Poetry for May Day

May is Mary's month, and I   
Muse at that and wonder why:   
Her feasts follow reason,   
Dated due to season—  
  
Candlemas, Lady Day;   
But the Lady Month, May,   
Why fasten that upon her,   
With a feasting in her honour?

Is it only its being brighter   
Than the most are must delight her?   
Is it opportunest   
And flowers finds soonest?  
  
Ask of her, the mighty mother:   
Her reply puts this other   
Question: What is Spring?—   
Growth in every thing—  
  
Flesh and fleece, fur and feather,   
Grass and greenworld all together;   
Star-eyed strawberry-breasted   
Throstle above her nested

Cluster of bugle blue eggs thin   
Forms and warms the life within;   
And bird and blossom swell   
In sod or sheath or shell.  
  
All things rising, all things sizing   
Mary sees, sympathising   
With that world of good,   
Nature's motherhood.  
  
Their magnifying of each its kind   
With delight calls to mind   
How she did in her stored   
Magnify the Lord.

Well but there was more than this:   
Spring's universal bliss   
Much, had much to say   
To offering Mary May.

When drop-of-blood-and-foam-dapple   
Bloom lights the orchard-apple   
And thicket and thorp are merry   
With silver-surfed cherry  
  
And azuring-over greybell makes   
Wood banks and brakes wash wet like lakes   
And magic cuckoocall   
Caps, clears, and clinches all—

This ecstasy all through mothering earth   
Tells Mary her mirth till Christ's birth   
To remember and exultation   
In God who was her salvation.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

(Uplands in May)

Wonder as of old things  
Fresh and fair come back  
Hangs over pasture and road.  
Lush in the lowland grasses rise  
And upland beckons to upland.  
The great strong hills are humble.

Carl Sandburg

This is the laughing-eyed amongst them all:   
My lady's month. A season of young things.   
She rules the light with harmony, and brings   
The year's first green upon the beeches tall.   
How often, where long creepers wind and fall   
Through the deep woods in noonday wanderings,   
I’ve heard the month, when she to echo sings,   
I've heard the month make merry madrigal.   
  
How often, bosomed in the breathing strong   
Of mosses and young flowerets, have I lain   
And watched the clouds, and caught the sheltered song -   
Which it were more than life to hear again -   
Of those small birds that pipe it all day long   
Not far from Marly by the memoried Seine.

Hilaire Belloc

(Sometime In May)

Mercy falls like morning dew on newborn rose buds,   
Not really falling at all…  
Just forming.  
Appearing as liquid dust,   
Barely making a stand,   
As the sun bursts its golden rays to dry up what is left of Mother Nature’s nurturing Kiss.

Brenda Arroyo

I lie stretched out upon the window-seat   
And doze, and read a page or two, and doze,   
And feel the air like water on me close,   
Great waves of sunny air that lip and beat   
With a small noise, monotonous and sweet,   
Against the window -- and the scent of cool,   
Frail flowers by some brown and dew-drenched pool   
Possesses me from drowsy head to feet.   
  
This is the time of all-sufficing laughter   
At idiotic things some one has done,   
And there is neither past nor vague hereafter.   
And all your body stretches in the sun   
And drinks the light in like a liquid thing;   
Filled with the divine languor of late spring.

Stephen Vincent Benet