

ERNEST DOWSON

“Yvonne of Brittany” (1896?)

In your mother's apple-orchard,
 Just a year ago, last spring:
Do you remember, Yvonne!
 The dear trees lavishing
Rain of their starry blossoms
 To make you a coronet?
Do you ever remember, Yvonne?
 As I remember yet.

In your mother's apple-orchard,
 When the world was left behind:
You were shy, so shy, Yvonne!
 But your eyes were calm and kind.
We spoke of the apple harvest,
 When the cider press is set,
And such-like trifles, Yvonne!
 That doubtless you forget.

In the still, soft Breton twilight,
 We were silent; words were few,
Till your mother came out chiding,
 For the grass was bright with dew:
But I know your heart was beating,
 Like a fluttered, frightened dove.
Do you ever remember, Yvonne?
 That first faint flush of love?

In the fulness of midsummer,
 When the apple-bloom was shed,
Oh, brave was your surrender,
 Though shy the words you said.
I was glad, so glad, Yvonne!
 To have led you home at last;
Do you ever remember, Yvonne!
 How swiftly the days passed?

In your mother's apple-orchard