

Alexander Search

LITTLE BIRD

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Poet

Little bird, sing me a sweet song deep
 Of what is not to-day;
Be it not the future that yet doth sleep
In the hall where Time his hours doth keep,
 More than far away.

Sing me a song of the things thou knew'st
 And desirest e'er,
Be it a song to which but is used
The heart that has to love refused
 What is merely fair.

Bird

Young, too young hither I was brought
 From the dells and trees;
Weep with me — I remember them not
Save with a vague and a pining thought:
 Can I sing of these?

Poet

Sing, little bird, sing me that song —
 None can be more dear —
Come of the spirit that doth long
Not for the past with a sadness strong,
 But for what was never here.

Sing me, sing me that song, little bird;
I would also sing
Of sounds I remember yet never heard,
Of wishes by which my soul is stirred
Till then bliss doth sting.

Bird

To breathe that singing I have no might;
Sing it deeply thou!
I sing when the day is clear and bright
And when the moon is so much in night
That thy tears do flow.

But thou, thou sing'st in woe, in ill,
And thy voice is fit
To speak of what the wish doth fill
With pinings indescribable,
Shadows vague of it.

Poet

Ay, little bird, let us sing in all weather
A song, of to-day,
Come of the sense we feel together
That nothing that doth die and wither
Truly goes away.

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Poesia Inglesa. Fernando Pessoa. (Organização e tradução de Luísa Freire. Prefácio de Teresa Rita Lopes.) Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 1995: 158.

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