath a living good,
And hence from me she dwelleth not a mile.
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In bed of down, and dirt doth not defile
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By sea, by land, of the delicacies the most
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The fare they had; they drank the wine so clear;
And as to purpose now and then it fell
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Amids this joy there fell a sorry chance,
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The fare she had. For as she looks, askance,
Under a stool she spied two steaming eyes
In a round head with sharp ears. In France
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 No, no, although thy head was hoopt with gold,
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Even as She is, so goodly fair and bright.
And whilst they clasp their lusts in arms across
Grant them, good Lord, as Thou mayst of Thy might,
To fret inward for losing such a loss.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

The Furious Gun

The furious gun in his raging ire,
When that the bowl is rammed in too sore
And that the flame cannot part from the fire,
Cracketh in sunder, and in the air doth roar
The shivered pieces; right so doth my desire,
Whose flame increaseth from more to more,
Which to let out I dare not look or speak;
So now hard force my heart doth all to break.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

The Heart and Service

The heart and service to you proffer'd
With right good will full honestly,
Refuse it not, since it is offer'd,
But take it to you gently.

And though it be a small present,
Yet good, consider graciously
The thought, the mind, and the intent
Of him that loves you faithfully.

It were a thing of small effect
To work my woe thus cruelly,
For my good will to be abject:
Therefore accept it lovingly.

Pain or travel, to run or ride,
I undertake it pleasantly;
Bid ye me go, and straight I glide
At your commandement humbly.

Pain or pleasure, now may you plant
Even which it please you steadfastly;
Do which you list, I shall not want
To be your servant secretly.

And since so much I do desire
To be your own assuredly,
For all my service and my hire
Reward your servant liberally.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

The Long Love

The long love that in my thought doth harbour,
And in mine heart doth keep his residence,
Into my face presseth with bold pretence,
And therein campeth, spreading his banner.
She that me learneth to love and suffer,
And wills that my trust and lust's negligence
Be reined by reason, shame, and reverence,
With his hardiness taketh displeasure.
Wherewithal, unto the heart's forest he fleeth,
Leaving his enterprise with pain and cry;
And there him hideth, and not appeareth.
What may I do when my master feareth
But in the field with him to live or die?
For good is the life ending faithfully.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

The Long Love That in My Thought Doth Harbour

The long love that in my thought doth harbour
And in mine hert doth keep his residence,
Into my face presseth with bold pretence
And therein campeth, spreading his banner.
She that me learneth to love and suffer
And will that my trust and lust's negligence
Be rayned by reason, shame, and reverence,
With his hardiness taketh displeasure.
Wherewithall unto the hert's forest he fleeth,
Leaving his enterprise with pain and cry,
And there him hideth and not appeareth.
What may I do when my master feareth
But in the field with him to live and die?
For good is the life ending faithfully.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

They Flee From Me

They flee from me that sometime did me seek
With naked foot, stalking in my chamber.
I have seen them gentle, tame, and meek,
That now are wild and do not remember
That sometime they put themself in danger
To take bread at my hand; and now they range,
Busily seeking with a continual change.

Thanked be fortune it hath been otherwise
Twenty times better; but once in special,
In thin array after a pleasant guise,
When her loose gown from her shoulders did fall,
And she me caught in her arms long and small;
Therewithall sweetly did me kiss
And softly said, 'dear heart, how like you this?'

It was no dream: I lay broad waking.
But all is turned thorough my gentleness
Into a strange fashion of forsaking;
And I have leave to go of her goodness,
And she also, to use newfangledness.
But since that I so kindly am served
I would fain know what she hath deserved.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

They Flee From Me That Sometime Did Me Seek

They flee from me that sometime did me seek,
With naked foot stalking in my chamber.
I have seen them gentle, tame, and meek
That are now wild and do not remember
That sometime they put themselves in danger
To take bread at my hand; and now they range
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And I have leave to go of her goodness,
And she also to use newfangledness.
But since that I so kindly am served,
I would fain know what she hath deserved.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

To His Lute

MY lute, awake! perform the last
Labour that thou and I shall waste,
And end that I have now begun;
For when this song is said and past,
My lute, be still, for I have done.

As to be heard where ear is none,
As lead to grave in marble stone,
My song may pierce her heart as soon:
Should we then sing, or sigh, or moan?
No, no, my lute! for I have done.

The rocks do not so cruelly
Repulse the waves continually,
As she my suit and affection;
So that I am past remedy:
Whereby my lute and I have done.

Proud of the spoil that thou hast got
Of simple hearts thorough Love's shot,
By whom, unkind, thou hast them won;
Think not he hath his bow forgot,
Although my lute and I have done.

Vengeance shall fall on thy disdain,
That makest but game of earnest pain:
Trow not alone under the sun
Unquit to cause thy lover's plain,
Although my lute and I have done.

May chance thee lie wither'd and old
The winter nights that are so cold,
Plaining in vain unto the moon:
Thy wishes then dare not be told:
Care then who list! for I have done.

And then may chance thee to repent
The time that thou has lost and spent
To cause thy lover's sigh and swoon:
Then shalt thou know beauty but lent,
And wish and want as I have done.

Now cease, my lute! this is the last
Labour that thou and I shall waste,
And ended is that we begun:
Now is this song both sung and past--
My lute, be still, for I have done.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Translation of Petrarch's Rima, Sonnet 134

I FIND no peace, and all my war is done;
I fear and hope; I burn and freeze like ice;
I fly above the wind, yet can I not arise;
And nought I have, and all the world I seize on;
That looseth nor locketh holdeth me in prison
And holdeth me not, yet can I 'scape nowise;
Nor letteth me live nor die at my device, [by my own choice]
And yet of death it giveth none occasion.
Withouten eyen, I see; and without tongue I plain; [lament]
I desire to perish, and yet I ask health;
I love another, and thus I hate myself;
I feed me in sorrow, and laugh in all my pain;
Likewise displeaseth me both death and life;
And my delight is causer of this strife.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Unstable Dream

Unstable dream, according to the place,
Be steadfast once, or else at least be true.
By tasted sweetness make me not to rue
The sudden loss of thy false feigned grace.
By good respect in such a dangerous case
Thou broughtest not her into this tossing mew
But madest my sprite live, my care to renew,
My body in tempest her succour to embrace.
The body dead, the sprite had his desire,
Painless was th'one, th'other in delight.
Why then, alas, did it not keep it right,
Returning, to leap into the fire?
And where it was at wish, it could not remain,
Such mocks of dreams they turn to deadly pain.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Vixi Puellis Nuper Idoneus...

THEY flee from me that sometime did me seek,
With naked foot stalking within my chamber:
Once have I seen them gentle, tame, and meek,
That now are wild, and do not once remember
That sometime they have put themselves in danger
To take bread at my hand; and now they range,
Busily seeking in continual change.

Thanked be fortune, it hath been otherwise
Twenty times better; but once especial--
In thin array: after a pleasant guise,
When her loose gown did from her shoulders fall,
And she me caught in her arms long and small,
And therewithal so sweetly did me kiss,
And softly said, 'Dear heart, how like you this?'

It was no dream; for I lay broad awaking:
But all is turn'd now, through my gentleness,
Into a bitter fashion of forsaking;
And I have leave to go of her goodness;
And she also to use new-fangleness.
But since that I unkindly so am served,
'How like you this?'--what hath she now deserved?

Sir Thomas Wyatt

What Needeth These Threat'ning Words

What needeth these threnning words and wasted wind?
All this cannot make me restore my prey.
To rob your good, iwis, is not my mind,
Nor causeless your fair hand did I display.
Let love be judge or else whom next we meet
That may both hear what you and I can say:
She took from me an heart, and I a glove from her.
Let us see now if th'one be worth th'other.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

What Should I Say

What should I say,
Since faith is dead,
And truth away
From you is fled?
Should I be led
With doubleness?
Nay, nay, mistress!

I promised you,
And you promised me,
To be as true
As I would be.
But since I see
Your double heart,
Farewell my part!

Though for to take
It is not my mind,
But to forsake
[One so unkind]
And as I find,
So will I trust:
Farewell, unjust!

Can ye say nay?
But you said
That I alway
Should be obeyed?
And thus betrayed
Or that I wiste--
Farewell, unkissed.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Whoso List to Hunt

Whoso list to hunt, I know where is an hind,
But as for me, *he*las! I may no more.
The vain travail hath worried me so sore,
I am of them that furthest come behind.
Yet may I by no means, my worried mind
Draw from the deer; but as she fleeth afore
Fainting I follow. I leave off therefore,
Since in a net I seek to hold the wind.
Who list her hunt, I put him out of doubt,
As well as I, may spend his time in vain;
And graven in diamonds in letters plain
There is written, her fair neck round about,
"Noli me tangere, for Caesar's I am,
And wild to hold, though I seem tame."

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Whoso List to Hunt, I Know Where is an Hind

Whoso list to hunt, I know where is an hind,
But as for me, hélas, I may no more.
The vain travail hath wearied me so sore,
I am of them that farthest cometh behind.
Yet may I by no means my wearied mind
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And graven with diamonds in letters plain
There is written, her fair neck round about:
Noli me tangere, for Caesar's I am,
And wild for to hold, though I seem tame.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

With Serving Still

With serving still
This I have won,
For my goodwill
To be undone.

And for redress
Of all my pain,
Disdainfulness
I have again.

And for reward
Of all my smart,
Lo, thus unheard,
I must depart.

Wherefore all ye
That after shall
By fortune be,
As I am, thrall,

Example take
What I have won,
Thus for her sake
To be undone.

Sir Thomas Wyatt

Ye Old Mule

Ye old mule that think yourself so fair,
Leave off with craft your beauty to repair,
For it is true, without any fable,
No man setteth more by riding in your saddle.
Too much travail so do your train appair.
Ye old mule

With false savour though you deceive th'air,
Whoso taste you shall well perceive your lair
Savoureth somewhat of a Kappurs stable.
Ye old mule

Ye must now serve to market and to fair,
All for the burden, for panniers a pair.
For since gray hairs been powdered in your sable,
The thing ye seek for, you must yourself enable
To purchase it by payment and by prayer,
Ye old mule.

Sir Thomas Wyatt