

I may be a mere example unto you of my folly and unthriftiness<sup>1</sup> that hath as I well deserved brought me into a thousand dangers and hazards, enmities, hatreds, imprisonments, despites<sup>2</sup> and indignations: but that God hath of His goodness chastised me and not cast me clean out of His favour, which thing I can impute to nothing but to the goodness of my good father, that I dare well say purchased with continual request of God His grace towards me more than I regarded or considered myself, and a little part to the small fear that I had of God in the most of my rage<sup>3</sup> and the little delight that I had in mischief. You therefore, if you be sure and have God in your sleeve, to call you to His grace at last, venture not hardily<sup>4</sup> by mine example upon naughty unthriftiness in trust of His goodness; and, besides the shame, I dare lay ten to one you shall perish in the adventure: for trust not that my wish or desire of God for you shall stand you in as much effect as I think my father's did for me: we are not all accepted of Him. Begin therefore betimes, make God and goodness your foundations. Make your examples of wise and honest me; shoot at the mark; be no mocker—mocks follow them that delight therein. He shall be sure of shame that feeleth no grief in other men's shames. Have your friends in a reverence and think unkindness to be the greatest offence, and least punished amongst men, but so much the more to be dreaded, for God is Justiser<sup>5</sup> upon that alone. Love well and agree with your wife, for where is noise and debate in the house, there is unquiet dwelling. And much more where it is in one bed. Frame well yourself to love, and rule well and honestly your wife as your fellow, and she shall love and reverence you as her head. Such as you are unto her, such shall she be unto you. Obey and reverence your father-in-law as you would me; and remember that long life followeth them that reverence their fathers and elders. And the blessing of God for good agreement between the wife and husband is fruit of many children, which I for the like thing do lack; and the fault is both in your mother and me, but chiefly in her.

Read oft this my letter and it shall be as though I had often written unto you. And think that I have herein printed a fatherly affection to you. If I may see that I have not lost my pain(s), mine shall be the contentation<sup>6</sup> and yours the profit. And upon condition that you follow my advertisement I send you God's blessing and mine, and as well to come to honesty as to increase of years.

At Paris the 15<sup>th</sup> of April, your loving father, Thomas Wyatt.

<sup>1</sup> And ... *unthriftiness* Prodigality and imprudence.

<sup>2</sup> *despites* Scorn.

<sup>3</sup> *rage* Irrationality, madness.

<sup>4</sup> *hardily* Boldly, incautiously.

<sup>5</sup> *Justiser* Judge, justice-maker.

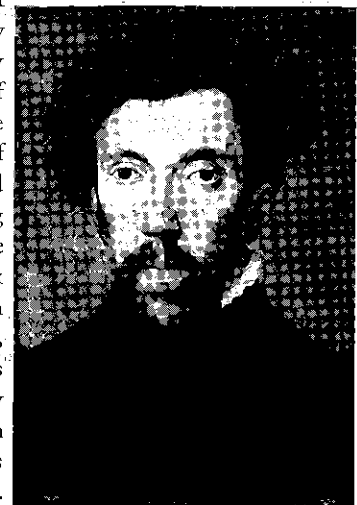
<sup>6</sup> *contentation* Payment, satisfaction, contentment.

## HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY

1517 – 1547

Like a number of other aristocrats, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, largely confined his literary writings to manuscript circulation among his friends and fellow members of Henry VIII's court; it was the posthumous appearance of his works in the printer Richard Tottel's *Miscellany* (1557) that won him widespread readership. His work is a landmark in the development of English literature, for he was among the first in England to import the Petrarchan sonnet, and, in his translation of Books II and IV of Virgil's *Aeneid*, the first to deploy blank verse. As a writer, Surrey was innovative; as a courtier, he was imprudent, and paid the price when the king had him beheaded.

Surrey was born in Hunsdon, Hertfordshire in 1517, eldest son of Lord Thomas Howard, third duke of Norfolk, and Lady Elizabeth Stafford. Surrey's ancestors on both sides of his family included royalty, and as a boy this talented member of one of England's greatest families spent some time at Windsor Castle with Henry VIII's illegitimate son, Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond, and in 1524 was granted the title of earl. He received a sound humanist education and had early experience living abroad when his father served as Lord Lieutenant in Ireland. One of his cousins was Anne Boleyn, second of Henry VIII's six wives, who managed to prevent a proposed marriage between Surrey and the king's daughter, Mary Tudor. Instead, in 1533, Surrey married Lady Frances de Vere, the earl of Oxford's daughter, by whom he had five children. As an adult, Surrey served as a courtier and soldier; his travels in France on diplomatic or military ventures doubtless had an impact on his understanding of the Continental Renaissance in art and letters.

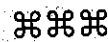


Service to the King was a risky business during the King's later years, however, for the King was increasingly suspicious and the court, especially after the Reformation, was split into competing factions. The balance had tipped against Surrey's family in 1536 when Henry VIII married Jane Seymour, his third wife, for the Seymours, who welcomed Henry's break with the Church of Rome, were bitter rivals of the Catholic Howards and took advantage of their new power (Surrey himself seems to have leaned toward Reform, although his exact views can be debated and perhaps shifted). Thanks to probably false accusations that he had sided with a rebellion against the King, the so-called Pilgrimage of Grace, Surrey was imprisoned between 1537 and 1539. His misfortune did not last, however, for Jane Seymour died shortly after giving birth. The King married Catherine Howard, another of Surrey's cousins, bringing the Howard family back into favor, at least until Catherine was found guilty of adultery and executed in early 1542. In 1541 the King named Surrey a Knight of the Garter, and for the next five years Surrey served the King in various English wars or administrative capacities.

During these years Surrey wrote verse (including love poems, elegies, satire, Biblical paraphrases, translated sections of Virgil's *Aeneid*, and a poignant meditation on Windsor Castle). During his lifetime he published only one poem, in praise of the deceased Sir Thomas Wyatt. Shakespeare and others would often adopt his sonnet structure, which instead of Petrarch's pattern—an octave followed by a sestet—most often has three quatrains (four lines usually rhyming alternately), and a

couplet (a pair of lines). We call this the Shakespearean or English form, but it was Surrey who invented it. Even more important for the future of English literature is the blank verse that Surrey developed for his translations from Virgil, a flexible and harmonious meter that English writers such as Marlowe, Shakespeare, and Milton found the best equivalent for the dactylic hexameter of Latin epic.

In 1546, Surrey was involved in another political struggle. Henry VIII's health was bad, and the court was thinking about who might be regent for his little son, the future Edward VI. Surrey dared suggest openly that his father, the earl of Norfolk, would be Protector. Norfolk was next in the line of succession after Edward, and the Seymour family convinced the King that he was planning to depose the prince after Henry died and make himself king instead. Surrey was put on trial, the legal excuse being that he had treasonably placed the royal arms and insignia on his own coat of arms. He and his father were imprisoned in the Tower and there Surrey lost his head on 10 January 1547—the last person to be executed during Henry's reign. Norfolk was also condemned to die, but the death of Henry on January 28 voided the sentence at the last minute. Surrey is buried in Framlington, Suffolk.



*Love, that Doth Reign and  
Live within My Thought*<sup>1</sup>

Love, that doth reign and live within my thought,  
And built his seat within my captive breast,  
Clad in the arms wherein with me he fought,  
Oft in my face he doth his banner rest.  
5 But she that taught me love and suffer pain,  
My doubtful hope and eke<sup>o</sup> my hot desire  
With shamefast<sup>o</sup> look to shadow and refrain,  
Her smiling grace converteth straight to ire.  
And coward Love, then, to the heart apace  
10 Taketh his flight, where he doth lurk and plain,<sup>o</sup>  
His purpose lost, and dare not show his face.  
For my lord's guilt thus faultless bide<sup>o</sup> I pain;  
Yet from my lord shall not my foot remove:  
Sweet is the death that takes end by love.

—1557

<sup>1</sup> *Love ... Thought* This sonnet is a translation of Petrarch's *Rima* 140, which Surrey's friend Wyatt also translated.

*Set Me Whereas the Sun Doth  
Parch the Green*<sup>2</sup>

Set me whereas the sun doth parch the green,  
Or where his beams may not dissolve the ice,  
In temperate heat where he is felt and seen;  
With proud people, in presence sad and wise;  
5 Set me in base, or yet in high degree,  
In the long night or in the shortest day,  
In clear weather or where mists thickest be,  
In lusty<sup>o</sup> youth or when my hairs be gray;  
Set me in earth, in heaven, or yet in hell,  
10 In hill, in dale, or in the foaming flood;  
Thrall<sup>o</sup> or at large, alive whereso I dwell,  
Sick or in health, in ill fame<sup>o</sup> or in good:  
Yours will I be, and with that only thought  
Comfort myself when that my hap<sup>o</sup> is nought.

—1557

<sup>2</sup> *Set ... Green* Adaptation of Petrarch's *Rima* 145.

*Alas! So All Things Now Do  
Hold Their Peace*<sup>1</sup>

Alas! so all things now do hold their peace,  
Heaven and earth disturbed in nothing.  
The beasts, the air, the birds their song do cease;  
The night's chair<sup>2</sup> the stars about doth bring;  
5 Calm is the sea, the waves work less and less:  
So am not I, whom love, alas, doth wring,  
Bringing before my face the great increase  
Of my desires, wherewith I weep and sing  
In joy and woe, as in a doubtful ease.  
10 For my sweet thoughts sometime do pleasure bring,  
But by and by the cause of my disease<sup>o</sup> uneasiness, distress  
Gives me a pang that inwardly doth sting,  
When that I think what grief it is again  
To live and lack the thing should rid my pain.

*So Cruel Prison How Could Betide*<sup>3</sup>

So cruel prison how could betide, alas,  
As proud Windsor, where I, in lust and joy,  
With a king's son my childish years did pass  
In greater feast than Priam's sons of Troy?<sup>4</sup>  
5 Where each sweet place returns a taste full sour:  
The large green courts, where we were wont to hove,<sup>o</sup> linger  
With eyes cast up unto the maidens' tower,  
And easy sighs, such as folk draw in love.  
The stately sales,<sup>5</sup> the ladies bright of hue,  
10 The dances short, long tales of great delight,

<sup>1</sup> *Alas ... Peace* Surrey's version of Petrarch's *Rima* 164.

<sup>2</sup> *night's chair* The constellation Ursa Major.

<sup>3</sup> *So ... Betide* In 1537 Surrey was imprisoned in Windsor Castle for having struck a courtier and broken the peace in the king's domain. In this poem he remembers his earlier stay at the castle (1530–32) with Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond and illegitimate son of Henry VIII. Richmond (who had married Surrey's sister in 1533) died in 1536.

<sup>4</sup> *Priam's ... Troy* Priam, the king of Troy at the time of the Trojan war, had fifty sons.

<sup>5</sup> *sales* Halls or spacious chambers (from the French "salle").

With words and looks that tigers could but rue,<sup>6</sup>  
Where each of us did plead the other's right.

The palm play,<sup>7</sup> where, despoiled<sup>o</sup> for the game,<sup>o</sup> stripped  
With dazed eyes oft we by gleams of love  
15 Have missed the ball and got sight of our dame,  
To bait<sup>o</sup> her eyes, which kept the leads<sup>8</sup> above.<sup>o</sup> attract

The gravelled ground,<sup>9</sup> with sleeves tied jousting ground  
on the helm,<sup>9</sup>  
On foaming horse, with swords and friendly hearts,  
With cheer<sup>o</sup> as though the one should overwhelm,  
20 Where we have fought and chased oft with darts.<sup>o</sup> javelins

With silver drops the meads yet spread for ruth,<sup>10</sup>  
In active games of nimbleness and strength,  
Where we did strain, trained by swarms of youth,  
Our tender limbs that yet shot up in length.

25 The secret groves, which oft we made resound  
Of pleasant plaint,<sup>o</sup> and of our ladies' praise,<sup>o</sup> lament  
Recording soft what grace each one had found,  
What hope of speed, what dread of long delays.

The wild forest, the clothed holts<sup>o</sup> with green;<sup>o</sup> wooded hills  
30 With reins ahaled, and swift ybreathed<sup>11</sup> horse,  
With cry of hounds and merry blasts between,  
Where we did chase the fearful hart<sup>o</sup> a force.<sup>12</sup> male deer

The void<sup>13</sup> walls eke<sup>o</sup> that harboured us each night;<sup>o</sup> also  
Wherewith, alas, revive within my breast.

<sup>6</sup> *rue* Regard with compassion.

<sup>7</sup> *palm play* Game in which the ball was hit with the palms.

<sup>8</sup> *leads* Sheets of metal that covered the roofs of the courts. Spectators would watch the game from these.

<sup>9</sup> *helm* Helmet, to which jousters would tie a lady's sleeve (then a separate, ornamental covering) as a token of her favor.

<sup>10</sup> *With ... ruth* I.e., the meadows (meads) were still covered with dew; *ruth* Compassion.

<sup>11</sup> *ahaled* Slackened; *swift ybreathed* Panting.

<sup>12</sup> *chase ... a force* Run down.

<sup>13</sup> *void* I.e., empty. In royal houses it was customary for all tapestries and wall-hangings to be taken down when the resident members of the court were not at home.

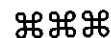
## THE ELIZABETHAN SONNET AND LYRIC

Developed first in thirteenth-century Italy and wildly popular in Renaissance Europe, the sonnet (or "little song") became one of the most enduring forms of English verse. A lyric poem in fourteen lines, usually with ten or twelve syllables to a line, the standard sonnet follows one of several rhyme schemes. The most important are the Italian or "Petrarchan," the English (often referred to as the "Shakespearean," although it was Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, who first developed it), and the Spenserian. The Petrarchan form, introduced by the Italian writer Francesco Petrarch in the fourteenth century, has two parts: first comes the "octave" of eight lines, which usually sets forth some situation, argument, narrative, analogy, comment, wish, or other thought. This is followed by the "sestet," six lines that often perform a volta, or turn, that gives some resolution, further elaboration, counter-argument, or other contrast to the octave. The rhyme scheme ordinarily is *abba abba cde cde*, although variations for the sestet (such as *cde cde* or *cde cde*) are acceptable.

The English poets Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey first introduced the sonnet into English, translating some of Petrarch's sonnets in the 1520s and 1530s and, in the case of Surrey, writing a few more in the Petrarchan manner. They were not published until 1557, but they circulated in manuscript. By the 1580s the popularity of the sonnet on the Continent led to its revival in England, and the posthumous publication in 1591 of Sir Philip Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* started a fashion for the form and for the sonnet sequence that blazed for a few years with extraordinary intensity.

Shakespeare's sonnets (some of which certainly, and many others probably, were written in the 1590s although Shakespeare may well have revised them before they were published, well after the fashion was over, in 1609) typically have four parts: three "quatrains" (a set of four lines) each rhyming *abab cdcd efef* and then a couplet rhyming *gg*. The quatrains may trace the development of an idea, state the same notion several times, or describe a situation from several angles—the possibilities of this flexible form are nearly endless. The couplet may be a logical conclusion, a further thought, or even a dramatic denial of what has come before.

Edmund Spenser's *Amoretti* (1595) have yet another scheme, a sort of compromise between the Petrarchan and the Shakespearean, interlocking its quatrains with the rhyme scheme *abab bcbe cdcd* concluding with a couplet *ee*. Substantial selections from the sonnets by Wyatt, Surrey, Sidney, Shakespeare, and Spenser appear elsewhere in this volume, thus the sonnets in this section are designed to provide further insight into the origins and range of the form; the lyrics by Gascoigne and by an anonymous poet are meant to extend the reader's sense of how the short Elizabethan lyric could handle some of the themes—age, absence—found in the sonnets.



### The Continental Background

FRANCESCO PETRARCH (1304-1374)

The influence of Petrarch's sonnet sequence, about his unfulfilled love for Laura, was immense, and provided European love poets with a way to shape the erotic experience in terms of

frustration, self-scrutiny, self-division, praise, and longing and to express this through elaborate metaphor, paradox, and an intense focus on detail. Whether the object of imitation, revision, or satire, Petrarch's approach to love long remained the discourse against which and through which poets defined themselves when writing on love.

from *Rime Sparse*

134

Pace non trovo et non ò da far guerra,  
e temo et spero, et ardo et son un ghiaccio,  
et volo sopra 'l cielo et giaccio in terra,  
et nulla stringo et tutto 'l mondo abbraccio.  
Tal m' à in pregion, che non m' apre né serra,  
né per suo mi riten né scioglie il laccio,  
et non m' ancide Amore et non mi sferra,  
né mi vuol vivo, né mi trae d' impaccio.  
Veggio senza occhi, et non ò lingua et grido,  
et bramo di perir, et cheggio aita,  
et ò in odio me stesso et amo altrui.  
Pascomi di dolor, piangendo rido,  
egualmente mi spiace morte et vita.  
In questo stato son, Donna, per vui.  
—WRITTEN MID-14TH CENTURY

140

Amor, che nel penser mio vive et regna  
e 'l suo seggio maggior nel mio cor tene,  
talor armato ne la fronte vene;  
ivi si loca et ivi pon sua insegna.  
Quella ch' amare et sofferir ne 'nsegna  
e vol che 'l gran desio, l' accesa spene  
ragion, vergogna, et reverenza affrene,  
di nostro ardir fra se stessa si sdegna.  
Onde Amor paventoso fugge al core,  
Lasciando ogni sua impresa, et piange et trema;  
ivi s' asonde et non appar più fore.  
Che poss' io far, temendo il mio signore,  
se non star seco infin a l' ora estrema?  
ché bel fin fa chi ben amando more.  
—WRITTEN MID-14TH CENTURY

189

Passa la nave mia colma d' oblio  
per aspro mare a mezza notte il verno

134

I find no peace and all my war is done,  
I fear and hope, I burn and freeze like ice;  
I fly above the wind yet can I not arise;  
And naught I have and all the world I season<sup>1</sup> seize upon  
That<sup>1</sup> looseth nor locketh holdeth me in prison  
And holdeth me not, yet can I scape no wise,  
Nor letteth me live nor die at my device.<sup>2</sup> own choice  
And yet of death it giveth none occasion.  
Without eyen<sup>3</sup> I see and without tongue I  
plain;<sup>3</sup> eyes / complain  
I desire to perish, and yet I ask health;  
I love another, and thus I hate myself;  
I feed me in sorrow and laugh in all my pain;  
Likewise displeaseth me both death and life:  
And my delight<sup>2</sup> is causer of this strife.  
—C. 1520S (TRANS. SIR THOMAS WYATT)

140

Love, that doth reign and live within my thought  
And built his seat<sup>1</sup> within my captive breast, dwelling  
Clad in the arms wherein with me he fought  
Oft in my face he doth his banner rest.  
But she that taught me love and suffer pain,  
My doubtful hope<sup>1</sup> and eke<sup>2</sup> my hot desire also  
With shamefast<sup>3</sup> look to shadow<sup>3</sup> and modest / conceal  
refrain,<sup>3</sup> hold back  
Her smiling grace converteth straight to ire.  
And coward Love then to the heart apace  
Taket<sup>3</sup> his flight, where he doth lurk and plain;<sup>3</sup> complain  
His purpose lost, and dare not show his face.  
For my lord's guilt thus faultless bide I pain,  
Yet from my lord<sup>3</sup> shall not my foot remove:  
Sweet is the death that taketh end by love.  
—C. 1530S (TRANS. HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY)

189

My galley chargèd with forgetfulness  
Through sharp seas in winter nights doth pass

<sup>1</sup> That Which (i.e., Love).

<sup>2</sup> my delight His paradoxical pleasure in loving but also the lady—Laura, in Petrarch's poem.

<sup>3</sup> lord I.e., Love—the speaker's feudal lord.

enfra Scilla et Caribdi, et al governo  
 siede 'l signore anzi 'l nimico mio;  
 5 à ciascun remo un penser pronto et rio  
 che la tempesta e 'l fin par ch' abbi a scherno;  
 la vela rompe un vento umido eterno  
 di sospir, di speranze et di desio;  
 pioggia di lagrimar, nebbia di sdegni  
 10 bagna et rallenta la già stanche sarte  
 che son d'error con ignoranzia attorto.  
 Celansi i duo mei dolci usati segni,  
 morta fra l'onde è la ragion et l'arte  
 tal ch' i' 'ncomincio a desperar del porto.  
 —WRITTEN MID-14TH CENTURY

190  
 U na candida cerva sopra l'erba  
 verde m'apparve con duo corna d'oro,  
 fra due riviere all'ombra d'un alloro,  
 levando 'l sole a la stagione acerba.  
 5 Era sua vista sì dolce superba  
 ch' i' lasciai per seguirla ogni lavoro,  
 come l'avarò che 'n cercar tesoro  
 con diletto l'affanno disacerba.  
 "Nessun mi tocchi," al bel collo d'intorno  
 10 scritto avea di diamanti et di topazi,  
 "Libera farmi al mio Cesare parve."  
 Et era 'l sol già volto al mezzo giorno,  
 gli occhi miei stanchi di mirar, non sazi,  
 quand' io caddi ne l'acqua et ella sparve.  
 —WRITTEN MID-14TH CENTURY

'Tween rock and rock,<sup>1</sup> and eke<sup>o</sup> mine enemy, alas, also  
 That is my lord,<sup>2</sup> steereth with cruelness;  
 5 And every oar a thought in readiness,  
 As though that death were light<sup>o</sup> in such a case. easy  
 An endless wind doth tear the sail apace  
 Of forcèd sighs and trusty fearfulness.  
 A rain of tears, a cloud of dark disdain,  
 10 Hath done the wearied cords<sup>o</sup> ship's rigging  
 great hinderance,  
 Wreathèd with error and eke with ignorance  
 The stars be hid that led me to this pain;  
 Drownèd is reason that should me consort,<sup>o</sup> accompany  
 And I remain despairing of the port.  
 —C. 1520S (TRANS. SIR THOMAS WYATT)

190  
 W hoso list<sup>o</sup> to hunt, I know where is a wishes  
 hind,<sup>o</sup> female deer  
 But as for me, alas, I may<sup>o</sup> no more: can  
 The vain travail<sup>o</sup> hath wearied me so sore effort  
 I am of them that farthest come behind.  
 5 Yet may I by no means my wearied mind  
 Draw from the deer: but, as she fleeth afore,  
 Fainting I follow. I leave off therefore,  
 Since in a net I seek to hold the wind.  
 Who list her hunt, I put him out of doubt,  
 10 As well as I may spend his time in vain.  
 And, graven with diamonds in letters plain,  
 There is written her fair neck round about:  
 "Noli me tangere,<sup>3</sup> for Caesar's I am,  
 And wild for to hold, although I seem tame."  
 —C. 1520S (ADAPTED BY SIR THOMAS WYATT)

<sup>1</sup> *Tween rock and rock* Petrarch specifies Scylla and Charybdis, the dangerous monster who lived on a rock and the whirlpool on either side of a narrow channel through which Ulysses must sail in Homer's *Odyssey*.

<sup>2</sup> *lord* I.e., Cupid, Love.

<sup>3</sup> *Noli me tangere* "Do not touch me," words said by Christ after the Resurrection. Early commentators on Petrarch often read this as signifying that Laura considered herself bound by the laws of chaste marriage as decreed by Augustus Caesar. Wyatt's readers who identified the deer with Anne Boleyn (whom Wyatt knew and perhaps loved), would have read the lines as suggesting that the "hind" belongs to Henry VIII.

GASPARA STAMPA (1523-1554)

132  
 Q uando io dimando nel mio pianto Amore,  
 Che cosí male il mio parlar ascolata,  
 Mille fate il dí, non una volta,  
 Ché mi fere e trafigge a tutte l'ore:  
 5 "Come esser può, s'io diedi l'alma e 'l core  
 al mio signor dal dí ch'a me l'ho tolta,  
 e se ogni cosa dentro a lui raccolta  
 è riso e gioia, è scema di dolore,  
 ch'io senta gelosia fredda e temenza,  
 10 e d'allegrezza e gioia resti priva,  
 s'io vivo in lui, e in me di me son senza?"  
 "Vo' che tu mora al bene ed al mal viva,"  
 mi risponde egli in ultima sentenza;  
 "Questa ti basti, e questo fa' che scriva."  
 —1554 (*Rime*, NO. 132 IN A. SALZA ED., 1913)

JOACHIM DU BELLAY (?1522-1560)

113  
 S i nostre vie est moins qu'une journée  
 En l'éternel, si l'an qui fait le tour  
 Chasse noz jours sans espoir de retour,  
 Si perissable est toute chose née,  
 5 Que songes-tu, mon ame emprisonée?  
 Pourquoi te plaist l'obscur de nostre jour  
 Si pour voler en un plus cler sejour,  
 Tu as au dos l'aele bien empanée?  
 La, est le bien que tout esprit desire,  
 10 La, le repos ou tout le monde aspire,  
 La, est l'amour, la, le plaisir encore.  
 La, ô mo name au plus hault ciel guide!  
 Tu y pouras reconnoistre l'Idée  
 De la beauté, qu'en ce monde j'adore.<sup>1</sup>  
 —1550

<sup>1</sup> *De la... j'adore* A Neoplatonic sonnet adapted from a sonnet by Bernardino Daniello.

132  
 W hen in my weeping I inquire of Love<sup>2</sup>  
 (Who so unwillingly gives ear to me)  
 A thousand times a day—never just once—  
 Why he will wound and pierce me all the time:  
 5 "How can it be, since I gave heart and soul  
 To him,<sup>3</sup> the day I took them both from me;  
 If everything enclosed within his breast  
 Is only joy and laughter, never sorrow,  
 How can I feel cold jealousy and fear  
 10 And be deprived of all my joyfulness,  
 Living in him, and never in myself?"  
 "I bid you die to joy and live in grief,"  
 Love answers me in his hard final sentence:  
 "Let this suffice you, that it makes you write."  
 —1997 (TRANS. LAURA ANNA STORTONI AND MARY  
 PRENTICE LILLIE)

113  
 I f this, our life, be less than but a day  
 In the eternal; if each circling year  
 Bears off our days, never to reappear;  
 If every creature born must death obey,  
 5 Why then, my prisoned soul, should you delay?  
 How can it please you thus to tarry here,  
 In darkness, when unto a brighter sphere,  
 Your well-plumed wings would carry you away?  
 There is the good that man's mind hungers for;  
 10 There, the repose he seeks, forevermore;  
 There, love and joy abound, their bliss bestow.  
 There, O my soul, as you reach heaven's height,  
 Beauty ideal will loom within your sight,  
 That beauty that I worship here below.  
 —2002 (TRANS. NORMAN R. SHAPIRO)

<sup>2</sup> *Love* The personified god of love, Cupid, Eros.

<sup>3</sup> *To him* Stampa refers to her beloved and social superior, Count Collatino di Collalto, on whose name, "high hill," she often puns, and who seems for a while to have reciprocated her love.

from *Amoretti*<sup>1</sup>

Happy ye leaves<sup>o</sup> when as those lilly hands,<sup>pages</sup>  
 which hold my life in their dead doing<sup>2</sup> might,<sup>bonds</sup>  
 shall handle you and hold in loves soft bands,<sup>bonds</sup>  
 lyke captives trembling at the victors sight.  
 5 And happy lines, on which with starry light,  
 those lamping<sup>o</sup> eyes will deigne sometimes to  
 look  
 and reade the sorrowes of my dying spright,<sup>blazing</sup>  
 written with teares in harts close bleeding book.<sup>spirit</sup>  
 And happy rymes bath'd in the sacred brooke,  
 10 of Helicon<sup>3</sup> whence she derivèd is,  
 when ye behold that Angels blessed looke,  
 my soules long lackèd foode, my heavens blis.  
 Leaves, lines, and rymes, seeke her to please alone,  
 whom if ye please, I care for other none.

The soverayne beauty which I doo admyre,  
 witnessè the world how worthy to be prayzed:  
 the light wherof hath kindled heavenly fyre,  
 in my fraile spirit by her from basenesse raysed.  
 5 That being now with her huge brightnesse dazed,  
 base thing I can no more endure to view:  
 but looking still on her I stand amazed,  
 at wondrous sight of so celestiall hew.<sup>form</sup>  
 So when my tounge would speak her praises dew,<sup>due</sup>  
 10 it stoppèd is with thoughts astonishment:  
 and when my pen would write her titles true,  
 it ravisht is with fancies wonderment:  
 Yet in my hart I then both speake and write,  
 The wonder that my wit cannot endite.

Be nought dismayd that her unmovèd mind  
 doth still persist in her rebellious pride:  
 such love not lyke to lusts of baser kynd,

<sup>1</sup> *Amoretti* Italian: little loves. This sonnet sequence is generally read as a description of Spenser's courtship of and marriage to Elizabeth Boyle (whom he had married in the previous year, 1594).

<sup>2</sup> *dead doing* Death-dealing.

<sup>3</sup> *Helicon* One of the mountains sacred to the Nine Muses, the goddesses of the arts and sciences. The sacred spring which flows from Helicon is the Hippocrene.

the harder wonne, the firmer will abide.  
 5 The duressull<sup>o</sup> Oake, whose sap is not yet dride, <sup>durable</sup>  
 is long ere it conceive the kindling fyre:  
 but when it once doth burne, it doth divide,  
 great heat, and makes his flames to heaven aspire.  
 So hard it is to kindle new desire,  
 10 in gende brest that shall endure for ever:  
 deepe is the wound, that dints<sup>o</sup> the parts entire <sup>strikes</sup>  
 with chast affects, that naught but death can sever.  
 Then thinke not long in taking litle paine,  
 to knit the knot, that ever shall remaine.

Ye tradefull<sup>o</sup> Merchants, that with weary  
 toyle,<sup>engaged in trading / toil</sup>  
 do seeke most pretious things to make your gain;  
 and both the Indias<sup>4</sup> of their treasures spoile,  
 what needeth you to seeke so farre in vaine?  
 5 For loe<sup>o</sup> my love doth in her selfe containe <sup>behold</sup>  
 all this worlds riches that may farre be found,  
 if Saphyres, loe her eies be Saphyres plaine,  
 if Rubies, loe hir lips be Rubies sound;<sup>pure</sup>  
 10 If Pearles, hir teeth be pearles both pure and round;  
 if Yvorie, her forehead yvorie weene;<sup>seems</sup>  
 if Gold, her locks are finest gold on ground;  
 if silver, her faire hands are silver sheene.<sup>beautiful</sup>  
 But that which fairest is, but few behold,  
 her mind adornd with vertues manifold.

This holy season<sup>5</sup> fit to fast and pray,  
 Men to devotion ought to be inclynd:  
 therefore, I lykewise on so holy day,<sup>6</sup>  
 for my sweet Saynt some service fit will find.  
 5 Her temple fayre is built within my mind,  
 in which her glorious ymage placèd is,  
 on which my thoughts doo day and night attend  
 lyke sacred priests that never thinke amisse.  
 There I to her as th'author of my blisse,  
 10 will builde an altar to appease her yre:  
 and on the same my hart will sacrifice,  
 burning in flames of pure and chast desyre:

<sup>4</sup> *both the Indias* I.e., the East and West Indies.

<sup>5</sup> *This holy season* Lent.

<sup>6</sup> *holy day* Ash Wednesday.

The which vouchsafe O goddesse to accept,  
 amongst thy deerest relicks to be kept:

Sweet is the Rose, but growes upon a brere;<sup>thorny bush</sup>  
 Sweet is the Junipere, but sharpe his bough;  
 sweet is the Eglantine,<sup>o</sup> but pricketh nere;<sup>sweet-briar</sup>  
 sweet is the firbloom,<sup>1</sup> but his branches rough.  
 5 Sweet is the Cypresse, but his rynd<sup>o</sup> is tough,<sup>bark</sup>  
 sweet is the nut, but bitter is his pill;<sup>shell</sup>  
 sweet is the broome-flowre,<sup>2</sup> but yet sowre enough;  
 and sweet is Moly,<sup>3</sup> but his root is ill.  
 So every sweet with soure is tempred still,  
 10 that maketh it be coveted the more:  
 for easie things that may be got at will,  
 most sorts of men doe set but little store.  
 Why then should I accompt<sup>o</sup> of litle paine,<sup>think much</sup>  
 that endlesse pleasure shall unto me gaine.

Lyke as a ship that through the Ocean wyde,  
 by conduct of some star doth make her way,  
 whenas a storme hath dimd her trusty guyde,  
 10 out of her course doth wander far astray.  
 So I whose star, that wont with her bright ray,  
 me to direct, with cloudes is overcast,  
 doe wander now in darknesse and dismay,  
 through hidden perils round about me plast.<sup>placed</sup>  
 Yet hope I well, that when this storme is past  
 10 my Helice the lodestar<sup>5</sup> of my lyfe  
 will shine again, and looke on me at last,  
 with lovely light to cleare my cloudy grief,  
 Till then I wander carefull<sup>o</sup> comfortlesse,<sup>full of cares</sup>  
 in secret sorow and sad pensivenesse.

What guyle is this, that those her golden tresses,

<sup>1</sup> *firbloom* Fruit of the fir tree.

<sup>2</sup> *broome-flowre* Large yellow flower of the broom shrub, a common English plant.

<sup>3</sup> *Moly* Mythical herb with a white flower and black root, taken by Odysseus to ward off the spells of the witch Circe.

<sup>4</sup> *34* From Petrarch's *Rima* 189, or one of the many adaptations.

<sup>5</sup> *Helice* The constellation Ursa Major; *lodestar* North Star, Polaris, in the constellation Ursa Major.

She doth attyre under a net of gold:  
 and with sly<sup>o</sup> skill so cunningly them dresses,<sup>dexterous</sup>  
 that which is gold or heare,<sup>o</sup> may scarce be told?<sup>hair</sup>  
 5 Is it that mens frayle eyes, which gaze too bold,  
 she may entangle in that golden snare:  
 and being caught may craftily enfold,  
 theyr weaker harts, which are not wel aware?  
 Take heed therefore, myne eyes, how ye doe stare  
 10 henceforth too rashly on that guilefull net,  
 in which if ever ye entrappèd are,  
 out of her bands<sup>o</sup> ye by no meanes shall get.<sup>bonds</sup>  
 Fondnesse<sup>o</sup> it were for any being free,<sup>foolishness</sup>  
 to covet fetters, though they golden bee.

Of this worlds Theatre in which we stay,  
 My love lyke the Spectator ydly sits  
 beholding me that all the pageants<sup>o</sup> play,<sup>parts</sup>  
 disguysing diversly my troubled wits.  
 5 Sometimes I joy when glad occasion fits,  
 and mask in myrth lyke to a Comedy:  
 soone after when my joy to sorrow flits,  
 I waile and make my woes a Tragedy.  
 Yet she beholding me with constant eye,  
 10 delights not in my merth nor rues<sup>o</sup> my smart;<sup>pities / pain</sup>  
 but when I laugh she mocks, and when I cry  
 she laughes, and hardens evermore her hart.  
 What then can move her? if nor merth nor mone,<sup>o</sup> moan  
 she is no woman, but a sençeslesse stone.

Comming to kisse her lyps, (such grace I found)  
 Me seemd I smelt a gardin of sweet flowres:  
 that dainty odours from them threw around  
 for damzels fit to decke their lovers bowres.  
 5 Her lips did smell lyke unto Gillyflowers,<sup>o</sup> <sup>carnations</sup>  
 her ruddy cheekes lyke unto Roses red:  
 her snowy browes lyke budded Bellamoures,<sup>6</sup>  
 her lovely eyes lyke Pincks<sup>7</sup> but newly spred,  
 Her goodly bosome lyke a Strawberry bed,  
 10 her neck lyke to a bounch of Cullambynes;<sup>o</sup> <sup>columbines</sup>  
 her brest lyke lillyes, ere theyr leaves be shed,

<sup>6</sup> *Bellamoures* Unidentified.

<sup>7</sup> *Pincks* Dianthus plants; the flowers of which can be red, white, pink, or variegated.

## ELIZABETH I, QUEEN OF ENGLAND

1533 – 1603

One of the most famous monarchs in European history, Queen Elizabeth I presided over a vigorous culture that saw notable accomplishments in the arts, voyages of discovery, the "Elizabethan settlement" that created the Church of England, and the defeat of military threats from Spain. Her shrewd political mind helped sustain her country in a time of occasional famine, widespread poverty, intermittent plague, and deep religious and political divisions; she also, if sometimes reluctantly, supported the beginnings of an empire that would flourish over the next 350 years. Elizabeth was also a precocious writer, penning translations even in her childhood and later composing poetry and speeches.

Elizabeth was the product of a controversial union, that of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. Some months before giving birth on 7 September 1533 Boleyn became the king's second wife. In 1534, Pope Clement VII, who had waffled for a few years, officially confirmed his refusal to annul Henry's marriage to his first wife, Catherine of Aragon. Henry responded by declaring himself head of the English Church, but many in and out of the government refused to recognize either his right to do this or the validity of his new marriage. A significant portion of the population therefore considered Elizabeth illegitimate, and throughout her reign many of those loyal to the Roman Catholic Church continued to dispute her right to the throne.

At first Henry designated Elizabeth as his heir. However, after her mother fell from favor and was executed in 1536, Elizabeth's political fortunes turned (much as they had for her older half-sister, Mary). Henry married Jane Seymour and had a son, Edward, who was named King after Henry died in 1547. Orphaned, Elizabeth was cared for by Henry's last wife, Catherine Parr, and her new husband, Thomas Seymour. Catherine made sure that Elizabeth received a fine education, hiring a number of prominent tutors, including the distinguished humanist Roger Ascham.

Young Edward VI proved to be sickly, dying in 1553 before his sixteenth birthday. Various political maneuvers ensued, but eventually Elizabeth's half-sister Mary was crowned Queen. Mary I was a staunch Catholic who wanted to undo the reforms of her father as well as the explicitly Protestant changes made by Edward, and she attempted to convince Elizabeth to convert to Catholicism. Whether from sincere reluctance or awareness that she was the Protestant hope, or both, Elizabeth was prudently ambiguous about her religious beliefs, so on 17 March 1554, fearful of plots against her throne, Mary had her imprisoned in the Tower of London. There she stayed for two months before being transferred into custody at Woodstock Castle, a dilapidated hunting lodge in Oxfordshire, where she remained for almost a year.

When Mary died on 17 November 1558, childless in her marriage to Philip II of Spain, Elizabeth was named Queen. She was crowned on 15 January 1559, after elaborate London celebrations, in Westminster Abbey. As Queen, Elizabeth proved to be a strong and cunning leader. Early in her reign she worked hard to solidify her rule, thwarting assassination attempts and Catholic plots to install her

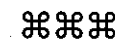


cousin, Mary Stuart, as queen. Elizabeth took a more moderate approach to England's religious conflicts than had her predecessors. She reinstated the reforms instituted by her father and brother, but she eschewed Edward's Calvinist militancy as well as Mary's punitive conservatism. She also displayed her acumen in domestic politics, manipulating her advisors as a means of maintaining her own control and playing the Petrarchan mistress or virgin goddess to encourage her courtiers' and subjects' loyalty and affection. Internationally, although she did send money and men to help Henri IV to the French throne and to help the Dutch expel the Spanish, she largely withdrew England from costly involvement in foreign conflicts. Ireland was another matter, and Elizabeth's government engaged in an often bloody struggle to suppress Irish revolts against English rule.

Throughout the first half of her reign, Elizabeth was under pressure from advisors and Parliament to marry and produce an heir. She resisted, no doubt aware that any spouse would exert considerable influence over her. She entertained many suitors, English and foreign, but declared that she preferred being married to England.

Elizabeth's writings provide glimpses into her mind, although as a princess or queen she knew she was always on stage and without real privacy. Her lines written on a window frame during her captivity at Woodstock (1555) cry for justice, for example, while "On Monsieur's Departure" (c. 1581; "Monsieur" is almost certainly her suitor the Duc d'Anjou, brother to the French king) shows her romantic side—or its political simulation. In her so-called "Golden Speech," her farewell speech to Parliament given on 30 November 1601, Elizabeth speaks frankly about the burdens of queenship: "to be a king and wear a crown is a thing more glorious to them that see it than it is pleasant to them that bear it." The queen also translated various works, including passages from Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, and made the first English translation of Horace's "Art of Poetry."

Elizabeth overcame the uncertainty that surrounded her accession to become enormously popular, even with many Catholics; she came to be known to her subjects as "Good Queen Bess." She died on 24 March 1603 at almost seventy, having ruled England for nearly 45 years. She was buried in Westminster Abbey and was succeeded by James VI of Scotland, the Protestant son of Mary Stuart, who reigned as James I.

*Written on a Wall at Woodstock*<sup>1</sup>

O h fortune, thy wresting<sup>2</sup> wavering state  
 Hath fraught with cares my troubled wit,  
 Whose witness this present prison late  
 Could bear, where once was joy's loan quit.<sup>3</sup>  
 5 Thou causedst the guilty to be loosed

<sup>1</sup> *Wall* This poem is variously noted as being written on a wall, a shutter, and a window frame. Writing poetry or proverbs on these surfaces was not uncommon in the period; *Woodstock* Elizabeth, under suspicion of involvement in Sir Thomas Wyatt the Younger's plots against Mary, was placed under house arrest at Woodstock.

<sup>2</sup> *wresting* Struggling, twisting.

<sup>3</sup> *joy's loan quit* The lease of joy repaid.

From bands where innocents were enclosed,  
 And caused the guiltless to be reserved,  
 And freed those that death had well deserved.  
 But herein can be nothing wrought,  
 10 So God send to my foes as they have thought.

—c. 1554–55

*Written in Her French Psalter*<sup>4</sup>

N o crooked leg, no bleared eye,  
 No part deformed out of kind,

<sup>4</sup> *Psalter* Translation or version of the Book of Psalms. This poem is inscribed in the last leaf of Elizabeth's French psalter.

Nor yet so ugly half can be  
As is the inward suspicious mind.

—1565

*The Doubt of Future Foes*<sup>1</sup>

The doubt of future foes exiles my present joy,  
And wit me warns to shun such snares as  
threaten mine annoy,  
For falsehood now doth flow, and subjects' faith  
doth ebb,  
Which should not be if reason ruled or wisdom  
weaved the web.  
5 But clouds of joys untried do cloak aspiring minds,  
Which turn to rain of late repent by changed  
course of winds.  
The top of hope supposed the root upreared shall be,  
And fruitless all their grafted guile, as shortly ye shall see.  
Their dazzled eyes with pride, which great ambition  
blinds,  
10 Shall be unsealed by worthy wights<sup>o</sup> whose *people*  
foresight falsehood finds.  
The daughter of debate<sup>2</sup> that discord aye doth sow  
Shall reap no gain where former rule still peace hath  
taught to grow.  
No foreign banished wight shall anchor in this port;  
Our realm brooks<sup>o</sup> not seditious sects, let *tolerates*  
them elsewhere resort.  
15 My rusty sword through rest<sup>3</sup> shall first his edge employ  
To poll<sup>o</sup> their tops that seek such change or *crop or cut*  
gape for future joy.  
—c. 1568–71

<sup>1</sup> *Doubt* Dread or fear; *Future Foes* This poem was written in response to the threat to Elizabeth's rule from Mary, Queen of Scots. Mary believed she had a legitimate claim to the throne of England and became the focal point of Catholic protests against Elizabeth. This was probably written shortly after Mary's flight from Scotland to England in 1568, as it appeared in commonplace books early in the 1570s, though the poem has been understood as a response to Mary's execution in 1587.

<sup>2</sup> *The daughter of debate* Mary, Queen of Scots.

<sup>3</sup> *rusty sword through rest* The sword is rusty because unused.

*On Monsieur's Departure*<sup>4</sup>

I grieve, and dare not show my discontent,  
I love, and yet am forced to seem to hate,  
I do, yet dare not say I ever meant,  
I seem stark mute, but inwardly do prate.

5 I am and not, I freeze and yet am burned,  
Since from myself another self I turned.

My care is like my shadow in the sun,  
Follows me flying, flies when I pursue it,  
Stands and lies by me, doth what I have done.

10 His too familiar care doth make me rue<sup>o</sup> it. *regret*  
No means I find to rid him from my breast,  
Till by the end of things it be suppressed.

Some gentler passion slide into my mind,  
For I am soft and made of melting snow,  
15 Or be more cruel, love, and so be kind.  
Let me or float or<sup>5</sup> sink, be high or low,  
Or let me live with some more sweet content,  
Or die, and so forget what love ere meant.

—c. 1582

*When I Was Fair and Young*<sup>6</sup>

When I was fair and young, and favour graced me,  
Of many was I sought their mistress for to be,  
But I did scorn them all and answered them therefore,  
"Go, go, go, seek some other where. Importune me no  
more."

5 How many weeping eyes I made to pine with woe,  
How many sighing hearts I have no skill to show,  
But I the prouder grew and still this spake therefore,  
"Go, go, go, seek some other where. Importune  
me no more."

<sup>4</sup> *On Monsieur's Departure* This poem was written in response to the final departure of Elizabeth's French suitor, François, duc d'Anjou, in 1582.

<sup>5</sup> *or ... or* Either ... or.

<sup>6</sup> *When I Was Fair and Young* The date of this poem is uncertain, and some editors have doubted its authenticity.

10 Then spake fair Venus' son,<sup>1</sup> that proud victorious boy,  
Saying, "You dainty dame, for that you be so coy,  
I will so pluck your plumes as you shall say no more,  
'Go, go, go, seek some other where. Importune  
me no more.'"

When he had spoke these words, such change grew in  
my breast  
That neither night nor day since that I could take any  
rest.

15 Wherefore I did repent that I had said before,  
"Go, go, go, seek some other where. Importune me no  
more."  
—1589–90

*To Our Most Noble and Virtuous Queen  
Katherine, Elizabeth Her Humble Daughter  
Wishes Perpetual Felicity and Everlasting Joy*<sup>2</sup>

Not only knowing the affectionate will and fervent  
zeal which your highness hath toward all godly  
learning, as also my duty toward you (most gracious and  
sovereign princess); but knowing also that pusillanimity<sup>3</sup>  
and idleness are most repugnant unto a reasonable  
creature and that (as the philosopher<sup>4</sup> saith) even as an  
instrument of iron or of other metal waxeth soon rusty  
unless it be continually occupied,<sup>5</sup> even so shall the wit  
of a man or woman wax dull and unapt to do or under-  
stand anything perfectly unless it be always occupied  
upon some manner of study, which things considered  
hath moved so small a portion as God hath lent me to  
prove what I could do. And therefore have I as for assay<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Venus' son* Cupid.

<sup>2</sup> *To Our Most ... Joy* This is the prefatory letter to Elizabeth's English translation of Marguerite de Navarre's *Miroir de l'Âme Récherchée*, given as a New Year's gift to Catherine Parr, Henry VIII's last wife.

<sup>3</sup> *pusillanimity* Lack of courage and strength of mind.

<sup>4</sup> *the philosopher* Aristotle, but the thought is proverbial.

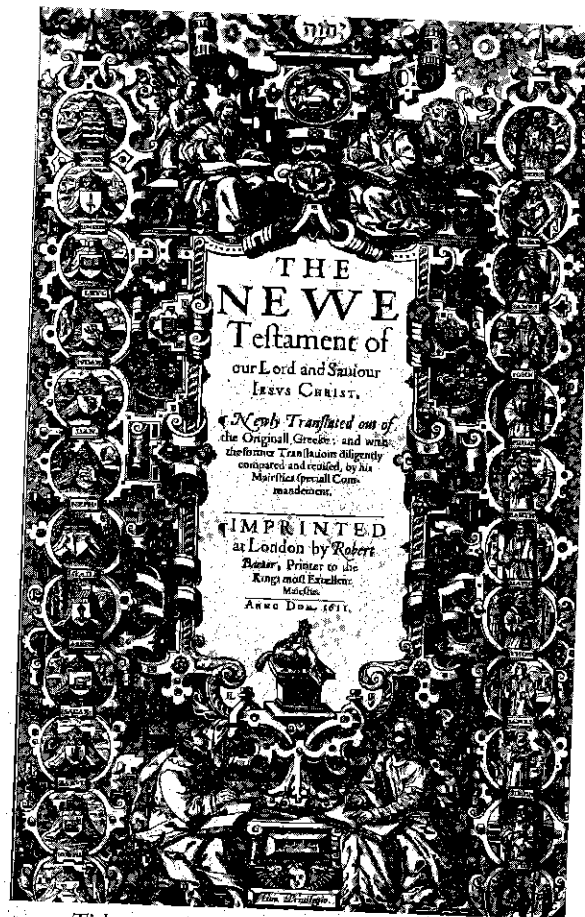
<sup>5</sup> *occupied* Used.

<sup>6</sup> *assay* Attempt.

or beginning (so following the right noble saying of the proverb aforesaid) translated this little book out of French rhyme into English prose, joining the sentences together as well as the capacity of my simple wit and small learning could extend themselves. The which book is entitled, or named, *The Mirror or Glass of the Sinful Soul*, wherein is contained how she<sup>7</sup> (beholding and contemplating what she is) doth perceive how of herself and of her own strength she can do nothing that good is, or prevaileth for her salvation, unless it be through the grace of God, whose mother, daughter, sister, and wife by the scriptures she proveth herself to be. Trusting also that through His incomprehensible love, grace, and mercy she (being called from sin to repentance) doth faithfully hope to be saved. And although I know that as for my part which I have wrought in it (as well spiritual as manual) there is nothing done as it should be, nor else worthy to come in your grace's hands, but rather all unperfect and uncorrect, yet do I trust also that albeit it is like a work which is but new begun and shaped, that the file of your excellent wit and godly learning in the reading of it (if so it vouchsafe your highness to do) shall rub out, polish, and mend (or else cause to mend) the words (or rather the order of my writing), the which I know in many places to be rude, and nothing done as it should be. But I hope that after having been in your grace's hands there shall be nothing in it worthy of reprehension and that in the meanwhile no other (but your highness only) shall read it or see it, lest my faults be known of many. Then shall they be better excused (as my confidence is in your grace's accustomed benevolence) than if I should bestow a whole year in writing or inventing ways to excuse them.

Praying God almighty, the maker and creator of all things, to grant unto your highness this same New Year's day a lucky and prosperous year with prosperous issue and continuance of many years in good health and continual joy and all to His honour, praise, and glory.  
—1548 (31 DECEMBER 1544)

<sup>7</sup> *she* Marguerite de Navarre.



Title page, *New Testament, King James Bible* (first edition, 1611).

## The Fearefull Summer:

OR,

Londons Calamitie, The Countries Discour-  
tesie, And both their Miseric.

Printed by Authoritie in *Oxford*, in the last great Infection of the  
Plague, 1625. And now reprinted with some Editions,  
concerning this present yeere, 1636.

With some mention of the grievous and afflicted estate of the famous Towne  
of *New-Castle* upon Tyne, with some other visited Townes  
of this Kingdome.

By JOHN TAYLOR.



Title page, John Taylor, *The Fearful Summer: or London's Calamity* (1625, reprinted 1636). The plague of 1665 remains the most famous of the seventeenth century, but it was one of many—including those of 1603, 1625 and 1636.

## AEMILIA LANYER

1569 – 1645

Aemilia Lanyer published her one book of poetry at a time when it was unusual for an English woman to publish her writing, especially under her full name. It was even more unusual for a middle-class woman to approach publication as a means of making money; to choose herself female patrons; and to make carefully planned use of poems addressed to them in order to raise the status of her work. Lanyer did all of these things.

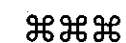
Because Lanyer was not born into the nobility, many of the details of her personal life are sketchy, cobbled together from court and church records, information gleaned from her poems, and the professional journals of Simon Forman, an astrologer whom she consulted in 1597. She was born to Baptista Bassano and Margaret Johnson, a couple in a common-law marriage, in January 1569. Her father was an Italian musician in the courts of Edward VI and Elizabeth I, so although Aemilia Bassano was not of noble birth, she had access to aristocratic circles and was probably educated along with the young ladies of the court, likely in classical literature and rhetoric.

At age 18, Aemilia Bassano became the mistress of Henry Carey, Lord Hunsdon, who was then serving as Lord Chamberlain to Queen Elizabeth. The affair continued for five years, until she became pregnant. To avoid embarrassment, Carey married her off to another court musician, Alfonso Lanyer, on 18 October 1592, and provided her with an annual stipend of £40. Lanyer bore a son in early 1593, and named him Henry. Lanyer's marriage to Alfonso was not happy: according to Simon Forman's journals, "her husband hath dealt hardly with her and spent and consumed her goods and she is now . . . in debt." The couple had one child together in December 1598, named Odillya, who died at the age of ten months.

Despite her domestic situation, Lanyer maintained her connection with aristocratic families, particularly with a circle of intellectual court women, to whom she later dedicated many poems. Some time before 1609, she stayed with Margaret Clifford, Countess of Cumberland, and her daughter Anne at the estate where they were then living, Cookham Dean. The visit influenced Lanyer profoundly, as she relates in "The Description of Cooke-ham," the first "country house" poem published in English. While at Cookham Dean, she says, she experienced a spiritual awakening, inspired by the piety of the countess.

In 1611, at age 42, she published her volume of verse, *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* (*Hail, God, King of the Jews*). Although the book focuses on virtue and religion, topics considered appropriate for a woman, it is nevertheless a radical (although not unprecedented) work for its time. Among its topics is the traditional and misogynistic maltreatment of women. The title poem, a lively narrative of the passion of Christ, interrupts its story once to argue that Eve, and, by extension, womankind, have been unjustly made to bear the chief responsibility for eating the fruit of the forbidden tree: that sin pales in comparison to the sin of the men who deliberately sentenced Christ to death. She commends the intervention of Pilate's wife and contrasts the behavior of Christ's male disciples, who forsook or denied him, with that of the women who stayed with him to the end.

After her husband died in 1613, Lanyer founded a school for the children of nobility and other wealthy families as a means of supporting herself. The only details concerning the remainder of her life come from court records, which indicate that she had considerable legal troubles, first concerning her school, then regarding the estate of her son, Henry, who died in October 1633. Lanyer died at age 76, and was buried 3 April 1645, at St. James Church, Clerkenwell.





## To the Virtuous Reader

Often have I heard that it is the property<sup>1</sup> of some women not only to emulate the virtues and perfections of the rest, but also by all their powers of ill-speaking to eclipse the brightness of their deserved fame; now contrary to this custom, which men I hope unjustly lay to their charge, I have written this small volume or little book, for the general use of all virtuous ladies and gentlewomen of this kingdom; and in commendation of some particular persons of our own sex, such as for the most part are so well known to myself and others, that I dare undertake fame dares not to call any better. And this have I done to make known to the world that all women deserve not to be blamed, though some forgetting they are women themselves, and in danger to be condemned by the words of their own mouths, fall into so great an error, as to speak unadvisedly against the rest of their sex; which if it be true, I am persuaded they can show their own imperfection in nothing more; and therefore could wish (for their own ease, modesties and credit) they would refer such points of folly to be practised by evil-disposed men, who forgetting they were born of women, nourished of women, and that if it were not by the means of women, they would be quite extinguished out of the world, and a final end of them all, do like vipers deface the wombs wherein they were bred,<sup>2</sup> only to give way and utterance to their want of discretion and goodness. Such as these, were they that dishonoured Christ, his apostles and prophets, putting them to shameful deaths. Therefore we are not to regard any imputations, that they undeservedly lay upon us, no otherwise than to make use of them to our own benefits, as spurs to virtue, making us fly all occasions that may colour their unjust speeches to pass current.<sup>3</sup> Especially considering that they have tempted even the patience of God himself, who gave power to wise and virtuous women to bring down their pride and arrogance. As was cruel Cesarius by the discreet counsel of noble

<sup>1</sup> property Habit.

<sup>2</sup> vipers ... bred It was thought that at birth the viper's young bit through the sides of the mother in order to be born, killing her.

<sup>3</sup> pass current Seem legitimate.

Deborah,<sup>4</sup> judge and prophetess of Israel, and resolution of Jael,<sup>5</sup> wife of Heber the Kenite; wicked Haman, by the divine prayers and prudent proceedings of beautiful Hester;<sup>6</sup> blasphemous Holofernes, by the invincible courage, rare wisdom, and confident carriage of Judith;<sup>7</sup> and the unjust judges, by the innocence of chaste Susanna;<sup>8</sup> with infinite others, which for brevity's sake I will omit. As also in respect it pleased our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, without the assistance of man, being free from original and all other sins, from the time of his conception till the hour of his death, to be begotten of a woman, born of a woman, nourished of a woman, obedient to a woman; and that he healed women, pardoned women, comforted women, yea, even when he was in his greatest agony and bloody sweat, going to be crucified, and also in the last hour of his death, took care to dispose of a woman; after his resurrection, appeared first to a woman, sent a woman to declare his most glorious resurrection to the rest of his disciples. Many other examples I could allege of diverse faithful and virtuous women, who have in all ages not only been confessors, but also endured most cruel martyrdom for their faith in Jesus Christ. All which is sufficient to enforce all good Christians and honourable-minded men to speak reverently of our sex, and especially of all virtuous and good women. To the modest censures of both which I refer these my imperfect endeavours, knowing that according to their own excellent dispositions they will rather cherish, nourish, and increase the least spark of virtue where they find it, by their favourable and best interpretations, than quench it by wrong constructions. To whom I wish with all increase of virtue, and desire their best opinions.

<sup>4</sup> Deborah Ruler of Israel who defeated the army of Sisera (Cesarius), a Canaanite general (see Judges 4).

<sup>5</sup> Jael Woman who killed Sisera by driving a tent peg through his head (see Judges 4).

<sup>6</sup> Hester Jewish queen (also called Esther) who saved the Jews from a genocidal plot concocted by Haman by appealing to Xerxes, King of Persia (see Esther 3-7).

<sup>7</sup> Judith Woman who killed the Babylonian general Holofernes by cutting off his head (see Judith 8-12).

<sup>8</sup> Susanna Woman who resisted the advances of two judges, who then unjustly charged her with adultery (see Daniel and Susanna 13).

from *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum*

## "Invocation"

Sith<sup>o</sup> Cynthia<sup>1</sup> is ascended to that rest<sup>since</sup>  
Of endless joy and true eternity,  
That glorious place that cannot be expressed  
By any wight<sup>o</sup> clad in mortality,<sup>creature</sup>  
In her almighty love so highly blest,  
And crowned with everlasting sovereignty;  
Where saints and angels do attend her throne,  
And she gives glory unto God alone.

To thee, great Countess,<sup>2</sup> now I will apply  
My pen, to write thy never dying fame;  
That when to heaven thy blessed soul shall fly,  
These lines on earth record thy reverend name:  
And to this task I mean my muse to tie,  
Though wanting skill I shall but purchase blame:  
Pardon (dear Lady) want of woman's wit  
To pen thy praise, when few can equal it.

## "Eve's Apology in Defense of Women"

Now Pontius Pilate<sup>3</sup> is to judge the cause  
Of faultless Jesus, who before him stands,  
Who neither hath offended prince, nor laws,  
Although he now be brought in woeful bands.  
O noble governor, make thou yet a pause,  
Do not in innocent blood inbrue<sup>o</sup> thy hands;<sup>defile</sup>  
But hear the words of thy most worthy wife,  
Who sends to thee, to beg her Savior's life.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cynthia Goddess of the moon, often identified with Queen Elizabeth I, who died in 1603.

<sup>2</sup> Countess Margaret Clifford, Countess of Cumberland (1560-1616), Lanyer's patroness.

<sup>3</sup> Pontius Pilate Roman governor of Judea, who presided over the trial of Jesus (see Matthew 27.11-26).

<sup>4</sup> Do ... hands Reference to Matthew 27.24, in which Pilate washes his hands to demonstrate that he does not consider himself responsible for what happens to Jesus.

<sup>5</sup> hear ... life Pilate received a message from his wife, urging him not to convict Jesus (see Matthew 27.19).

Let barb'rous cruelty far depart from thee,  
And in true justice take affliction's part;  
Open thine eyes, that thou the truth may'st see.  
Do not the thing that goes against thy heart,  
Condemn not him that must thy Savior be;  
But view his holy life, his good desert.<sup>o</sup>  
Let not us women glory in men's fall.<sup>6</sup>  
Who had power given to overrule us all,

Till now your indiscretion sets us free.  
And makes our former fault much less appear;  
Our mother Eve, who tasted of the tree,<sup>7</sup>  
Giving to Adam what she held most dear,  
Was simply good, and had no power to see;  
The after-coming harm did not appear:  
The subtle serpent that our sex betrayed  
Before our fall so sure a plot had laid.

That undiscerning ignorance perceived  
No guile or craft that was by him intended;  
For had she known of what we were bereaved,<sup>8</sup>  
To his request she had not condescended.  
But she, poor soul, by cunning was deceived;  
No hurt therein her harmless heart intended:  
For she alleged<sup>o</sup> God's word, which he<sup>o</sup> denies,<sup>affirmed</sup>  
That they should die, but even as gods be wise.

But surely Adam cannot be excused;  
Her fault though great, yet he was most to blame;  
What weakness offered, strength might have refused,  
Being lord of all, the greater was his shame.  
Although the serpent's craft had her abused,  
God's holy word ought all his actions frame,<sup>o</sup>  
For he was lord and king of all the earth,  
Before poor Eve had either life or breath;

<sup>6</sup> men's fall Fall into a sin, by crucifying Christ, greater than Eve's "original" sin.

<sup>7</sup> Eve ... tree According to Genesis 3.6, Eve ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. She shared the fruit with Adam, and as a consequence the two were banished from the Garden of Eden.

<sup>8</sup> bereaved Robbed (of eternal life).

<sup>9</sup> he I.e., the serpent (see Genesis 3.4-5).

785 Who being framed<sup>o</sup> by God's eternal hand *formed*  
 The perfectest man that ever breathed on earth;  
 And from God's mouth received that strait<sup>o</sup> command, *strict*  
 The breach whereof he knew was present death;  
 Yea, having power to rule both sea and land,  
 790 Yet with one apple won to lose that breath!  
 Which God had breathed in his beauteous face,  
 Bringing us all in danger and disgrace.

And then to lay the fault on Patience' back,  
 That we (poor women) must endure it all.  
 795 We know right well he did discretion lack,  
 Being not persuaded thereunto at all.  
 If Eve did err, it was for knowledge sake;  
 The fruit being fair persuaded him to fall:  
 No subtle serpent's falsehood did betray him;  
 800 If he would eat it, who had power to stay<sup>o</sup> him? *stop*

Not Eve, whose fault was only too much love,  
 Which made her give this present to her dear,  
 That what she tasted he likewise might prove,<sup>o</sup> *experience*  
 Whereby his knowledge might become more clear;  
 805 He never sought her weakness to reprove  
 With those sharp words which he of God did hear;  
 Yet men will boast of knowledge, which he took  
 From Eve's fair hand, as from a learned book.

If any evil did in her remain,  
 810 Being made of him,<sup>2</sup> he was the ground of all.  
 If one of many worlds<sup>3</sup> could lay a stain  
 Upon our sex, and work so great a fall  
 To wretched man by Satan's<sup>4</sup> subtle train,  
 What will so foul a fault amongst you all?  
 815 Her weakness did the serpent's words obey,  
 But you in malice God's dear Son betray,

<sup>1</sup> *breath* God breathed life into Adam (see Genesis 2.7).

<sup>2</sup> *made ... him* According to Genesis 2.21–22, Eve was made from one of Adam's ribs.

<sup>3</sup> *many worlds* As the first man, Adam was the father of all humans. Human beings were sometimes likened to individual worlds in the literature of the time.

<sup>4</sup> *Satan's* Belonging to the serpent, traditionally identified with Satan.

Whom, if unjustly you condemn to die,  
 Her sin was small to what you do commit;  
 All mortal sins that do for vengeance cry  
 820 Are not to be compared unto it.  
 If many worlds would altogether try  
 By all their sins the wrath of God to get,  
 This sin of yours surmounts them all as far  
 As doth the sun another little star.<sup>5</sup>

825 Then let us have our liberty again,  
 And challenge<sup>o</sup> to yourselves no sovereignty. *attribute*  
 You came not in the world without our pain,  
 Make that a bar against your cruelty;  
 Your fault being greater, why should you disdain  
 830 Our being your equals, free from tyranny?  
 If one weak woman simply did offend,  
 This sin of yours hath no excuse nor end,<sup>6</sup>

To which, poor souls, we never gave consent.  
 Witness, thy wife, O Pilate, speaks for all,  
 835 Who did but dream, and yet a message sent  
 That thou shouldest have nothing to do at all  
 With that just man<sup>6</sup> which, if thy heart relent,  
 Why wilt thou be a reprobate<sup>7</sup> with Saul<sup>8</sup>  
 To seek the death of him that is so good,  
 840 For thy soul's health to shed his dearest blood?

### *The Description of Cooke-ham<sup>9</sup>*

Farewell (sweet Cooke-ham) where I first obtained  
 Grace from that grace where perfect grace remained;  
 And where the muses gave their full consent,

<sup>5</sup> *sun ... star* As the sun outshines the other stars in the sky, so the sin of killing Jesus is greater in magnitude. In earlier understandings of astronomy, the sun was thought to be much larger than the stars.

<sup>6</sup> *just man* I.e., Jesus.

<sup>7</sup> *a reprobate* Damned.

<sup>8</sup> *Saul* King of Israel, who tried to kill David (see 1 Samuel 19.9–24).

<sup>9</sup> *Cooke-ham* Cookham Dean, a country house in Berkshire, UK, leased by the brother of Lanyer's patroness, Margaret Clifford, Countess of Cumberland.

I should have power the virtuous to content;  
 5 Where princely palace willed me to indite<sup>o</sup> *write*  
 The sacred story of the soul's delight.<sup>1</sup>  
 Farewell (sweet place) where virtue then did rest,  
 And all delights did harbour in her breast;  
 Never shall my sad eyes again behold  
 10 Those pleasures which my thoughts did then unfold;  
 Yet you (great lady) mistress of that place,<sup>2</sup>  
 From whose desires did spring this work of grace,  
 Vouchsafe<sup>o</sup> to think upon these pleasures past *are prepared*  
 As fleeting, worldly joys that could not last,  
 15 Or as dim shadows of celestial pleasures,  
 Which are desired above all earthly treasures.  
 Oh how (methought) against you thither came  
 Each part did seem some new delight to frame!  
 The house received all ornaments to grace it,  
 20 And would endure no foulness to deface it.  
 The walks put on their summer liveries,<sup>o</sup> *uniforms*  
 And all things else did hold like similes:  
 The trees with leaves, with fruits, with flowers clad,  
 Embraced each other, seeming to be glad,  
 25 Turning themselves to beauteous canopies  
 To shade the bright sun from your brighter eyes;  
 The crystal streams with silver spangles graced,  
 While by the glorious sun they were embraced;  
 The little birds in chirping notes did sing,  
 30 To entertain both you and that sweet spring;  
 And Philomela<sup>3</sup> with her sundry lays,  
 Both you and that delightful place did praise.  
 Oh, how methought each plant, each flower, each tree  
 Set forth their beauties then to welcome thee;  
 35 The very hills right humbly did descend,  
 When you to tread upon them did intend.  
 And as you set your feet, they still did rise,  
 Glad that they could receive so rich a prize.  
 The gentle winds did take delight to be  
 40 Among those woods that were so graced by thee

<sup>1</sup> *sacred ... delight* *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*, to which this poem is appended.

<sup>2</sup> *you ... place* Margaret Clifford, Countess of Cumberland (1560–1616).

<sup>3</sup> *Philomela* Nightingale. In Greek mythology, Philomela was a woman who was changed into a nightingale.

And in sad murmur uttered pleasing sound,  
 That pleasure in that place might more abound;  
 The swelling banks delivered all their pride,  
 When such a phoenix once they had espied.  
 45 Each arbour, bank, each seat, each stately tree  
 Thought themselves honoured in supporting thee.  
 The pretty birds would oft come to attend thee,  
 Yet fly away for fear they should offend thee;  
 The little creatures in the burrow by  
 50 Would come abroad to sport them in your eye;<sup>4</sup>  
 Yet fearful of the bow in your fair hand  
 Would run away when you did make a stand.  
 Now let me come unto that stately tree,  
 Wherein such goodly prospects you did see;  
 55 That oak that did in height his fellows pass,  
 As much as lofty trees, low-growing grass;  
 Much like a comely cedar, straight and tall,  
 Whose beauteous stature far exceeded all;  
 How often did you visit this fair tree,  
 60 Which seeming joyful in receiving thee,  
 Would like a palm tree spread his arms abroad,  
 Desirous that you there should make abode;  
 Whose fair green leaves much like a comely veil  
 Defended Phoebus<sup>5</sup> when he would assail;  
 65 Whose pleasing boughs did lend a cool fresh air,  
 Joying his happiness when you were there;  
 Where being seated, you might plainly see  
 Hills, vales and woods, as if on-bended knee  
 They had appeared, your honour to salute,  
 70 Or to prefer<sup>o</sup> some strange unlooked-for suit,<sup>o</sup> *proffer / request*  
 All interlaced with brooks and crystal springs,  
 A prospect fit to please the eyes of kings;  
 And thirteen shires appear all in your sight,  
 Europe could not afford much more delight.  
 75 What was there then but gave you all content,  
 While you the time in meditation spent,  
 Of their creator's power, which there you saw  
 In all his creatures held a perfect law,  
 And in their beauties did you plain descry<sup>o</sup> *discern*  
 80 His beauty, wisdom, grace, love, majesty.

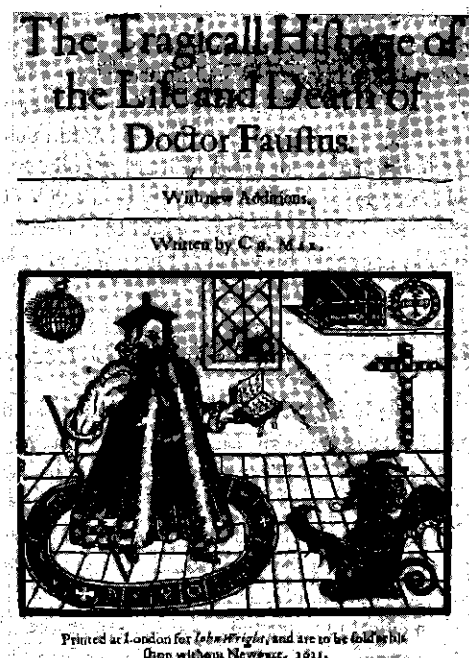
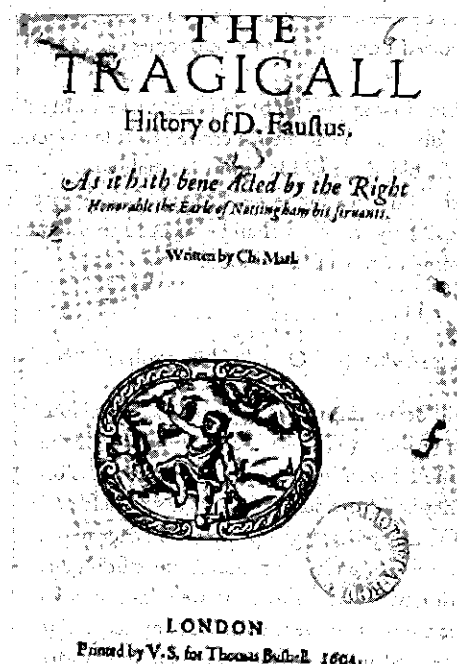
<sup>4</sup> *sport ... eye* Entertain you.

<sup>5</sup> *Phoebus* Sun. "Phoebus" is an epithet for Apollo, Greek and Roman god of the sun.

from AUTHOR'S PREFACE  
I do not doubt but that the title of our book, *Of Occult Philosophy, or of Magic*, may by its rarity entice a large number to read it, among whom some twisted, feeble-minded people, and also many ill-disposed and hostile to my talents, will approach: these, in their rash ignorance taking the name of magic in the worse sense, will cry out, hardly having beheld the title, that I teach forbidden arts, sow the seed of heresy, am an offence to pious ears and to outstanding minds a stumbling block; that I am a sorcerer, a superstitious man, and a demoniac, because I am a magician. To these people I would reply that *magus* among learned men does not signify a sorcerer, nor a superstitious man, nor one possessed, but one who is a wise man, a priest, a prophet. The Sibyls were magicians; hence they prophesied most plainly of Christ. And indeed the Magi knew by the wonderful secrets of the world that Christ the author of the world itself was born, and were the first of all to come and worship him. And the name itself of magic was accepted by philosophers, extolled by theologians, and was also not displeasing to the gospel itself. Yet I believe those censors to be of such steadfast arrogance that they will forbid themselves the Sibyls and the holy magicians, and even the gospel itself, sooner than that the name of magic should be admitted into favour; to such a degree are they careful of their conscience, that neither Apollo, nor all the Muses, nor an angel from heaven would be able to deliver me from their curse. And I advise them now that they neither read, nor understand, nor remember our treatise, for it is harmful, it is poisonous, the gate of Acheron is in this book, it speaks stones: let them take heed lest it beat out their brains. . . .

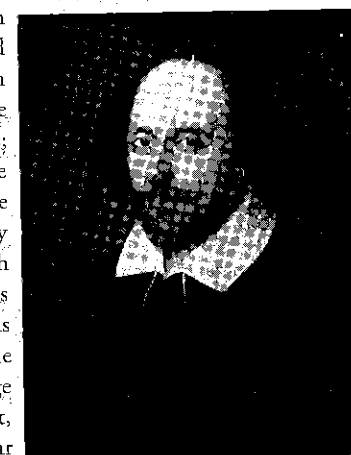
Dr. Faustus

The title pages of the 1604 and 1616 editions of *Dr. Faustus* are reproduced below.



## WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

1564 – 1616



The plays of Shakespeare are foundational works of Western culture; in the English-speaking world they have influenced subsequent literary culture more broadly and more deeply than any other group of texts except the books of the Bible. The language and imagery of the plays; their ways of telling stories; their innovative dramatic qualities; the characters that populate them (and the ways in which these characters are created); the issues and ideas the plays explore (and the ways in which they explore them)—all these have powerfully shaped English literature and culture over the past four centuries. And this shaping influence has continually touched popular culture as well as more “elevated” literary and academic worlds. From the eighteenth century on Shakespeare’s plays have held the stage with far greater frequency than those of any other playwright, and in the twentieth century many have been made into popular films (some of the best of which are films in Japanese and in Russian). Even outside the English-speaking world the plays of Shakespeare receive unparalleled exposure; in the Netherlands, for example, his plays have been performed in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries more than twice as often as those of any other playwright. In 2000 he headed the list both on the BBC “person of the millennium” poll and on the *World Almanac’s* poll listing the 10 “most influential people of the second millennium.” The fact that a playwright, a member of the popular entertainment industry, has continued to enjoy this kind of cultural status—ranked above the likes of Newton, Churchill, Galileo, and Einstein—is worth pausing over. Why are these plays still performed, read, watched, filmed, studied, and appropriated four centuries after they were written? What is the source of his ongoing cultural currency?

There are many ways to answer this question. One is surely that the plays tell great stories. Fundamental, psychologically sophisticated stories, about love, death, growing up, families, communities, guilt, revenge, jealousy, order and disorder, self-knowledge and identity. Another, just as surely, is that they tell them with extraordinary verbal facility in almost all respects: Shakespeare is generally regarded as unsurpassed in his choice of individual words and his inventiveness in conjuring up striking images; in his structuring of the rhythm of poetic lines; in balancing sentences rhetorically; in shaping long speeches; and in crafting sparkling dialogue. A third is that the characters within the stories are uniquely engaging and memorable. In large part this can be attributed to Shakespeare’s ingenuity: within the English literary tradition he more or less invented the psychologically realistic literary character; within the European literary tradition he more or less also invented the strong, independent female character. The bare bones of his characters are typically provided by other sources, but the flesh and blood is of Shakespeare’s making. Fourth, and perhaps most important of all, Shakespeare’s plays tell their stories in ways that are open-ended emotionally and intellectually: no matter how neatly the threads of story may be knitted together at the end, the threads of idea and of emotion in Shakespeare’s plays are never tied off. It is this openness of the plays, their availability for reinterpretation, that enables them to be endlessly re-staged, rewritten, re-interpreted—and to yield fresh ideas and fresh feelings time and time again.

Given the centrality of Shakespeare to Western culture, the wish of many readers to know far more than we do about his life is understandable. In fact we do know a fair amount about the facts of his life—given late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century norms, perhaps more than we might expect to know of someone of his class and background. But we know a good deal less of Shakespeare than we do of some other leading writers of his era—Ben Jonson, for example, or John Donne. And, perhaps most frustrating of all, we know almost nothing of an intimate or personal nature about Shakespeare.

Shakespeare (whose surname also appears on various documents as Shakespear, Shaksper, Shaxpere, and Shagspere) was baptized in Stratford-upon-Avon on 26 April 1564. Reasonable conjecture, given the customs of the time, suggests that he was born two-to-four days earlier; the date that has been most frequently advanced is 23 April (the same day of the year on which he died in 1616, and also the day on which St. George, England's patron saint, is traditionally honored). His father, John, was a glove-maker and also a local politician: first an alderman and then bailiff, a position equivalent to mayor. Some scholars have argued that he had remained a Catholic in newly-Protestant England, and that Shakespeare thus grew up in a clandestinely Catholic home; though the evidence for this is suggestive, it is not conclusive. (If Shakespeare had grown up Catholic, that background might lead readers to see some of his history plays in a different perspective, and might lend even greater poignancy to images such as that of the "bare ruined choirs" of Sonnet 73, with its suggestion of the destruction of the monasteries destroyed by Henry VIII following the break with Rome.)

Stratford-upon-Avon had a good grammar school, which is generally presumed to have provided William's early education, though no records exist to confirm this. Not surprisingly, he did not go on to university, which at the time would have been unusual for a person from the middle class. (Even Ben Jonson, one of the finest classicists of the period, did not attend university.) Shakespeare's first exposure to theater was probably through the troupes of traveling players that regularly toured the country at that time.

On 28 November 1562, when Shakespeare was eighteen, he was married to Anne Hathaway, who was eight years his senior. Six months later, in May of 1583, Anne gave birth to their first daughter, Susanna; given the timing, it seems reasonable to speculate that an unexpected pregnancy may have prompted a sudden marriage. In February 1585, twins, named Hamnet (Shakespeare's only son, who was to die at the age of eleven) and Judith, were born. Some time later, probably within the next three years, Shakespeare moved to London, leaving his young family behind. There has been considerable speculation as to his reasons for leaving Stratford-upon-Avon, but no solid evidence has been found to support any of the numerous theories. Certainly London was then (as now) a magnet for ambitious young men, and in the late 1580s it was effectively the only English city conducive to the pursuit of a career as a writer or in the theater.

It is not known exactly when Shakespeare joined the professional theater in London, but by 1592 several of his plays had reached the stage—the three parts of *Henry VI*, probably *The Comedy of Errors* and *Titus Andronicus*, possibly others. The earliest extant mention of him in print occurs in 1592: a sarcastic jibe by an embittered older playwright, Robert Greene. Greene calls Shakespeare "an upstart crow beautified with our feathers," probably referring to Shakespeare's work on the series of *Henry VI* plays, which may well have involved the revision of material by other writers who had originally worked on the play. In any case, from 1594 on, Will Shakespeare is listed as a member of the company called The Lord Chamberlain's Men (later called The King's Men, when James I became their patron).

Professional theater in London did not become firmly established until 1576, when the first permanent playhouses opened. By the late 1580s four theaters were in operation—an unprecedented level of activity, and one that in all probability helped to nurture greater sophistication on the part of audiences. Certainly it was a hothouse that nurtured an extraordinary growth of theatrical agility

on the part of Elizabethan playwrights. Shakespeare, as both playwright and actor in The Lord Chamberlain's Men, was afforded opportunities of forging, testing and reworking his written work in the heat of rehearsals and performances—opportunities that were not open to other playwrights.<sup>1</sup> And in Christopher Marlowe he had a rival playwright of a most extraordinary sort. It seems safe to conjecture that the two learned a good deal about play construction from each other. In the late 1580s and early 1590s they both adopt virtually simultaneously the practice of having their characters express their intentions in advance of the unfolding action, thereby encouraging the formation of audience expectations; they also begin to make it a practice to interpose some other action between the exit and the re-entry of any character, thereby further fostering the creation of a sense of temporal and spatial illusion of a sort quite new to the English stage.

In his early years in London Shakespeare also established himself as a non-dramatic poet—and sought aristocratic patronage in doing so. In the late sixteenth century the writing of poetry was accorded considerable respect, the writing of plays a good deal less. It was conventional for those not of aristocratic birth themselves to seek a patron for their writing—as Shakespeare evidently did with the Earl of Southampton, a young noble to whom he dedicated two substantial poems of mythological narrative, *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594). (It is a measure of the enormity of Shakespeare's achievement that these poems, which would be regarded as major works of almost any other writer of the period, are an afterthought in most considerations of Shakespeare's work.) Before the end of the century Shakespeare was also circulating his sonnets, as we know from the praise of Francis Meres, who wrote in 1598 that the "sweet, witty soul" of the classical poet of love, Ovid, "lives in mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakespeare, witness his *Venus and Adonis*, his *Lucrece*, his sugared sonnets among his private friends, etc." Such circulation among "private friends" was common practice at the time, and was not necessarily followed by publication. When Shakespeare's sonnets were finally published, in 1609, the dedication was from the printer rather than the author, suggesting that Shakespeare may not have authorized their publication.

There are thirty-eight extant plays by Shakespeare (if *Two Noble Kinsmen* is included in the total). Unlike most other playwrights of the age, he wrote in every major dramatic genre. His history plays (most of them written in the 1590s) include *Richard III*, *Henry IV, Part 1 and Part 2*, and *Henry V*. He wrote comedies throughout his playwrighting years; the succession of comedies that date from the years 1595–1601, including *Much Ado About Nothing*, *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*, may represent his most successful work in this genre; though some have argued that *The Merchant of Venice* (c. 1596) and the "dark comedies" which date from between 1601 and 1604 (including *All's Well That Ends Well* and *Measure for Measure*) resonate even more deeply. The period of the "dark comedies" substantially overlaps with the period in which Shakespeare wrote a succession of great tragedies. *Hamlet* may have been written as early as 1598–99, but *Orbello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth* were written in succession between 1601 and 1606. Several of his last plays are romance-comedies—notably *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest* (all of which date from the period 1608–11).

Shakespeare was a shareholder in The Lord Chamberlain's Men, and it was in that capacity rather than as a playwright or actor that he made a good deal of money. There was at the time no equivalent

<sup>1</sup> From the nineteenth century onwards (though, perhaps tellingly, never before that), the suggestion has occasionally been put forward that Shakespeare never wrote the plays attributed to him, and that someone else—perhaps Francis Bacon, perhaps Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford—was actually the author. These conspiracy theories have sometimes gained popular currency, but scholars have never found any reason whatsoever to credit any of them. One of the many reasons such theories lack credibility follows from our sure knowledge that Shakespeare was an actor in many of the plays that bear his name as author. If Shakespeare had not written the plays himself it would surely have been impossibly difficult to conceal that fact from all the members of the rest of the company, in rehearsal as well as in performance, over the course of many, many years.

to modern laws of copyright, or to modern conventions of payment to the authors of published works. Nineteen of Shakespeare's plays were printed individually during Shakespeare's lifetime, but it is clear that many of these publications did not secure his co-operation. It has often been hypothesized that some of the printers of the most obviously defective texts (referred to by scholars as "bad quartos") are pirated editions dictated from memory to publishers by actors; there is some evidence to support this theory, though even if correct it leaves many textual issues unresolved.

The first publication of Shakespeare's collected works did not occur until 1623, several years after his death, when two of his fellow actors, John Heminges and Henry Condell, arranged to have printed the First Folio, a carefully prepared volume (by the standards of the time) that included thirty-six of Shakespeare's plays. Eighteen of these were appearing for the first time, and four others for the first time in a reliable edition. (*Two Noble Kinsmen*, which was written in collaboration with a younger playwright, John Fletcher; and *Pericles*, of which it appears Shakespeare was not the sole author, were both excluded, although the editors did include *Henry VIII*, which is now generally believed to have been another work in which Fletcher had a hand.)

A vital characteristic of Shakespeare's plays is their extraordinary richness of language. After several centuries of forging a new tongue out of its polyglot sources, the English language in the sixteenth century had entered a period of steady growth in its range, as vocabulary expanded to meet the needs of an increasingly complex society. Yet its structure over this same time (no doubt in connection with the spread of print culture) was becoming increasingly stable. When we compare the enormous difference between the language of Chaucer, who was writing in the late fourteenth century, and that of Shakespeare, writing in the late sixteenth century, it is remarkable to see how greatly the language changed over those two centuries—considerably more than it has changed in the four centuries from Shakespeare's time to our own. English was still effectively a new language in his time, with immense and largely unexplored possibilities for conveying subtleties of meaning. More than any other, Shakespeare embarked on that exploration; his reading was clearly very wide,<sup>1</sup> as was his working vocabulary. But he expanded the language as well as absorbing it; a surprising number of the words Shakespeare used are first recorded as having been used in his work.

The popular image of Shakespeare's last few years is that first expressed by Nicholas Rowe in 1709:

The latter part of his life was spent, as all men of good sense wish theirs may be, in ease, retirement, and the conversation of his friends. He had the good fortune to gather together an estate equal to his occasion, and, in that, to his wish; and is said to have spent some years before his death at his native Stratford.

We know for a fact that around 1610 Shakespeare moved from London to Stratford, where his family had continued to live throughout the years he had spent in London, and the move has often been referred to as a "retirement." Shakespeare did not immediately give up playwriting, however; *The Tempest* (1611), *Henry VIII* (c. 1612) and *Two Noble Kinsmen* (c. 1613) all date from after his move to Stratford. By the time he left London Shakespeare was indeed a relatively wealthy man, with

<sup>1</sup> In his early years in London Shakespeare may well have acquired much of his reading material from Richard Field, a man from Stratford-upon-Avon of about Shakespeare's age who was in the book trade. Field printed Shakespeare's early poems, *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, and it is certainly possible that the two men had some understanding by which Shakespeare borrowed some of the books he read, which otherwise might have been prohibitively expensive. (Among the works printed by Field was a multi-volume Thomas North translation of Plutarch's *Lives*, of which Shakespeare made extensive use.) Shakespeare also lodged for a time in London with a French Huguenot family named Montjoy, whose home may have been the source for some of the French books that his plays demonstrate a familiarity with. And he may also have had the use of the libraries of one or more of his aristocratic patrons.

substantial investments both in real estate and in the tithes of the town (an arrangement that would be comparable to buying government bonds today).

After 1613 we have no record of any further writing; he died on 23 April 1616, aged 52. In his will, Shakespeare left his extensive property to the sons of his daughter, Susanna (described in her epitaph as "witty above her sex"). To his wife, he left his "second-best bed"—a bequest which many have found both puzzling and provocative. He was buried as a respectable citizen in the chancel of the parish church, where his gravestone is marked not with a name, but a simple poem:

Good friend; for Jesus' sake forbear,  
To dig the dust enclosed here.  
Blest be the man that spares these bones,  
And curst be he that moves my bones.

Shakespeare's work appears to have been extremely well regarded in his lifetime; soon after his death a consensus developed that his work—his plays in particular—constitute the highest achievement in English literature. In some generations he has been praised most highly for the depth of his characterization, in others for the dense brilliance of his imagery, in others for the extraordinary intellectual suggestiveness of the ideas that his characters express (and occasionally embody). But in every generation since the mid-seventeenth century a consensus has remained that Shakespeare stands without peer among English authors.

In most generations the study of Shakespeare has also helped to shape the development of literary criticism and theory. From John Dryden and Samuel Johnson to Samuel Taylor Coleridge to Northrop Frye, works central to the development of literary theory and criticism have had Shakespeare as their subject. And in the past 50 years Shakespeare has been a vital test case in the development of feminist literary theory, of post-colonial theory, and of political, cultural, and new historicist criticism; just as with each generation people of the theater develop new ways of playing Shakespeare that yield fresh insight, so too do scholars develop new ways of reading texts through reading Shakespeare.

### The Sonnets

Begun in the 1590s, intermittently revised, and with some of its contents already circulating, Shakespeare's *Sonnets* was printed in 1609 under obscure circumstances. Did Shakespeare authorize publication by the printer Thomas Thorpe? Did he organize the sonnets himself? Is there a pattern to them? The 154 sonnets, concluding with two light poems on Cupid, are followed by a long "Lover's Complaint" in a female voice. How does this poem fit the volume, and do we know with any certainty that Shakespeare is the author of it as well?

The volume's structure parallels that of sonnet collections in the 1590s, such as Samuel Daniel's *Delia* and Spenser's *Epithalamion and Amoretti*. Is Shakespeare merely following this example or subtly commenting on it? Who is the "W.H." whom the printer Thorpe calls "the only begetter" of the sonnets? No one knows. Nor, despite sometimes wild speculation, do we know the identity of the beautiful but faithless young man to whom many of the sonnets are addressed (or if there is only one young man), or that of the "dark lady" whom the lover treats with erotic admiration and moral contempt, or that of the rival poet to whom some sonnets allude. Is the lady always the same woman? Sonnet 145 seems to pun on "Hathaway," maiden name of Shakespeare's wife, Anne. Who is the presumed speaker of these sonnets? Several sonnets pun on the "Will"—a useful name, for it could also denote a faculty of the soul, sexual desire, and even the genitals.

For many years the sonnets received little attention or respect. The second edition of Shakespeare's poems, a shabby volume published by John Benson (1640), feminizes some pronouns, runs

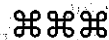
some sonnets together, and plagiarizes some commentary; it did the sonnets' reputation no good, and it was not until relatively recently that their splendor and power was fully acknowledged.

One source of older generations' unease with the sonnets was the passion with which the speaker addresses a younger man. It is conventional to think that the first 126 sonnets are to or about this youth and most of the remainder to or about a "dark lady," but many of the sonnets leave the gender of the addressee unspecified. Some of those undeniably involving the young man are clearly expressive of strong homoerotic desire, but the extent to which such desire is acted upon is much less clear. Sonnet 20 seems to say that a sexual relation between the speaker and his friend is impossible, but for some recent critics the poem's puns hint at the opposite. However we read them, such ardent expressions of love and longing for a fellow man are unusual, although not unparalleled, in the literature either of Renaissance England or the Continent.

Also unusual is the lover's sexually reciprocated but problematic love for a compliant if unfaithful woman. This is another respect in which Shakespeare makes a show of revising the Petrarchan tradition familiar to him from Renaissance poetry, in which the love of the male wooer was typically not reciprocated by his female beloved. Much as Shakespeare was clearly indebted to the Petrarchan tradition, he departed from it in a variety of ways.

In form, Petrarch and most other Italian poets had made it a practice to divide their sonnets formally into an octave followed by a sestet. Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, had been instrumental in the development of an "English" sonnet pattern of three quatrains followed by a couplet. Shakespeare varies the structure of his sonnets in a number of ways, but generally employs rhyme schemes deriving from the "English" pattern (most commonly: *abab cdcd efef gg*).

Whether or not we read *Sonnets* as a sequence, certain recurrent motifs are worth noticing: desire and "will" in every sense, the ruinous passage of time together with the physical and poetic means of surmounting its ravages, the cyclical and poignant beauty of the natural world, and the paradoxes involved in loving the unworthy. Just as notable is the language, which offers an astonishing array of puns, syntactic or lexical ambiguities, and metaphors that evolve through associative connections with a logic just below the surface sense of the verse. Note, for example, how Sonnet 60 moves from ocean waves, to crooked eclipses that must involve the moon (which affects the ocean), to the (curved) plow that makes agricultural furrows, that parallels the wrinkles of bent age, and to Time's curved scythe. Shakespeare can also be funny, though—as witness Sonnet 135's bawdy insinuations, or the resigned (bitter? amused?) puns in Sonnet 138 on lying to and lying with a lover.



Sonnets

From fairest creatures we desire increase,<sup>1</sup> *progeny*  
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,  
But as the ripener should by time<sup>1</sup> decease  
His tender<sup>2</sup> heir might bear his memory: *young*  
5 But thou, contracted<sup>2</sup> to thine own bright eyes,  
Feed'st thy light's flame with self-substantial fuel,<sup>3</sup>  
Making a famine where abundance lies,<sup>4</sup>  
Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel.  
Thou that art now the world's fresh<sup>5</sup> ornament, *unspoiled*  
10 And only herald to the gaudy<sup>5</sup> spring,  
Within thine own bud buryest thy content,<sup>6</sup>  
And, tender churl, mak'st waste in niggarding,<sup>7</sup>  
Pity the world, or else this glutton<sup>8</sup> be,  
To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee.<sup>9</sup>

When forty<sup>10</sup> winters shall besiege thy brow,  
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,  
Thy youth's proud livery,<sup>10</sup> so gazed on now, *uniform*  
Will be a tattered weed<sup>10</sup> of small worth held: *garment*  
5 Then being asked, where all thy beauty lies,  
Where all the treasure of thy lusty<sup>10</sup> days, *vigorous*  
To say, within thine own deep-sunken eyes,

<sup>1</sup> *But* But rather than; *riper* Older; *by time* Because of the passage of time.

<sup>2</sup> *contracted* Betrothed; also confined.

<sup>3</sup> *Feed'st ... fuel* Like a candle, you consume your own substance with self-love; cf. the story of Narcissus in Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 3.464 ("I am burned by love of myself / I produce and am consumed by flames").

<sup>4</sup> *Making ... lies* Cf. *Metamorphoses* 3.466 ("my very abundance makes me poor").

<sup>5</sup> *only* Chief; *gaudy* Brightly colored, but not in the modern pejorative sense.

<sup>6</sup> *content* Contentment; also, essence.

<sup>7</sup> *churl* Here, miser; *mak'st ... niggarding* Cf. *Romeo and Juliet* 1.1.223; *niggarding* Behaving in a miserly fashion.

<sup>8</sup> *this glutton* This kind of glutton.

<sup>9</sup> *To ... thee* What should belong to the world will be consumed first by yourself, then by death.

<sup>10</sup> *forty* Number signifying many and, in Shakespeare's time, corresponding to late middle age.

Were an all-eating shame and thriftless<sup>11</sup> praise.  
How much more praise deserved thy beauty's use!<sup>12</sup>  
10 If thou couldst answer, "This fair child of mine  
Shall sum my count, and make my old excuse,"<sup>13</sup>  
Proving his beauty by succession<sup>14</sup> thine: *legal inheritance*  
This were to be new made when thou art old,  
And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it cold.

When I do count the clock<sup>14</sup> that tells the time,  
And see the brave<sup>15</sup> day sunk in hideous *splendid*  
night;  
When I behold the violet past prime,  
And sable curls all silvered o'er with white:  
5 When lofty trees I see barren of leaves,  
Which erst from heat did canopy the herd,<sup>15</sup>  
And summer's green all girded<sup>16</sup> up in sheaves *bundled*  
Borne on the bier with white and bristly beard:<sup>16</sup>  
Then of thy beauty do I question make,  
10 That thou among the wastes of time must go,  
Since sweets and beauties do themselves forsake,<sup>17</sup>  
And die as fast as they see others grow,  
And nothing 'gainst time's scythe can make defence  
Save breed<sup>18</sup> to brave<sup>18</sup> him, when he *reproduce / defy*  
takes thee hence.

When I consider<sup>15</sup> everything that grows *consider that*  
Holds in perfection but a little moment;  
That this huge stage presenteth naught but shows<sup>18</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *thriftless* Wasteful or unprofitable.

<sup>12</sup> *deserved ... use* Would thy beauty's use deserve; *use* Proper employment, also engagement for profit, as in money on loan.

<sup>13</sup> *sum my count* Display the total of my assets; *make ... excuse* Justify or make reparation for my old age.

<sup>14</sup> *count the clock* Count the sounds of the clock.

<sup>15</sup> *erst* Formerly; *canopy the herd* Provide shade for livestock.

<sup>16</sup> *bier* Barrow or litter for carrying crops, but more often associated with the bearing of a corpse to the grave; *white ... beard* As on wheat or barley after harvest.

<sup>17</sup> *sweets* Pleasures, or people or things affording pleasure; *themselves forsake* Lose their essence through time.

<sup>18</sup> *this huge stage* The world as stage was a common notion in the Renaissance; cf. Shakespeare's *As You Like It* 2.7.139-40: "All the world's a stage / And all the men and women merely players"; *shows* Theatrical displays.

Whereon the stars in secret influence<sup>1</sup> comment;  
 5 When I perceive that men as plants increase,  
 Cheered and checked even by the self-same sky,  
 Vaunt<sup>o</sup> in their youthful sap, at height decrease,  
 And wear their brave state out of memory;<sup>2</sup>  
 Then the conceit of this inconstant stay<sup>3</sup>  
 10 Sets you, most rich in youth, before my sight,  
 Where wasteful<sup>4</sup> time debateth with decay  
 To change your day of youth to sullied<sup>5</sup> night:  
 And all in war with time for love of you  
 As he takes from you, I engraft<sup>6</sup> you new.

16

But wherefore<sup>o</sup> do not you a mightier way<sup>7</sup>  
 Make war upon this bloody tyrant, time,  
 And fortify yourself in your decay  
 With means more blessed than my barren rhyme?  
 5 Now stand you on the top of happy hours,  
 And many maiden gardens, yet unset,<sup>8</sup>  
 With virtuous wish would bear your living flowers,  
 Much liker<sup>7</sup> than your painted counterfeit:  
 So should the lines of life that life repair,<sup>8</sup>  
 10 Which this, time's pencil or my pupil pen,  
 Neither in inward worth nor outward fair,<sup>9</sup>  
 Can make you live yourself in eyes of men:  
 To give away yourself<sup>9</sup> keeps yourself still,<sup>o</sup>  
 And you must live drawn by your own sweet skill.

18

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?  
 Thou art more lovely and more temperate:

<sup>1</sup> *secret influence* The supposed life effects of the stars on human life and temperament.

<sup>2</sup> *wear ... memory* Decay until their glory fades from memory.

<sup>3</sup> *conceit* Thought; conception; *inconstant stay* Constant state ("stay") of inconstancy, or change, as in the aging process.

<sup>4</sup> *wasteful* In the sense of wasting or destructive.

<sup>5</sup> *sullied* Tarnished; made gloomy or dull.

<sup>6</sup> *engraft* Insert a scion, or shoot, from one tree into the bark of another, from which it gains sustenance.

<sup>7</sup> *liker* More like you.

<sup>8</sup> *lines of life* Bloodlines of your descendants, or the outlines of you reflected in them; *repair* Restore.

<sup>9</sup> *give away yourself* Marry.

Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
 And summer's lease hath all too short a date:  
 5 Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
 And often is his gold complexion dimmed;  
 And every fair<sup>o</sup> from fair sometime declines,  
 By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimmed:  
 But thy eternal summer shall not fade,  
 10 Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,<sup>o</sup>  
 Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade:  
 When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:  
 So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,  
 So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

19

Devouring time, blunt thou the lion's paws,  
 And make the earth devour her own sweet brood;  
 Pluck the keen teeth from the fierce tiger's jaws,  
 And burn the long-lived Phoenix in her blood;<sup>10</sup>  
 5 Make glad and sorry seasons as thou fleet'st,  
 And do what'er thou wilt, swift-footed time,  
 To the wide world and all her fading sweets;<sup>o</sup>  
 But I forbid thee one most heinous crime,  
 O carve not with thy hours my love's fair brow,  
 10 Nor draw no lines there with thine antique<sup>11</sup> pen;  
 Him in thy course untainted<sup>12</sup> do allow  
 For beauty's pattern to succeeding men.  
 Yet do thy worst, old Time, despite thy wrong,  
 My love shall in my verse ever live young.

20

A woman's face with nature's own hand painted  
 Hast thou, the master mistress of my passion;  
 A woman's gentle heart, but not acquainted  
 5 With shifting change, as is false women's fashion;  
 An eye more bright than theirs, less false in rolling,<sup>13</sup>  
 Gilding the object whereupon it gazeth;  
 A man in hue,<sup>o</sup> all hues in his controlling,  
 Which steals men's eyes and women's souls amazeth;  
 And for a woman wert thou first created,

<sup>10</sup> *Phoenix* Mythical bird that after living five or six centuries burns itself in a nest of spices and then rises from the ashes renewed to begin another cycle; *in her blood* Alive.

<sup>11</sup> *antique* Ancient.

<sup>12</sup> *untainted* Unmarked, unhurt.

<sup>13</sup> *rolling* Glancing at lovers.

Till nature as she wrought thee fell a-doting,  
 And by addition<sup>1</sup> me of thee defeated;  
 By adding one thing to my purpose nothing:  
 But since she pricked<sup>2</sup> thee out for women's pleasure,  
 Mine be thy love, and thy love's use<sup>3</sup> their treasure.

23

As an unperfect actor<sup>4</sup> on the stage,  
 Who with his fear is put besides<sup>5</sup> his part;  
 Or some fierce thing, replete with too much rage,  
 Whose strength's abundance weakens his own heart;  
 5 So I, for fear of trust,<sup>6</sup> forget to say  
 The perfect ceremony<sup>7</sup> of love's right,<sup>o</sup>  
 And in mine own love's strength seem to decay,  
 O'ercharged with burden of mine own love's might:  
 O let my books be then the eloquence  
 10 And dumb presagers<sup>8</sup> of my speaking breast,  
 Who plead for love, and look for recompense,<sup>9</sup>  
 More than that tongue that more hath more expressed:  
 O learn to read what silent love hath writ!  
 To hear with eyes belongs to love's fine wit.<sup>9</sup>

29

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes  
 I all alone bewep my outcast state,  
 And trouble deaf heav'n with my bootless<sup>o</sup> cries,  
 And look upon myself, and curse my fate,  
 5 Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,  
 Featured like him,<sup>10</sup> like him with friends possessed,  
 Desiring this man's art<sup>o</sup> and that man's scope,  
 With what I most enjoy contented least;  
 Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,  
 10 Haply<sup>o</sup> I think on thee, and then my state,  
 By chance

<sup>1</sup> *by addition* I.e., of male genitals.

<sup>2</sup> *pricked* Selected; "prick" was also slang for penis.

<sup>3</sup> *love's use* Sexual pleasure and probably the suggestion of reproduction and increase, with a pun on "usury."

<sup>4</sup> *unperfect actor* Actor who does not remember his lines accurately.

<sup>5</sup> *is put besides* Loses track of, forgets.

<sup>6</sup> *for ... trust* Afraid to trust myself, or perhaps afraid of not being trusted.

<sup>7</sup> *perfect ceremony* Precise words demanded by the situation.

<sup>8</sup> *dumb presagers* Silent signals.

<sup>9</sup> *belongs ... wit* Is characteristic of love's subtle intelligence.

<sup>10</sup> *featured like him* With physical attractions like his.

Like to the lark at break of day arising,  
 From sullen<sup>o</sup> earth sings hymns at  
 heaven's gate;  
 For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings  
 That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

30

When to the sessions<sup>o</sup> of sweet silent  
 thought  
 I summon up remembrance of things past,<sup>11</sup>  
 I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,  
 And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste;  
 5 Then can I drown an eye (unused to flow)  
 For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,  
 And weep afresh love's long since cancelled woe,  
 And moan th'expense<sup>o</sup> of many a vanished sight.  
 Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,<sup>o</sup>  
 10 And heavily from woe to woe tell<sup>o</sup> o'er  
 The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,  
 Which I new pay, as if not paid before;  
 But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,  
 All losses are restored, and sorrows end.

33

Full many a glorious morning have I seen  
 Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eye,  
 Kissing with golden face the meadows green,  
 Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;  
 5 Anon<sup>o</sup> permit the basest clouds to ride  
 With ugly rack<sup>12</sup> on his celestial face,  
 And from the forlorn world his visage hide,  
 Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:  
 Even so my sun one early morn did shine  
 10 With all triumphant splendour on my brow;  
 But out alack,<sup>13</sup> he was but one hour mine,  
 The region cloud<sup>14</sup> hath masked him from me now.  
 Yet him for this, my love no whit<sup>15</sup> disdaineth:

<sup>11</sup> *summon* Call to court; *remembrance ... past* Cf. Geneva Bible (1560), *Wisdom* 11.10: "For their grief was double with mourning, and the remembrance of things past."

<sup>12</sup> *rack* Mass of clouds driven by the wind in the upper air.

<sup>13</sup> *out alack* An expression of sharp regret.

<sup>14</sup> *region cloud* Clouds of the upper air.

<sup>15</sup> *no whit* Not the least bit.

Suns of the world may stain,<sup>1</sup> when heaven's sun  
staineth.

35  
No more be grieved at that which thou hast done;  
Roses have thorns, and silver fountains mud;  
Clouds and eclipses stain both moon and sun,  
And loathsome canker<sup>o</sup> lives in sweetest bud.<sup>caterpillar</sup>  
5 All men make faults, and even I, in this,  
Authorizing thy trespass with compare,<sup>o comparisons</sup>  
Myself corrupting, salving thy amiss,<sup>2</sup>  
Excusing these sins more than these sins are:<sup>3</sup>  
For to thy sensual fault I bring in sense,<sup>4</sup>  
10 Thy adverse party is thy advocate,<sup>5</sup>  
And 'gainst myself a lawful plea commence:  
Such civil war is in my love and hate  
That I an accessory needs must be  
To that sweet thief which sourly robs from me.

36  
Let me confess that we two must be twain,<sup>o separate</sup>  
Although our undivided loves are one;  
So shall those blows<sup>o</sup> that do with me remain,<sup>o disgraces</sup>  
Without thy help, by me be borne alone.  
5 In our two loves there is but one respect,<sup>6</sup>  
Though in our lives a separable spite,<sup>7</sup>  
Which, though it alter not love's sole effect,<sup>8</sup>  
Yet doth it steal sweet hours from love's delight.  
I may not evermore acknowledge<sup>9</sup> thee,  
10 Lest my bewailed guilt should do thee shame,  
Nor thou with public kindness honour me,  
Unless thou take<sup>10</sup> that honour from thy name:

<sup>1</sup> *stain* Lose luster or brightness.

<sup>2</sup> *salving thy amiss* Excusing or explaining away your wrong.

<sup>3</sup> *Excusing ... are* My making excuses for your sins is worse than the actual sins themselves.

<sup>4</sup> *bring in sense* Add spurious reasoning.

<sup>5</sup> *adverse party* Legal opponent; *advocate* Legal defender.

<sup>6</sup> *one respect* A single, and hence mutual, regard.

<sup>7</sup> *a separable spite* An injury or misfortune capable of separating us.

<sup>8</sup> *love's sole effect* Our unity in love.

<sup>9</sup> *acknowledge* Greet or recognize in public.

<sup>10</sup> *Unless thou take* Without taking.

But do not so,<sup>11</sup> I love thee in such sort,  
As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

55  
Not marble, nor the gilded monuments  
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme;  
But you shall shine more bright in these contents<sup>12</sup>  
Than unswept stone, besmeared with sluttish time.<sup>13</sup>  
5 When wasteful war shall statues overturn  
And broils<sup>o</sup> root out the work of masonry,<sup>o violent quarrels</sup>  
Nor Mars<sup>14</sup> his sword, nor war's quick<sup>o</sup> fire,<sup>o vigorous</sup>  
shall burn  
The living record of your memory:  
'Gainst death, and all oblivious<sup>15</sup> enmity,  
10 Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room  
Even in the eyes of all posterity  
That wear this world out to the ending doom.<sup>16</sup>  
So till the judgement that yourself arise,<sup>17</sup>  
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

60  
Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,  
So do our minutes hasten to their end,  
Each changing place with that which goes before,  
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.  
5 Nativity, once in the main<sup>o</sup> of light,<sup>o broad expanse</sup>  
Crawls to maturity; wherewith being crowned  
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,  
And time, that gave, doth now his gift confound.<sup>o ruin</sup>  
Time doth transfix<sup>o</sup> the flourish set on youth,<sup>o pierce</sup>  
10 And delves the parallels<sup>18</sup> in beauty's brow;  
Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,  
And nothing stands<sup>19</sup> but for his scythe to mow.

<sup>11</sup> *do not so* Do not display such public kindness toward me.

<sup>12</sup> *these contents* The contents of these poems.

<sup>13</sup> *Than ... time* Than in dust-covered stone dirtied by the passage of time, which is dirty and grimy ("sluttish") in its effects.

<sup>14</sup> *Mars* Roman god of war.

<sup>15</sup> *oblivious* Bringing about oblivion.

<sup>16</sup> *ending doom* Last Judgment at the end of the world.

<sup>17</sup> *That ... arise* When you yourself are resurrected.

<sup>18</sup> *delves the parallels* Digs the trenches, i.e., forms the wrinkled lines; cf. Sonnet 2.2: "... dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field."

<sup>19</sup> *stands* Grows to full height, as a plant ready for harvest.

And yet to times in hope my verse shall stand,  
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

64  
When I have seen by time's fell hand defaced  
The rich proud cost<sup>1</sup> of outworn buried age;<sup>2</sup>  
When sometime lofty towers I see down razed,  
And brass eternal slave to mortal rage;<sup>3</sup>  
5 When I have seen the hungry ocean gain  
Advantage on the kingdom of the shore,  
And the firm soil win of the wat'ry main,<sup>o ocean</sup>  
Increasing store<sup>o</sup> with loss, and loss with store;<sup>o gain</sup>  
When I have seen such interchange of state,  
10 Or state itself confounded,<sup>o</sup> to decay,<sup>o ruined</sup>  
Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminat:  
That time will come and take my love away.

This thought is as a death, which cannot choose  
But weep<sup>4</sup> to have that which it fears to lose.

65  
Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea,  
But sad mortality o'er-sways<sup>o</sup> their power,<sup>o overcomes</sup>  
How with this rage<sup>5</sup> shall beauty hold a plea,<sup>6</sup>  
Whose action is no stronger than a flower?  
5 O how shall summer's honey breath hold out  
Against the wrackful<sup>o</sup> siege of batt'ring days<sup>o destructive</sup>  
When rocks impregnable are not so stout,  
Nor gates of steel so strong, but time decays?  
O fearful meditation! Where, alack,  
10 Shall time's best jewel from time's chest lie hid?  
Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back;  
Or who his spoil<sup>o</sup> o'er beauty can forbid?<sup>o plunder</sup>  
O none, unless this miracle have might:  
That in black ink my love may still shine bright.

<sup>1</sup> *rich ... cost* Prideful and extravagant splendor.

<sup>2</sup> *outworn ... age* Antiquity worn out and obscured by time.

<sup>3</sup> *Brass ... rage* Brass, known for its durability, but also subject ultimately to the fatally destructive effects of time.

<sup>4</sup> *cannot ... weep* Can only weep.

<sup>5</sup> *with this rage* Against this destructive action.

<sup>6</sup> *hold a plea* Present a legal case.

71  
No longer mourn for me when I am dead<sup>7</sup>  
Than you shall hear<sup>7</sup> the surly sullen bell<sup>8</sup>  
Give warning to the world that I am fled  
From this vile world; with vilest worms to dwell:  
5 Nay, if you read this line, remember not  
The hand that writ it, for I love you so  
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,  
If thinking on me then should make you woe.<sup>9</sup>  
O if (I say) you look upon this verse,  
10 When I, perhaps, compounded am with clay,  
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,<sup>o utter</sup>  
But let your love even<sup>o</sup> with my life decay;<sup>o along</sup>  
Lest the wise world should look into your moan,<sup>10</sup>  
And mock you with me<sup>11</sup> after I am gone.

73  
That time of year thou mayst in me behold,  
When yellow leaves, or none, or few do hang  
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,  
Bare ruined choirs<sup>12</sup> where late the sweet birds sang;  
5 In me thou seest the twilight of such day  
As after sunset fadeth in the west,  
Which by and by black night doth take away,  
Death's second self<sup>13</sup> that seals up all in rest;  
In me thou seest the glowing of such fire  
10 That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,  
As the deathbed, whereon it must expire,  
Consumed with that which it was nourished by;  
This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more  
strong,  
To love that well, which thou must leave<sup>o</sup> lose  
ere long.

<sup>7</sup> *you shall hear* The span of time during which you hear.

<sup>8</sup> *surly ... bell* Passing-bell, rung solemnly from the church to announce a death, customarily one chime for each year of the deceased's lifespan.

<sup>9</sup> *make you woe* Cause you grief.

<sup>10</sup> *look ... moan* Question the cause of your grief.

<sup>11</sup> *with me* Along with me, and perhaps in the same manner.

<sup>12</sup> *choirs* Parts of churches designated for singers.

<sup>13</sup> *Death's second self* Sleep.



Before, a joy proposed; behind, a dream.  
All this the world well knows, yet none knows well  
To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell:

130

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;  
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;  
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;  
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head;  
5 I have seen roses damasked,<sup>o</sup> red and white, *parti-colored*  
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;  
And in some perfumes is there more delight  
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.  
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know  
10 That music hath a far more pleasing sound;  
I grant I never saw a goddess go;<sup>o</sup> *walk*  
My mistress when she walks treads on the ground.  
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare  
As any she<sup>1</sup> belied with false compare.

135

Whoever hath her wish,<sup>2</sup> thou hast thy Will,<sup>3</sup>  
And Will to boot, and Will in  
overplus;<sup>o</sup> *superabundance*  
More than enough am I, that vex thee still,  
To thy sweet will making addition thus.  
5 Wilt thou, whose will is large and spacious,  
Not once vouchsafe to hide my will in thine?  
Shall will in others seem right gracious,  
And in my will no fair acceptance shine?  
The sea, all water, yet receives rain still,  
10 And in abundance addeth to his store;  
So thou, being rich in Will, add to thy Will  
One will of mine, to make thy large Will more:  
Let no unkind,<sup>o</sup> no fair beseechers kill; *unkindness*  
Think all but one,<sup>4</sup> and me in that one Will.

<sup>1</sup> any she Any woman.

<sup>2</sup> Whoever ... wish No matter what other women may wish for or attain.

<sup>3</sup> Will In Shakespeare's time, the word could also refer to sexual desire and even to the genitals.

<sup>4</sup> Think ... one Think of all your suitors as one.

If thy soul check<sup>5</sup> thee that I come so near,  
I swear to thy blind soul<sup>6</sup> that I was thy Will,  
And will, thy soul knows, is admitted there;  
Thus far for love my love-suit sweet-fulfil.  
5 Will will fulfil the treasure of thy love,  
Ay, fill it full with wills, and my will one;  
In things of great receipt<sup>o</sup> with ease we prove *capacity*  
Among a number one is reckoned none.  
Then in the number let me pass untold,  
10 Though in thy store's account I one must be.  
For nothing hold<sup>o</sup> me, so it please thee hold; *regard*  
That nothing, me, a something sweet to thee.  
Make but my name thy love, and love that still;<sup>o</sup> *always*  
And then thou lov'st me, for my name is Will.

138

When my love swears that she is made of truth,  
I do believe her, though I know she lies,  
That she might think me some untutored youth  
Unlearn'd in the world's false subtleties.  
5 Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,  
Although she knows my days are past the best,  
Simply I credit her false-speaking tongue;  
On both sides thus is simple truth suppressed.  
But wherefore says she not she is unjust?<sup>o</sup> *unfaithful*  
10 And wherefore say not I that I am old?  
O love's best habit is in seeming trust,  
And age in love<sup>7</sup> loves not t<sup>o</sup> have years told;  
Therefore I lie with her, and she with me,  
And in our faults by lies we flattered be.

143

Lo, as a careful housewife<sup>8</sup> runs to catch  
One of her feathered creatures broke away,  
Sets down her babe, and makes all swift dispatch<sup>o</sup> *haste*

<sup>5</sup> check Restrain or rebuke.

<sup>6</sup> blind soul Blind by nature, being enclosed within the body, or blinded by passion.

<sup>7</sup> age in love An older person in love; or in matters of love.

<sup>8</sup> careful Attentive, but also perhaps "full of cares," or anxious; housewife. Pronounced "hussif" in Shakespeare's time.

In pursuit of the thing she would have stay;  
5 Whilst her neglected child holds her in chase,  
Cries to catch her whose busy care is bent<sup>o</sup> *determined*  
To follow that which flies before her face,  
Not prizing<sup>o</sup> her poor infant's discontent; *considering*  
So run'st thou after that which flies from thee,  
10 Whilst I, thy babe, chase thee afar behind.  
But if thou catch thy hope,<sup>2</sup> turn back to me,  
And play the mother's part; kiss me, be kind:  
So will I pray that thou mayst have thy Will,  
If thou turn back and my loud crying still;<sup>o</sup> *soothe*

Two loves I have, of comfort and despair,  
Which, like two spirits, do suggest<sup>o</sup> me  
still;<sup>o</sup> *tempt / always*  
The better angel is a man right fair,  
The worse spirit a woman coloured ill.  
5 To win me soon to hell<sup>4</sup> my female evil  
Tempteth my better angel from my side,  
And would corrupt my saint to be a devil,  
Wooing his purity with her foul pride;  
And whether that<sup>5</sup> my angel be turned fiend  
10 Suspect I may, yet not directly<sup>o</sup> tell; *exactly*  
But being both from me both to each friend,<sup>6</sup>  
I guess one angel in another's hell.  
Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt,  
Till my bad angel fire my good one out.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> holds ... chase Chases after her.

<sup>2</sup> thy hope The object of your hope.

<sup>3</sup> coloured ill Of a dark or ugly complexion or temperament.

<sup>4</sup> hell For the equation of hell with sexual intercourse, cf. Sonnet 129.14: "... the heaven that leads men to this hell."

<sup>5</sup> whether that Whether or not.

<sup>6</sup> being ... friend Both spirits being apart from me and together (and friendly) with each other.

<sup>7</sup> fire ... out Expel or reject my good angel; to "fire out" meant to drive someone or something away from a place by setting a fire, as, e.g., in fox-hunting; fire. Possibly "fever," with perhaps a glancing reference to venereal disease.

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,  
8 these rebel powers that thee array;<sup>9</sup>  
Why dost thou pine<sup>10</sup> within and suffer dearth,  
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?  
5 Why so large cost, having so short a lease,  
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?  
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,  
Eat up thy charge?<sup>11</sup> Is this thy body's end?  
Then soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss;  
10 And let that<sup>12</sup> pine to aggravate thy store;<sup>13</sup>  
Buy terms<sup>14</sup> divine in selling hours of dross;<sup>o</sup> *scum*  
Within be fed, without<sup>o</sup> be rich no more; *externally*  
So shalt thou feed on death, that feeds on men,  
And death once dead, there's no more dying then.

147

My love is as a fever, longing still<sup>o</sup> *continually*  
For that which longer nurseth the disease,  
Feeding on that which doth preserve the ill,  
Th'uncertain<sup>o</sup> sickly appetite to please; *fitful*  
20 My reason, the physician to my love,  
Angry that his prescriptions are not kept,  
Hath left me, and I, desperate, now approve<sup>o</sup> *accept that*  
Desire is death, which physic did except.<sup>15</sup>  
Past cure I am, now reason is past care,  
25 And frantic mad with ever more unrest;  
My thoughts and my discourse as madmen's are,

<sup>8</sup> ... The earliest printed version repeats the words "my sinful earth," an apparent misprint; Shakespeare's words are not known. Possible substitutions include "Rebuke," "Foiled by," or "Fooled by."

<sup>9</sup> these rebel ... thee array I.e., the body that clothes you (which rebels against your soul).

<sup>10</sup> pine Dwindle from longing.

<sup>11</sup> thy charge Your expense; also, a possession for which you are responsible.

<sup>12</sup> that I.e., the body.

<sup>13</sup> aggravate thy store Increase your riches.

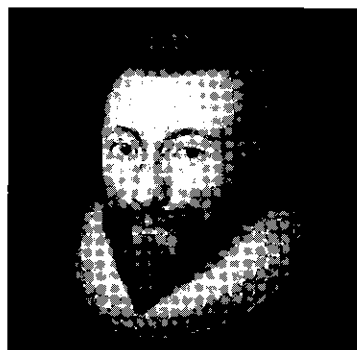
<sup>14</sup> terms Periods of time; also agreements.

<sup>15</sup> Desire ... except The sexual desire objected to by my physician is deadly.

## JOHN DONNE

1572 – 1631

John Donne was an innovator: his work represented something new in poetry, and his contemporaries knew it. Donne set out to startle his readers with his disdain for convention, writing poems that challenged expectations about what was appropriate in poetic subject, form, tone, language, and imagery. He was not afraid of being difficult, or ambiguous, or contradictory from one poem to another: like the speaker of his "Holy Sonnet 19," in Donne "contraries meet in one." Some critics and readers try to smooth out these "contraries" by separating Donne's works into the secular verse written by "Jack Donne" (Donne's own phrase), the witty young man-about-London whose love poems combine erotic energy with high-minded argument; and the religious verse written later in life by Dr. John Donne, Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, the learned Anglican minister famous for his electrifying sermons. But this neat division is complicated by the fact that many of his poems are impossible to date. Donne wrote primarily for manuscript circulation: only a handful of his poems were printed before he died. Some religious poetry may therefore have been written earlier than



once thought, and some love lyrics later. In any case, Donne frequently blurs any differences between the sacred and the secular, erotic love and divine love: he can present erotic love as a form of religious experience, and religious devotion as an erotic experience. Donne's voice, moreover, ranges across a multitude of roles and postures, from misogynist cynicism and self-mocking sophistry to tender idealism and devout if still painfully self-conscious religious passion.

With his colloquial language, rough meter, sometimes swaggeringly masculine persona, and elaborately worked out philosophical (or wittily pseudo-philosophical) conceits, Donne's poetry breaks with the late Elizabethan poets: even when expressing difficult or ambiguous thoughts, they tended to prefer lines of smooth and highly decorated elegance. Donne's new manner caught the imagination of many poets, and his work was immensely influential for much of the seventeenth century. Times and tastes change, however, and what had been thought wit in 1600 by 1700 had come to seem mere fancy, unrestrained by judgment. In 1693, for example, John Dryden argued that Donne "affects the metaphysics ... where nature only should reign," claiming that his love poetry "perplexes [women's minds] ... with nice speculations of philosophy, when he should engage their hearts." In the eighteenth century, Samuel Johnson labeled Donne and his followers "Metaphysical Poets" who "ransacked" nature to create startling and strained conceits. (Because of the objections of scholars who point out that the term is misleading, the long-popular term "metaphysical" is currently losing ground.) Thanks to further shifts in sensibility, and thanks also to the praise of T.S. Eliot, who found in Donne's difficulty and intellectual dazzle a model for modernist poetic practice, Donne's work moved again in the twentieth century to the center of the English poetic canon.

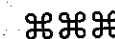
Born in London in 1572, Donne was the son of a prosperous ironmonger. The family was Catholic at a time when the government viewed all Catholics with suspicion and prosecuted those it thought seditious. Donne's mother, Elizabeth, was related to Thomas More, beheaded as a traitor for refusing to support Henry VIII's rejection of the Pope's authority. Two of her uncles lived in exile; another, a Jesuit, was incarcerated; and in 1593 Donne's brother Henry died of a fever while imprisoned for harboring a priest. Thus, Donne well understood religious persecution, which is why some have speculated that his conversion to the Church of England, however sincere, must have felt

at times like a betrayal. First educated by Jesuits, at age eleven Donne entered Oxford, and then studied at Cambridge. He took no degree, perhaps because graduation required accepting the Church of England's thirty-nine "articles of religion." In 1592 he began legal studies at Lincoln's Inn, and over the next few years wrote many of the love lyrics that were known at first to a few friends and then, especially in the next century, found a large readership. A set of five satires mocking English life, laws, and mores (including those of courtiers) also dates from these years; they helped intensify a fashion in the late 1590s for biting verse satire. The most powerful, "Satire III," explores with surprising candor, if no conclusion, the risks and dilemmas of choosing a version of Christianity to follow.

After taking part in the 1596 and 1597 anti-Spanish expeditions to Cadiz and the Azores, in 1598 Donne was appointed secretary to Sir Thomas Egerton, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. By now his future seemed assured—he had distanced himself from the Roman Catholic Church and had served in Parliament. In 1601, however, he nearly wrecked his prospects by a secret marriage to Egerton's 17-year-old-niece, Ann More. When the marriage was discovered, Donne wrote to her father, Sir George More, begging that Ann not "feel the terror of your sudden anger," but Sir George disinherited his daughter and had Donne dismissed from his position and briefly imprisoned. Years of poverty and unemployment lay before the couple and their family (Ann eventually had twelve children, seven of whom survived). Donne found some support, however, from various friends and patrons, among them Sir Robert Drury, for whom he wrote two long "Anniversary" poems (1611–1612) lamenting the death of Sir Robert's daughter, Elizabeth.

During this difficult period Donne finally renounced his Roman Catholicism and within a few years published two anti-Catholic tracts: *Pseudo-Martyr* (1610), which argues that Catholics should take the Oath of Allegiance to the crown, and the satirical *Ignatius his Conclave* (1611), which describes a meeting of Jesuits in Hell. King James was pleased but insisted that Donne be ordained before receiving an appointment. Donne complied and was shortly thereafter made a royal chaplain and a Reader in Divinity at Lincoln's Inn. He soon suffered a personal loss, however, when his wife died during childbirth at age 33, a sorrow to which Donne probably alludes in his seventeenth "Holy Sonnet," when he mentions that "she whom I loved hath paid her last debt." Most of his "Holy Sonnets," however (including "Death be not Proud"), seem to have been written before his ordination and reflect earlier hopes and anguish. In 1621 Donne was appointed Dean of St. Paul's, and attracted large audiences for his intellectually challenging and emotionally stirring sermons, many of which were published, both during and after his life.

During a grave illness in the mid-1620s, Donne wrote his popular *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions* (1624), a series of prose meditations that include his famous assertion of human interconnectedness ("No man is an island"). Donne survived, but he never lost his fascination with death. He delivered his last sermon, "Death's Duel," early in 1631 before Charles I. His audience, it was later said, sensed that he was in effect preaching his own funeral sermon; he died that March. Donne is buried at St. Paul's Cathedral; his monument is modeled on a portrait of himself taken while he was still alive and dressed for the occasion in his shroud. His collected *Poems* were printed in 1633 and was reprinted several times before his reputation faded with the coming of the Restoration and a new generation's taste for neoclassical poetry.



25 So thy love may be my love's sphere;  
Just such disparity  
As is 'twixt air and angels' purity,  
'Twixt women's love, and men's will ever be.  
—1633

*Break of Day*<sup>1</sup>

'Tis true, 'tis day; what though it be?  
O wilt thou therefore rise from me?  
Why should we rise because 'tis light?  
Did we lie down because 'twas night?  
5 Love, which in spite of darkness brought us hither,  
Should in despite of light keep us together.

Light hath no tongue, but is all eye;  
If it could speak as well as spy,  
This were the worst that it could say,  
10 That being well, I fain would stay,  
And that I loved my heart and honor so,  
That I would not from him, that had them, go.  
Must business thee from hence remove?  
Oh that's the worst disease of love,  
15 The poor, the foul, the false, love can  
Admit, but not the busied man.  
He which hath business, and makes love, doth do  
Such wrong, as when a married man doth woo.  
—1612, 1633

*The Anniversary*

All kings, and all their favourites,  
All glory of honours; beauties, wits,  
The sun itself, which makes times, as they pass,  
Is elder by a year, now, than it was  
5 When thou and I first one another saw:  
All other things to their destruction draw,  
Only our love hath no decay;  
This, no tomorrow hath, nor yesterday,

<sup>1</sup> *Break of Day* First printed, with a musical setting, in William Corkine's *Second Book of Aires* (1612). The speaker is a woman.

Running it never runs from us away,  
But truly keeps his first, last, everlasting day.

Two graves must hide thine and my corpse,<sup>2</sup> corpse  
If one might, death, were no divorce:  
Alas, as well as other princes, we  
(Who prince enough in one another be)  
15 Must leave at last in death, these eyes, and ears,  
Oft fed with true oaths, and with sweet salt tears;  
But souls where nothing dwells but love  
(All other thoughts being inmates) then shall prove  
This, or a love increased there above,  
20 When bodies to their graves, souls from their  
graves remove.

And then we shall be thoroughly<sup>3</sup> blest, thoroughly  
But we no more than all the rest,  
Here upon earth, we're kings, and none but we  
Can be such kings, nor of such subjects be;  
25 Who is so safe as we? where none can do  
Treason to us, except one of us two.  
True and false fears let us refrain,  
Let us love nobly, and live, and add again  
Years and years unto years, till we attain  
30 To write threescore: this is the second of our reign.  
—1633

*Twickenham Garden*<sup>2</sup>

Blasted with sighs, and surrounded with tears,  
Hither I come to seek the spring;  
And at mine eyes, and at mine ears,  
5 Receive such balms, as else cure everything;  
But O, self traitor, I do bring  
The spider<sup>3</sup> love, which transubstantiates all,  
And can convert manna to gall.

<sup>2</sup> *Twickenham Garden* Twickenham Park (pronounced, and often in the period spelled, Twicknam) was the home of Lucy, Countess of Bedford (1581–1627), a friend and patron of Donne and other writers, including Ben Jonson, Samuel Daniel, and Michael Drayton.

<sup>3</sup> *spider* Spiders were believed to transform everything they ate into poison.

And that this place may thoroughly be thought  
True Paradise, I have the serpent<sup>1</sup> brought.

'Twere wholesomer for me, that winter did  
10 Benight the glory of this place,  
And that a grave frost did forbid  
These trees to laugh and mock me to my face;  
But that I may not this disgrace  
15 Endure, nor leave this garden, Love, let me  
Some senseless piece of this place be;  
Make me a mandrake, so I may groan here,<sup>2</sup>  
Or a stone fountain weeping out my year.

Hither with crystal vials, lovers come,  
20 And take my tears, which are love's wine,  
And try<sup>3</sup> your mistress' tears at home,  
For all are false, that taste not just like mine;  
Alas, hearts do not in eyes shine,  
Nor can you more judge woman's thoughts by tears,  
25 Than by her shadow, what she wears.  
O perverse sex; where none is true but she,  
Who's therefore true, because her truth kills me.  
—1633

*A Valediction: of Weeping*

Let me pour forth  
My tears before thy face, whilst I stay here,  
For thy face coins them, and thy stamp they bear,  
And by this mintage they are something worth,  
5 For thus they be  
Pregnant of thee;  
Fruits of much grief they are; emblems of more,  
When a tear falls; that thou falls which it bore,  
So thou and I are nothing then, when on a diverse shore.

On a round ball<sup>3</sup>  
A workman that hath copies by, can lay

<sup>1</sup> *serpent* Emblem of envy, and of temptation.  
<sup>2</sup> *mandrake... groan here* Plant whose forked root was thought to resemble the human body, and reputed to shriek or groan; the printed edition has "grow," but many manuscripts have "groan," which better parallels the weeping fountain in the next line.  
<sup>3</sup> *round ball* Blank globe, on which printed maps could be placed to make a world.

An Europe, Afric, and an Asia,<sup>4</sup>  
And quickly make that, which was nothing. All,  
So doth each tear,

15 Which thee doth wear,  
A globe, yea world by that impression grow,  
Till thy tears mixed with mine do overflow  
This world, by waters sent from thee, my heaven  
dissolved so.

O more than Moon,  
20 Draw not up seas to drown me in thy sphere;  
Weep me not dead, in thine arms, but forbear  
To teach the sea what it may do too soon;  
Let not the wind  
Example find,  
25 To do me more harm than it purposeth;  
Since thou and I sigh one another's breath,  
Who e'r sighs most is cruellest, and hastes the  
other's death.<sup>5</sup>  
—1633

*The Flea*

Mark but this flea, and mark in this,  
How little that which thou deny'st me is;  
It sucked me first, and now sucks thee,  
And in this flea our two bloods mingled be;  
5 Thou know'st that<sup>6</sup> this cannot be said  
A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead,  
Yet this enjoys before it woo,  
And pampered swells with one blood made of two,  
And this<sup>7</sup> alas, is more than we would do.

10 Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare,  
Where we almost, nay more than married are;  
This flea is you and I, and this<sup>8</sup>  
Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is;

<sup>4</sup> *Asia* Pronounced in the period as a three-syllable word.  
<sup>5</sup> *Who e'r sighs... death* According to folklore, sighing shortened life (each sigh was said to cost one drop of blood).  
<sup>6</sup> *It sucked me first* "Me it sucked first" in many manuscripts.  
<sup>7</sup> *mingled be* The speaker's subsequent argument hinges on the traditional belief that blood mixed during sexual intercourse.  
<sup>8</sup> *Thou know'st that* "Confess it" in many manuscripts.

Though parents grudge, and you, we're met  
 15 And cloistered in these living walls of jet.<sup>o</sup> *black stone*  
 Though use<sup>o</sup> make you apt to kill me, *fla* *habit*  
 Let not to that, self murder added be,  
 And sacrilege, three sins in killing three.

Cruel and sudden, hast thou since  
 20 Purpled thy nail in blood of innocence?  
 Wherein could this flea guilty be,  
 Except in that drop which it sucked from thee?  
 Yet thou triumph'st, and say'st that thou  
 Find'st not thy self, nor me the weaker now;  
 25 'Tis true, then learn how false, fears be;  
 Just so much honor, when thou yield'st to me,  
 Will waste, as this flea's death took life from thee.  
 —1633

*A Nocturnal upon St. Lucy's Day,  
 Being the Shortest Day<sup>1</sup>*

'Tis the year's midnight, and it is the day's,  
 Lucy's, who scarce seven hours herself unmasks;  
 The sun is spent, and now his flasks<sup>o</sup> *the stars*  
 Send forth light squibs, no constant rays;  
 5 The world's whole sap is sunk:  
 The general balm<sup>2</sup> the hydroptic<sup>o</sup> earth hath drunk, *thirsty*  
 Whither, as to the bed's-feet, life is shrunk,  
 Dead and interred; yet all these seem to laugh,  
 Compared with me, who am their epitaph.

Study me then, you who shall lovers be  
 At the next world, that is, at the next spring:  
 For I am every dead thing,  
 In whom Love wrought new alchemy.  
 For his art did express<sup>o</sup> *extract*  
 15 A quintessence even from nothingness,  
 From dull privations, and lean emptiness;  
 He ruined me, and I am re-begot  
 Of absence, darkness, death; things which are not.

All others, from all things, draw all that's good,

<sup>1</sup> *St Lucy's Day, Being the Shortest Day* December 13, the shortest day of the year in the old Julian calendar.

<sup>2</sup> *general balm* The innate, vital sap believed to preserve all things.

Life, soul, form, spirit, whence they being have;  
 I, by love's limbeck,<sup>3</sup> am the grave  
 Of all that's nothing. Oft a flood  
 Have we two wept, and so  
 Drowned the whole world, us two; oft did we grow  
 25 To be two chaoses, when we did show  
 Care to aught else; and often absences  
 Withdrew our souls, and made us carcasses.

But I am by her death (which word wrongs her)  
 Of the first nothing the elixir grown;  
 30 Were I a man, that I were one  
 I needs must know; I should prefer,  
 If I were any beast,  
 Some ends, some means; yea plants, yea stones detest,  
 And love; all, all some properties invest;  
 35 If I an ordinary nothing were,  
 As shadow, a light and body must be here.

But I am none; nor will my sun renew.  
 You lovers, for whose sake the lesser sun  
 At this time to the Goat<sup>4</sup> is run  
 40 To fetch new lust, and give it you,  
 Enjoy your summer all;  
 Since she enjoys her long night's festival,  
 Let me prepare towards her, and let me call  
 This hour her vigil, and her eve, since this  
 45 Both the year's, and the day's deep midnight is.  
 —1633

*The Bait*

Come live with me, and be my love,  
 And we will some new pleasures prove  
 Of golden sands, and crystal brooks,  
 With silken lines, and silver hooks.

5 There will the river whispering run  
 Warmed by thy eyes, more than the sun.  
 And there the enamoured fish will stay,  
 Begging themselves they may betray.

<sup>3</sup> *limbeck* Retort, or still (apparatus for distillation).

<sup>4</sup> *Goat* The constellation Capricorn, into whose sign the sun enters at the winter solstice; goats were associated with lust.

When thou wilt swim in that live bath,  
 10 Each fish, which every channel hath,  
 Will amorously to thee swim,  
 Gladder to catch thee, than thou him.

If thou, to be so seen, be'st loth,  
 By sun or moon, thou dark'nest both,  
 15 And if myself have leave to see,  
 I need not their light, having thee.

Let others freeze with angling reeds,  
 And cut their legs with shells and weeds,  
 Or treacherously poor fish beset;  
 20 With strangling snare, or windowy net.

Let coarse bold hands, from slimy nest  
 The bedded fish in banks out-wrest;  
 Or curious traitors, sleeve-silk<sup>1</sup> flies,  
 Bewitch poor fishes' wand'ring eyes.

25 For thee, thou need'st no such deceit,  
 For thou thyself art thine own bait;  
 That fish, that is not caught thereby,  
 Alas, is wiser far than I.  
 —1633

*The Apparition*

When by thy scorn, O murd'ress, I am dead,  
 And that thou thinkst thee free  
 From all solicitation from me,  
 Then shall my ghost come to thy bed,  
 5 And thee, feigned vestal,<sup>2</sup> in worse arms shall see;  
 Then thy sick taper will begin to wink,  
 And he, whose thou art then, being tired before,  
 Will, if thou stir, or pinch to wake him, think  
 Thou call'st for more,  
 10 And in false sleep will from thee shrink,  
 And then, poor aspen<sup>o</sup> wretch, neglected thou *trembling*

<sup>1</sup> *sleeve-silk* Silk in the form of fine filaments.

<sup>2</sup> *feigned vestal* Pretended virgin. The original has "fained," the common variant spelling in the period; many editions retain "fained" (eager, glad).

Bathed in a cold quicksilver sweat<sup>3</sup> wilt lie,  
 A verier ghost than I;  
 What I will say, I will not tell thee now,  
 15 Lest that preserve thee; and since my love is spent,  
 I'd rather thou shouldst painfully repent,  
 Than by my threatnings rest still innocent.  
 —1633

*A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning*

As virtuous men pass mildly away,  
 And whisper to their souls to go,  
 Whilst some of their sad friends do say,  
 The breath goes now, and some say, no:

5 So let us melt, and make no noise,  
 No tear-floods, nor sigh-tempests move,  
 'Twere profanation of our joys,  
 To tell the laity our love.

Moving of the earth<sup>o</sup> brings harms and fears, *earthquakes*  
 10 Men reckon what it did and meant,  
 But trepidation of the spheres,<sup>4</sup>  
 Though greater far, is innocent.

Dull sublunary<sup>5</sup> lovers' love  
 (Whose soul is sense) cannot admit  
 15 Absence, because it doth remove  
 Those things which elemented it.

But we by a love, so much refined  
 That our selves know not what it is,  
 Inter-assured of the mind,  
 20 Care less, eyes, lips, and hands to miss.

Our two souls therefore, which are one,  
 Though I must go, endure not yet

<sup>3</sup> *quicksilver sweat* Shiny coating of sweat; from quicksilvering, the application of a thin coat of an alloy using mercury (quicksilver). That mercury was also used to relieve the symptoms of syphilis adds to Donne's insult.

<sup>4</sup> *trepidation of the spheres* The precession of the equinox, thought to be caused by movements in the celestial spheres.

<sup>5</sup> *sublunary* Beneath the moon, hence corruptible and subject to change (because subject to the consequences of the Fall from Paradise).

Their prince, or coin his gold, themselves exile  
 Into another country, and do it there,  
 30 We play in another house, what should we fear?  
 There we will scorn his household policies,  
 His silly plots and pensionary spies,<sup>9</sup>  
 As the inhabitants of Thames' right side,<sup>1</sup>  
 Do London's mayor, or Germans, the Pope's pride.<sup>2</sup>  
 —1633

Elegy 8. The Comparison<sup>3</sup>

As the sweet sweat of roses in a still,  
 As that which from chafed musk cat's pores  
 doth trill,<sup>9</sup>  
 As the almighty balm<sup>9</sup> of the early East,<sup>10</sup>  
 Such are the sweat drops of my mistress' breast,  
 5 And on her neck her skin such lustre sets,  
 They seem no sweat drops, but pearl carcanets,<sup>9</sup>  
 Rank sweaty froth thy mistress' brow defiles,  
 Like spermatie issue of ripe menstruous boils,  
 Or like that scum, which, by need's lawless law,  
 10 Enforced, Sanserra's starved men did draw  
 From parboiled shoes, and boots, and all the rest  
 Which were with any sovereign fatness blest,<sup>4</sup>  
 And like vile lying stones in saffroned tin,<sup>5</sup>  
 Or warts, or weals, they hang upon her skin,  
 15 Round as the world's her head, on every side,  
 Like to that fatal ball which fell on Ide,<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Thames' right side Southwark, where the theaters were, was outside the jurisdiction of London authorities.

<sup>2</sup> Pope's pride Germany was the birthplace of the Reformation, which challenged the authority of the Pope.

<sup>3</sup> Elegy 8. The Comparison. Numbered "Elegy 2" in some modern editions.

<sup>4</sup> From parboiled shoes ... fatness blest. The King's Catholic army laid siege to the Protestants of Sancerre, France, for nine months in 1573; the town's inhabitants were reduced to eating anything made out of leather.

<sup>5</sup> lying stones in saffroned tin Artificial jewels set in false gold (gilded tin).

<sup>6</sup> fatal ball that fell on Ide The golden apple inscribed "To the fairest" that Eris, goddess of discord, brought to a wedding in revenge for not being invited. Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite competed for the prize, and Paris, a herdsman on Mount Ida (near Troy), had to choose the winner. His choice of Aphrodite led to the Trojan war. The elegy invites the reader to compare that beauty

Or that whereof God had such jealousy,  
 As, for the ravishing thereof we die,<sup>7</sup>  
 Thy head<sup>8</sup> is like a rough-hewn statue of jet,<sup>9</sup> black stone  
 20 Where marks for eyes, nose, mouth, are yet scarce set;  
 Like the first Chaos, or flat seeming face  
 Of Cynthia,<sup>9</sup> where the earth's shadows her  
 embrace.  
 Like Proserpine's white beauty-keeping chest,<sup>9</sup>  
 Or Jove's best fortune's urn,<sup>10</sup> is her fair breast.  
 25 Thine's like worm eaten trunks, clothed in seal's skin,  
 Or grave, that's dirt without, and stink within.  
 And like that slender stalk, at whose end stands  
 The woodbine quivering, are her arms and hands,  
 Like rough-barked elmboughs, or the russet skin  
 30 Of men late scourged for madness, or for sin,  
 Like sun-parched quarters on the city gate,<sup>11</sup>  
 Such is thy tanned skin's lamentable state.  
 And like a bunch of ragged carrots stand  
 The short swoll'n fingers of thy gouty hand.  
 35 Then like the chemic's masculine equal<sup>9</sup> fire,<sup>12</sup>  
 Which in the limbeck's<sup>12</sup> warm womb doth inspire  
 Into the earth's worthless dirt a soul of gold,  
 Such cherishing heat her best loved part doth hold.  
 Thine's like the dread mouth of a fired gun,  
 40 Or like hot liquid metals newly run  
 Into clay moulds, or like to that Aetna<sup>13</sup>  
 Where round about the grass is burnt away.  
 Are not your kisses then as filthy, and more,  
 As a worm sucking an envenomed sore?  
 45 Doth not thy fearful hand in feeling quake,

competition with the one it offers.

<sup>7</sup> ravishing ... we die The forbidden fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil in Eden.

<sup>8</sup> Thy head That is, the head of thy mistress, as opposed to "her head" (the speaker's mistress) of line 15. The poem proceeds to contrast the qualities of the speaker's "her" with those of "thy" or "thine" mistress.

<sup>9</sup> beauty-keeping chest In classical story, Psyche was required to travel to the underworld and ask Proserpina (Persephone) to place in a box a gift of beauty for Venus.

<sup>10</sup> Jove's best fortune's urn From Homer, *Iliad*: Zeus (Jove) kept two urns in his palace, one filled with good gifts, the other with evil ones.

<sup>11</sup> Like sun-parched ... city gate The desiccated body parts of "quartered" criminals, impaled as warning to would-be offenders on city gates.

<sup>12</sup> limbeck Alchemical still or retort.

<sup>13</sup> Aetna Volcano in Sicily.

As one which gath'ring flowers, still fears a snake?  
 Is not your last act harsh, and violent,  
 As when a plough a stony ground doth rent?  
 So kiss good turtles,<sup>9</sup> so devoutly nice  
 25 Are priests in handling reverent sacrifice,  
 And such in searching wounds the surgeon is  
 As we, when we embrace, or touch, or kiss.  
 Leave her, and I will leave comparing thus,  
 She, and comparisons are odious.  
 —1633

Elegy 19. To His Mistress Going to Bed<sup>1</sup>

Come Madam, come, all rest my powers defy,  
 Until I labour, I in labour lie.  
 The foe off-times, having the foe in sight,  
 Is tired with standing though they never fight.  
 5 Off with that girdle, like heaven's zone glistening,  
 But a far fairer world encompassing.  
 Unpin that spangled breastplate,<sup>2</sup> which you wear  
 That the eyes of busy fools may be stopped there.  
 Unlace your self: for that harmonious chime<sup>3</sup>  
 10 Tells me from you that now 'tis your bed time.  
 Off with that happy busk,<sup>9</sup> which I envy,  
 That still can be, and still can stand so nigh,  
 Your gown's going off, such beauteous state reveals,  
 As when from flow'ry meads the hill's shadow steals.  
 15 Off with that wiry coronet and show  
 The hairy diadem which on you doth grow.  
 Now off with those shoes, and then softly tread  
 In this love's hallowed temple, this soft bed.  
 In such white robes, Heaven's angels used to be  
 20 Received by men: thou, angel, bringst with thee  
 A heaven like Mahomet's Paradise,<sup>4</sup> and though

<sup>1</sup> Elegy 19. To His Mistress Going to Bed Censoring authorities refused to let the publisher include this elegy in early collections of Donne's poems; it was first printed in an anthology, *The Harmony of the Muses* (1654), and did not appear in an edition of Donne's poems until 1669. It is numbered "Elegy 8" in some modern editions.

<sup>2</sup> spangled breastplate The stomacher; it covered the chest and was often richly ornamented.

<sup>3</sup> chime The lady wears a chiming watch.

<sup>4</sup> Mahomet's Paradise Heaven of erotic bliss. The sensual aspects of the Islamic version of Paradise are described in the Koran sura 55, 54–56, sura 56, 12–40, and sura 76, 12–22.

Ill spirits walk in white, we easily know  
 By this these angels from an evil sprite:  
 Those set our hairs, but these our flesh upright.  
 25 Licence my roving hands, and let them go,  
 Behind, before, above, between, below.  
 Oh my America, my newfound land,  
 My kingdom, safest when with one man manned,  
 My mine of precious stones: my empery,<sup>9</sup>  
 30 How blest am I in this discovering thee!  
 To enter in these bonds, is to be free;  
 Then where my hand is set, my seal shall be.  
 Full nakedness, all joys are due to thee;  
 As souls unbodied, bodies unclothed must be  
 35 To taste whole joys. Gems which you women use  
 Are like Atlanta's balls,<sup>6</sup> cast in men's views,  
 That when a fool's eye lighteth on a gem,  
 His earthly soul may covet theirs, not them.  
 Like pictures, or like books' gay coverings, made  
 40 For lay-men,<sup>7</sup> are all women thus arrayed;  
 Themselves are mystic books, which only we  
 (Whom their imputed grace<sup>8</sup> will dignify)  
 Must see revealed. Then since I may know,  
 As liberally as to a midwife show  
 45 Thyself: cast all, yea, this white linen hence,  
 There is no penance, much less innocence.<sup>9</sup>  
 To teach thee, I am naked first; why then  
 What needst thou have more covering than a man.  
 —1654

<sup>5</sup> Behind, before ... below The order of the words in this line varies in the manuscripts and printed editions.

<sup>6</sup> Atlanta's balls In classical legend, Atalanta said she would only marry a man who could defeat her in footrace. Her suitor Hippomenes won the challenge by dropping three golden balls as he ran; Atalanta stopped to pick them up. The speaker here reverses the story's gender dynamic.

<sup>7</sup> lay-men Referring to the traditional use of images to instruct non-clerics ("lay-men") who could not read the Bible itself; and to the ornate bindings commissioned by wealthy owners to cover books they probably would never read. The speaker proceeds to argue that women are like these kinds of pictures or books: externally beautiful, but only a favored few may "read" what lies inside.

<sup>8</sup> imputed grace Theological term associated with Protestantism: the justifying grace ascribed to a person through Christ's righteousness.

<sup>9</sup> this white ... innocence The color white is associated with both penitence and innocence. In some manuscripts and in the 1654 and 1669 printed editions, this line reads "There is no penance due to innocence," a more theologically conventional reading. Some manuscripts read "Here is no penance, much less innocence."

And here all tempting frumenty.<sup>1</sup>  
 35 And for to make the merry cheer,  
 If smirking wine be wanting here,  
 There's that, which drowns all care, stout beer:  
 Which freely drink to your Lord's health,  
 Then to the plough, (the common-wealth),  
 40 Next to your flails, your fanes, your vats;<sup>2</sup>  
 Then to the maids with wheaten° hats:  
 To the rough sickle, and crook'd sythe,  
 Drink, frolic boys, till all be blithe.  
 Feed, and grow fat; and as ye eat,  
 45 Be mindful, that the laboring neat,  
 As you, may have their fill of meat.  
 And know, besides, ye must revoke°  
 The patient ox unto the yoke,  
 And all go back unto the plow  
 50 And harrow, though they're hanged up now.

<sup>1</sup> *frumenty* Hulled wheat boiled in milk and flavored with sugar and spices.

<sup>2</sup> *fanes* Winnowing fans; *vats* Storage barrels.

And, you must know, your Lord's word's true,  
 Feed him ye must, whose food fills you,  
 And that this pleasure is like rain,  
 Not sent ye for to drown your pain,  
 55 But for to make it spring again.  
 —1648

### Upon Julia's Clothes

Whenas° in silks my Julia goes,  
 Then, then, methinks, how sweetly flows  
 That liquefaction of her clothes.

Next, when I cast mine eyes and see  
 5 That brave° vibration each way free,  
 Oh, how that glittering taketh me!  
 —1648

## GEORGE HERBERT

1593 – 1633

Although his contribution to English poetry consists of a single volume, *The Temple*, George Herbert stands in the first rank of the poets of the seventeenth century and, indeed, of all English lyric poets. Born into wealth and privilege, he chose instead a life dedicated to the power of faith and poetry, dying a humble country parson. An early friend and poetic disciple of John Donne, he left behind Donne's learned abstruseness and fashioned instead a modestly artful music that overleaps sectarian boundaries. Immensely influential on the devotional poets of his own century, Herbert in the eighteenth century was celebrated perhaps more for his piety than his poetry. (John Wesley, for instance, turned a number of Herbert's lyrics into hymns, some of which are still sung.) In the nineteenth century his reputation waned, though he was deeply admired by a few major figures, including Coleridge, Emerson, and Hopkins. In the twentieth century Herbert rejoined the poetic mainstream when T.S. Eliot, in his influential 1921 essay "The Metaphysical Poets," lamented the modern "dissociation of sensibility" and praised Herbert as one of the last poets to have consummated a true fusion of feeling and intellect.

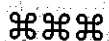
George Herbert was born in 1593, the fifth son of a prominent landowning family in the Welsh Border Country. His eldest brother, Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, was a noted philosopher and diplomat. Raised by their widowed mother Magdalen, an intelligent and strong-willed woman, the Herbert children benefitted from a sound education and a lively environment that included a close family friendship with John Donne. George Herbert attended Westminster School in London and later Trinity College at Cambridge, where he stayed on as a tutor and lecturer. His appointment as Public Orator there in 1620 made him spokesman for the University. Able, urbane, and ambitious, Herbert aspired to political prominence, and was named as Member of Parliament in 1624. Soon after, however, with the ascension of a new monarch and the fall from favor of influential friends such as Francis Bacon, Herbert's political fortunes dimmed and his health began to fail. A devoted Anglican all his life, he began to turn more seriously toward the Church, and was ordained deacon in 1624. When his mother died in 1627, John Donne delivered her funeral oration, and Herbert commemorated her with a collection of Latin and Greek verse, *Memoriae Matris Sacrum*.



For the next few years Herbert seems to have lived quietly with friends, nursing his health, pursuing his religious vocation, and writing much of the devotional poetry in English for which he was to become famous. He married in 1629, was ordained a priest in 1630, and devoted his remaining years to his small country parish at Bemerton, near Salisbury. Herbert died in 1633, releasing for publication on his deathbed *The Temple*, a meticulously crafted compilation of devotional and meditative verse that was to achieve immediate popularity, running through at least eleven editions in the seventeenth century alone.

Herbert had been writing poetry as early as 1610, when, in two sonnets sent as a gift to his mother, he declared his intention to consecrate his poetic gifts to the glory of God rather than to erotic or romantic love. With the exception of some occasional pieces and a collection of polemical Latin epigrams written during his tenure as Public Orator, he remained true to his word.

As a collection, *The Temple* is an intricately structured whole, with numerous correspondences and connections among its almost 170 poems. Herbert establishes resonant patterns that link the physical space of the church with the interior space of the human heart, and the cycle of the church year with the spiritual journey of both the individual believer and humanity as a whole. The poems themselves reflect the subtle spiritual struggles of the everyday inner life. Herbert shows the influence of John Donne in his affinity for plain diction and the rhythms of colloquial speech, but he consciously avoids the elaborate conceits, scholarly allusions, and self-dramatizing spiritual anguish found in Donne's devotional verse. Simplicity, or the artfulness of seeming artless, is one of the central themes of Herbert's poetry, and generations of readers and poets have admired Herbert's exquisite craftsmanship, emotional directness, modest wit, elegance and concision of language, and ability to create connections among poetic form, language, and meaning.



The Altar

A broken ALTAR, Lord thy servant rears,  
 Made of a heart, and cemented with tears;<sup>1</sup>  
 Whose parts are as thy hand did frame;  
 No workman's tool hath touched the same.<sup>2</sup>  
 A HEART alone  
 Is such a stone,  
 As nothing but  
 Thy pow'r doth cut.  
 Wherefore each part  
 Of my hard heart  
 Meets in this frame,  
 To praise thy name.  
 That, if I chance to hold my peace,  
 These stones to praise thee may not cease.<sup>3</sup>  
 O let thy blessed SACRIFICE be mine,  
 And sanctify this ALTAR to be thine.

-1633

<sup>1</sup> A broken ... tears Cf. Psalms 51.17.  
<sup>2</sup> No ... same Cf. Exodus 20.25.  
<sup>3</sup> That ... cease From Luke 19.40.

Redemption

Having been tenant long to a rich Lord,  
 Not thriving, I resolved to be bold,  
 And make a suit unto him, to afford<sup>o</sup>  
 A new small-rented lease, and cancel th' old.  
 In heaven at his manor I him sought:  
 They told me there, that he was lately gone  
 About some land, which he had dearly bought  
 Long since on earth, to take possession.  
 I straight returned, and knowing his great birth,  
 Sought him accordingly in great resorts;  
 In cities, theatres, gardens, parks, and courts:  
 At length I heard a ragged noise and mirth  
 Of thieves and murderers: there I him espied,  
 Who straight, Your suit is granted, said, and died.

-1633

God grant

Easter Wings

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,  
 Though foolishly he lost the same,  
 Decaying more and more,  
 Till he became  
 Most poor:  
 With thee  
 O let me rise  
 As larks, harmoniously,  
 And sing this day thy victories:

Then shall the fall further the flight in me.  
 My tender age in sorrow did begin:  
 And still with sicknesses and shame  
 Thou didst so punish sin,  
 That I became  
 Most thin.  
 With thee  
 Let me combine,  
 And feel this day thy victory:  
 For, if I imp<sup>1</sup> my wing on thine,  
 Affliction shall advance the flight in me.

-1633

Affliction (1)

When first thou didst entice to thee my heart,  
 I thought the service brave:<sup>o</sup>  
 So many joys I writ down for my part,  
 Besides what I might have  
 Out of my stock of natural delights,  
 Augmented with thy gracious benefits.  
 I looked on thy furniture so fine,  
 And made it fine to me:  
 Thy glorious household-stuff did me entwine,  
 And 'tice<sup>o</sup> me unto thee.  
 Such stars I counted mine: both heav'n and earth  
 Paid me my wages in a world of mirth:  
 What pleasures could I want, whose King I served?  
 Where joys my fellows were.  
 Thus argued into hopes, my thoughts reserved

<sup>1</sup> imp Graft feathers from one falcon onto the wing of another, a technique used in falconry to mend damaged wings and improve flight.

No place for grief or fear.  
 Therefore my sudden<sup>2</sup> soul caught at<sup>3</sup> the place,  
 And made her youth and fierceness seek thy face,  
 At first thou gav'st me milk and sweetnesses;  
 I had my wish and way:  
 My days were strawed<sup>4</sup> with flow'rs and happiness;  
 There was no month but May.  
 But with my years sorrow did twist and grow,  
 And made a party<sup>o</sup> unawares<sup>o</sup> for woe.  
 My flesh began unto my soul in pain,  
 Sicknesses cleave my bones;  
 Consuming agues<sup>o</sup> dwell in ev'ry vein,  
 And tune my breath to groans.  
 Sorrow was all my soul; I scarce believed,  
 Till grief did tell me roundly, that I lived.

<sup>2</sup> sudden Rash, impetuous.  
<sup>3</sup> caught at Eagerly sought.  
<sup>4</sup> strawed Strewn.

Making a chiming of a passing-bell.<sup>1</sup>

We say amiss;

This or that is:

Thy word is all, if we could spell.<sup>o</sup>

O that I once past changing were,

Fast in thy Paradise, where no flower can wither!

Many a spring I shoot up fair,

Off ring<sup>o</sup> at heav'n, growing and groaning thither:

Nor doth my flower

Want<sup>o</sup> a spring-shower,

My sins and I joining together:

But while I grow in a straight line,

Still upwards bent; as if heav'n were mine own,

Thy anger comes, and I decline:

What<sup>o</sup> frost to that? what pole is not the zone,

Where all things burn,

When thou dost turn,

And the least frown of thine is shown?

And now in age I bud again,

After so many deaths I live and write;

I once more smell the dew and rain,

And relish versing: O my only light,

It cannot be

That I am he

On whom thy tempests fell all night.

These are thy wonders, Lord of love,

To make us see we are but flowers that glide:<sup>2</sup>

Which when we once can find and prove,<sup>3</sup>

Thou hast a garden for us, where to bide.

Who<sup>o</sup> would be more,

Swelling through store,<sup>o</sup>

Forfeit their Paradise by their pride.

—1633

<sup>1</sup> *passing-bell* Bell tolled to mark a death.

<sup>2</sup> *flowers that glide* Flowers that pass away silently, imperceptibly. Cf. Job 14.2: "Man cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he flecth also like a shadow, and continueth not."

<sup>3</sup> *prove* Confirm through experience.

### Discipline

Throw away thy rod,  
Throw away thy wrath:

O my God,

Take the gentle path.

For my heart's desire

Unto thine is bent:

I aspire

To a full consent.

Not a word or look

I affect to own,

But by book,

And thy book alone.

Though I fail, I weep:

Though I halt in pace,

Yet I creep

To the throne of grace.

Then let wrath remove,<sup>o</sup>

Love will do the deed:

For with love

Stony hearts will bleed.

Love is swift of foot;

Love's a man of war,<sup>4</sup>

And can shoot,

And can hit from far.

Who can scape<sup>o</sup> his bow?

That which wrought<sup>o</sup> on thee,

Brought thee low,

Needs must work on me.

Throw away thy rod;

Though man frailties hath,

Thou art God:

Throw away thy wrath.

—1633

<sup>4</sup> *Love's... war* Cf. Exodus 15.3: "The Lord is a man of war." Also, an armed naval vessel.

### Death

Death, thou wast once an uncouth hideous thing,  
Nothing but bones,

The sad effect of sadder groans:

Thy mouth was open, but thou couldst not sing.

For we considered thee as at some six

Or ten years hence,

After the loss of life and sense,

Flesh being turned to dust, and bones to sticks.

We looked on this side of thee, shooting short;

Where we did find

The shells of fledge<sup>1</sup> souls left behind,

Dry dust, which sheds no tears, but may extort.

But since our Saviour's death did put some blood

Into thy face;

Thou art grown fair and full of grace,

Much in request, much sought for, as a good.

For we do now behold thee gay and glad,

As at doomsday:

When souls shall wear their new array,<sup>o</sup>

And all thy bones with beauty shall be clad:

Therefore we can go die as sleep, and trust

Half that we have

Unto an honest faithful grave;

Making our pillows either down, or dust.

—1633

<sup>1</sup> *fledge* Ready to fly.

### Love (3)

Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back,  
Guilty of dust and sin.

But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack<sup>2</sup>

From my first entrance in,

Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,

If I lacked anything.

A guest, I answered, worthy to be here:

Love said, You shall be he:

I the unkind, ungrateful? Ah my dear,

I cannot look on thee.

Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,

Who made the eyes but I?

Truth Lord, but I have marred them: let my shame

Go where it doth deserve.

And know you not, says Love, who bore the blame?

My dear, then I will serve.

You must sit down, says Love, and taste my meat.<sup>3</sup> So

I did sit and eat.

—1633

<sup>2</sup> *grow slack* Become hesitant or uncertain.

<sup>3</sup> *My dear... my meat* Cf. Luke 12.37: "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them."



This waxèd tame, while he grew wild,  
And quite regardless of my smart,  
Left me his fawn, but took his heart.

Thenceforth I set myself to play  
My solitary time away  
With this: and very well content,  
Could so mine idle life have spent.  
For it was full of sport, and light  
Of foot and heart, and did invite  
Me to its game; it seemed to bless  
Itself in me. How could I less  
Than love it? O, I cannot be  
Unkind to a beast that loveth me.

Had it lived long, I do not know  
Whether it too might have done so  
As Sylvio did; his gifts might be  
Perhaps as false, or more, than he.  
But I am sure, for aught that I  
Could in so short a time espy,  
Thy love was far more better than<sup>o</sup>  
The love of false and cruel men.

With sweetest milk and sugar first  
I it at mine own fingers nursed.  
And as it grew, so every day  
It waxed more white and sweet than they.  
It had so sweet a breath! And oft  
I blushed to see its foot more soft  
And white (shall I say than my hand?  
Nay, any lady's of the land).

It is a wondrous thing, how fleet  
'Twas on those little silver feet.  
With what a pretty skipping grace,  
It oft would challenge me the race:  
And, when 't had left me far away,  
'Twould stay, and run again, and stay.  
For it was nimbler much than hinds;  
And trod, as on the four<sup>1</sup> winds.

I have a garden of my own,  
But so with roses overgrown,  
And lilies, that you would it guess  
To be a little wilderness.  
And all the springtime of the year  
It only lovèd to be there.

<sup>1</sup> *four* Pronounced as two syllables.

Among the beds of lilies, I  
Have sought it oft, where it should lie;  
Yet could not, till itself would rise,  
Find it, although before mine eyes.  
For, in the flaxen lilies' shade,  
It like a bank of lilies laid.  
Upon the roses it would feed,  
Until its lips e'en seem to bleed:  
And then to me 'twould boldly trip,  
And print those roses on my lip.  
But all its chief delight was still  
On roses thus itself to fill:  
And its pure virgin limbs to fold  
In whitest sheets of lilies cold.  
Had it lived long, it would have been  
Lilies without, roses within.

O help! O help! I see it faint:  
And die as calmly as a saint.  
See how it weeps. The tears do come  
Sad, slowly, dropping like a gum.  
So weeps the wounded balsam: so  
The holy frankincense doth flow.  
The brotherless Heliades<sup>2</sup>  
Melt in such amber tears as these.

I in a golden vial will  
Keep these two crystal tears; and fill  
It till it do o'erflow with mine;  
Then place it in Diana's<sup>3</sup> shrine.

Now my sweet fawn is vanished to  
Whither the swans and turtles<sup>o</sup> go:  
In fair Elysium to endure,  
With milk-white lambs, and emines pure.  
O do not run too fast: for I

Will but bespeak thy grave, and die.  
First, my unhappy statue shall  
Be cut in marble; and withal,  
Let it be weeping too: but there  
The engraver sure his art may spare,

For I so truly thee bemoan,

<sup>2</sup> *Heliades* Daughters of Helios, the sun; while weeping over the death of their brother Phaethon they were transformed into poplar trees that wept amber tears (a story from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*).

<sup>3</sup> *Diana* Roman goddess of chastity, the moon, and hunting; according to a story in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, her pet stag was killed during a hunt.

That I shall weep, though I be stone:<sup>1</sup>  
Until my tears, still dropping, wear  
My breast, themselves engraving there.  
There at my feet shalt thou be laid,  
Of purest alabaster made:  
For I would have thine image be  
White as I can, though not as thee.

—c. 1681

### To His Coy Mistress

Had we but world enough, and time,<  
This coyness Lady were no crime.  
We would sit down, and think which way  
To walk, and pass our long love's day.  
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side  
Shouldst rubies find: I by the tide  
Of Humber<sup>2</sup> would complain. I would  
Love you ten years before the Flood:  
And you should, if you please, refuse  
Till the conversion of the Jews.<sup>3</sup>  
My vegetable love<sup>4</sup> should grow  
Vaster than empires; and more slow.  
An hundred years should go to praise  
Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze.  
Two hundred to adore each breast:  
But thirty thousand to the rest.  
An age at least to every part,  
And the last age should show your heart:

<sup>1</sup> *I shall weep, though I be stone* Like Niobe, who continued to weep after she was turned into stone by Zeus: Niobe wept for the loss of her many children, who died as punishment for Niobe's excessive maternal pride (she had boasted that she was a more impressive mother than Leto, who only had two children, Apollo and Artemis/Diana). From Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

<sup>2</sup> *Humber* River in northern England; it flowed alongside Hull, Marvell's home town.

<sup>3</sup> *conversion of the Jews* Event supposed to usher in the final Millennium leading to the end of time. Jews were officially readmitted to England in 1655 (after being expelled in 1290), primarily as a result of widespread millenarian hopes that their return would speed up the process of conversion.

<sup>4</sup> *vegetable love* His love (or its physical manifestation) would grow slowly and steadily: Aristotle had defined the vegetative part of the soul as that characterized only by growth.

For Lady you deserve this state;  
Nor would I love at lower rate.  
But at my back I always hear  
Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near:  
And yonder all before us lie  
Deserts of vast eternity.

Thy beauty shall no more be found;  
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound  
My echoing song: then worms shall try<sup>5</sup>  
That long-preserved virginity:  
And your quaint honour turn to dust;  
And into ashes all my lust.  
The grave's a fine and private place,  
But none, I think, do there embrace.

Now, therefore, while the youthful glew  
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,<sup>6</sup>  
And while thy willing soul transpires  
At every pore with instant fires,  
Now let us sport us while we may;  
And now, like amorous birds of prey,  
Rather at once our time devour,

Than languish in his slow-chapped<sup>7</sup> power.  
Let us roll all our strength, and all  
Our sweetness, up into one ball:  
And tear our pleasures with rough strife,  
Thorough<sup>o</sup> the iron gates<sup>8</sup> of life.

<sup>5</sup> *try* Test, and taste.

<sup>6</sup> *youthful glew / ... morning dew* One of the more famous textual problems in English literature. The 1681 printed edition has "youthful hew / ... morning glew." The version of the 1681 text with manuscript corrections changes this reading to "youthful glew / ... morning dew." Another manuscript, a transcription of the entire poem dated 1672, reads "youthful glue / ... morning dew." Many modern editions conflate the first line of the 1681 edition with the second line from the two manuscript versions, producing the decorous "youthful hew / ... morning dew." But the original manuscript reading does seem to have been "glew," a word then read by one transcriber as "gluc," and changed by a puzzled 1681 printer to "hew." "Glew" appears to mean sweat, which sits on the Lady's skin like dewdrops (and is evaporating from her pores in lines 35-36). The image might seem unusual, but is in keeping with the violent, passionate physicality of the poem's final section. "Glew" might be a northern dialect spelling of "glow," a word that could imply sexual ardour.

<sup>7</sup> *slow-chapped* Slowly devouring; "chaps" are jaws.

<sup>8</sup> *gates* "Grates" in the 1681 printed edition with manuscript corrections. But many editors see "gates of life" as a typically Marvellian inversion of the Biblical "gates of death" (Psalm 9:13).

heavily fades,  
all things  
die

45 Thus, though we cannot make our sun  
Stand still,<sup>1</sup> yet we will make him run.  
—1681

*The Picture of Little T.C.<sup>2</sup> in a  
Prospect of Flowers*

I  
See with what simplicity  
This nymph begins her golden days!  
In the green grass she loves to lie,  
And there with her fair aspect tames  
5 The wilder flowers, and gives them names:<sup>3</sup>  
But only with the roses plays;  
And them does tell  
What colour best becomes them, and what smell.

2  
Who can foretell for what high cause  
10 This Darling of the Gods was born!  
Yet this is she whose chaster laws  
The wanton Love shall one day fear,  
And, under her command severe,  
See his bow broke and ensigns torn,  
15 Happy, who can  
Appease this virtuous enemy of man!

3  
O, then let me in time compound,<sup>4</sup>  
And parley with those conquering eyes;  
Ere they have tried their force to wound,

<sup>1</sup> *sun / Stand still* Referring ultimately to Joshua 10.12–14, when Joshua made the sun and moon stand still while his army slaughtered the Amorites; but also invoking a traditional trope of love poetry in which lovers ask for time to slow down or stop when in one another's company.

<sup>2</sup> *T.C.* Probably Theophila Cornewall (b. 1644), whose mother was a member of a family, the Skinners, with whom Marvell was familiar. "Darling of the Gods" (line 10) is a literal translation of "Theophila."

<sup>3</sup> *gives them names* Associating "T.C." with Eve, traditionally said to have named the flowers in Eden (*Paradise Lost*, 11.277).

<sup>4</sup> *compound* "Come to terms with." The word also had a political resonance in the period: Royalists "compounded" by paying a fine to avoid confiscation of their estates.

20 Ere, with their glancing wheels, they drive  
In triumph over hearts that strive,  
And them that yield but more despise.  
Let me be laid,  
Where I may see thy glories from some shade.

4  
25 Meantime, whilst every verdant thing  
Itself does at thy beauty charm,  
Reform the errors of the spring;  
Make that the tulips may have share  
Of sweetness, seeing they are fair;  
30 And roses of their thorns disarm:  
But most procure  
That violets may a longer age endure.

5  
But, O young beauty of the woods,  
Whom Nature courts with fruits and flowers,  
35 Gather the flowers, but spare the buds;  
Lest Flora<sup>5</sup> angry at thy crime,  
To kill her infants in their prime,  
Do quickly make the example yours;  
And, ere we see,  
40 Nip in the blossom all our hopes and thee.  
—1681 (PROBABLY WRITTEN IN THE EARLY 1650S)

*The Mower against Gardens*

Luxurious man, to bring his vice in use,  
Did after him the world seduce,  
And from the fields the flowers and plants allure,  
Where nature was most plain and pure.  
5 He first enclosed within the gardens square  
A dead and standing pool of air,  
And a more luscious earth for them did knead,  
Which stupefied them while it fed.  
The pink grew then as double as his mind;  
10 The nutriment did change the kind.  
With strange perfumes he did the roses taint,  
And flowers themselves were taught to paint.  
The tulip, white, did for complexion seek,

<sup>5</sup> *Flora* Roman goddess of flowers.

*Damon the Mower*

Hark how the Mower Damon sung,  
With love of Juliana stung!  
While everything did seem to paint  
The scene more fit for his complaint.  
5 Like her fair eyes the day was fair,  
But scorching like his am'rous care.  
Sharp like his scythe his sorrow was,  
And withered like his hopes the grass.

2  
"Oh what unusual heats are here,  
10 Which thus our sunburned meadows sear!  
The grasshopper its pipe gives o'er;  
And hamstringed<sup>6</sup> frogs can dance no more.  
But in the brook the green frog wades;  
And grasshoppers seek out the shades.  
15 Only the snake, that kept within,  
Now glitters in its second skin.

3  
"This heat the sun could never raise,  
Nor Dog Star<sup>7</sup> so inflame the days.  
It from an higher beauty groweth,  
20 Which burns the fields and mower both:  
Which mads the dog, and makes the sun  
Hotter than his own Phaëton.<sup>8</sup>  
Not July causeth these extremies,  
But Juliana's scorching beams.

4  
25 "Tell me where I may pass the fires  
Of the hot day, or hot desires.  
To what cool cave shall I descend,

And learned to interline its cheek:  
15 Its onion root they then so high did hold,  
That one was for a meadow sold.<sup>1</sup>  
Another world was searched, through oceans new,  
To find the *Marvel of Peru*.<sup>2</sup>  
And yet these rarities might be allowed  
To man, that sovereign thing and proud,  
20 Had he not dealt between the bark and tree,<sup>3</sup>  
Forbidden mixtures there to see.  
No plant now knew the stock from which it came;  
He grafts upon the wild the tame:  
25 That the uncertain and adulterate fruit  
Might put the palate in dispute.  
His green seraglio has its eunuchs too,  
Lest any tyrant him outdo.  
And in the cherry he does nature vex,  
30 To procreate without a sex.<sup>4</sup>  
'Tis all enforced, the fountain and the grot,  
While the sweet fields do lie forgot:  
Where willing Nature does to all dispense  
A wild and fragrant innocence:  
35 And fauns and fairies do the meadows till,  
More by their presence than their skill.  
Their statues, polished by some ancient hand,  
May to adorn the gardens stand:  
But howsoe'er the figures do excel,  
40 The gods themselves with us<sup>5</sup> do dwell.  
—1681 (PROBABLY WRITTEN IN THE EARLY 1650S)

<sup>1</sup> *for a meadow sold* Referring to the speculative bubble of the "tulip mania" in Holland in the 1630s, during which spectacular prices were paid for some bulbs.

<sup>2</sup> *Marvel of Peru* Much prized multi-colored tropical flower of South America (and possibly with a pun on the poet's name).

<sup>3</sup> *between the bark and tree* "To deal between the bark and the tree" was a proverbial expression for interfering activity, often to interfering between husband and wife; the proverb is here made literal through its reference to grafting.

<sup>4</sup> *And in the cherry ... a sex* Probably referring to attempts to create, through grafting, stoneless cherries (hence "eunuchs").

<sup>5</sup> *with us* With mowers (not with gardeners).

<sup>6</sup> *hamstringed* Lamed or disabled (figuratively) by the heat.

<sup>7</sup> *Dog Star* Sirius; associated with the "dog days" of July and August, the period when Sirius rises at the same time as the sun.

<sup>8</sup> *Phaëton* Son of the sun god, who set part of the world on fire when driving his father's chariot.