

The Muse's Lament

— for Florence

I heard the muse, despairing, cry aloud:
"Can music live amidst a world of noise,
When mindless clatter virtually destroys
The power of song, ageless, and sweet, and proud?
How can I save the legacy endowed
By masters gone? If art's nuance annoys
The young, distracted by their countless toys,
What can reclaim the unresponsive crowd?"

I answered, "Send them one whose spirit's strong,
Who understands that music needs both grace
And backbone; generous to those who long
To learn the craft; who shines, without a trace
Of pride; whose songs consistently engage
The eye and heart. Let Florence take the stage."

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Oberlin, Ohio
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The poem uses two Renaissance conventions, the lament (or "complaint") of the Muse, and the Italian sonnet form.