

Do You Think I Do Not Know

Henry Lawson wrote the words in 1910 in response to criticism that he never wrote about love. The tune given here is based on David Kirkpatrick's setting. Kirkpatrick (1927~2003) is, of course, better known by his stage name Slim Dusty.

A **E7**

They say that I nev-er have writ-ten of love As the writ-ers of songs should do.

E7 **A**

They say that I nev-er could touch the strings, With a touch that is firm — and true.

A **E7**

They say I know noth-ing of wo-men and men, In the fields where love ros-es grow.

D **A** **E7** **A**

I must write, they say, with a halt-ing pen. Do you think I do not know?

My love—burst came, like an English spring,
In the days when our hair was brown,
And the hem of her skirt was a sacred thing,
And her hair was an angel's crown.
The shock when another man touched her arm,
Where the dancers sat in a row.
The hope, and despair, the false alarm
Do you think I do not know?

The arbour lights in the western farms,
Do you remember the question put?
While you held her warm in your quivering arms,
And trembled from head to foot,
The electric touch of her finger tips,
The murmuring answer low,
The soft, shy yielding of warm red lips.
Do you think I do not know?

She was buried at Brighton where Gordon sleeps,
When I was a world away;
And the sad old garden its secret keeps,
For nobody knows to—day,
She left me a message for me to read,
Where the wild wide oceans flow;
Do you know how the heart of a man can bleed?
Do you think I do not know?

I stood by the grave where the dead girl lies,
When the sunlit scene was fair,
'Neath white clouds high in the autumn sky,
I answered the message there,
But the haunting words of the dead to me,
Shall go wherever I go.
She lives in the marriage that might have been.
Do you think I do not know?

They sneer or scoff, and they pray or groan,
And the false friend plays his part,
Do you think that the blackguard who drinks alone,
Knows aught of a pure girl's heart?
Knows aught of the first pure love of a boy,
With his warm young blood aglow,
Knows aught of the thrill of the world—old joy—
Do you think I do not know?

They say that I never have written of love,
They say that my heart is such,
That the finer feelings are far above;
But a writer may know too much,
There are darkest depths in the brightest nights,
When the clustering stars hang low;
There are things it would break his strong heart to write—
Do you think I do not know?