

## Three Poems for Easter Day

### Sonnet by Edmund Spenser

Most glorious Lord of life, that on this day,  
Didst make thy triumph over death and sin:  
And having harrow'd hell, didst bring away  
Captivity thence captive, us to win:  
This joyous day, dear Lord, with joy begin,  
And grant that we for whom thou diddest die,  
Being with thy dear blood clean wash'd from sin,  
May live for ever in felicity.  
And that thy love we weighing worthily,  
May likewise love thee for the same again:  
And for thy sake, that all like dear didst buy,  
With love may one another entertain.  
So let us love, dear love, like as we ought,  
Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.

### 'An Easter Carol' by Christina Rossetti

Spring bursts to-day,  
For Christ is risen and all the earth's at play.

Flash forth, thou Sun,  
The rain is over and gone, its work is done.

Winter is past,  
Sweet Spring is come at last, is come at last.

Bud, Fig and Vine,  
Bud, Olive, fat with fruit and oil and wine.

Break forth this morn  
In roses, thou but yesterday a Thorn.

Uplift thy head,  
O pure white Lily through the Winter dead.

Beside your dams  
Leap and rejoice, you merry-making Lambs.

All Herds and Flocks  
Rejoice, all Beasts of thickets and of rocks.

Sing, Creatures, sing,  
Angels and Men and Birds and everything.

All notes of Doves  
Fill all our world: this is the time of loves.

'River' by Carol Ann Duffy

Down by the river, under the trees, love waits for me  
to walk from the journeying years of my time and arrive.  
I part the leaves and they toss me a blessing of rain.

The river stirs and turns consoling and fondling itself  
with watery hands, its clear limbs parting and closing.  
Grey as a secret, the heron bows its head on the bank.

I drop my past on the grass and open my arms, which ache  
as though they held up this heavy sky, or had pressed  
against window glass all night as my eyes sieved the stars;

open my mouth, wordless at last meeting love at last, dry  
from travelling so long, shy of a prayer. You step from the shade,  
and I feel love come to my arms and cover my mouth, feel

my soul swoop and ease itself into my skin, like a bird  
threading a river. Then I can look love full in the face, see  
who you are I have come this far to find, the love of my life.