

OUR NATURES

Philip Higson

(after Petrarch)

Gluttony, dullness, beds of sluggish ease
Have cast out virtue till our world has none;
Our natures, through vain habit's vogue forgone,
Are strangers to their rightful destinies.

And so obscured are heaven's lucencies
Which brought us life when genially they shone,
That those who toil to rouse from Helicon
New streams of vigour now seem oddities.

Do they crave laurels? Chase the myrtle's lure?
'Naked and poor you crawl, Philosophy,'
The base herd scoffs, with sordid pelf obsessed.

Your variant path will yield scant company;
Yet, gentle soul, I do but urge you more
Never to falter from your valiant quest.

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