

To Althea, from Prison

By Richard Lovelace

When Love with unconfined wings

Hovers within my Gates,

And my divine Althea brings

To whisper at the Grates;

When I lie tangled in her hair,

And fettered to her eye,

The Gods that wanton in the Air,

Know no such Liberty.

When flowing Cups run swiftly round

With no allaying Thames,

Our careless heads with Roses bound,

Our hearts with Loyal Flames;

When thirsty grief in Wine we steep,

When Healths and draughts go free,

Fishes that tipple in the Deep

Know no such Liberty.

When (like committed linnets) I

With shriller throat shall sing

The sweetness, Mercy, Majesty,

And glories of my King;

When I shall voice aloud how good

He is, how Great should be,

Enlargèd Winds, that curl the Flood,

Know no such Liberty.

Stone Walls do not a Prison make,

Nor Iron bars a Cage;

Minds innocent and quiet take

That for an Hermitage.

If I have freedom in my Love,

And in my soul am free,

Angels alone that soar above,

Enjoy such Liberty.