

Two Poems by James Clarence Mangan (1809-34)

“My Dark Rosaleen”

‘O, my dark Rosaleen, do not sign, so not  
  weep,  
The priests are on the ocean, they roll along  
  the deep.  
There’s wine from the good Pope,  
    To bring us joy,  
    To bring us hope  
        My dark Rosaleen!  
        My own Rosaleen!  
Shall glad your heart, shall give you hope,  
Shall give you health, and help, and hope,  
    My Dark Rosaleen!

Over hills and through dales  
Have I roamed for your sake;  
All yesterday I sailed with sails  
    On river and on lake.  
The Erne at its highest flood  
    I dashed across unseen,  
For there was lightning in my blood,  
    My Dark Rosaleen!  
    My own Rosaleen!  
Oh! there was lightning in my blood,  
Red lightning lightened in my blood,  
    My Dark Rosaleen!

All day long with unrest  
    To and fro do I move,  
The very soul within my breast  
    Is wasted for you, love!  
The heart in my bosom faints  
To think of you, my Queen,  
My life of life, my saint of saints,  
    My Dark Rosaleen!  
    My own Rosaleen!  
To hear your sweet and sad complaints,  
My life, my love, my saint of saints,  
    My Dark Rosaleen!  
Woe and pain, pain and woe,  
    Are my lot night and noon,  
To see your bright face clouded so,  
Like to the mournful moon.  
But yet will I rear your throne  
    Again in golden sheen;  
’Tis you shall reign, shall reign alone,  
    My Dark Rosaleen!  
    My own Rosaleen!

’Tis you shall have the golden throne,  
’Tis you shall reign, and reign alone,  
    My Dark Rosaleen!  
Over dews, over sands  
    Will I fly for your weal;  
Your holy delicate white hands  
    Shall girdle me with steel.  
At home in your emerald bowers,  
From morning's dawn till e'en,  
You'll pray for me, my flower of flowers,  
    My Dark Rosaleen!  
    My fond Rosaleen!

You'll think of me through Daylight's  
  hours,  
My virgin flower, my flower of flowers,  
    My Dark Rosaleen!  
    I could scale the blue air,  
    I could plough the high hills,  
Oh, I could kneel all night in prayer,  
    To heal your many ills!  
And one beamy smile from you  
Would float like light between  
My toils and me, my own, my true,  
    My Dark Rosaleen!  
    My fond Rosaleen!

Would give me life and soul anew,  
A second life, a soul anew,  
    My Dark Rosaleen!  
O! the Erne shall run red  
With redundance of blood,  
The earth shall rock beneath our tread,  
    And flames wrap hill and wood,  
    And gun-peal, and slogan cry,  
    Wake many a glen serene,  
Ere you shall fade, ere you shall die,  
    My Dark Rosaleen!  
    My own Rosaleen!  
The judgement Hour must first be nigh,  
Ere you can fade, ere you can die,  
    My Dark Rosaleen!'

