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**Poems On Several Occasions**

**Gay, John**

**London, 1745**

Sweet William's Farewell, to Black-ey'd Susan. A Ballad.

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Sweet WILLIAM's Farewell  
to Black-ey'd SUSAN.

A BALLAD.

I.

ALL in the *Downs* the fleet was moor'd,  
The streamers waving in the wind,  
When black-ey'd *Susan* came aboard,  
Oh! where shall I my true love find!  
Tell me, ye jovial sailors, tell me true,  
If my sweet *William* sails among the crew.

II.

*William*, who high upon the yard,  
Rock'd with the billows to and fro,  
Soon as her well-known voice he heard,  
He sigh'd and cast his eyes below:  
The cord slides swiftly through his glowing hands,  
And (quick as lightning) on the deck he stands.

III.

So the sweet lark, high-pois'd in air,  
Shuts close his pinions to his breast,

(If, chance, his mate's shrill call he hear)  
 And drops at once into her nest.  
 The noblest Captain in the *British* fleet,  
 Might envy *William's* lip those kisses sweet.

IV.

O *Susan, Susan*, lovely dear,  
 My vows shall ever true remain ;  
 Let me kiss off that falling tear,  
 We only part to meet again.  
 Change, as ye list, ye winds ; my heart shall be  
 The faithful compass that still points to thee.

V.

Believe not what the landmen say,  
 Who tempt with doubts thy constant mind :  
 They'll tell thee, sailors, when away,  
 In ev'ry port a mistress find.  
 Yes, yes, believe them when they tell thee so,  
 For thou art present wheresoe'er I go.

VI.

If to far *India's* coast we sail,  
 Thy eyes are seen in di'monds bright,  
 Thy breath is *Africk's* spicy gale,  
 Thy skin is ivory, so white.



Thus ev'ry beauteous object that I view,  
Wakes in my soul some charm of lovely *Sue*.

## VII.

Though battle call me from thy arms,  
Let not my pretty *Susan* mourn ;  
Though cannons roar, yet safe from harms,  
*William* shall to his Dear return.  
Love turns aside the balls that round me fly,  
Left precious tears should drop from *Susan's* eye.

## VIII.

The boatswain gave the dreadful word,  
The sails their swelling bosom spread,  
No longer must she stay aboard :  
They kiss'd, she sigh'd, he hung his head ;  
Her leas'ning boat, unwilling rows to land :  
Adieu, she cries! and wav'd her lily hand.

