

## Since Love by its Very Nature

*sober pleasures that arise*  
- Mary Wollstonecraft

1

Since love by its very nature is transitory,  
inevitably succeeded either by friendship or by  
indifference (any effort to make it constant  
a search for the philosopher's stone),  
the most holy bond in society is friendship  
and virtue is available equally to both  
sexes however much one denies it,  
refusing to own up to its tyranny over the other.

2

Feasts delight the heart of man she said  
though death and disease lurk in the cup and dainty.  
So the heated imagination draws  
the picture of love from rainbows, its hand directed  
by a mind condemned in this world to prove  
its noble origin by panting after  
unattainable perfection.  
Imagination of this ingenious cast  
can give existence to insubstantial forms,  
stability to the shadowy reveries  
the mind naturally falls into when  
realities are she said found vapid:  
it can depict love with celestial charms,  
dote on the grand ideal object, imagine  
a degree of mutual affection  
which shall refine the soul and not expire  
when it has served as a scale to heaven, and make it  
absorb like sacred devotion every meaner  
affection and desire, picture lovers in each other's  
arms as in a temple, the world shut out.

3

When the loved one ceases to be her lover  
will she whose whole life was pleasing him  
have sufficient energy to look  
into herself for comfort and cultivate  
dormant faculties or isn't it  
more rational to think that though she would shrink  
from an intrigue she would yet wish to be convinced  
by the homage of gallantry that she is

cruelly neglected by her distracted lover  
and so try to please other men by exciting  
the emotions raised by new conquests,  
not to gratify her vanity  
but her heart, not coquetry but rather  
the artless impulse of nature in her and try  
in doing her best to please, to forget  
the mortifications her love and pride have suffered.