DUNBAR, William

**Sweet Rose of Virtue**Sweet rose of virtue,
delightful lily of youthful wantonness,
richest in bounty and in beauty clear
and in every virtue that is held most dear―
except only that you are merciless.

Into your garden, today, I followed you;
there I saw flowers of freshest hue,
both white and red, delightful to see,
and wholesome herbs, waving resplendently―
yet nowhere, one leaf or flower of rue.

I fear that March with his last arctic blast
has slain my fair rose of pallid and gentle cast,
whose piteous death does my heart such pain
that, if I could, I would compose her roots again―
so comforting her bowering leaves have been.