

## AURORA LEIGH

### Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Offer we walked only two  
If cousin Romney pleased to walk with me.  
We read, or talked, or quarrelled, as it chanced.  
We were not lovers, nor even friends well-matched:  
Say rather, scholars upon different tracks,  
And thinkers disagreed, he, overfull  
Of what is, and I, haply, overbold  
For what might be.

But then the thrushes sang,  
And shook my pulses and the elms' new leaves;  
At which I turned, and held my finger up,  
And bade him mark that, howsoe'er the world  
Went ill, as he related, certainly  
The thrushes still sang in it. And the word  
His brow would soften, - and he bore with me  
In melancholy patience, not unkind,  
While, breaking into voluble ecstasy,  
I flattered all the beauteous country round,  
As poet use...the skies, the clouds, the fields  
The happy violets hiding from the roads  
The primroses run down to, carrying gold;  
The tangled hedgerows, where the cows push out  
Impatient horns and tolerant churning mouths  
'Twixt dripping ash-boughs, - hedgerows all alive  
With birds and gnats and large white butterflies  
Which looks as if the May-flower had caught life  
And palpitated forth upon the wind;  
Hills, vales, woods, netted in a silver mist,  
Farms, granges, doubled up among the hills;  
And cattle grazing in the watered vales,  
And cottage-chimneys smoking from the woods,  
And cottage-gardens smelling everywhere,  
Confused with smell of orchards. 'See,' I said,  
'And see! Is God not with us on the earth?  
And shall we put Him down by aught we do?  
Who says there's nothing for the poor and vile  
Save poverty and wickedness? Behold!  
And ankle-deep in English grass I leaped  
And clapped my hands, and called all very fair.