

**NO BIRDS SING**

For John Keats

I lock my door,  
spread your letters in swirl  
on the floor, place my cheek  
on your even script,  
on 'my Dear Gir.'  
Then I cut my hair.

No one knows outside the house.  
Losing you bears me down.  
I go out looking for you  
as sun sets, your favorite time,  
walk Hamstead Heath,  
tear at stems.

They have to send the watchmen  
out to find me. I am your betrothed,  
still Millamant, your minx,  
your partner in beauty's truth.  
They see my black bonnet, hear  
the crush of my black gown,

think I was merely your fancy.  
This will die with me, as my last  
unopened letters died in the soil with you.  
*If only you'd stayed here*  
*among friends, with me, me.*  
I would have fed you the milk,

brought roses near you.  
All your effort to make money  
for us to marry,  
all the cheaper rooms  
you moved to.  
All future contains

your eyes  
in half light,  
entering my body.  
I will keep your lyre,  
strung with your hair,  
be *faery truth* for us both

**Donna L. Emerson**