**Follow Thy Fair Sun**

Follow thy fair sun, unhappy shadow,

Though thou be black as night

And she made all of light,

Yet follow thy fair sun unhappy shadow.

Follow her whose light thy light depriveth,

Though here thou liv’st disgraced,

And she in heaven is placed,

Yet follow her whose light the world reviveth.

Follow those pure beams whose beauty burneth,

That so have scorched thee,

As thou still black must be,

Till Her kind beams thy black to brightness turneth.

Follow her while yet her glory shineth,

There comes a luckless night,

That will dim all her light,

And this the black unhappy shade divineth.

Follow still since so thy fates ordained,

The Sun must have his shade,

Till both at once do fade,

The Sun still proved, the shadow still disdained.

—Thomas Campion

**A Lecture upon the Shadow**

Stand still, and I will read to thee

A lecture, love, in love’s philosophy.

These three hours that we have spent,

Walking here, two shadows went

Along with us, which we ourselves produc’d.

But, now the sun is just above our head,

We do those shadows tread,

And to brave clearness all things are reduc’d.

So whilst our infant loves did grow,

Disguises did, and shadows, flow

From us, and our cares; but now ’tis not so.

That love has not attain’d the high’st degree,

Which is still diligent lest others see.

Except our loves at this noon stay,

We shall new shadows make the other way.

As the first were made to blind

Others, these which come behind

Will work upon ourselves, and blind our eyes.

If our loves faint, and westwardly decline,

To me thou, falsely, thine,

And I to thee mine actions shall disguise.

The morning shadows wear away,

But these grow longer all the day;

But oh, love’s day is short, if love decay.

Love is a growing, or full constant light,

And his first minute, after noon, is night.

—John Donne

**The Shadow on the Stone**

I went by the Druid stone

That broods in the garden white and lone,

And I stopped and looked at the shifting shadows

That at some moments fall thereon

From the tree hard by with a rhythmic swing,

And they shaped in my imagining

To the shade that a well-known head and shoulders

Threw there when she was gardening.

I thought her behind my back,

Yea, her I long had learned to lack,

And I said: ‘I am sure you are standing behind me,

Though how do you get into this old track?’

And there was no sound but the fall of a leaf

As a sad response; and to keep down grief

I would not turn my head to discover

That there was nothing in my belief.

Yet I wanted to look and see

That nobody stood at the back of me;

But I thought once more: ‘Nay, I’ll not unvision

A shape which, somehow, there may be.’

So I went on softly from the glade,

And left her behind me throwing her shade,

As she were indeed an apparition—

My head unturned lest my dream should fade.

—Thomas Hardy

**Sublunary**

Mid-sentence, we remembered the eclipse,

Arguing home through our scant patch of park

Still warm with barrel wine, when none too soon

We checked the hour by glancing at the moon,

Unphased at first by that old ruined marble

Looming like a monument over the hill,

So brimmed with light it seemed about to spill,

Then, there! We watched the thin edge disappear—

The obvious stole over us like awe,

That it was our own silhouette we saw,

Slow perhaps to us moon-gazing here

(Reaching for each other's fingertips)

But sweeping like a wing across that stark

Alien surface at the speed of dark.

The crickets stirred from winter sleep to warble

Something out of time, confused and brief,

The roosting birds sang out in disbelief,

The neighborhood’s stray dogs began to bark.

And then the moon was gone, and in its place,

A dim red planet hung just out of reach,

As real as a bitter orange or ripened peach

In the penumbra of a tree. At last

We rose and strolled at a reflective pace

Past the taverna crammed with light and smoke

And people drinking, laughing at a joke,

Unaware that anything had passed

Outside in the night where we delayed

Sheltering in the shadow we had made.

—A. E. Stallings

**Ballad of a Shadow**

Take from me my voice and I shall voiceless go

to find you; take from me my face,

I’ll trek the hills invisibly,

my strength, and I shall run but keep no pace.

Even in cities, take the sense with which I reason

and I shall seek, but close it in your heart,

keep this and forget this

and this, when we’re apart,

will be the shadow game of love.

And I shall love in secret

and I shall love in crowds

and love in darkness, in the quiet

outlet of shadows, and in cities

as a ghost walking unnoticed,

and love with books, using their pages like a wind,

not reading, and with people, latticed

by words but through the lattice loving.

And when at last my love is understood,

with you I shall not love but breathe

and turn by breathing into flesh and blood.

—Alice Oswald