

## Theme From Cyrano

William Shatner

What would you have me do?

Seek out some wealthy patron and crawl like a clinging vine up the lordly tree? Rising by deceit and trickery instead of my own strength?

No thank you.

Imitate what others do and dedicate my works to the rich in the hope of arousing a smile of recognition from some sterile face?

No thank you.

Breakfast everyday on insults, wear out my knees and warp my spine with endless bowing and groveling in the dust?

No thank you.

Become a master of hypocrisy and opportunism? Never letting my right hand know what my left is doing? Burn incense for some glorified idol of the day, pull the proper strings?

No thank you.

Shall I become the captain of some literary cult by writing stupid love songs for wealthy widows and navigate to success with their sighs filling out my sails? Pay some publisher to print my poems and bribe some critic to review them?

No, thank you!

Shall I become the high priest of a petty group of hack writers who dine together once a week?

No, I thank you!

Shall I build my reputation on one flawless poem and never write another, should I scheme to get my name mentioned in the columns of some newspaper and smack my lips over little praises written about me?

No, thank you.

Shall I calculate and scheme, live in fear, make visits instead of rhymes, meet all the right people, seek introductions and favors?

No, thank you.

No I thank you . . .

And again, I thank you!

Oh my friend, I prefer to sing, to laugh, to dream, to travel light in my own way to see things as they are, and speak out without fear, to cock my hat at any angle that I choose, to duel if necessary for a quick "yes" or "no." I prefer to work alone without any thought of reward, to scorn fame for a journey to the moon. Never write a line that does not ring with sincerity. I shall be content with the fruits and flowers that grow in my garden, no matter how small, because they belong to me. Then if success should come my way, no tribute ever

need be paid to Caesar, whatever fortune or misfortune  
that happens shall be mine and only mine.

And although I may never reach the stature of a great  
oaken tree, I shall never be a parasitic vine. I will  
climb perhaps to no great height, but I will . . .  
climb . . . alone.