

# APOLOGIA

*Oscar Wilde*

Is it thy will that I should wax and  
wane,  
Barter my cloth of gold for hodden  
grey,  
And at thy pleasure weave that web  
of pain  
Whose brightest threads are each a  
wasted day?

Is it thy will—Love that I love so  
well—  
That my Soul's House should be a  
tortured spot  
Wherein, like evil paramours, must  
dwell  
The quenchless flame, the worm  
that dieth not?

Nay, if it be thy will I shall endure,  
And sell ambition at the common  
mart,  
And let dull failure be my vestiture,  
And sorrow dig its grave within my  
heart.

Perchance it may be better so—at  
least  
I have not made my heart a heart of  
stone,  
Nor starved my boyhood of its  
goodly feast,  
Nor walked where Beauty is a thing  
unknown.

Many a man hath done so; sought  
to fence  
In straitened bonds the soul that  
should be free,  
Trodden the dusty road of  
common sense,  
While all the forest sang of liberty,

Not marking how the spotted hawk  
in flight  
Passed on wide pinion through the  
lofty air,  
To where some steep untrodden  
mountain height  
Caught the last tresses of the Sun  
God's hair.

Or how the little flower he trod  
upon,  
The daisy, that white-feathered  
shield of gold,  
Followed with wistful eyes the  
wandering sun  
Content if once its leaves were  
aureoled.

But surely it is something to have  
been  
The best beloved for a little while,  
To have walked hand in hand with  
Love, and seen  
His purple wings flit once across  
thy smile.

Ay! though the gorgèd asp of  
passion feed  
On my boy's heart, yet have I burst  
the bars,  
Stood face to face with Beauty,  
known indeed  
The Love which moves the Sun and  
all the stars!