

Stephen Robertson

The well of love

'Stay me with raisins, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love'

The song of songs, which is Solomon's

Raisins are all very well in their place
—in muesli, say, or maybe Christmas cake,
or more appropriately, Suliman's pilaf.
But stay me not with them, nor comfort me
with apples, for I am well of love.

The usual translation is not raisins
but flagons. Flagons might indeed
distract me, or Suliman, from his pilaf.
But stay me not with raisins nor
with flagons, for I am well of love.

Apples may perhaps be comforting
as any fruit, though Suliman's pilaf
is real comfort food. But comfort me not
with apples, nor with pilaf. I can't speak
for Suliman, but I am well of love.