

# Ballade of the Daisy

[From the French of Froissart]

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Above all flowers in fair the fragrant rose,  
To her the modest violet e'en gives place,  
The fleur-de-lys,—the marjoram sweetly blows,—  
The gentle iris tall, with slender grace;  
And all men love the simple columbine,  
Peony, lily, and the marigold,  
For every flower hath a face divine,  
But, as for me, if that the truth be told,  
Of all flowers I the daisy sweetest hold.

Whether the day be dull, or chill with snows,  
Whether the season may be fair or base,  
Ever the daisy meetly nods and grows,  
Sweetly and fair with white and crimson face;  
In seasons due doth ope and close her eyne  
The daisy sweet; she fades not nor grows old.  
And for this thing, (now thought hath long been mine,)  
That truth her gentle being doth enfold,  
Of all flowers I the daisy sweetest hold.

And now once more the daisy newly glows,  
Again young Spring hath won the year's long race;  
Upon the sward have I seen seated those  
Whose hearts a pleasant arrow pierced apace.  
Ah! may the god of love his arms entwine  
Around the twain,—so may their hearts grow bold  
With courtesy and pleasance; so, in fine,  
Weaving a wreath, my carol shall be trolled,—  
"Of all flowers I the daisy sweetest hold."