

Poems of
Letitia Elizabeth Landon
(L. E. L.)
in
The Amulet, 1835

compiled
by
Peter J. Bolton

Contents

The Festa of Madonna dei Fiori
.....
The Proposal



FESTA OF MADONNA DEI FIORI

Painted by T. Uwins A. R. A. Engraved by S. Sangster

THE FESTA OF MADONNA DEI FIORI.

BY L. E. L.

THEY gathered in that holy place,
A young and lovely band,
With banners wrought with sacred signs,
And flowers in each hand.

It was a summer festival
Worthy a summer sky,
That brought the fragrant and the fair
Upon that shrine to die.

Many a little foot had been
Amid the early dew,
While fresh the odour to each leaf,
Fresh colour to each hue.

And many a little brow had watched
For weeks some favourite flower,
Proud and impatient of its growth
For this auspicious hour.

And many a little heart had linked
Its deepest, dearest prayer,
And the fulfilment of its hope
With the sweet offerings there.

One bore a banner, where was wrought
The Virgin and her Son—
Her younger sister and herself
The broidery begun.

But she who held the banner now
Went on her way alone ;
No sister shared the sacred task :—
Her sister's task was done !

As yet the grass was scarcely grown
Upon that bright young head ;
As yet the tears were warm that fell
Above the early dead.

Poor child! how pale and sorrowful
She takes her silent way !
A prayer for the departed one
Is on her lips to-day.

But foremost come two fairy ones
With dark eyes filled with light,
The very roses that they bear
Can scarcely be more bright.

The youngest bears a single plant,
One that herself has nursed ;
A far exotic from the South,
The fairest and the first.

And they have tender hopes and fears
To claim the votive vow ;
And parents, for whose precious sake
Their prayers are ready now.

Blest be their lovely pilgrimage,
Although they seek a shrine
Hallowed by a believing faith
Not unto us divine!

No banners in our humbler church
Are waved, no flowers are strown ;
The sacrifice we offer up
Must in the heart be shown.

And that is much if truly given :
Our vanity and pride,
Our empty hopes, our fair deceits,
Must there be all denied.

IGNORANCE IS BLISS.

Those children, with an earnest faith,
Are offering early flowers ;
Methinks their simple truth and love
Might teach and strengthen ours.



THE PROPOSAL

Painted by H. Wyatt

Engraved by Charles Rolls

THE PROPOSAL.

BY L. E. L.

THE summer sun looks laughing through the bough
Thick with the clustering leaves ; a thousand flowers
Open their bright eyes to the fanning wind ;
Songs are upon the air—a general song,
Many in one—the linnet and the thrush
Join with the blackbird in sweet unison.
All places are now fair, but far most fair
Is a lone garden by the river's side—
A garden of the ancient times, adorned
With quaint devices ; branches cut in shapes
Of courtly fashion ; and with terraces
Where foreign plants are ranged, and greenhouse flowers :
The white camelia in soft ivory carved—
The cactus, like a shining serpent, wreathed
With a red crown of rubies—orange trees
With small gold fruits, and buds that are like snow.
On such a terrace stands the maiden here :

So fair a face must love and be beloved
By summer flowers ; each has so much of each
In either's nature. She is standing now
With eyes downcast and blue ; the violet hides
So its deep colours and its dew from noon.
The rose is on her cheek ; an unquiet bloom
That comes and goes, then settles down at last
In one rich flash of pleasure. What a smile !
A heartfelt conscious smile, scarce parts the lips
That seem as if they sighed ; the deep-drawn sigh
Of anxious happiness, which builds on hope.
A scroll is in her hand ; it bears the words
Of one who loves her—dear as his own life.
What will her answer be ? A down-cast eye,
A blush, a smile—What can their answer be ?
Yes !—only “ Yes !”