

Three Lute Songs by John Dowland (1563-1626)

Flow My Tears

If My Complaints

Come Away, Come Sweet Love

JOHN DOWLAND (1563-1626)

English lute song, written for voice and lute (a plucked-string instrument with fifteen to nineteen strings), flowered briefly late in the reign of Elizabeth I and through James I's reign with vast volumes of song books printed between 1597 and 1622. With their sensitive texts and subtle melodies, John Dowland's 87 songs are the finest examples of lute songs, and many depict the melancholy of unrequited love typical of music from the Elizabethan era. Most have a musical style and form based on dance rhythms and patterns. *Flow My Tears* mirrors a pavan, and *If My Complaints* uses the rhythms of a galliard.

Dowland converted to Roman Catholicism around 1580, which may have prevented him from landing a post as an official lutanist at Elizabeth I's Protestant court. He was employed instead at the court of Christian IV of Denmark from 1598 to 1612, when he was finally employed in London by Elizabeth I's successor, James I.

Flow My Tears

Flow my tears fall from your springs,

Exil'd for ever let me mourn:

Where night's black bird her sad infamy sings,

There let me live forlorn.

Down vain lights shine you no more,

No nights are dark enough for those

That in despair their last fortunes deplore,

Light doth but shame disclose.

Never may my woes be relieved,

Since pity is fled;

And tears,

And sighs,

And groans my weary days,

My weary days of all joys have deprived.

From the highest spire of contentment,

My fortune is thrown,

And fear,

And grief,

And pain for my deserts,

For my deserts,

Are my hopes since hope is gone.

Hark you shadows that in darkness dwell,

Learn to contemn light,

Happy, happy they that in hell

Feel not the world's despite.

If My Complaints Could Passions Move

If my complaints could passions move,

Or make Love see wherein I suffer wrong:

My passions were enough to prove,

That my despairs had govern'd me too long.

*O Love, I live and die in thee,
Thy grief in my deep sighs still speaks:
Thy wounds do freshly bleed in me,
My heart for thy unkindness breaks:*

*Yet thou dost hope when I despair,
And when I hope,
thou mak'st me hope in vain.
Thou say'st thou canst my harms repair,
yet for redress, thou let'st me still complain.*

*Can Love be rich and yet I want?
Is Love my judge,
and yet am I condemn'd?
Thou plenty hast,
yet me dost scant:*

Come Away Come Sweet Love

*Come away , come sweet love.
The golden morning breaks;
All the earth, all the air
Of love and pleasure speaks.
Teach thine arms then to embrace,
And sweet rosy lips to kiss,
And mix our souls in mutual bliss.
Eyes were made for beauty's grace,
Viewing,
Rueing love's long pain
Procur'd by beauty's rude disdain.*

*Come away , come sweet love.
The golden morning wastes,
While the sun from his sphere,
His fiery arrows casts,
Making all the shadows fly,
Playing,
Staying in he grove,*

*Thou made a god,
and yet thy pow'r contemn'd.*

*That I do live,
it is thy pow'r,
That I desire it is thy worth:
If Love doth make men's lives too sour,
Let me not love,
Nor live henceforth:*

*Die shall my hopes,
but not my faith,
That you that of my fall may hearers be.
May here despair,
which truly saith,
I was more true to Love than Love to me.*

*To entertain the stealth of love.
Thither, sweet love, let us hie,
Flying, dying in desire
Wing'd with sweet hopes and heav'nly fire.*

*Come away , come sweet love.
Do not in vain adorn,
Beauty's grace, that should rise
Like to the naked morn.
Lilies on the river's side
And fair Cyprian flow'rs new-blown,
Desire no beauties but their own.
Ornament is nurse of pride,
Pleasure,
Measure love's delight.
Haste then, sweet love, our wished flight!*