



Sweet as a flower in May

MADRIGAL
for four voices

Robert Lucas Pearsall
(1795-1856)

Robert Lucas Pearsall (1795-1856) was born at Clifton Hill, Bristol, into a wealthy Quaker family. His father was an army officer and amateur musician. He was privately educated and practiced as a barrister in Bristol. In 1825, after suffering a stroke, he took his family to live abroad. He sold the family estate in Willsbridge and, in 1842, bought the Schloss Wartensee, a ruined medieval keep near Rorschach in Switzerland and spent several years restoring it. He remained there until his death. Pearsall was an amateur composer and many of his compositions were not published until after his death. He is best remembered for his part-songs and madrigals but also wrote orchestral works, anthems, services, musical treatises, and edited a Catholic hymnal. He kept in touch with his home city of Bristol and wrote many pieces for the Bristol Madrigal Society. He also composed poetry, some of which he used for his madrigals, such as 'Why Do the Roses' and 'Why should the cuckoo's tuneful note'. The particle "de" often spelled in his name is a feature added after his death by his daughter Philippa.

Sweet as a flower in May is my heart's treasure.
See! she cometh fresh and gay to taste the spring;
Every living thing doth honour to her charms!
All that bloometh throughout nature,
Longs to deck the lovely creature;
The birds do sing,
The flowers do bring their perfume rich to greet her.
Say, have you seen her smile?
There's nothing sweeter,
She is so fair, so ponderous fair,
That earth and air
Alike are charmed to meet her.

Sweet as a flower in May

R. L. Pearsall

Allegretto ma non troppo ♩ = 84

S
Sweet as a flow'r in May _____ is my heart's treas - ure.

A
Sweet as a flow'r is my heart's treas - ure. See! See! she

T
Sweet as a flow'r is my heart's treas - ure. _____ See! she com - eth, she

B
Sweet as a flow'r is my heart's treas - ure. See! she com - eth

S
See! she com - eth fresh _____ and gay _____ To taste the spring;

A
com - eth gay, fresh and gay To taste the spring; Ev - 'ry

T
com - eth fresh and gay, fresh and gay To taste the spring; Ev - 'ry liv - ing

B
fresh _____ and gay, fresh and gay To taste _____ the spring;



Sweet as a flower in May

7

S Ev - 'ry liv - ing thing doth hon - our to her charms!

A liv - ing thing, ev - 'ry thing doth hon - our to her charms!

T thing doth hon - our to her charms! All, all that

B Ev - 'ry liv - ing thing doth hon - our to her charms!

10

S All, all that bloom-eth through - out na - ture,

A All, all that bloom - eth through - out na - ture, Longs to deck the

T bloom - eth through - out na - ture, Longs to deck the

B All, all that bloom-eth through - out na - ture, Longs to deck the love -

13

S Longs to deck the love - ly crea - ture; The birds do sing,

A love - - - ly crea - ture; The birds do

T love - ly crea - - - ture; The birds do

B - - - - ly crea - ture; The

Sweet as a flower in May

16

S The flow'rs do bring, do bring their per - fume rich to greet her,

A sing, The flow'rs do bring their per - fume rich to greet her, do

T sing, The flow'rs do bring their per - fume rich to greet her, do

B flow'rs do bring their per - fume rich to greet her, _____

fp

19

S Their rich per -

A bring Their

T bring Their

B — do bring Their rich per - fume

21

S fume to greet her.

A rich per - fume to greet

T per - fume rich to greet

B to greet her. Say,

Sweet as a flower in May

23 *cresc.*

S Say, have you seen her smile? There's noth - ing sweet - er,

A her. *cresc.* Say, have you seen her smile? There's noth - ing sweet - er, She is so

T her. *cresc.* She is so fair, so

B have you seen her smile? *cresc.* She is so fair, so

26 *f*

S She is so fair, so won - d'rous fair, That earth and air A -

A fair, so fair, so won - d'rous fair, That earth and

T won - d'rous fair, so won - d'rous fair, That earth and

B won - d'rous fair, so won - d'rous fair, That earth and air A - like

29

S like are charm'd, are charm'd to meet her.

A air A - like are charm'd, are charm'd to meet her.

T air A - like are charm'd to meet her.

B are charm'd, are charm'd to meet her.

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