

NAXOS
AudioBooks

POETRY



A Lover's Gift

From Him to Her

POETRY • PROSE
MUSIC

Read by
Michael Sheen

NA138912D

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Total time: 75:10

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1. *from Twelfth Night* William Shakespeare (1564–1616)

Act I Scene I

If music be the food of love, play on,
Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,
The appetite may sicken, and so die.
That strain again, it had a dying fall:
O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour, Enough, no more;
'Tis not so sweet now as it was before.
O spirit of love, how quick and fresh art thou,
That notwithstanding thy capacity
Receiveth as the sea, nought enters there,
Of what validity and pitch soe'er,
But falls into abatement and low price,
Even in a minute! So full of shapes is fancy,
That it alone is high fantastical.

Music: 'Lascia ch'io pianga' from Rinaldo, Handel

Takako Nishizaki/Polish National Radio SO/Breiner

8.223586

2. *from* **Romeo and Juliet** William Shakespeare

Act II Scene II

'But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!...

...It is my lady, O, it is my love.

O that she knew she were!'

Music: **Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture, Tchaikovsky**

RPO/Leaper

8.553017

3. **Sonnet** William Shakespeare

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?

Thou art more lovely and more temperate;

Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,

And summer's lease hath all too short a date:

Sometimes too hot the eye of heaven shines,

And often is his gold complexion dimm'd:

And every fair from fair sometimes declines,

By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimm'd.

But thy eternal summer shall not fade

Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;

Nor shall Death brag thou wanderest in his shade

When in eternal lines to time thou growest.

So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see

So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

Music: **Meditation** from **Thais, Massenet**

Takako Nishizaki/Jeno Jandó

8.550306

4. The Face that Launched a Thousand Ships from **Doctor Faustus**

Christopher Marlowe (1564 1593)

'Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss:
Her lips suck forth my soul, see where it flies:
And all is dross that is not Helena'.

Music: **Sarabande** from **Lady Radnor's Suite, Parry**

Capella Istropolitana/Leaper

8.550331

5. The Passionate Shepherd to his Love Christopher Marlowe

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

And we will sit upon the rocks,
And see 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
Embroider'd 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.

Music: 'Ich liebe Dich' from Zärtliche Liebe, Beethoven

Nishizaki/Polish National Radio SO/Brainer

8.223586

6. Red, Red Rose Robert Burns (1759–1796)

O my Luve's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June;
O my Luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly played in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonie lass,
So deep in luve am I;
And I will luve thee still, my Dear
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my Dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun:
I will luve thee still, my Dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only Luve!
And fare thee weel, a while!
And I will come again, my Luve,
Tho' it were ten thousand mile!

Music: **Air from *An English Suite, Parry***
Capella Istropolitana/Leaper

8.550331a

7. The Rigs O' Barley Robert Burns

'I lock' her in my fond embrace;
Her heart was beating rarely!
My blessings on that happy place
Among the rigs o' barley.'

Music: **'Ich Liebe Dich'** from ***Hjertets melodier Op.5, Grieg***
Nishizaki/Polish National Radio SO/Breiner

8.223586

8. 'Che gelida manina' from ***La Bohème, Puccini***
Jonathan Welch/Czecho-Slovak Radio SO/Breiner

8.553151

9. from *David Copperfield* Charles Dickens (1812–1870)

'I don't think I had any definite idea where Dora came from, or in what degree she was related to a higher order of being, but I am quite sure I should have scouted the notion of her being simply human, like any other lady, with indignation and contempt.'

10. from *Persuasion* Jane Austen (1775–1817)

'I have loved none but you. Unjust I may have been, weak and resentful I have been, but never inconstant. For you alone I think and plan.'

After years of undeclared love, Frederick Wentworth finally expresses his feelings in a letter to Anne Elliot

*Music: **Larghetto, Serenade for Strings Op. 20, Elgar.***

Capella Istropolitana/Leaper

8.550331

11. from Jane Eyre Charlotte Brontë (1816–1855)

‘I have for the first time found what I can truly love – I have found you.’

*Music: **Allegretto, Serenade for Strings Op. 20, Elgar.***

Capella Istropolitana/Leaper

8.550331

12. from Far From the Madding Crowd Thomas Hardy (1840–1928)

‘Such women as you a hundred men always covet

*Music: **Mondnacht from Liederkreis Op. 39, Schumann***

Nishizaki/Polish National Radio SO/Breiner

8.223586

13. Perfect Woman William Wordsworth (1770–1850)

‘She was a phantom of delight
When first she gleam’d upon my sight;
A lovely apparition, sent
To be a moment’s ornament.’

14. Love Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834)

'The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,
Had blended with the lights of eve;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve!'

Music: Claire de lune from Suite Bergamasque, Debussy
CSRSO(Bratislave)/Lenard/Clark

8.550088

15. 'E lucevan le stelle' from *Tosca*, Puccini
Giorgio Lamberti/Czecho-Slovak Radio SO/Rahbari

8.660001-2

16. He Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven William Butler Yeats (1865–1939)

Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
Of night and light and the half-light,
I would spread the cloths under your feet:
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
I have spread my dreams under your feet;
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.

17. Summer Night Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809–1892)

Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white
Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk;
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font:
The firefly wakens: waken thou with me.

Now droops the milk-white peacock like a ghost,
And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

Now lies the earth all Danae to the stars,
And all thy heart lies open unto me.

Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves
A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake:
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip
Into my bosom and be lost in me.

Music: Sonntag from Five Songs Op. 47, Brahms
Nishizaki/Polish National Radio SO/Breiner

8.223586

18. *from Confessions*

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1777)

‘Friendship, confidence, intimacy, sympathy of soul – what a relish do such things give!’

Volatile, passionate and intense, Rousseau presaged, in his writings, the Romantic age.

Music: Berceuse Op. 16, Fauré

CSRSO/Lenard/Clark

8.550088

19. **Letter** from Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821) to Josephine

‘...As for me, to love you alone, to make you happy, to do nothing which would contradict your wishes, this is my destiny and the aim of my life.’

20. **Letters** from Karl Marx (1818–1883) to his wife, Jenny

‘There are actually many females in the world, and some among them are beautiful. But where could I find again a face, whose every feature, even every wrinkle, is a reminder of the greatest and sweetest memories of my life? Even my endless pains, my irreplaceable losses I read in your sweet face.’

‘You have only to be snatched away from me even in a mere dream, and I know immediately that the moment you are absent, my love for you shows itself to be what it is, a giant, in which are crowded together all the energy of my spirit and all the character of my heart.’

A very human face to the political revolutionary.

21. My Heart's Friend Shoshone Love Song

Fair is the white star of twilight,
And the sky clearer
At the day's end;
But she is fairer, and she is dearer,
She, my heart's friend!

Fair is the white star of twilight,
And the moon roving
To the sky's end;
But she is fairer, better worth loving,
She, my heart's friend.

*Music: **Adagio, Piano Concerto in A minor Op. 16, Grieg**
Jandó/Budapest SO/Ligeti*

8.550118

22. Letter from Gustave Flaubert (1821–1880) to Louise Colet

'I have never felt for any woman so deep a devotion, so irresistible an attraction;
never has there been such complete communion.'

*Music: **Sicilienne** from **Pelléas and Mélisande, Fauré**
CSRSO/Lenard*

8.550088

23. Fidelity D.H. Lawrence (1885–1930)

Fidelity and love are two different things, like a flower and a gem.
And love, like a flower, will fade, will change into something else
or it would not be flower...

...But a gem is different. It lasts so much longer than we do
so much much much longer that it seems to last forever.

24. Letter from Rupert Brooke (1887–1915) to Katherine Cox

'But once in love with you, one has, I find – since you are uniquely you – to go
further and further, at least if one's me.'

Music: Adagio Sostenuto, Piano Concerto in C minor Op. 18, Rachmaninov

Jandó/Budapest SO/Lehel

8.550117

25. 'Au fond du temple saint' from Les Pécheurs de Perles, Bizet

Lotric/Morozov /Slovak Radio SO/Wildner

8.555037-38

26. She walks in beauty Lord George Gordon Byron (1788–1824)

She walks in beauty like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes.
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.
One shade the more, one ray the less

Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress
Or softly lightens o'er her face
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling place.

And on that cheek, and on that brow
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow.
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent.

27. As you are woman Robert Graves (1895–1985)

As you are woman, so be lovely,
As you are lovely, so be various,
Merciful as constant, constant as various,
So be mine, as I yours forever.

*Music: **Adagio assai, Piano Concerto in G major, Ravel***

Thiollier/Polish National Radio SO/Wit

8.550753

Cover picture: Fulfilment by Gustav Klimt (1862–1918)
Courtesy of Osterreichisches Galerie, Vienna/Bridgeman Art Library, London

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POETRY • PROSE • MUSIC

Read by **Michael Sheen**

'I have for the first time found what I can truly love – I have found you'

Some of the greatest poets and lovers in the English language speak of their love in this seductive and romantic collection. Here are the voices of Romeo, Robert Burns, Lord Byron and many others and the music of Puccini, Grieg, Fauré and Elgar.



Michael Sheen is one of Britain's most exciting young actors. Since leaving RADA he has played Romeo for the Royal Exchange, Manchester, appeared in the world première production of Harold Pinter's *Moonlight* and taken the title role of Peer Gynt in Ninagawa's world tour production. He has also played Jimmy Porter in Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*. His film credits include *Mary Reilly*. Sheen also reads Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, and *The Idiot*, takes

the role of Vicomte de Valmont in *Dangerous Liaisons*; performs Romeo and directs in *Romeo and Juliet*; and performs the title role of *Oedipus* by Sophocles, all on Naxos Audiobooks.

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