

The Passionate Shepherd to his Love

A poem by Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593), an English dramatist and poet of the Elizabethan era. It is one of the earliest examples of pastoral style of British poetry. In the poem, a shepherd invites a nymph to live with him. Shakespeare reproduces a few lines from it in the form of a song in his play *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Many poets wrote replies to Marlowe's pastoral invitation, such as Sir Walter Raleigh's *The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd*.

Come live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That valleys, groves, hills, and fields,
Woods, or steepy mountain yields.

And we will sit upon the rocks,
Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow rivers to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Fair lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivy buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me, and be my love.

The shepherds' swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my love.