

Aura Lea

Music by George R. Poulton, lyrics by W. W. Fosdick (published 1861)

NOTE: On chords marked * play open fifths or 1-5-7 (no thirds)

G Am/C D7 G



When the black - bird in the Spring, 'On the wil - low tree, _____
 In thy blush the rose was born, Mu - sic, when you spake, _____
 Au - ra Lea! the bird may flee The wil - low's gold - en hair, _____
 When the mis - tle - toe was green Midst the win - ter's snows, _____

G C G/B Am D7 G




Sat and rock'd, I heard him sing, Sing - ing Au - ra Lea.
 Through thine az - ure eye the morn, Spark - ling seemed to break.
 Swing through win - ter fit - ful - ly On the storm - y air.
 Sun - shine in thy face was seen, Kiss - ing lips of rose.

G Am/C D7 G




Au - ra Lea, _____ Au - ra Lea, Maid with gold - en hair; _____
 Au - ra Lea, _____ Au - ra Lea, Birds of crim - son wing; _____
 Yet if thy blue eyes I see, Gloom will soon de - part; _____
 Au - ra Lea, _____ Au - ra Lea, Take my gold - en ring; _____

G C G/B Am D7 G



Sun - shine came a - long with thee, And swal - lows in the air.
 Nev - er song have sung to me, As in that sweet spring.
 For to me, sweet Au - ra Lea Is sun - shine through the heart.
 Love and light re - turn with thee, And swal - lows with the spring.

D Em D7 G



Au - ra Lea, Au - ra Lea, Maid with gold - en hair;

G C/E Am/C G/B *A7 D7 G



Sun - shine came a - long with thee, And swal - lows in the air.

George R. Poulton (1828-1867) was born in England, and emigrated with his family to Lansingburgh NY in 1835. Poulton showed musical talent from a young age, and published at least twenty songs popular in minstrel shows of the time. William Whiteman Fosdick (1825-1862) was a poet, writer, lyricist, and attorney who was born to a theatrical family in Cincinnati OH. Fosdick's poems were set to music by several composers. "Aura Lea" gained great popularity during the American Civil War, sung equally by Union and Confederate soldiers. It was featured in the 1936 film Come and Get It, sung by Frances Farmer; the song "Love Me Tender" was adapted from "Aura Lea" (with lyrics by Ken Darby, under his wife Vera Matson's name) for Elvis Presley in 1956. Poulton and Fosdick both died young (ages 38 and 37, respectively); "Aura Lea" remains the best-known work of either man.