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## Epigrams

Percy Bysshe Shelley

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Epigrams  
1839

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1839



## Circumstance

A man who was about to hang himself,  
Finding a purse, then threw away his rope;  
The owner, coming to reclaim his pelf,  
The halter found; and used it. So is Hope  
Changed for Despair—one laid upon the shelf,  
We take the other. Under Heaven's high cope  
Fortune is God—all you endure and do  
Depends on circumstance as much as you.

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## **To Stella**

Thou wert the morning star among the living,  
Ere thy fair light had fled;—  
Now, having died, thou art as Hesperus, giving  
New splendour to the dead.

## **Kissing Helena**

Kissing Helena, together  
With my kiss, my soul beside it  
Came to my lips, and there I kept it,—  
For the poor thing had wandered thither,  
To follow where the kiss should guide it,  
Oh, cruel I, to intercept it!

## **Spirit of Plato**

Eagle! why soarest thou above that tomb?  
To what sublime and star-ypaven home  
Floatest thou?—  
I am the image of swift Plato's spirit,  
Ascending heaven; Athens doth inherit  
His corpse below.