



# An Anthology of English Poetry

from the Middle Ages to the End of the 1930s

Krisztina Kodó

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A kötet megjelenése az Európai Unió támogatásával,  
a Nemzeti Fejlesztési Terv keretében valósult meg:

**A felsőoktatás szerkezeti és tartalmi fejlesztése HEFOP-3.3.1-P.-2004-09-0134/1.0**

ISBN 963 9704 78 4

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**Bölcsész Konzorcium HEFOP Iroda**

H-1088 Budapest, Múzeum krt. 4/A.

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AN ANTHOLOGY OF ENGLISH POETRY  
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OF THE 1930s





Dr. Kodó Krisztina

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2006



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## FOREWORD

The compilation of this work had taken considerable time and effort as the basic aim in editing this anthology, in the first place, was to provide an easy-to-use and accessible material for the teachers, as well as for the students within the sphere of Hungarian higher education. The intention was to include not only the poems, but also a brief overview of the poet's life, achievement and major role within English literary history, which would provide students with enough information at first glance to be able to understand and classify the poet chronologically according to his/her specific age and place within the English Literary Canon.

The principle of selection has been defined by a fourfold ambition. 1. The anthology endeavours to provide Hungarian students studying English at the B.A. and M.A. levels with a comprehensive resource material that reflects the new critical awareness created by the most significant critical approaches that have redefined "tradition" in the English, Scottish and Irish poetic history by the beginning of the 21st century. An attempt has been made to give due emphasis to female poets brought into focus by feminist criticism (Aphra Behn, Emily Brontë, Christina Rossetti), to texts distinguished by deconstruction (e.g. Percy Shelley's *Triumph of Life*) and poems representing poetic careers that the New Historicists have found representative of the ever varying but specific historical milieu (John Clare, Charlotte Smith, and Anna Letitia Barbauld). 2. Another important ambition of the compiler has been to reflect, in a modest way, Hungarian literary history, including cases of direct influence (Pope's mock heroic epic and *Essay on Man* exercising a decisive influence on Mihály Csokonai and György Bessenyei) and influence through translation (*Sir Patrick Spens*). 3. Last but not least, a specific aim has been to offer poems which may lend themselves easily to classroom treatment in teaching English as a foreign language in this country.

We sincerely hope that the anthology will enable Hungarian students majoring in English language and literature to benefit from the wide selection of poets and their works presented here, thereby helping to

enhance and further their studies, and simultaneously awaken their interest in further research and study within the field of English poetry.

I would like to thank all my colleagues at János Kodolányi University College, who have helped with their numerous comments and advice in the making of this anthology, because it would not have been written without them. And a very special thanks to Professor Ágnes Péter for her advice, comments and help in the selection of the material and Keith Hardwick for his comments and corrections.

Krisztina Kodó, Ph.D  
Editor

## MIDDLE ENGLISH LYRICS

English language began to develop in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century the kinds of aristocratic, formal, learned and literary types of lyric that had long been cultivated on the Continent by the Troubadour poets in the south of France, the Minnesänger in Germany, or the Italian poets. The Middle English Lyric is a genre of English Literature that was popular in the 14th century and is characterized by its brevity and emotional expression. Conventionally, the lyric expresses “a moment,” usually spoken or performed in the first person. Although some lyrics have narratives, the plots are usually simple to emphasize an occasional, common experience. Even though lyrics appear to be individual and personal, they are not “original”. Instead, the lyrics express a common state of mind. Many are marked by strong accentual rhythms with a good deal of alliteration.

Most Middle English Lyrics are anonymous. Because the lyrics reflect on a sort of “community property” of ideas, the concept of copyrighting a lyric to a particular author is usually inappropriate. Many lyrics that survive today were widely recited in various forms before being written down. Some were undoubtedly set to music, and in a few cases the music has survived. One of the earliest among the lyrics is *The Cuckoo Song*, which is a canon or round in which the voices follow one another and join together echoing the joyous cry, “Cuckou”.

### *The Cuckoo Song*

Summer is ycomen in,  
Loude sing cuckou!  
Groweth seed and bloweth meed,<sup>1</sup>  
And springth the wode<sup>2</sup> now.  
Sing cuckou!

---

<sup>1</sup> The meadow blossoms.

<sup>2</sup> wood

Ewe bleteth after lamb,  
Loweth after calve cow,  
Bulloc sterteth,<sup>3</sup> bukke verteth,<sup>4</sup>  
Merye sing cuckou!  
Wel singest thou cuckou:  
Ne swik<sup>5</sup> thou never now!  
(ca. 1240)

*Western Wind*

Westron wind, when will thou blow?  
The smart rain down can rain.  
Christ, that my love were in my arms,  
And I in my bed again.  
(early 16<sup>th</sup> century)

---

3 leaps  
4 farts  
5 cease

## GEOFFREY CHAUCER

(ca. 1343–1400)

Chaucer was born into a well-to-do bourgeois family, in London, probably in the year 1343. His father was a prosperous wine merchant, who was an important member of the emerging English middle classes. In 1357 he was employed in the service of Lionel, third son of King Edward III, and later Duke of Clarence. He entered military service in 1359, served in France, where he was taken prisoner, but was shortly ransomed. Chaucer held various positions at court, and was sent on a mission to Genoa and Florence in 1372-3, when he perhaps met Boccaccio and Petrarch. The last period of his life Chaucer spent in England, and this is his most fruitful period, when he wrote his masterpiece the *Canterbury Tales* (ca. 1387). Chaucer died in 1400, and was the first to be buried in the now famous Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey.

From the *General Prologue*

*Here Beginneth the Book of the Tales of Caunterbury*

Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote  
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote  
And bathed every veyne in swich licour  
Of which vertu engendred is the flour,  
Whan Zephirus cek with his sweete breeth  
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth  
The tender croppes, and the yonge sonne  
Hath in the Ram his half cours yronnes,  
And smale foweles maken melodye  
That slepen al the nyght with open eye,  
So priketh hem nature in hir corages,  
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages  
And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes  
To ferne halwes kouthe in sondry londes,  
And specially from every shires ende  
Of Engelond to Caunterbury they wende  
The holy blisful martir for to seke  
That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke.

Bifel that in that sesoun on a day  
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay  
Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage  
To caunterbury, with ful devout corage,  
At nyght was come into that hostelrye  
Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye  
Of sondry folk, by aventure yfalle  
In felaweshipe, and pilgrimes were they alle  
That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde.  
The chambers and the stables weren wyde  
And wel we weren esed at best.  
And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,  
So hadde I spoken with hem everichon  
That I was if hir felaweshipe anon,  
And made forward erly for to ryse  
To take oure wey ther as I yow devyse.

But natheless whil I have tyme and space  
Er that I ferther in this tale pace,  
Me thynketh it acordant to resoun  
To telle yow al the condicioun  
Of ech of hem so as it semed me  
And whiche they weren and of what degree  
And eek in what array that they were inne;  
And at a knyght than wol I first bigynne.

A knyght ther was, and that a worthy man,  
That fro the tyme that he first bigan  
To riden out, he loved chivalrie,  
Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie.  
Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,  
And therto hadde he riden, no man ferre,  
As wel in Cristendom as in hethenesse,  
And evere honoured for his worthynesse.  
At Alisaundre he was whan it was wonne.  
Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne  
Aboven alle nacions in Pruce;  
In Lettow hadde he reysed and in Ruce,  
No Cristen man so ofte of his degree.

In Grenade at the seege eek hadde he be  
Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye.  
At Lyeys was he and at Satalye  
Whan they were wonne and in the Grete See  
At many a noble armee hadde he be.  
At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene,  
And foughten for oure feith at Tramysene  
In lystes thrics, and ay slayn his foo.  
This ilke worthy knyght hadde been also  
Som tyme with the lord of Palatye  
Agayn another hethen in Turkye.  
And evere moore he hadde a sovereyn prys;  
And though that he were worthy, he was wys,  
And of his port as mecke as is a mayde.  
He nevere yet no vileynye ne sayde  
In al his lyf unto no maner wight.  
He was a verray parfit gentil knyght.  
But, for to tellen yow of his array,  
Hise hors were goode, but he was nat gay.  
Of fustian he wered a gypoun  
Al bismotered with his habergeon  
For he was late ycome from his viage  
And wente for to doon his pilgrymage.

With hym ther was his sone, a yong squier,  
A lovyere and a lusty bachelor  
With lokkes crulle as they were leyd in presse.  
Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.  
Of his stature he was of evene lengthe  
And wonderly delyvere and of greet strengthe.  
And he hadde been som tyme in chyvachie  
In Flaundres, in Artoys, and Pycardie,  
And born hym weel, as of so litel space,  
In hope to stonden in his lady grace.  
Embrouded was he, as it were a meede  
Al ful of fresshe floures, whyte and reede.  
Syngynge he was, or floytynge al the day;  
He was as fressh as is the month of May.

Short was his gowne, with sleeves longe and wyde.  
Wel koude he sitte on hors and faire ryde.  
He koude songes make and wel endite,  
Juste and eek daunce, and weel purtreye and write.  
So hoot he lovede that by nyghtertale  
He sleep namoore than dooth a nyghtyngale.  
Curteis he was, lowely, and servysable,  
And carf biforn his fader at the table.

A yeman hadde he and servantz namo  
At that tyme, for hym liste ride so,  
And he was clad in cote and hood of grene.  
A sheef of pecok arwes bright and kene,  
Under his belt he bar ful thriftily –  
Wel koude he dresse his takel yemanly:  
His arwes drouped noght with fetheres lowe –  
And in his hand he baar a myghty bowe.  
A not heed hadde he, with a broun visage.  
Of wodecraft wel koude he al the usage.  
Upon his arm he baar a gay bracer  
And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler  
And on that oother syde a gay daggere  
Harneised wel and sharp as point of spere;  
A Cristopher on his brest of silver sheene,  
An horn he bar, the bawdryk was of grene;  
A forster was he, soothly, as I gesse.

Ther was also a nonne, a Prioressse,  
That of hir smylyng was ful symple and coy;  
Hir gretteste ooth was but by Sainte Loy,  
And she was cleped Madame Eglentyne.  
Ful weel she soong the service dyvyne,  
Entuned in hir nose ful semely,  
And Frenssh she spak ful faire and fetisly,  
After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe,  
For Frenssh of Parys was to hire unknowe.  
At mete wel ytaught was she with alle:  
She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,



Ne wette hir fyngres in hir sauce deepe;  
 Wel koude she carie a morsel and wel keepe  
 That no drope ne fille upon hire brest.  
 In curteisie was set ful muchel hir lest:  
 Hir over lippe wyped she so clene  
 That in hir coppe ther was no ferthyng sene  
 Of grece whan she dronken hadde hir draughte.  
 Ful semely after hir mete she raughte,  
 And sikerly she was of greet desport,  
 And ful plesaunt, and amyable of port,  
 And peyned hire to countrefete cheere  
 Of court, and to been estatlich of manere,  
 And to been holden digne of reverence.  
 But, for to speken of hire conscience,  
 She was so charitable and so pitous  
 She wolde wepe, if that she saugh a mous  
 Caught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde.  
 Of smale houndes hadde she that she fedde  
 With rosted flessch or milk and wastel-breed,  
 But soore wepte she if oon of hem were deed,  
 Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte,  
 And al was conscience and tendre herte.  
 Ful semyly hir wympel pynched was,  
 Hir nose tretys, hir cyen greye as glas,  
 Hir mouth ful smal, and therto softe and reed;  
 But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed;  
 It was almoost a spanne brood, I trowe;  
 For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe.  
 Ful fetys was hir cloke, as I was war.  
 Of smal coral aboute hire arm she bar  
 A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene,  
 And theron heng a brooch of gold ful sheene  
 On which ther was first write a crowned A,  
 And after *Amor Vincit Omnia*.

Another nonne with hire hadde she,  
 That was hir chapeleyn and preestes thre.  
 A monk ther was, a fair for the maistrie,

An outridere, that lovede venerie  
A manly man, to been an abbot able.  
Ful many a deyntee hors hadde he in stable,  
And whan he rood, men myghte his brydel heere  
Gynglen in a whistlynge wynd as cleere  
And eek as loude as dooth the chapel belle  
Ther as this lord was kepere of the celle.  
The reule of Seint Maure or of Seint Beneit,  
By cause that it was old and som del streit  
This ilke monk leet olde thynges pace,  
And heeld after the newe world the space.  
He yaf nat of that text a pulled hen,  
That seith that hunters been nat holy men,  
Ne that a monk, whan he is reccheles,  
Is likned til a fissh that is waterlees, —  
This is to seyn, a monk out of his cloystre.  
But thilke text heeld he nat worth an oystre;  
And I seyde his opinion was good:  
What sholde he studie and make hym selven wood,  
Upon a book in cloystre alwey to poure,  
Or swynken with his handes, and laboure,  
As Austyn bit? How shal the world be served?  
Lat Austyn have his swynk to hym reserved!  
Therfore he was a prikasour aright:  
Grehoundes he hadde as swift as fowel in flight;  
Of prikyng and of huntyng for the hare  
Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.  
I seigh his sleeves purfild at the hond  
With grys and that the fyneste of a lond;  
And, for to festne his hood under his chyn,  
He hadde of gold wroght a ful curious pyn;  
A love knotte in the gretter ende ther was.  
His heed was balled that shoon as any glas,  
And eek his face, as he hadde been enoynt.  
He was a lord ful fat and in good poynt;  
His eyen stepe and rollynge in his heed  
That stemed as a forneys of a leed,  
His bootes souple, his hors in greet estaat.

Now certainly he was a fair prelaat;  
 He was nat pale as a forpynd goost.  
 A fat swan loved he best of any roost.  
 His palfrey was as broun as is a berye.

A frere ther was, a wantowne and a merye,  
 A lymytour, a ful solempne man:  
 In alle the ordres foure is noon that kan  
 So muche of daliaunce and fair langage.  
 He hadde maad ful many a mariage  
 Of yonge wommen at his owene cost.  
 Unto his ordre he was a noble post.  
 Ful wel biloved and famulier was he  
 With frankeleyns over al in his contree,  
 And with worthy wommen of the toun;  
 For he hadde power of confessioun,  
 As seyde hymself, moore than a curat,  
 For of his ordre he was licenciat.  
 Ful swetely herde he confessioun,  
 And plesaunt was his absolucioun:  
 He was an esy man to yeve penaunce,  
 Ther as he wiste to have a good pitaunce,  
 For unto a povre ordre for to yive  
 Is signe that a man is wel yshryve;  
 For if he yaf, he dorste make avaunt,  
 He wiste that a man was repentaunt:  
 For many a man so hard is of his herte,  
 He may nat wepe, althogh hym soore smerte;  
 Therfore in stede of wepyng and preyes  
 Men moote yeve silver to the povre freres.  
 His typet was ay farsed ful of knyves  
 And pynnes, for to yeven faire wyves.  
 And certainly he hadde a murye note:  
 Wel koude he synge and pleyen on a rote;  
 Of yeddynges he baar outrely the pris.  
 His nekke whit was as the flour-delys,  
 Therto he strong was as a champioun.  
 He knew the tavernes wel in every toun

And every hostiler and tappestere  
Bet than a lazar or a beggestere,  
For unto swich a worthy man as he  
Acorde nat as by his facultee  
To have with sike lazars aqueyntaunce,  
It is nat honeste, it may nat avaunce  
For to deelen with no swich poraille,  
But al with riche and selleres of vitaille.  
And over al ther as profit sholde arise,  
Curteis he was and lowely of servyse.  
Ther nas no man no wher so vertuous.  
He was the beste beggere in his hous;  
(and yaf a certeyne ferme for the graunt:  
Noon of his bretheren cam ther in his haunt;)  
For thogh a wydwe hadde noght a sho,  
So plesaunt was his *In principio*,  
Yet wolde he have a ferthyng, er he wente:  
His purchas was wel bettre than his rente.  
And rage he koude, as it were right a whelpe.  
In lovedayes ther koude he muchel helpe,  
For ther he was nat lyk a cloysterer  
With a thredbare cope as is a povre scolere,  
But he was lyk a maister or a pope:  
Of double worstede was his semycope  
That rounded as a belle out of the presse.  
Som what he lipped for his wantownesse  
To make his Englissh sweete upon his tonge;  
And in his harpyng whan that he hadde songe  
His eyen twynkled in his heed aryght,  
As doon the sterres in the frosty nyght.  
This worthy lymytour was cleped Huberd.

A marchant was ther with a forked berd,  
In mottelee, and hye on hors he sat;  
Upon his heed a Flaundryssh bevere hat,  
His bootes clasped faire and fetisly.  
His resons he spak ful solemprely  
Sownynge alwey th' entrees of his wynnyng.

He wolde the see were kept for any thyng  
Bitwixe Middelburgh and Orewelle.  
Wel koude he in eschaunge sheeldes selle.  
This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette:  
Ther wiste no wight that he was in dette,  
So estatly was he of his governaunce,  
With his bargaynes and with his chevysaunce.  
For soothe he was a worthy man with alle,  
But, sooth to seyn, I noot how men hym calle.

A clerk ther was of Oxenford also  
That unto logyk hadde longe ygo.  
As leene was his hors as is a rake,  
And he nas nat right fat, I undertake,  
But looked holwe and therto sobrelly.  
Ful thredbare was his overeste courtiepy  
For he hadde geten hym yet no benefice  
Ne was so worldly for to have office,  
For hym was levere have at his beddes heed  
Twenty bookes clad in blak or reed  
Of Aristotle and his philosophie  
Than robes riche, or fithele or gay sautrie.  
But al be that he was a philosophre,  
Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre;  
But al that he myghte of his freendes hente  
On bookes and on lernynge he it spente,  
And bisily gan for the soules preye  
Of hem that yaf hym wherwith to scoleye.  
Of studie took he moost cure and moost heede,  
Noght o word spak he moore than was neede  
And that was seyed in forme and reverence,  
And short and quyk and ful of hy sentence:  
Sownynge in moral vertu was his speche,  
And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche.

A sergeant of the lawe, war and wys,  
That often hadde been at the Parvys,  
Ther was also, ful riche of excellence.

Discreet he was and of greet reverence:  
He semed swich, his wordes weren so wise.  
Justice he was ful often in assise  
By patente and by pleyn commissioun.  
For his science and for his heigh renoun,  
Of fees and robes hadde he many oon.  
So greet a purchasour was nowher noon:  
Al was fee symple to hym in effect;  
His purchasyng myghte nat been infect.  
Nowher so bisy a man as he ther nas,  
And yet he semed bisier than he was.  
In termes hadde he caas and doomes alle  
That from the tyme of Kyng William were falle.  
Therto he koude endite and make a thyng  
Ther koude no wight pynchen at his writyng;  
And every statut koude he pleyn by rote.  
He rood but hoonly in a medlee cote  
Girt with a ceint of silk with barres smale;  
Of his array telle I no lenger tale.

A frankelyn was in his compaignye.  
Whit was his berd as is the dayesye;  
Of his complexioun he was sangwyn.  
Wel loved he by the morwe a sop in wyn;  
To lyven in delyt was evere his wone  
For he was Epicurus owene sone  
That heeld opinioun that pleyn delit  
Was verray felicittee parfit.  
An housholdere, and that a greet, was he;  
Seint Julian he was in his contree.  
His breed, his ale, was always after oon,  
A bettre envyned man was nowher noon.  
Withoute bake mete was nevere his hous  
Of fissh and flessch and that so plentevous  
It snewed in his hous of mete and drynke,  
Of alle deyntees that men koude thynke.  
After the sondry sesons of the year  
So chaunged he his mete and his soper.

Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in muwe  
 And many a breem and many a luce in stuwe.  
 Wo was his cook but if his sauce were  
 Poynaunt and sharp, and redy al his geere.  
 His table dormant in his halle alway  
 Stood redy covered al the longe day.  
 At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire;  
 Ful ofte tyme he was knyght of the shire.  
 An anlaas and a gipser al of silk  
 Heeng at his girdel, whit as morne milk.  
 A shirreve hadde he been, and a contour.  
 Was nowher swich a worthy vavasour.

An haberdasshere and a carpenter,  
 A webbe, a dyere, and a tapycer  
 And they were clothed alle in o lyveree  
 Of a solempne and a greet fraternitee.  
 Ful fressh and newe hir geere apiked was;  
 Hir knyves were chaped noght with bras  
 But al with silver; wroght ful clene and wel  
 Hire girdles and hir pouches everydel.  
 Wel semed ech of hem a fair burgeys  
 To sitten in a yeldehalle on a deys.  
 Everich, for the wisdom that he kan  
 Was shaply for to been an alderman,  
 For catel hadde they ynogh and rente  
 And eek hir wyves wolde it wel assente;  
 And elles certeyn were they to blame:  
 It is ful fair to been ycleped 'Madame',  
 And goon to vigilies al bifore  
 And have a mantel roialliche ybore.

A cook they hadde with hem for the nones  
 To boille the chiknes with the marybones  
 And poudre marchant tart and galyngale.  
 Wel koude he knowe a draughte of Londoun ale.  
 He koude rooste and seethe and broille and frye,  
 Maken mortreux and wel bake a pye.

But greet harm was it, as it thoughte me,  
That on his shyne a mormal hadde he.  
For blankmanger, that made he with the beste.

A shipman was ther, wonyng fer by weste:  
For aught I woot he was of Dertemouthe.  
He rood upon a rouncy as he kouthe  
In a gowne of faldyng to the knece.  
A daggere hangyng on a laas hadde he  
Aboute his nekke under his arm adoun.  
The hoote somer hadde maad his hewe al broun;  
And certainly he was a good felawe.  
Ful many a draughte of wyn had he drawe  
Fro Burdeauxward whil that the chapman sleep.  
Of nyce conscience took he no keep.  
If that he faught and hadde the hyer hond,  
By water he sente hem hoom to every lond.  
But of his craft, to rekene wel his tydes,  
His streames and his daungers hym bisydes,  
His herberwe and his moone, his lodemenage,  
Ther nas noon swich from Hulle to Cartage.  
Hardy he was and wys to undertake;  
With many a tempest hadde his berd been shake.  
He knew alle the havenes as they were,  
Fro Gootlond to the Cape of Fynystere,  
And every cryke in Britaigne and in Spayne.  
His barge ycleped was the Maudelayne.

With us ther was a doctour of phisik;  
In al this world ne was ther noon hym lik,  
To speke of phisik and of surgerye  
For he was grounded in astronomye:  
He kepte his pacient a ful greet deel  
In houres by his magyk natureel.  
Wel koude he fortunen the ascendant  
Of his ymages for his pacient.  
He knew the cause of everich maladye,  
Were it of hoot, or coold, or moyste, or drye,



And where engendred and of what humour:  
 He was a verray, parfit praktisour.  
 The cause yknowe and of his harm the roote,  
 Anon he yaf the sike man his boote.  
 Ful redy hadde he his apothecaries  
 To sende hym drogges and his letuaries,  
 For ech of hem made oother for to wynne;  
 Hir frendshipe nas nat newe to bigynne.  
 Wel knew he the olde Esculapius  
 And Deyscorides and cek Rufus,  
 Olde Ypocras, Haly, and Galyen,  
 Serapion, Razis, and Avycen,  
 Averrois, Damascien, and Constantyn,  
 Bernard, and Gatesden, and Gilbertyn.  
 Of his diete mesurable was he,  
 For it was of no superfluitee  
 But of greet norissing and digestible.  
 His studie was but litel on the Bible.  
 In sangwyn and in pers he clad was al,  
 Lynced with taffata and with sendal,  
 And yet he was but esy of dispence:  
 He kepste that he wan in pestilence,  
 For gold in phisik is a cordial;  
 Ther fore he loved gold in special.

A good wif was ther of biside Bathe,  
 But she was som del deaf and that was scathe.  
 Of clooth-makyn she hadde swich an haunt  
 She passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt.  
 In al the parisshe wif ne was ther noon  
 That to the offrynge bifore hire sholde goon;  
 And if ther dide, certeyn so wrooth was she,  
 That she was out of alle charitee.  
 Hir coverchiefs ful fyne weren of ground,  
 I dorste swere they weyeden ten pound  
 That on a Sonday weren upon hir heed;  
 Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed  
 Ful streite yteyd, and shoes ful moyste and newe.

Boold was hir face and fair and reed of hewe.  
She was a worthy womman al hir lyve:  
Housbondes at chirche dore she hadde fyve,  
Withouten oother compaignye in youthe,  
But therof nedeth nat to speke as nowthe.  
And thries hadde she been at Jerusalem;  
She hadde passed many a straunge strem;  
At Rome she hadde been, and at Boloigne,  
In Galice at Seint-Jame, and at Coloigne;  
She koude muche of wandrynge by the weye:  
Gat-tothed was she soothly for to seye.  
Upon an amblere esily she sat  
Ywympled wel and on hir heed an hat  
As brood as is a bokeler or a targe,  
A foot mantel aboute hir hipcs large  
And on hir feet a paire of spores sharpe.  
In felaweshipe wel koude she laughe and carpe;  
Of remedies of love she knew per chaunce,  
For she koude of that art the olde daunce.

A good man was ther of religioun,  
And was a povre persoun of a toun,  
But riche he was of hooly thoght and werk.  
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,  
That Cristes gospel trewely wolde preche:  
His parissheis devoutly wolde he teche.  
Benygne he was and wonder diligent  
And in adversitee ful pacient  
And swich he was yprevcd ofte sithes.  
Ful looth were hym to cursen for his tithes,  
But rather wolde he yeven out of doute  
Unto his povre parissheis aboute  
Of his offryng and eek of his substaunce;  
He koude in litel thyng have suffisaunce.  
Wyd was his parisshe and houses fer asonder,  
But he ne lefte nat for reyn ne thonder,  
In siknesse nor in meschief to visite  
The ferreste in his parisshe, muche and lite,

Upon his feet, and in his hand a staf.  
 This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf  
 That first he wroghte and afterward he taughte;  
 Out of the gospel he tho wordes caughte,  
 And this figure he added eek therto  
 That if gold ruste, what shal iren do?  
 For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,  
 No wonder is a lewed man to ruste;  
 And shame it is, if a preest take keep,  
 A shiten shepherde and a clene sheep;  
 Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yive  
 By his clenness how that his sheep sholde lyve.  
 He sette nat his benefice to hyre  
 And leet his sheep encombred in the myre  
 And ran to Londoun unto Seinte Poules  
 To seken hym a chaunterie for soules  
 Or with a bretherhed to been withholde,  
 But dwelte at hoom, and kepte wel his folde  
 So that the wolf ne made it nat myscarie:  
 He was a shepherde and noght a mercenarie.  
 And though he hooly were and vertuous,  
 He was to synful men nat despitous  
 Ne of his speche daungerous ne digne,  
 But in his techyng discret and benygne;  
 To drawen folk to hevene by fairnesse,  
 By good ensample, this was his bisynesse;  
 But it were any persone obstinat,  
 What so he were, of heigh or lough estat,  
 Hym wolde he snybben sharply for the nonys.  
 A better preest I trowe that nowher noon ys:  
 He waited after no pompe and reverence  
 Ne maked him a spiced conscience,  
 But Cristes loore and his apostles twelve  
 He taughte but first he folwed it hym selve.

With hym ther was a plowman, was his brother,  
 That hadde ylad of dong ful many a fother;  
 A trewe swynkere and a good was he

Lyvyng in pees and parfit charitee.  
God loved he best with al his hoole herte  
At alle tymes thogh him gamed or smerte,  
And thanne his neighebor right as hym selve:  
He wolde thresshe and therto dyke and delve  
For Cristes sake, for every povre wight,  
Withouten hire, if it lay in his myght;  
His tithes payde he ful faire and wel  
Bothe of his propre swynk and his catel.  
In a tabard he rood upon a mere.

Ther was also a reve and a millere,  
A somnour and a pardoner also,  
A maunciple, and myself – ther were namo.

The millere was a stout carl for the nones,  
Ful byg he was of brawn and eek of bones;  
That proved wel, for over al ther he cam  
At wrastlyng he wolde have alwey the ram.  
He was short-sholdred, brood, a thikke knarre:  
Ther was no dore that he nolde heve of harre  
Or breke it at a rennyng with his heed.  
His berd as any sowe or fox was reed  
And therto brood as though it were a spade;  
Upon the cop right of his nose he hade  
A werte, and theron stood a toft of herys  
Reed as the bristles of a sowes erys;  
His nosethirles blake were and wyde.  
A swerd and bokeler bar he by his syde.  
His mouth as greet was as a greet forneys,  
He was a jangler and a goliardeys,  
And that was moost of synne and harlotries.  
Wel koude he stelen corn and tollen thries  
And yet he hadde a thombe of gold, pardee.  
A whit cote and a blew hood wered he,  
A baggepipe wel koude he blowe and sowne  
And therewithalin he broghte us out of townne.

A gentil maunciple was ther of a temple,  
 Of which achatours myghte take exemple  
 For to be wise in bynyng of vitaille:  
 For whether that he payde or took by taille  
 Algate he wayted so in his achaaat  
 That he was ay biforn and in good staat.  
 Now is nat that of God a ful fair grace  
 That swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace  
 The wisdom of an heep of lerned men?  
 Of maistres hadde he mo than thries ten  
 That weren of lawe expert and curious,  
 Of which ther were a dozeyne in that hous  
 Worthy to been stywardes of rente and lond  
 Of any lord that is in Engelond  
 To make hym lyve by his propre good  
 In honour dettelees, but if he were wood,  
 Or lyve as scarsly as him lyst desire;  
 And able for to helpen al a shire  
 In any caas that myghte falle or happe;  
 And yet this manciple sette hir aller cappe.

The reve was a sclendre colerik man.  
 His berd was shave as neigh as ever he kan,  
 His heer was by his erys ful round yshorn,  
 His top was dokked lyk a preest biforn,  
 Ful longe were his legges and ful lene  
 Ylyk a staf, ther was no calf ysene.  
 Wel koude he kepe a gerner and a bynne,  
 Ther was noon auditour koude on him wynne;  
 Wel wiste he by the droghte and by the reyn  
 The yeldyng of his seed and of his greyn.  
 His lordes sheep, his neet, his dayerye,  
 His swyn, his hors, his stoor and his pultrye  
 Was hoolly in this reves governynge,  
 And by his covenant yaf the rekenynge  
 Syn that his lord was twenty yeer of age;  
 Ther koude no man bryng hym in arrerage.  
 Ther nas baillif, ne hierde nor oother hyne

That he ne knew his sleighte and his covyne;  
They were adrad of hym as of the deeth.  
His wonyng was ful faire upon an heeth;  
With grene trees yshadwed was his place.  
He koude better than his lord purchase;  
Ful riche he was astored pryvely;  
His lord wel koude he plesen subtilly  
To yeve and lene hym of his owene good  
And have a thank and yet a cote and hood.  
In youthe he hadde lerned a good myster:  
He was a wel good wrighte, a carpenter.  
This reve sat upon a ful good stot  
That was al pomely grey and highte Scot;  
A long surcote of pers upon he hade  
And by his syde he baar a rusty blade.  
Of Northfolk was this reve of which I telle,  
Beside a toun men clepen Baldeswelle.  
Tukked in he was as is a frere aboute  
And evere he rood the hyndreste of oure route.

A somonour was ther with us in that place  
That hadde a fyr reed cherubynnes face,  
For saucefleem he was with eyen narwe;  
As hoot he was and lecherous as a sparwe,  
With scalled browes blake and piled berd;  
Of his visage children were aferd:  
Ther nas quyk-silver, lytarge ne brymston,  
Boras, ceruce ne oile of tartre noon  
Ne oynement that wolde clense and byte  
That hym myghte helpen of his whelkes white  
Nor of the knobbes sittynge on his chekes.  
Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek lekes  
And for to drynken strong wyn reed as blood;  
Thanne wolde he speke and crie asas if he were wood,  
And whan that he wel dronken hadde the wyn  
Thanne wolde he speke no word but Latyn.  
A fewe termes hadde he, two or three  
That he had lerned out of som decree:

No wonder is, he herde it al the day,  
 And eek ye knowen wel how that a jay  
 Kan clepen "Watte" as wel as kan the pope.  
 But whoso koude in oother thyng hym grope,  
 Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophie:  
 Ay "Questio quid iuris" wolde he crie.  
 He was a gentil harlot and a kynde,  
 A bettre felawe sholde men noght fynde:  
 He wolde suffre for a quart of wyn  
 A good felawe to have his concubyn  
 A twelf month and excuse hym atte fulle;  
 Ful prively a finch eek koude he pulle.  
 And if he foond owher a good felawe  
 He wolde techen him to have noon awe  
 In swich caas of the Ercedeknes curs,  
 But if a mannes soule were in his purs,  
 For in his purs he sholde ypunysshed be:  
 "Purs is the Ercedeknes helle," seyde he;  
 But wel I woot he lyed right in dede:  
 Of cursyng oghte ech gilty man him drede  
 For curs wol slee right as assoilyng savith,  
 And also war hym of a *significavit*.  
 In daunger hadde he at his owene gise  
 The yonge girles of the diocise,  
 And knew hir conseil and was al hir reed.  
 A gerland hadde he set upon his heed  
 As greet as it were for an ale-stake;  
 A bokeleer hadde he maad hym of a cake.

With hym ther rood a gentil pardoner  
 Of Rouncivale, his freend and his compeer  
 That streight was comen fro the court of Rome.  
 Ful loude he soong "Com hider, love, to me!"  
 This somonour bar to hym a stif burdoun,  
 Was nevere trompe of half so greet a soun.  
 This pardoner hadde heer as yelow as wex,  
 But smothe it heeng as dooth a strike of flex;  
 By ounces henge his lokkes that he hadde

And therwith he his shuldres overspradde,  
But thynne it lay by colpons oon and oon;  
But hood, for jolitee wered he noon  
For it was trussed up in his walet;  
Hym thoughte he rood al of the newe jet:  
Dischevelec save his cappe he rood al bare.  
Swiche glarynge eyen hadde he as an hare.  
A vernycle hadde he sowed upon his cappe,  
His walet biforn hym in his lappe  
Bretful of pardoun comen from Rome al hoot.  
A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot;  
No berd hadde he ne nevere sholde have,  
As smothe it was as it were late shave:  
I trowe he were a geldyng or a mare.  
But of his craft, fro Berwyk into Ware  
Ne was ther swich another pardoner,  
For in his male he hadde a pilwe-beer  
Which that he seyde was Oure Lady veyl;  
He seyde he hadde a gobet of the seyl  
That Seint Peter hadde whan that he wente  
Upon the see til Jesu Crist hym hente;  
He hadde a croys of latoun ful of stones  
And in a glas he hadde pigges bones;  
But with thise relikes, whan that he fond  
A povre person dwellynge upon lond,  
Upon a day he gat hym moore moneye  
Than that the person gat in monthes tweye;  
And thus, with feyned flaterye and japes  
He made the person and the peple his apes.  
But trewely to tellen atte laste  
He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste:  
Wel koude he rede a lessoun or a storie  
But alderbest he song an offertorie,  
For wel he wiste whan that song was songe  
He moste preche and wel affile his tonge  
To wynne silver, as he ful wel koude;  
Ther fore he song the murierly and loude.



Now have I toold you soothly in a clause  
 Th' estaat, th' array, the nombre, and eek the cause  
 Why that assembled was this compaignye  
 In Southwerk at this gentil hostelrye  
 That highte the Tabard, faste by the Belle;  
 But now is tyme to yow for to telle  
 How that we baren us that ilke nyght  
 Whan we were in that hostelrie alyght;  
 And after wol I telle of our viage  
 And al the remenaunt of oure pilgrimage.  
 But first I pray yow of youre courtesye  
 That ye n' arrete it nat my vileynye  
 Thogh that I pleylyn speke in this mateere  
 To telle yow hir wordes and hir cheere,  
 Ne thogh I speke hir wordes proprely,  
 For this ye knowen al so wel as I,  
 Whoso shal telle a tale after a man,  
 He moot reherce as neigh as evere he kan  
 Everich a word, if it be in his charge,  
 Al speke he nevere so rudeliche and large,  
 Or ellis he moot telle his tale untrewe  
 Or feyne thyng or fynde wordes newe;  
 He may nat spare, althogh he were his brother,  
 He may as wel seye oone word as another.  
 Crist spak hym self ful brode in hooly writ  
 And wel ye woot no vileynye is it;  
 Eek Plato seith, whoso kan hym rede,  
 The wordes moote be cosyn to the dede.  
 Also I prey yow to foryeve it me  
 Al have I nat set folk in hir degree  
 Heere in this tale as that they sholde stonde:  
 My wit is short, ye may wel understonde.  
 Greet cheere made oure hoost us everichon  
 And to the soper sette he us anon.  
 He served us with vitaille at the beste:  
 Strong was the wyn, and wel to drynke us leste.

A semely man oure hooste was with alle  
 For to been a marchal in an halle:

A large man he was with eyen stepe,  
A fairer burgeys is ther noon in Chepe,  
Boold of his speche and wys and wel ytraught  
And of manhod hym lakked right naught.  
Eek therto he was right a myrie man,  
And after soper pleyen he bigan  
And spak of myrthe amonges othere thynges  
Whan that we hadde maad oure rekenynges,  
And seyde thus: "Now, lordynges, trewely  
Ye been to me right welcome, hertely,  
For by my trouthe if that I shal nat lye,  
I saugh nat this yeer so myrie a compaignye  
At ones in this herberwe as is now.  
Fayn wolde I doon yow myrthe, wiste I how;  
And of a myrthe I am right now bythoght  
To doon yow ese, and it shal coste noght.  
Ye goon to Caunterbury, God yow speede;  
The blisful martir quite yow youre meede!  
And wel I woot as ye goon by the weye  
Ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye;  
For trewely confort ne myrthe is noon  
To ride by the weye doumb as a stoon,  
And ther fore wol I maken yow disport  
As I seyde erst, and doon yow som confort;  
And if yow liketh alle by oon assent  
For to stonden at my juggement  
And for to werken as I shal yow seye,  
Tomorwe whan ye riden by the weye,  
Now by my fader soule that is deed,  
But ye be myrie I wol yeve yow myn heed.  
Hoold up youre hondes, withouten moore speche."

Oure conseil was nat longe for to seche,  
Us thoughte it was noght worth to make it wys,  
And graunted hym withouten moore avys  
And bad him seye his voidrit as hym leste.  
"Lordynges," quod he, "now herketh for the beste,  
But taak it nought, I prey yow, in desdeyn;

This is the poynt, to speken short and pleyn,  
That ech of yow to shorte with oure weye  
In this viage shal telle tales tweye  
To Caunterbury-ward, I mene it so,  
And homward he shal tellen othere two,  
Of aventures that whilom han bifalle;  
And which of yow that bereth hym best of alle,  
That is to seyn, that telleth in this cas  
Tales of best sentence and moost solas,  
Shal have a soper at oure aller cost  
Heere in this place, sittynge by this post,  
Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury.  
And for to make yow the moore mury  
I wol myselven goodly with yow ryde  
Right at myn owene cost, and be youre gyde;  
And whoso wole my juggement withseye  
Shal paye al that we spenden by the weye.  
And if ye vouche sauf that it be so  
Tel me anon withouten wordes mo  
And I wol erly shape me ther fore."

This thyng was graunted, and oure othes swore  
With ful glad herte, and preyden hym also  
That he wolde vouche sauf for to do so  
And that he wolde been oure governour  
And oure tales juge and reportour  
And sette a soper at a certeyn pris  
And we wol reuled been at his devys  
In heigh and lough; and thus by oon assent  
We been acorded to his juggement.  
And therupon the wyn was fet anon,  
We dronken, and to reste wente echon  
Withouten any lenger taryynge.

Amorwe whan that day bigan to sprynge,  
Up roos oure hoost, and was oure aller cok  
And gadred us togidre alle in a flok  
And forth we riden a litel moore than paas

Unto the wateryng of Seint Thomas;  
And there oure hoost bigan his hors areste  
And seyde, "Lordynges, herkneth, if yow leste!  
Ye woot youre foreward and it yow recorde.  
If even-song and morwe-song accorde,  
Lat se now who shal telle the firste tale.  
As evere mote I drynke wyn or ale,  
Whoso be rebel to my juggement  
Shal paye for al that by the wey is spent.  
Now draweth cut er that we ferrer twynne:  
He which that hath the shorteste shal bigynne.  
Sire Knyght," quod he, "my mayster and my lord,  
Now draweth cut, for that is myn accord.  
Cometh neer," quod he, "My lady Prioress,  
And ye, Sire Clerk, lat be youre shamefastnesse  
Ne studieth noght; ley hond to, every man!"  
Anon to drawen every wightperson bigan,  
And shortly for to tellen as it was,  
Were it by aventure, or sort, or cas  
The sothe is this, the cut fil to the knyght,  
Of which ful blithe and glad was every wyght;  
And telle he moste his tale, as was resoun  
By foreward and by composicioun  
As ye han herd; what nedeth wordes mo?  
And whan this goode man saugh that it was so,  
As he that wys was and obedient  
To kepe his foreward by his free assent,  
He seyde, "Syn I shal bigynne the game,  
What, welcome be the cut, a Goddes name!  
Now lat us ryde, and herkneth what I seye."  
And with that word we ryden forth oure weye,  
And he bigan with right a myrie cheere  
His tale anon, and seyde as ye may heere.

(ca. 1387)

## EARLY MODERN BALLADS

The English and Scottish popular ballads were originally poems transmitted orally and only rarely recorded in writing. The ballad was considered to be the earliest form of poetry in the native tradition when a systematic effort was made in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries to collect and publish them. Many of the best ballads derive from the regions between the Scottish Highlands and Lowlands, and between Scotland and England. The distinctive quality shared by most ballads is their spareness, where the narrative usually strips the story down to a few objective and dramatic scenes. Ballads are apt to deal with the culminating incident or climax of a plot, which describes the event with intense compression. Oral poetry depends on regular metre and a heavy use of formulaic expressions. The stanzas are often linked by repetition. The most common stanza form, called ballad stanza, is a quatrain rhyming *abcb* in which the *a* and *c* lines usually have four beats and the *b* lines three. Their subject usually concerns a tragic incident, often a murder or accidental death, and at times involving supernatural elements. These motifs are part of the common legacy of European folklore, and many of the Scottish and English ballads have their counterparts in other languages.

### *Sir Patrick Spens*

The King sits in Dumferline town,  
Drinking the blude-ried wine:  
'O whar will I get a guid sailor,  
To sail this schip of mine?'

Up and spank an eldern knicht,  
Sat at the king's richt knee:  
'Sir Patrick Spence is the best sailor,  
That sails upon the sea.'

The King has writtē a braid<sup>6</sup> letter,  
And signē it wi<sup>7</sup> his hand;  
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,  
Was walking on the sand.

The first line that Sir Parick red,  
A loud lauch lauched he;  
The next line that Sir Patrick red,  
The tear blinded his e<sup>c</sup>e.

‘O wha<sup>r</sup> is this has don this deid,  
This ill deid don to me,  
To send me out this time o<sup>r</sup> the yier,  
To sail upon the sea?

Mak haste, mak haste, my mirry men all,  
Our guid schip sails the morne.<sup>9</sup>  
‘O say na sac,<sup>8</sup> my master deir,  
For I feir a deadlie storme.

Late, late yestreen I saw the new moone  
Wi<sup>7</sup> the auld moone in hir arme;  
And I feir, I feir my deir master  
That we will come to harme.<sup>9</sup>

O our Scots nobles wer richt laith<sup>9</sup>  
To weet their cork-heil’d schoone;<sup>10</sup>  
Bot lang owre a<sup>r</sup> the play wer played,  
Thair hats they swam aboone.<sup>11</sup>

O lang, lang may thair ladies sit  
Wi<sup>7</sup> thair fans into their hand,  
Or eir they se Sir Patrick Spens  
Com sailing to the land.

---

6 broad  
7 who  
8 not/ so  
9 loath  
10 wet / shoes  
11 above

O lang, land may the ladies sit  
Wi' thair gold kems<sup>12</sup> in their hair,  
Waiting for thair ain<sup>13</sup> deir lords  
For they'll se thame na mair.

Haf owre, haf owre<sup>14</sup> to Aberdour  
It's fiftie fadom<sup>15</sup> deip:  
And thair lies guid Sir Patrick Spens,  
Wi' the Scots lords at his feit.

(1765)

---

12 combs  
13 own  
14 halfway over  
15 fathoms

**SIR THOMAS WYATT**  
(1503–1542)

Wyatt was born in Kent in 1503 and educated at St. John's College in Cambridge. He was a courtier and diplomat whose travels to Italy and France in 1526 and 1527 acquainted him with the High Renaissance abroad. He held various posts at home and abroad, including that of ambassador to Charles V (1537-9), in the service of Henry VIII. He was charged with treason, but was acquitted a year before his death. Wyatt's translations and adaptations of Petrarch not only brought the sonnet form to English, but also sought to work out from the Italian eleven-syllable line a viable English equivalent. None of Wyatt's poems was published during his lifetime – the first book to feature his verse was printed a full fifteen years after his death. He and Lord Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, were the first poets to use the form of the sonnet in English. One of his sonnets, *Whoso List to Hunt*, is thought to be about Anne Boleyn with whom he had allegedly been in love.

*Whoso List to Hunt*<sup>16</sup>

Whoso list to hunt, I know where is an hind<sup>17</sup>,  
But as for me, alas I may no more.  
The vain travail hath wearied me so sore,  
I am of them that farthest cometh behind.  
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,  
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*, for Caesar's I am,  
And wild for to hold, though I seem tame.”

*From the Egerton MS.*

16 An adaptation of Petrarch's *Rima* 190. Wyatt's sonnet is usually supposed to refer to Anne Boleyn, in whom Henry VIII became interested in 1526.

17 Female deer



*They Flee From Me*

They flee from me, that sometime did me seek  
With naked foot stalking<sup>18</sup> in my chamber.  
I have seen them gentle, tame, and meek  
That now are wild and do not remember  
That sometime they put themselves in danger  
To take bread at my hand; and now they range,  
Busily seeking with a continual change.

Thanked be fortune it hath been otherwise  
Twenty times better; but once in special,  
In thin array, after a pleasant guise,  
When her loose gown from her shoulders did fall,  
And she me caught in her arms long and small,<sup>19</sup>  
Therewithal sweetly did me kiss  
And softly said, "Dear heart, how like you this?"

It was no dream, I lay broad waking.  
But all is turned, thorough my gentleness,  
Into a strange fashion of forsaking;  
And I have leave to go, of her goodness,  
And she also to use newfangledness.<sup>20</sup>  
But since that I so kindly<sup>21</sup> am served,  
I fain would know what she hath deserved.

*From the Egerton MS.*

---

18 Walking softly

19 slender

20 fickleness

21 Naturally, but with an ironic suggestion of the modern meaning of "kindly". Based on Wyatt's spelling the word should presumably be pronounced as three syllables.

*My Galley*<sup>22</sup>

My galley chargèd with forgetfulness  
Thorough<sup>23</sup> sharp seas, in winter nights doth pass  
T'ween rock and rock; and eke<sup>24</sup> mine enemy, alas,  
That is my lord, steereth with cruelness,  
And every oar a thought in readiness,  
As though that death were light in such a case.<sup>25</sup>  
An endless wind doth tear the sail apace  
Of forcèd sighs and trusty fearfulness.<sup>26</sup>  
A rain of tears, a cloud of dark disdain,  
Hath done the wearied cords 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>27</sup>  
And I remain despairing of the port.

*From the Egerton MS.*

---

22 Translated from Petrarch's Rime 189.

23 through

24 also

25 As though my destruction would not matter much.

26 Fear to trust

27 Accompany

**HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY**  
(1517–1547)

Surrey was a soldier and courtier from the time of his youth. He was in and out of favour with King Henry VIII who married, then beheaded, Surrey's cousin Catherine. He was finally condemned and executed for treason when barely 30 years old in 1547. He appears to have made translations into English verse when young, and was an admirer and friend of Thomas Wyatt. His works consist of sonnets and miscellaneous poems in various metres that are noteworthy for their grace and finish. Like Wyatt, he studied Italian models, especially Petrarch, and shared with Wyatt the merit of bringing the sonnet form into England. He and his friend Thomas Wyatt were the first English poets to write in the sonnet form that Shakespeare later used, and Henry Howard was the first English poet to publish blank verse.

*Love, that Doth Reign and Live Within My Thought*<sup>28</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.  
But she that taught me love and suffer pain,  
My doubtful hope and eke my hot desire  
With shamefast<sup>29</sup> look to shadow and refrain,  
Her smiling grace converteth straight to ire.  
And coward Love, then, to the heart apace  
Taket<sup>h</sup> his flight, where he doth lurk and plain,<sup>30</sup>  
His purpose lost, and dare not show his face.  
For my lord's guilt thus faultless bide I pain,  
Yet from my lord shall not my foot remove:  
Sweet is the death that taketh end by love.

(1557)

28 This is Surrey's version of Petrarch's *Rima* 140.

29 modest

30 complain

*Alas! So all things now do hold their peace<sup>31</sup>*

So all things now do hold their peace,  
Heaven and earth disturbed in no thing.  
The beasts, the air, the birds their song do cease;  
The night's chare<sup>32</sup> the stars about doth bring;  
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, whereat I weep and sing,  
In joy and woe, as in a doubtful ease:  
For my sweet thoughts sometime do pleasure bring,  
But by and by the cause of my disease<sup>33</sup>  
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.

(1557)

*When youth had led me half the race*

WHEN youth had led me half the race  
That Cupid's scourge had made me run;  
I looked back to mete the place  
From whence my weary course begun.

And then I saw how my desire  
By guiding ill had led the way:  
Mine eyen, to greedy of their hire,  
Had made me lose a better prey.

For when in sighs I spent the day,  
And could not cloak my grief with game;  
The boiling smoke did still bewray  
The present heat of secret flame.

---

31 Adapted from Petrarch's *Rima* 164.

32 From Italian *carro* (the Great Bear).

33 Dis-ease, i.e., discomfort.

And when salt tears do bain my breast,  
Where Love his pleasant trains hath sown;  
Her beauty hath the fruits opprest,  
Ere that the buds were sprung and blown.

And when mine eyen did still pursue  
The flying chase of their request;  
Their greedy looks did oft renew  
The hidden wound within my breast.

When every look these cheeks might stain,  
From deadly pale to glowing red;  
By outward signs appeared plain,  
To her for help my heart was fled.

But all too late Love learneth me  
To paint all kind of colours new;  
To blind their eyes that else should see  
My speckled cheeks with Cupid's hue.

And now the covert breast I claim,  
That worshipp'd Cupid secretly;  
And nourished his sacred flame,  
From whence no blazing sparks do fly.

(1557)

**SIR PHILIP SIDNEY**  
(1554–1586)

Sidney was born into an important family. His father was Sir Henry Sidney (who was thrice Lord Deputy of Ireland) and his uncles were the Earls of Leicester and Warwick. His mother, too, was an unusually educated lady for her day. He travelled extensively abroad assisting on diplomatic missions, fought in Ireland, and met many learned and influential men who would strengthen his commitments to the skills of knowledge, and to Protestantism. In 1586 he joined as a volunteer the attack on a Spanish convoy for the relief of Zutphen, in Holland. Here, he received a fatal wound in the thigh while fighting the Spanish forces of his godfather, King Philip of Spain. Sidney began writing the sonnets of *Astrophel and Stella* in 1581, and probably finished them the following year. The poems circulated widely in manuscript form, and finally appeared in 1591 in three unauthorized editions. The sequence is considered to be an important stage in English Renaissance poetry. In it, Sidney partially anglicised the key features of his Italian model, Petrarch: variation of emotion from poem to poem, with the attendant sense of an ongoing, but partly obscure, narrative; the philosophical trappings; the musings on the act of poetic creation itself. His experiments with rhyme scheme were also noteworthy; they served to free the English sonnet from the strict rhyming requirements of the Italian form.

*From Astrophel and Stella*

1

Loving in truth, and fain<sup>34</sup> in verse my love to show,  
That the dear She might take some pleasure of my pain,  
Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her know,  
Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain,  
    I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe,  
Studying inventions fine, her wits to entertain,  
 Oft turning others' leaves, to see if thence would flow  
Some fresh and fruitful showers upon my sunburned brain.

---

34    desirous

But words came halting forth, wanting Invention's stay<sup>35</sup>;  
 Invention, Nature's child, fled step-dame Study's blows,  
 And others' feet still seemed but strangers in my way.  
 Thus great with child to speak, and helpless in my throes,  
     Biting my trewand<sup>36</sup> pen, beating myself for spite,  
     "Fool," said my Muse to me, "look in thy heart and write."

## 5

It is most true that eyes are formed to serve  
 The inward light<sup>37</sup>, and that the heavenly part  
 Ought to be king, from whose rules who do swerve,  
 Rebels to nature, strive for their own smart.  
 It is most true, what we call Cupid's dart  
 An image is, which for ourselves we carve  
 And, fools, adore in temple of our heart,  
 Till that good god make church and churchmen starve.  
 True, that true beauty virtue is indeed,  
 Whereof this beauty can be but a shade<sup>38</sup>,  
 Which elements with mortal mixture breed.  
 True, that on earth we are but pilgrims made,  
     And should in soul up to our country move.  
     True, and yet true that I must Stella love.

## 39

Come sleep! O sleep the certain knot of peace,  
 The baiting place<sup>39</sup> of wit, the balm of woe,  
 The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,  
 Th' indifferent judge between the high and low;  
     With shield of proof shield me from out the prease<sup>40</sup>  
 Of those fierce darts Despair at me doth throw:

35 prop

36 truant

37 Reason, which ought to rule over the whole person; yet love, by another convention, enters at the eye and imprints the beloved one's image on the heart.

38 An image or picture, which was a standard Platonic theme.

39 A resting place on a journey.

40 Throng

O make in me those civil wars to cease;  
I will good tribute pay if thou do so.

Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,  
A chamber deaf to noise and blind to light,  
A rosy garland, and a weary head:

And if these things, as being thine by right,  
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me  
Livelier than elsewhere Stella's image see.

(1591)



EDMUND SPENSER  
(1552-99)

Spenser was born in London, and though he himself was not rich, he was connected with a noble family of Spensers. He received a good education, and by working for the richer students he was able to attend Cambridge University through a charitable grant. In 1580 he became secretary to Lord Grey de Wilton, the new Lord Deputy of Ireland; and apart from visits to London he spent most of his life in that country. He settled down on the 3000-acre estate he had acquired at Kilcolman. It was here that he wrote the first three books of his *Faerie Queene*. Spenser's sonnet sequence, the *Amoretti* (meaning "little loves" or "little cupids") was published in 1595 with the *Epithalamion*. These poems seem to embrace his cycle of courtship and marriage to Elizabeth Boyle whom he married in 1594. Towards the end of his life he was forced to return to London, where he died in great poverty. He was buried beside Chaucer in Westminster Abbey. The inscription upon his tomb proclaims him to have been "The Prince of the Poets of his Tyme". His influence on Milton and the Romantics was most significant.

From *Amoretti*

3

The souerayne beauty which I doo admyre,  
witnesses the world how worthy to be prayzed:  
the light wherof hath kindled heauenly fyre,  
in my fraile spirit by her from basenesse rayzed.  
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 celestially hew.  
So when my tongue would speak her praises dew,  
it stopped is with thoughts astonishment:  
and when my pen would write her titles true,  
it rauisht is with fancies wonderment:  
Yet in my hart I then both speake and write,  
the wonder that my wit cannot endite.

## 67

Lyke as a huntsman after weary chace,  
Seeing the game from him escapt away:  
sits downe to rest him in some shady place,  
with panting hounds beguiled of their pray.  
So after long pursuit and vaine assay,  
when I all weary had the chace forsooke,  
the gentle deare returnd the selfe-same way,  
thinking to quench her thirst at the next brooke.  
There she beholding me with mylder looke,  
sought not to fly, but fearelesse still did bide:  
till I in hand her yet halfe trembling tooke,  
and with her owne goodwill hir fymely tyde.  
Strange thing me seemd to see a beast so wyld,  
so goodly wonne with her owne will beguyld.

## 75

One day I wrote her name vpon the strand,  
but came the waues and washed it away:  
agayne I wrote it with a second hand,  
but came the tyde, and made my paynes his pray.  
"Vayne man," sayd she, "that doest in vaine assay,  
a mortall thing so to immortalize.  
for I my selue shall lyke to this decay,  
and eek my name bee wyped out lykewize."  
"Not so," (quod I) "let baser things deuize,  
to dy in dust, but you shall liue by fame:  
my verse your vertues rare shall eternize,  
and in the heuens wryte your glorious name.  
Where whenas death shall all the world subdew,  
our loue shall liue, and later life renew."

## 79

Men call you fayre, and you doe credit it,  
For that your selfe ye dayly such doe see:  
but the trew fayre, that is the gentle wit,  
and vertuous mind is much more praysd of me.

For all the rest, how euer fayre it be,  
shall turne to nought and loose that glorious hew:  
but onely that is permanent and free  
from frayle corruption, that doth flesh ensew.  
That is true beautie: that doth argue you  
to be diuine and borne of heavenly seed:  
deriu'd from that fayre Spirit, from whom all true  
and perfect beauty did at first proceed.  
He only fayre, and what he fayre hath made,  
all other fayre lyke flowres untymely fade.

(1595)

*Epithalamion*

Ye learned sisters which haue oftentimes  
beene to me ayding, others to adorne:  
Whom ye thought worthy of your gracefull rymes,  
That euen the greatest did not greatly scorne  
To heare theyr names sung in your simple layes,  
But ioyed in theyr prayse.  
And when ye list your owne mishaps to mourne,  
Which death, or loue, or fortunes wreck did rayse,  
Your string could soone to sadder tenor turne,  
And teach the woods and waters to lament  
Your dolefull dreriment.  
Now lay those sorrowfull complaints aside,  
And hauing all your heads with girland crownd,  
Helpe me mine owne loues prayes to resound,  
Ne let the fame of any be enuide,  
So Orpheus did for his owne bride,  
So I vnto my selfe alone will sing,  
The woods shall to me answer and my Eccho ring.  
Early before the worlds light giuing lampe,

His golden beame vpon the hils doth spred,  
Hauing disperst the nights vnchearefull dampe,  
Doe ye awake and with fresh lusty hed,  
Go to the bowre of my beloued loue,

My trueſt turtle doue  
Bid her awake; for Hymen is awake,  
And long ſince ready forth his maſke to moue,  
With his bright Tead that flames with many a flake,  
And many a bachelor to waite on him,  
In theyr freſh garments trim.

Bid her awake therefore and ſoone her dight,  
For lo the wiſhed day is come at laſt,  
That ſhall for al the paynes and ſorrowes paſt,  
Pay to her vſury of long delight,  
And whyleſt ſhe doth her dight,  
Doe ye to her of ioy and ſolace ſing,  
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.  
Bring with you all the Nymphes that you can heare  
both of the riuers and the forreſts greene:  
And of the ſea that neighbours to her neare,

Al with gay girlands goodly wel beſeene.  
And let them alſo with them bring in hand,  
Another gay girland  
my fayre loue of lillyes and of roſes,  
Bound trueloue wiſe with a blew ſilke riband.  
And let them make great ſtore of bridale poſes,  
And let them ecke bring ſtore of other flowers  
To deck the bridale bowers.  
And let the ground whereas her foot ſhall tread,  
For feare the ſtones her tender foot ſhould wrong,

Be ſtrewed with fragrant flowers all along,  
And diaped lyke the diſcolored mead.  
Which done, doe at her chamber dore awayt,  
For ſhe will waken ſtrayt,  
The while doe ye this ſong vnto her ſing,  
The woods ſhall to you answer and your Eccho ring.  
Ye Nymphes of Mulla which with carefull heed,  
The ſiluer ſcaly trouts doe tend full well,  
and greedy pikes which vſe therein to feed,  
(Thoſe trouts and pikes all others doo excell)

And ye likewise which keepe the rushy lake,  
Where none doo fishes take.  
Bynd vp the locks the which hang scatterd light,  
And in his waters which your mirror make,  
Behold your faces as the christall bright,  
That when you come whereas my loue doth lie,  
No blemish she may spie.  
And eke ye lightfoot mayds which keepe the d[ee]re,  
That on the hoary mountayne vie to towre,  
And the wylde wolues which seeke them to deuoure,

With your steele darts doo chace from comming neer  
Be also present heere,  
To helpe to decke her and to help to sing,  
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.  
Wake now my loue, awake; for it is time,  
The Rosy Morne long since left Tithones bed,  
All ready to her siluer coche to clyme,  
And Phoebus gins to shew his glorious hed.  
Hark how the cheerefull birds do chaunt theyr laies  
And carroll of loues praise.

The merry Larke hir mattins sings aloft,  
The thrush replyes, the Mauius descant playes,  
The Ouzell shrills, the Ruddock warbles soft,  
So goodly all agree with sweet consent,  
To this dayes meriment.  
Ah my deere loue why doe ye sleepe thus long,  
When meeter were that ye should now awake,  
Tawayt the comming of your ioyous make,  
And hearken to the birds louelearned song,  
The deawy leaues among.

For they of ioy and pleasance to you sing.  
That all the woods them answer & theyr eccho ring.  
My loue is now awake out of her dreame,  
and her fayre eyes like stars that dimmed were  
With darksome cloud, now shew theyr goodly beams  
More bright then Hesperus his head doth rere.

Come now ye damzels, daughters of delight,  
Helpe quickly her to dight,  
But first come ye fayre houres which were begot  
In Ioues sweet paradise, of Day and Night,

Which doe the seasons of the yeare allot,  
And al that euer in this world is fayre  
Doe make and still repayre.  
And ye three handmayds of the Cyprian Queene,  
The which doe still adorne her beauties pride,  
Helpe to addorne my beautifullest bride  
And as ye her array, still throw betweene  
Some graces to be seene,  
And as ye vse to Venus, to her sing,  
The whiles the woods shal answer & your eccho ring.

Now is my loue all ready forth to come,  
Let all the virgins therefore well awayt,  
And ye fresh boyes that tend vpon her groome  
Prepare your selues; for he is comming strayt.  
Set all your things in seemely good aray  
Fit for so ioyfull day,  
The ioyfulst day that euer sunne did see.  
Faire Sun, shew forth thy fauourable ray,  
let thy lifull heat not feruent be  
For feare of burning her sunshyny face,  
Her beauty to disgrace.  
O fayrest Phoebus, father of the Muse,  
If euer I did honour thee aright,  
Or sing the thing, that mote thy mind delight,  
Doe not thy seruants simple boone refuse,  
But let this day let this one day be myne,  
Let all the rest be thine.  
Then I thy souerayne prayses loud wil sing,  
That all the woods shal answer and theyr eccho ring.  
Harke how the Minstrels gin to shrill aloud,  
Their merry Musick that resounds from far,  
The pipe, the tabor, and the trembling Croud,

That well agree withouten breach or iar.  
But most of all the Damzels doe delite,  
When they their tymbrels smyte,  
And thereunto doe daunce and carrol sweet,  
That all the sences they doe rauish quite,  
The whyles the boyes run vp and downe the street,  
Crying aloud with strong confused noyce,  
As if it were one voyce.

Hymen io Hymen, Hymen they do shout,  
That euen to the heauens theyr shouting shrill  
Doth reach, and all the firmament doth fill,  
To which the people standing all about,  
As in approuance doe thereto applaud  
And loud aduaunce her laud,  
And euermore they Hymen Hymen sing,  
that al the woods them answer and theyr eccho ring.  
Loe where she comes along with portly pace,  
Lyke Phoebe from her chamber of the East,

Arysing forth to run her mighty race,  
Clad all in white, that seemes a virgin best.  
So well it her beseemes that ye would weene  
Some angell she had beene.  
Her long loose yellow locks lyke golden wyre,  
Sprinkled with perle, and perling flowres a tweene,  
Doe lyke a golden mantle her attyre,  
And being crowned with a girland greene,  
Seeme lyke some mayden Queene,  
Her modest eyes abashed to behold

So many gazers, as on her do stare,  
Vpon the lowly ground affixed are.  
Ne dare lift vp her countenance too bold,  
But blush to heare her prayes sung so loud,  
So farre from being proud.  
Nathlesse doe ye still loud her prayes sing,  
That all the woods may answer and your eccho ring.

Tell me ye merchants daughters did ye see  
So fayre a creature in your towne before,  
So sweet, so louely, and so mild as she,

Adorn'd with beautyes grace and vertues store,  
Her goodly eyes lyke Saphyres shining bright,  
Her forehead yuory white,  
Her cheekes lyke apples which the sun hath rudded,  
Her lips lyke cherries charming men to byte,  
Her brest like to a bowle of creame vncrudded,  
Her paps lyke lillies budded,  
Her snowie necke lyke to a marble towre,  
And all her body like a pallace fayre,  
Ascending vpppe with many a stately stayre,

To honors seat and chastities sweet bowre.  
Why stand ye still ye virgins in amaze,  
Vpon her so to gaze,  
Whiles ye forget your former lay to sing,  
To which the woods did answer and your eccho ring?  
But if ye saw that which no eyes can see,  
The inward beauty of her liuely spright,  
Garnisht with heauenly guifts of high degree,  
Much more then would ye wonder at that sight,  
And stand astonisht lyke to those which red

Medusaes mazeful hed.  
There dwels sweet loue and constant chastity,  
Vnspotted fayth and comely womanhood,  
Regard of honour and mild modesty,  
There vertue raynes as Queene in royal throne,  
And giueth lawes alone.  
The which the base affections doe obay,  
And yeeld theyr seruices vnto her will  
Ne thought of thing vncomely euer may  
Thereto approach to tempt her mind to ill.  
Had ye once seene these her celestial treasures,  
And vnreuealed pleasures,  
Then would ye wonder and her prayses sing,



That al the woods should answer and your echo ring.  
Open the temple gates vnto my loue,  
Open them wide that she may enter in,  
And all the postes adorne as doth behoue,  
And all the pillours deck with girlands trim,  
For to recyue this Saynt with honour dew,  
That commeth in to you.

With trembling steps and humble reuerence,  
She commeth in, before th' almighties vew,  
Of her ye virgins learne obedience,  
When so ye come into those holy places,  
To humble your proud faces,  
Bring her vp to th' high altar that she may,  
The sacred ceremonies there partake,  
The which do endlesse matrimony make,  
And let the roring Organs loudly play  
The praises of the Lord in liuely notes,

The whiles with hollow throates,  
The Choristers the ioyous Antheme sing,  
That all the woods may answere, and their eccho ring.  
Behold whiles she before the altar stands  
Hearing the holy priest that to her speaks  
And blesseth her with his two happy hands,  
How the red roses flush vp in her cheekes,  
And the pure snow with goodly vermill stayne,  
Like crimson dyde in grayne,  
That euen th' Angels which continually,

About the sacred Altare doe remaine,  
Forget their seruice and about her fly,  
Ofte peeping in her face that seemes more fayre,  
The more they on it stare.  
But her sad eyes still fastened on the ground,  
Are gouerned with goodly modesty,  
That suffers not one looke to glaunce awry,  
Which may let in a little thought vnsownd,

Why blush ye loue to giue to me your hand,  
The pledge of all our band?

Sing ye sweet Angels Alleluya sing,  
That all the woods may answere and your eccho ring.  
Now al is done; bring home the bride againe,  
bring home the triumph of our victory,  
Bring home with you the glory of her gaine,  
With ioyance bring her and with iollity.  
Neuer had man more ioyfull day then this,  
Whom heauen would heape with blis.  
Make feast therefore now all this liue long day,  
This day for euer to me holy is,  
Poure out the wine without restraint or stay,  
Poure not by cups, but by the belly full,  
Poure out to all that wull,  
And sprinkle all the postes and wals with wine,  
That they may sweat, and drunken be withall.  
Crowne ye God Bacchus with a coronall,  
And Hymen also crowne with wreathes of vine,  
And let the Graces daunce vnto the rest;  
For they can doo it best:  
The whiles the maydens doe theyr carroll sing,

To which the woods shal answer & theyr eccho ring.  
Ring ye the bells, ye yong men of the towne,  
And leaue your wonted labors for this day:  
This day is holy; doe ye write it downe,  
that ye for euer it remember may.  
This day the sunne is in his chiefest hight,  
With Barnaby the bright,  
From whence declining daily by degrees,  
He somewhat loseth of his heat and light,  
When once the Crab behind his back he sees.

But for this time it ill ordained was,  
To chose the longest day in all the yeare,  
And shortest night, when longest fitter weare:

Yet neuer day so long, but late would passe.  
Ring ye the bells, to make it weare away,  
And bonefiers make all day,  
And daunce about them, and about them sing:  
that all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.  
AH when will this long vveary day haue end,  
and lende me leaue to come vnto my loue?

Hovv slowly do the houres theyr numbers spend?  
How slowly does sad Time his feathers moue?  
Hast thee O fayrest Planet to thy home  
Within the Westernne fome:  
Thy tyred steedes long since haue need of rest.  
Long though it be, at last I see it gloome,  
And the bright euening star with golden creast  
Appeare out of the East.  
Payre childe of beauty, glorious lampe of loue  
That all the host of heauen in rankes dost lead,

And guydest louers through the nights dread,  
How chearefully thou lookest from aboue,  
And seemst to laugh atweene thy twinkling light  
As ioying in the sight  
Of these glad many which for ioy doe sing,  
That all the woods them answer and their echo ring.  
Now cease ye damsels your delights forepast;  
Enough is it, that all the day was youre:  
Now day is doen, and night is nighing fast:  
Now bring the Bryde into the brydall boures.

Now night is come, now soone her disaray,  
And in her bed her lay;  
Lay her in lillies and in violets,  
And silken courteins ouer her display,  
The odour sheetes, and Arras couerlets,  
Behold how goodly my faire loue does ly  
In proud humility;  
Like vnto Maia, when as Ioue her tooke,

In Tempe, lying on the flowry gras,  
Twixt sleepe and wake, after she weary was,

With bathing in the Acidalian brooke,  
Now it is night, ye damsels may be gon,  
And leaue my loue alone,  
And leaue likewise your former lay to sing:  
The woods no more shal answere, nor your echo ring.  
Now welcome night, thou night so long expected,  
that long daies labour doest at last defray,  
And all my cares, which cruell loue collected,  
Hast sumd in one, and cancelled for aye:  
Spread thy broad wing ouer my loue and me,  
That no man may vs see,  
And in thy sable mantle vs enwrap,  
From feare of perrill and foule horror free.  
Let no false treason seeke vs to entrap,  
Nor any dread disquiet once annoy  
the safety of our ioy:  
But let the night be calme and quietsome,  
Without tempestuous storms or sad afray:  
Lyke as when Ioue with fayre Alcmena lay,  
When he begot the great Tirynthian groome:

Or lyke as when he with thy selfe did lie,  
And begot Maiesty.  
And let the mayds and yongmen cease to sing:  
Ne let the woods them answer, nor theyr eccho ring.  
Let no lamenting cryes, nor dolefull teares,  
Be heard all night within nor yet without:  
Ne let false whispers breeding hidden feares,  
Breake gentle sleepe with misconceiued dout.  
Let no deluding dreames, nor dreadful sights,  
Make sudden sad affrights;

Ne let housefyres, nor lightnings helpelesse harmes,  
Ne let the Pouke, nor other euill sprights,  
Ne let mischieuous witches with theyr charmes,

Ne let hob Goblins, names whose sence we see not,  
Fray vs with things that be not.  
Let not the shriech Oule, nor the Storke be heard:  
Nor the night Rauen that still deadly yels,  
Nor damned ghosts cald vp with mighty spels,  
Nor grievly vultures make vs once affeard:  
Ne let th' vnpleasant Quayre of Frogs still croking

Make vs to wish theyr choking.  
Let none of these theyr drery accents sing;  
Ne let the woods them answer, nor theyr eccho ring.  
But let stil Silence trew night watches keepe,  
That sacred peace may in assurance rayne,  
And tymely sleep, when it is tyme to sleepe,  
May poure his limbs forth on your pleasant playne,  
The whiles an hundred little winged loues,  
Like diuers fethered doues,  
Shall fly and flutter round about your bed,

And in the secret darke, that none reproues  
Their pretie stealthes shal worke, & snares shal spread  
To filch away sweet snatches of delight,  
Conceald through couert night.  
Ye sonnes of Venus, play your sports at will,  
For greedy pleasure, carelesse of your toyes,  
Thinks more vpon her paradise of ioyes,  
Then what ye do, albe it good or ill.  
All night therefore attend your merry play,  
For it will soone be day:

Now none doth hinder you, that say or sing,  
Ne will the woods now answer, nor your Eccho ring.  
Who is the same, which at my window peepes?  
Or whose is that faire face, that shines so bright,  
Is it not Cinthia, she that neuer sleepes,  
But walkes about high heauen al the night?  
O fayrest goddess, do thou not enuy  
My loue with me to spy:

For thou likewise didst loue, though now vnthought,  
And for a fleecce of woll, which priuily,

The Latmian shephard once vnto thee brought,  
His pleasures with thee wrought,  
Therefore to vs be fauorable now;  
And sith of wemens labours thou hast charge,  
And generation goodly dost enlarge,  
Encline they will t'effect our wishfull vow,  
And the chaste wombe informe with timely seed,  
That may our comfort breed:  
Till which we cease our hopefull hap to sing,  
Ne let the woods vs answer, nor our Eccho ring.

And thou great Iuno, which with awful might  
the lawes of wedlock still dost patronize,  
And the religion of the faith first plight  
With sacred rites hast taught to solemnize:  
And eeke for comfort often called art  
Of women in their smart,  
Eternally bind thou this louely band,  
And all thy blessings vnto vs impart.  
Thou glad Genius, in whose gentle hand,  
The bridale bowre and geniall bed remaine,

Without blemish or staine,  
And the sweet pleasures of theyr loues delight  
With secret ayde doest succour and supply,  
Till they bring forth the fruitfull progeny,  
Send vs the timely fruit of this same night.  
And thou fayre Hebe, and thou Hymen free,  
Grant that it may so be.  
Til which we cease your further prayse to sing,  
Ne any woods shal answer, nor your Eccho ring.  
And ye high heauens, the temple of the gods,  
In which a thousand torches flaming bright  
Do burne, that to vs wretched earthly clods:  
In dreadful darknesse lend desired light;

And all ye powers which in the same remayne,  
More then we men can fayne,  
Poure out your blessing on vs plentiously,  
And happy influence vpon vs raine,  
That we may raise a large posterity,  
Which from the earth, which they may long possesse  
With lasting happinesse,  
Vp to your haughty pallsaces may mount,  
And for the guerdon of theyr glorious merit  
May heauenly tabernacles there inherit,  
Of blessed Saints for to increase the count.  
So let vs rest, sweet loue, in hope of this,  
And cease till then our tymely ioyes to sing,  
The woods no more vs answer, nor our eccho ring.

Song made in lieu of many ornaments,  
With which my loue should duly haue bene dect,  
Which cutting off through hasty accidents,  
Ye would not stay your dew time to expect,  
But promist both to recompens,  
Be vnto her a goodly ornament,  
And for short time an endlesse monument.

(1595)

**WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE**  
(1564–1616)

Shakespeare was baptized on 26 April 1564 at Stratford-on-Avon, Warwickshire. His father was a Stratford tradesman, but also a dealer in timber and wool. William was the third of seven children. He was sent to the Free Grammar School at Stratford, where the teaching was mostly of Latin grammar and rhetoric. He did not go to university, but married the pregnant Anne Hathaway, eight years his senior, in November 1582. Nothing is known about his going to London, but he was almost certainly there by 1589. Shakespeare retired to Stratford around 1610. *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest* were probably written there. He continued his business life until his death, at the age of fifty-two, on 23 April 1616. The sonnets were written over an indeterminate period and published together in 1609, after the vogue of sonneteering was over. Their compact language, range of tone, profound word-play and intense moral vision are unsurpassed by any of the regular sonnet sequences of Sidney or Spenser. The sonnets do not revolve around a central mythical lady. Instead, there is a constellation of three figures providing greater irony and dramatic range: a blond young aristocrat, a dark lady and a rival poet.

*The Phoenix and the Turtle*

Let the bird of loudest lay,  
On the sole Arabian tree,  
Herald sad and trumpet be,  
To whose sound chaste wings obey.

But thou shrieking harbinger,  
Foul precurrer of the fiend,  
Augur of the fever's end,  
To this troop come thou not near!

From this session interdict  
Every fowl of tyrant wing,  
Save the eagle, feather'd king:  
Keep the obsequy so strict.



Let the priest in surplice white,  
That defunctive music can,  
Be the death-divining swan,  
Lest the requiem lack his right.

And thou treble-dated crow,  
That thy sable gender makest  
With the breath thou givest and takest,  
'Mongst our mourners shalt thou go.  
Here the anthem doth commence:  
Love and constancy is dead;  
Phoenix and the turtle fled  
In a mutual flame from hence.

So they loved, as love in twain  
Had the essence but in one;  
Two distincts, division none:  
Number there in love was slain.

Hearts remote, yet not asunder;  
Distance, and no space was seen  
'Twixt the turtle and his queen:  
But in them it were a wonder.

So between them love did shine,  
That the turtle saw his right  
Flaming in the phoenix' sight;  
Either was the other's mine.

Property was thus appalled,  
That the self was not the same;  
Single nature's double name  
Neither two nor one was called.

Reason, in itself confounded,  
Saw division grow together,  
To themselves yet either neither,  
Simple were so well compounded,

That it cried, How true a twain  
Seemeth this concordant one!  
Love hath reason, reason none,  
If what parts can so remain.

Whereupon it made this threne  
To the phoenix and the dove,  
Co-supremes and stars of love,  
As chorus to their tragic scene.

THRENOS.

Beauty, truth, and rarity,  
Grace in all simplicity,  
Here enclosed in cinders lie.

Death is now the phoenix' nest  
And the turtle's loyal breast  
To eternity doth rest,

Leaving no posterity:  
'Twas not their infirmity,  
It was married chastity.

Truth may seem, but cannot be:  
Beauty brag, but 'tis not she;  
Truth and beauty buried be.

To this urn let those repair  
That are either true or fair  
For these dead birds sigh a prayer.

(1601)

*Sonnets*

## 1

From fairest creatures we desire increase,  
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,  
But as the ripper should by time decease,  
His tender heir might bear his memory:  
But thou contracted to thine own bright eyes,  
Feed'st thy light's flame with self-substantial fuel,  
Making a famine where abundance lies,  
Thy self thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel:  
Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament,  
And only herald to the gaudy spring,  
Within thine own bud buriest thy content,  
And, tender churl, mak'st waste in niggarding:  
Pity the world, or else this glutton be,  
To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee.

## 12

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

## 18

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?  
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:  
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:

Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
And often is his gold complexion dimmed,  
And every fair from fair sometime declines,  
By chance, or nature's changing course untrimmed:  
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,  
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,  
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

55

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments  
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme;  
But you shall shine more bright in these contents  
Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time.  
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,  
And broils root out the work of masonry,  
Nor Mars his sword, nor war's quick fire shall burn  
The living record of your memory.  
'Gainst death, and all oblivious enmity  
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.  
So, till the judgment that yourself arise,  
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

75

So are you to my thoughts as food to life,  
Or as sweet-season'd showers are to the ground;  
And for the peace of you I hold such strife  
As 'twixt a miser and his wealth is found;  
Now proud as an enjoyer and anon  
Doubting the filching age will steal his treasure,  
Now counting best to be with you alone,  
Then better'd that the world may see my pleasure;  
Sometime all full with feasting on your sight  
And by and by clean starved for a look;

Possessing or pursuing no delight,  
Save what is had or must from you be took.  
Thus do I pine and surfeit day by day,  
Or gluttoning on all, or all away.

## 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.  
I have seen roses damask'd, red and white,  
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  
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;  
I grant I never saw a goddess go;  
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:  
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare  
As any she belied with false compare.

## 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 untutor'd youth,  
Unlearned in the world's false subtleties.  
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 suppress'd.  
But wherefore says she not she is unjust?  
And wherefore say not I that I am old?  
O, love's best habit is in seeming trust,  
And age in love loves not to have years told:  
Therefore I lie with her and she with me,  
And in our faults by lies we flatter'd be.

(1609)

*Song*

Fear no more the heat o' th' sun  
Nor the furious winter's rages;  
Thou thy worldly task hast done,  
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages.  
Golden lads and girls all must,  
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Fear no more the frown o' th' great;  
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke.  
Care no more to clothe and eat;  
To thee the reed is as the oak.  
The sceptre, learning, physic, must  
All follow this and come to dust.  
Fear no more the lightning flash,  
Nor th' all-dreaded thunder-stone;  
Fear not slander, censure rash;  
Thou hast finish'd joy and moan.  
All lovers young, all lovers must  
Consign to thee and come to dust.

No exorciser harm thee!  
Nor no witchcraft charm thee!  
Ghost unlaid forbear thee!  
Nothing ill come near thee!  
Quiet consummation have,  
And renowned be thy grave!

(1623)

*JOHN DONNE*  
(1572–1631)

Donne was born in London, in 1572, as the son of a prosperous London merchant, and a mother not only Catholic, but also connected by marriage to Sir Thomas More. His early education was Catholic, and, although he came to reject it, his thinking and his temperament were affected throughout his life by his Catholic training. As a Catholic, Donne could not take a degree, though he spent three years at Oxford, and three at Cambridge. He probably declared for the Anglican religion by 1602, but he resisted royal pressure to take orders until 1615, after which his ecclesiastical advancement was rapid. He preached sermons which rank among the best of the 17th century. From 1621 until his death he was Dean of St. Paul's and frequently preached before Charles I. In verse he wrote satires, epistles, elegies, and miscellaneous poems, distinguished by wit, profundity of thought and erudition, passion, and subtlety, coupled with a certain roughness of form. He was the greatest of the writers of "metaphysical poetry", in which passion is interwoven with reasoning.

*The Flea*

MARK but this flea, and mark in this,  
How little that which thou deniest me is ;  
It suck'd me first, and now sucks thee,  
And in this flea our two bloods mingled be.  
Thou know'st that this cannot be said  
A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead ;  
Yet this enjoys before it woo,  
And pamper'd swells with one blood made of two ;  
And this, alas ! is more than we would do.

O stay, three lives in one flea spare,  
Where we almost, yea, more than married are.  
This flea is you and I, and this  
Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is.  
Though parents grudge, and you, we're met,

And cloister'd in these living walls of jet.  
Though use make you apt to kill me,  
Let not to that self-murder added be,  
And sacrilege, three sins in killing three.

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

(1633)

*A Valediction: Forbidden Mourning*

AS virtuous men pass mildly away,  
And whisper to their souls to go,  
Whilst some of their sad friends do say,  
    "Now his breath goes," and some say, "No."  
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 th' earth brings harms and fears;  
    Men reckon what it did, and meant;  
But trepidation of the spheres,  
    Though greater far, is innocent.  
Dull sublunary lovers' love  
    – Whose soul is sense – cannot admit  
Of absence, 'cause it doth remove  
    The thing which elemented it.  
But we by a love so much refined,  
    That ourselves know not what it is,  
Inter-assured of the mind,



Care less, eyes, lips and hands to miss.  
 Our two souls therefore, which are one,  
 Though I must go, endure not yet  
 A breach, but an expansion,  
 Like gold to aery thinness beat.  
 If they be two, they are two so  
 As stiff twin compasses are two;  
 Thy soul, the fix'd foot, makes no show  
 To move, but doth, if th' other do.  
 And though it in the centre sit,  
 Yet, when the other far doth roam,  
 It leans, and hearkens after it,  
 And grows erect, as that comes home.  
 Such wilt thou be to me, who must,  
 Like th' other foot, obliquely run;  
 Thy firmness makes my circle just,  
 And makes me end where I begun.

(1633)

From the *Holy Sonnets*

## 1

THOU hast made me, and shall Thy work decay?  
 Repair me now, for now mine end doth haste;  
 I run to death, and Death meets me as fast,  
 And all my pleasures are like yesterday.  
 I dare not move my dim eyes any way;  
 Despair behind, and Death before doth cast  
 Such terror, and my feeble flesh doth waste  
 By sin in it, which it towards hell doth weigh.  
 Only Thou art above, and when towards Thee  
 By Thy leave I can look, I rise again;  
 But our old subtle foe so tempteth me,  
 That not one hour myself I can sustain.  
 Thy grace may wing me to prevent his art  
 And thou like adamant draw mine iron heart.

(1635)

14

Batter my heart, three-person'd God ; for you  
As yet but knock ; breathe, shine, and seek to mend;  
That I may rise, and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend  
Your force, to break, blow, burn, and make me new.  
I, like an usurp'd town, to another due,  
Labour to admit you, but O, to no end.  
Reason, your viceroy in me, me should defend,  
But is captived, and proves weak or untrue.  
Yet dearly I love you, and would be loved fain,  
But am betroth'd unto your enemy ;  
Divorce me, untie, or break that knot again,  
Take me to you, imprison me, for I,  
Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,  
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.

(1633)

19

Oh, to vex me, contraries meet in one:  
Inconstancy unnaturally hath begot  
A constant habit; that when I would not  
I change in vows, and in devotion.  
As humorous is my contrition  
As my profane love, and as soon forgot:  
As riddlingly distempered, cold and hot,  
As praying, as mute; as infinite, as none.  
I durst not view heaven yesterday; and today  
In prayers and flattering speeches I court God:  
Tomorrow I quake with true fear of his rod.  
So my devout fits come and go away  
Like a fantastic ague; save that here  
Those are my best days, when I shake with feare.

(1899)

*Elegy XIX. To His Mistress Going to Bed*<sup>41</sup>

COME, madam, come, all rest my powers defy;  
 Until I labour, I in labour lie.  
 The foe oft-times, having the foe in sight,  
 Is tired with standing, though he never fight.  
 Off with that girdle, like heaven's zone glittering,  
 But a far fairer world encompassing.  
 Unpin that spangled breast-plate, which you wear,  
 That th' eyes of busy fools may be stopp'd there.  
 Unlace yourself, for that harmonious chime  
 Tells me from you that now it is bed-time.  
 Off with that happy busk, which I envy,  
 That still can be, and still can stand so high.  
 Your gown going off such beauteous state reveals,  
 As when from flowery meads th' hill's shadow steals.  
 Off with your wiry coronet, and show  
 The hairy diadems which on you do grow.  
 Off with your hose and shoes; then softly tread  
 In this love's hallow'd temple, this soft bed.  
 In such white robes heaven's angels used to be  
 Revealed to men; thou, angel, bring'st with thee  
 A heaven-like Mahomet's paradise; and though  
 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.  
     Licence my roving hands, and let them go  
 Before, behind, between, above, below.  
 O, my America, my Newfoundland,  
 My kingdom, safest when with one man mann'd,  
 My mine of precious stones, my empery;  
 How am I blest in thus discovering thee!  
 To enter in these bonds, is to be free;  
 Then, where my hand is set, my soul shall be.  
     Full nakedness! All joys are due to thee;  
 As souls unbodied, bodies unclothed must be

41 This poem reworks the central situation of Ovid's *Amores* 1.5 in much more dramatic terms.

To taste whole joys. Gems which you women use  
Are like Atlanta's ball cast in men's views;  
That, when a fool's eye lighteth on a gem,  
His earthly soul might court that, not them.  
Like pictures, or like books' gay coverings made  
For laymen, are all women thus array'd.  
Themselves are only mystic books, which we  
– Whom their imputed grace will dignify –  
Must see reveal'd. Then, since that I may know,  
As liberally as to thy midwife show  
Thyself ; cast all, yea, this white linen hence;  
There is no penance due to innocence:  
To teach thee, I am naked first; why then,  
What needst thou have more covering than a man?

(1609)

**ANDREW MARVELL**  
(1620–1678)

Marvell, the son of a Yorkshire clergyman, was educated at Hull Grammar School and Trinity College, Cambridge. When the Civil War began in 1642 he was travelling in Europe. At the end of the war he found himself on the winning anti-Royalist side, and became tutor at Nunappleton in Yorkshire, to Mary Fairfax, daughter of the victorious Commonwealth general. Later he was tutor to William Dutton, Cromwell's prospective son-in-law, and in 1657 he was Milton's assistant as Latin Secretary. In 1659, after the death of Cromwell, he became Member of Parliament for Hull, and held the seat till his death, serving also as secretary to English embassies in Russia, Denmark, and Sweden. His lyric poetry, then out of fashion, is highly individual yet related, in close and interesting ways, to that of some of his contemporaries.

*To His Coy Mistress*<sup>42</sup>

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 would complain. I would  
Love you ten years before the Flood;  
And you should, if you please, refuse  
Till the conversion of the Jews.  
My vegetable love 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;

<sup>42</sup> One of the most well known 'carpe diem' (seize the day) poems of the period, which develops the motifs of time and space introduced in line 1.

An age at least to every part,  
And the last age should show your heart.  
For, lady, you deserve this state,  
Nor would I love at lower rate.

But at my back I always hear  
Time's winged 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  
That long preserv'd 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 hue  
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,  
And while thy willing soul transpires  
At every pore with instant fires,  
Now let us sport us while we may;  
And now, like am'rous birds of prey,  
Rather at once our time devour,  
Than languish in his slow-chapp'd power.  
Let us roll all our strength, and all  
Our sweetness, up into one ball;  
And tear our pleasures with rough strife  
Thorough the iron gates of life.  
Thus, though we cannot make our sun  
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

(1681)

*The Garden*

How vainly men themselves amaze  
To win the palm, the oak, or bays;  
And their uncessant labors see  
Crowned from some single herb or tree,  
Whose short and narrow-vergèd shade  
Does prudently their toils upbraid;  
While all the flowers and trees do close  
To weave the garlands of repose.

Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,  
And Innocence, thy sister dear!  
Mistaken long, I sought you then  
In busy companies of men:  
Your sacred plants, if here below,  
Only among the plants will grow;  
Society is all but rude,  
To this delicious solitude.

No white nor red was ever seen  
So amorous as this lovely green;  
Fond lovers, cruel as their flame,  
Cut in these trees their mistress' name.  
Little, alas, they know or heed,  
How far these beauties hers exceed!  
Fair trees! wheresoe'er your barks I wound  
No name shall but your own be found.

When we have run our passion's heat,  
Love hither makes his best retreat:  
The gods who mortal beauty chase,  
Still in a tree did end their race.  
Apollo hunted Daphne so,  
Only that she might laurel grow,  
And Pan did after Syrinx speed,  
Not as a nymph, but for a reed.

What wondrous life is this I lead!  
Ripe apples drop about my head;  
The luscious clusters of the vine  
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;  
The nectarine and curious peach  
Into my hands themselves do reach;  
Stumbling on melons as I pass,  
Insnared with flowers, I fall on grass.

Meanwhile the mind, from pleasure less,  
Withdraws into its happiness:  
The mind, that ocean where each kind  
Does straight its own resemblance find;  
Yet it creates, transcending these,  
Far other worlds, and other seas;  
Annihilating all that's made  
To a green thought in a green shade.

Here at the fountain's sliding foot,  
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,  
Casting the body's vest aside,  
My soul into the boughs does glide:  
There like a bird it sits and sings,  
Then whets and combs its silver wings;  
And, till prepared for longer flight,  
Waves in its plumes the various light.

Such was that happy garden-state,  
While man there walked without a mate:  
After a place so pure and sweet,  
What other help could yet be meet!  
But 'twas beyond a mortal's share  
To wander solitary there:  
Two paradises 'twere in one  
To live in Paradise alone.



How well the skillful gard'ner drew  
Of flowers and herbs this dial new;  
Where from above the milder sun  
Does through a fragrant zodiac run;  
And, as it works, th' industrious bee  
Computes its time as well as we.  
How could such sweet and wholesome hours  
Be reckoned but with herbs and flowers!

(1681)

*The Definition of Love*

My love is of a birth as rare  
As 'tis for object strange and high;  
It was begotten by Despair  
Upon Impossibility.

Magnanimous Despair alone  
Could show me so divine a thing  
Where feeble Hope could ne'er have flown,  
But vainly flapp'd its tinsel wing.

And yet I quickly might arrive  
Where my extended soul is fixt,  
But Fate does iron wedges drive,  
And always crowds itself betwixt.

For Fate with jealous eye does see  
Two perfect loves, nor lets them close;  
Their union would her ruin be,  
And her tyrannic pow'r depose.

And therefore her decrees of steel  
Us as the distant poles have plac'd,  
(Though love's whole world on us doth wheel)  
Not by themselves to be embrac'd;

Unless the giddy heaven fall,  
And earth some new convulsion tear;  
And, us to join, the world should all  
Be cramp'd into a planisphere.

As lines, so loves oblique may well  
Themselves in every angle greet;  
But ours so truly parallel,  
Though infinite, can never meet.

Therefore the love which us doth bind,  
But Fate so enviously debars,  
Is the conjunction of the mind,  
And opposition of the stars.

(1681)

**JOHN MILTON**  
(1608–1674)

Milton was the son of a scrivener and composer of music. He was educated at St. Paul's School and Christ's College, Cambridge, receiving his B.A. in 1629 and M.A. in 1632. While at college he wrote some poems, Latin elegies and epigrams. After leaving Cambridge, Milton lived with his father at Horton from 1632 to 1637, reading the classics and preparing himself for his vocation as a poet. During these years of solitude he composed *Lycidas*, *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso* and a few sonnets. From 1637 to 1639 he travelled abroad, chiefly in Italy, and visited Grotius and Galileo. When the Civil war broke out Milton immediately cut his tour short and hurried home. For the next twenty years he devoted himself to politics and prose. After the execution of King Charles I, Milton became Latin Secretary in the new government. His eyesight began to fail around 1651 and by 1652 he was totally blind. With the return of the Stuart monarch, Charles II, Milton was in danger of royal prosecution both as a propagandist and as a former Latin Secretary within the government. He lost most of his fortune and lived in great poverty. The most ambitious of Milton's works, such as *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, *Samson Agonistes*, were written during these years. He was buried in the Church of St. Giles, Cripplegate.

*L'Allegro*

Hence loathed Melancholy,  
Of Cerberus and blackest midnight born,  
In Stygian Cave forlorn  
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shreiks, and sights unholy,  
Find out som uncouth cell,  
Wher brooding darknes spreads his jealous wings,  
And the night-Raven sings;  
There under ebon shades, and low-brow'd Rocks,  
As ragged as thy Locks,  
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.  
But com thou Goddess fair and free,  
In Heav'n yclept Euphrosyne,

And by men, heart-easing Mirth,  
Whom lovely *Venus* at a birth  
With two sister Graces more  
To Ivy-crowned *Bacchus* bore;  
Or whether (as som sager sing)  
The frolick Wind that breathes the Spring,  
Zephir with Aurora playing,  
As he met her once a Maying,  
There on Beds of Violets blew,  
And fresh-blown Roses washt in dew,  
Filled her with thee a daughter fair,  
So bucksom, blith, and debonair.  
Haste thee nymph, and bring with thee  
Jest and youthful Jollity,  
Quips and Cranks, and wanton Wiles,  
Nods, and Becks, and Wreathed Smiles,  
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,  
And love to live in dimple sleek;  
Sport that wrincled Care derides,  
And Laughter holding both his sides.  
Com, and trip it as ye go  
On the light fantastick toe,  
And in thy right hand lead with thee,  
The Mountain Nymph, sweet Liberty;  
And if I give thee honour due,  
Mirth, admit me of thy crue  
To live with her, and live with thee,  
In unreprieved pleasures free;  
To hear the Lark begin his flight,  
And singing startle the dull night,  
From his watch-towre in the skies,  
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;  
Then to com in spight of sorrow,  
And at my window bid good morrow,  
Through the Sweet-Briar, or the Vine,  
Or the twisted Eglantine.  
While the Cock with lively din,  
Scatters the rear of darknes thin,

And to the stack, or the Barn dore,  
Stoutly struts his Dames before,  
Oft list'ning how the Hounds and horn,  
Chearly rouse the slumbring morn,  
From the side of som Hoar Hill,  
Through the high wood echoing shrill.  
Some time walking not unseen  
By Hedge-row Elms, on Hillocks green,  
Right against the Eastern gate,  
Wher the great Sun begins his state,  
Rob'd in flames, and Amber light,  
The clouds in thousand Liveries dight.  
While the Plowman neer at hand,  
Whistles ore the Furrow'd Land,  
And the Milkmaid singeth blithe,  
    And the Mower whets his sithe,  
And every Shepherd tells his tale  
Under the Hawthorn in the dale.  
Streit mine eye hath caught new pleasures  
Whilst the Lantskip round it measures,  
    Russet Lawns, and Fallows Gray,  
Where the nibling flocks do stray,  
Mountains on whose barren brest  
The labouring clouds do often rest:  
Meadows trim with Daisies pide,  
Shallow Brooks, and Rivers wide.  
Towers, and Battlements it sees  
Boosom'd high in tufted Trees,  
Wher perhaps som beauty lies,  
The Cynosure of neighbouring eyes.  
Hard by, a Cottage chimney smokes,  
From betwixt two aged Okes,  
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met,  
Are at their savory dinner set  
Of Hearbs, and other Country Messes,  
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;  
And then in haste her Bowre she leaves,  
With Thestylis to bind the Sheaves;

Or if the earlier season lead  
To the tann'd Haycock in the Mead,  
Som times with secure delight  
The up-land Hamlets will invite,  
When the merry Bells ring round,  
And the jocond rebecks sound  
To many a youth, and many a maid,  
Dancing in the Chequer'd shade;  
And young and old com forth to play  
On a Sunshine Holyday,  
Till the live-long day-light fail,  
Then to the Spicy Nut-brown Ale,  
With stories told many a feat,  
How Faery Mab the junkets eat,  
She was pincht, and pull'd she sed,  
And he by Friars Lanthorn led  
Tells how the drudging Goblin swet  
To ern his Cream-bowle duly set,  
When in one night, ere glimps of morn,  
His shadowy Flae hath thresh'd the Corn  
That ten day-labourers could not end,  
Then lies him down the Lubbar Fend.  
And stretch'd out all the Chimney's length,  
Basks at the fire his hairy strength;  
And Crop-full out of dores he flings,  
Ere the first Cock his Mattin rings.  
Thus don the Tales, to bed they creep,  
By whispering Windes soon lull'd asleep.  
Towred Cities please us then,  
And the busie humm of men,  
Where throngs of Knights and Barons bold,  
In weeds of Peace high triumphs hold,  
With store of Ladies, whose bright eies  
Rain influence, and judge the prise  
Of Wit, or Arms, while both contend  
To win her Grace, whom all commend.  
There let Hymen oft appear  
In Saffron robe, with Taper clear,

And pomp, and feast, and revelry,  
With mask, and antique Pageantry,  
Such sights as youthfull Poets dream  
On Summer eeves by haunted stream.  
Then to the well-trod stage anon,  
If *Jonsons* learned Sock be on,  
Or sweetest *Shakespear* fancies childe,  
Warble his native Wood-notes wilde,  
And ever against eating Cares,  
Lap me in soft Lydian Aires,  
Married to immortal verse,  
Such as the meeting soul may pierce  
In notes, with many a winding bout  
Of linckd sweetnes long drawn out,  
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,  
The melting voice through mazes running;  
Untwisting all the chains that ty  
The hidden soul of harmony.  
That Orpheus self may heave his head  
From golden slumber on a bed  
Of heapt Elysian flowres, and hear  
Such streins as would have won the ear  
Of Pluto, to have quite set free  
His half regain'd Eurydice.  
These delights, if thou canst give,  
Mirth with thee, I mean to live.

(ca. 1631)

(1645)

### *Il Penseroso*

Hence vain deluding joyes,  
The brood of folly without father bred,  
How little you bested,  
Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys;  
Dwell in som idle brain,  
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,  
As thick and numberless

As the gay motes that people the Sun Beams,  
Or likest hovering dreams  
The fickle Pensioners of Morpheus train.  
But hail thou Goddess, sage and holy,  
Hail divinest Melancholy,  
Whose Saintly visage is too bright  
To hit the Sense of human sight;  
And therefore to our weaker view,  
Ore laid with black staid Wisdoms hue.  
Black, but such as in esteem,  
Prince Memnons sister might beseech,  
Or that Starr'd Ethiopie Queen that strove  
To set her beauties praise above  
The Sea Nymphs, and their powers offended.  
Yet thou art higher far descended,  
Thee bright- hair'd Vesta long of yore,  
To solitary *Saturn* bore;  
His daughter she (in Saturns raig,  
Such mixture was not held a stain).  
Oft in glimmering Bowres, and glades  
He met her, and in secret shades  
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,  
While yet there was no fear of Jove.  
Com pensive Nun, devout and pure,  
Sober, stedfast, and demure,  
All in a robe of darkest grain,  
Flowing with majestick train,  
And sable stole of Cipres Lawn,  
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.  
Com, but keep thy wonted state,  
With even step, and musing gait,  
And looks commercing with the skies,  
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:  
There held in holy passion still,  
Forget thy self to Marble, till  
With a sad Leaden downward cast,  
Thou fix them on the earth as fast.  
And joyn with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,



Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,  
And hears the Muses in a ring,  
Ay round about *Joves* Altar sing.  
And adde to these retired leasure,  
That in trim Gardens takes his pleasure;  
But first, and chiefest, with thee bring,  
Him that yon soars on golden wing,  
Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,  
The Cherub Contemplation,  
And the mute Silence hist along,  
'Less Philomel will daign a Song,  
In her sweetest, saddest plight,  
Smoothing the rugged brow of night,  
While Cynthia checks her Dragon yoke,  
Gently o're th' accustom'd Oke;  
Sweet Bird that shunn'st the noise of folly,  
Most musicall, most melancholy!  
Thee Chauntress oft the Woods among,  
I woo to hear thy even-Song;  
And missing thee, I walk unseen  
On the dry smooth-shaven Green,  
To behold the wandring Moon,  
Riding neer her highest noon,  
Like one that had bin led astray  
Through the Heav'ns wide pathles way;  
And oft, as if her head she bow'd,  
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.  
Oft on a Plat of rising ground,  
I hear the far-off *Curfew* sound,  
Over som wide-water'd shoar,  
Swinging slow with sullen roar;  
Or if the Ayr will not permit,  
Som still removed place will fit,  
Where glowing Embers through the room  
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,  
Far from all resort of mirth,  
Save the Cricket on the hearth,  
Or the Belmans drousic charm,

To bless the doers from nightly harm:  
Or let my Lamp at midnight hour,  
Be seen in som high lonely Towr,  
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear  
With thrice great Hermes, or unspear  
The spirit of *Plato* to unfold  
What Worlds, or what vast Regions hold  
The immortal mind that hath forsook  
Her mansion in this fleshly nook:  
And of those Daemons that are found  
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,  
Whose power hath a true consent  
With Planet, or with Element.  
Som time let Gorgeous Tragedy  
In Scepter'd Pall com sweeping by,  
Presenting Thebs, or Pelops line,  
Or the tale of Troy divine.  
Or what (though rare) of later age,  
Ennobled hath the Buskind stage.  
But, O sad Virgin, that thy power  
Might raise Musaeus from his bower,  
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing  
Such notes as warbled to the string,  
Drew Iron tears down *Pluto's* cheek,  
And made Hell grant what Love did seek.  
Or call up him that left half told  
The story of *Cambuscan* bold,  
Of *Camball*, and of *Algarsife*,  
And who had *Canace* to wife,  
That own'd the vertuous Ring and Glass,  
And of the wondrous Hors of Brass,  
On which the *Tartar* King did ride;  
And if ought els, great Bards beside,  
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,  
Of Turneys and of Trophies hung;  
Of Forests, and enchantments drear,  
Where more is meant then meets the ear.  
Thus night oft see me in thy pale career,

Till civil-suited Morn appeer,  
Not trickt and frounc't as she was wont,  
With the Attick Boy to hunt,  
But Chercheft in a comly Cloud,  
While rocking Winds are Piping loud,  
Or usher'd with a shower still,  
When the gust hath blown his fill,  
Ending on the russling Leaves,  
With minute drops from off the Eaves.  
And when the Sun begins to fling  
His flaring beams, me Goddes bring  
To arched walks of twilight groves,  
And shadows brown that Sylvan loves  
Of Pine, or monumental Oake,  
Where the rude Ax with heaved stroke,  
Was never heard the Nymphs to daunt,  
Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.  
There in close covert by som Brook,  
Where no profaner eye may look,  
Hide me from Day's garish cie,  
While the Bee with Honied thie,  
That at her flowry work doth sing,  
And the Waters murmuring  
With such consort as they keep,  
Entice the dewy-feather'd Sleep;  
And let som strange mysterious dream,  
Wave at his Wings in Airy stream,  
Of lively portrature display'd,  
Softly on my eye-lids laid.  
And as I wake, sweet musick breath  
Above, about, or underneath,  
Sent by som spirit to mortals good,  
Or th' unseen Genius of the Wood.  
But let my due feet never fail,  
To walk the studious Cloysters pale,  
And love the high embowed Roof,  
With antick Pillars massy proof,  
And storied Windows richly dight,

Casting a dimm religious light.  
There let the pealing Organ blow,  
To the full voic'd Quire below,  
In Service high, and Anthems cleer,  
As may with sweetnes, through mine ear,  
Dissolve me into extasies,  
And bring all Heav'n before mine eyes.  
And may at last my weary age  
Find out the peacefull hermitage,  
The Hairy Gown and Mossy Cell,  
Where I may sit and rightly spell,  
Of every Star that Heav'n doth shew,  
And every Herb that sips the dew;  
Till old experience do attain  
To something like Prophetic strain.  
These pleasures *Melancholy* give,  
And I with thee will choose to live.

(ca. 1631)

(1645)

*Paradise Lost, Book 8 (ll. 491–559)*

This turn hath made amends; thou hast fulfill'd  
Thy words, Creator bounteous and benigne,  
Giver of all things faire, but fairest this  
Of all thy gifts, nor enviest. I now see  
Bone of my bone, Flesh of my Flesh, my Self  
Before me; Woman is her Name, of Man  
Extracted; for this cause he shall forgoe  
Father and Mother, and to his Wife adhere;  
And they shall be one Flesh, one Heart, one Soule.  
She heard me thus, and though divinely brought,  
Yet Innocence and Virgin Modestie,  
Her vertue and the conscience of her worth,  
That would be woo'd, and not unsought be won,  
Not obvious, not obtrusive, but retir'd,  
The more desirable, or to say all,  
Nature her self, though pure of sinful thought,

Wrought in her so, that seeing me, she turn'd;  
I follow'd her, she what was Honour knew,  
And with obsequious Majestic approv'd  
My pleaded reason. To the Nuptial Bowre  
I led her blushing like the Morn: all Heav'n,  
And happie Constellations on that houre  
Shed thir selectest influence; the Earth  
Gave sign of gratulation, and each Hill;  
Joyous the Birds; fresh Gales and gentle Aires  
Whisper'd it to the Woods, and from thir wings  
Flung Rose, flung Odours from the spicie Shrub,  
Disporting, till the amorous Bird of Night  
Sung Spousal, and bid haste the Evening Starr  
On his Hill top, to light the bridal Lamp.  
Thus I have told thee all my State, and brought  
My Storie to the sum of earthly bliss  
Which I enjoy, and must confess to find  
In all things else delight indeed, but such  
As us'd or not, works in the mind no change,  
Nor vehement desire, these delicacies  
I mean of Taste, Sight, Smell, Herbs, Fruits and Flours,  
Walks, and the melodie of Birds; but here  
Farr otherwise, transported I behold,  
Transported touch; here passion first I felt,  
Commotion strange, in all enjoyments else  
Superior and unmov'd, here onely weake  
Against the charm of Beauties powerful glance.  
Or Nature faild in mee, and left some part  
Not proof enough such Object to sustain,  
Or from my side subducting, took perhaps  
More then enough; at least on her bestow'd  
Too much of Ornament, in outward shew  
Elaborate, of inward less exact.  
For well I understand in the prime end  
Of Nature her th' inferiour, in the mind  
And inward Faculties, which most excell,  
In outward also her resembling less  
His Image who made both, and less expressing

The character of that Dominion giv'n  
O're other Creatures; yet when I approach  
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems  
And in her self compleat, so well to know  
Her own, that what she wills to do or say,  
Seems wisest, vertuosest, discreetest, best;  
All higher knowledge in her presence falls  
Degraded, Wisdom in discourse with her  
Looses discount'nanc't, and like folly shewes;  
Authority and Reason on her waite,  
As one intended first, not after made  
Occasionally; and to consummate all,  
Greatness of mind and nobleness thir seat  
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe  
About her, as a guard Angelic plac't.

(1667)

*On the Late Massacre in Piedmont*

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones  
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold,  
Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old,  
When all our fathers worshipp'd stocks and stones;  
Forget not: in thy book record their groans  
Who were thy sheep and in their ancient fold  
Slain by the bloody Piemontese that roll'd  
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans  
The vales redoub'd to the hills, and they  
To Heav'n. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow  
O'er all th' Italian fields where still doth sway  
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow  
A hundred-fold, who having learnt thy way  
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

(1655)

(1673)

*When I Consider How My Light is Spent*

When I consider how my light is spent  
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,  
And that one talent which is death to hide  
Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent  
To serve therewith my Maker, and present  
My true account, lest he returning chide,  
"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"  
I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent  
That murmur, soon replies: "God doth not need  
Either man's work or his own gifts: who best  
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state  
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed  
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:  
They also serve who only stand and wait."

(ca. 1652)

(1673)

## APHRA BEHN (1640!–1689)

Much of Behn's life remains a mystery. She seems to have left no record of her date and place of birth, her family name and upbringing. She was almost certainly from East Kent, and she may well have been named Johnson. Behn almost surely performed spy-work long before the 2nd Dutch War. She travelled to Suriname in 1663-4. After her time in Suriname, she is married, whether in Suriname or on ship home. The likely Behn is a Johan Behn of Frankfurt, who was probably a slave trader and a Dutch go-between trader (a literal middleman). He likely died during the plague year of 1665-6. Behn went to live near the Temple Bar, where she met many playwrights. In London, Behn flourished in the cosmopolitan world of the playhouse and the court. Dryden and other wits encouraged her. She mixed with actresses, playwrights and managers and exchanged verses with a lively literary set that she called her "cabal". She kept up with the most advanced thinking and joined in public debates with pointed satire against the Whigs. Her poetry may be considered very fine, and it is the basis of her fame in the 18th century – with admirers including Burns, Blake, and later Wordsworth and Coleridge. It would be the basis of her reputation for the generation after her life. Her drama was very popular. Only Dryden's plays were staged more often in the 1670's. Her most well known novel is *Oroonoko*. She was not the first female professional author in English, but she was the first professional woman dramatist, and the first female professional poet and novelist of her time.

### *The Disappointment*

One Day the Amorous Lisander,  
By an impatient Passion sway'd,  
Surpris'd fair Cloris, that lov'd Maid,  
Who cou'd defend her self no longer;  
All things did with his Love conspire,  
The gilded Planet of the Day,  
In his gay Chariot, drawn by Fire,  
Was now descending to the Sea,  
And left no Light to guide the World,  
But what from Cloris brighter Eyes was hurld.



In alone Thicket, made for Love,  
Silent as yielding Maids Consent,  
She with a charming Languishment  
Permits his force, yet gently strove?  
Her Hands his Bosom softly meet,  
But not to put him back design'd,  
Rather to draw him on inclin'd,  
Whilst he lay trembling at her feet;  
Resistance 'tis to late to shew,  
She wants the pow'r to say – Ah! what do you do?

Her bright Eyes sweat, and yet Severe,  
Where Love and Shame confus'dly strive,  
Fresh Vigor to Lisander give:  
And whispering softly in his Ear,  
She Cry'd – Cease – cease – your vain desire,  
Or I'll call out – What wou'd you do?  
My dearer Honour, ev'n to you,  
I cannot – must not give – retire,  
Or take that Life whose chiefest part  
I gave you with the Conquest of my Heart.

But he as much unus'd to fear,  
As he was capable of Love,  
The blessed Minutes to improve,  
Kisses her Lips, her Neck, her Hair!  
Each touch her new Desires alarms!  
His burning trembling Hand he prest  
Upon her melting Snowy Breast,  
While she lay panting in his Arms!  
All her unguarded Beauties lie  
The Spoils and Trophies of the Enemy.

And now, without Respect or Fear,  
He seeks the Objects of his Vows;  
His Love no Modesty allows:  
By swift degrees advancing where  
His daring Hand that Alter seiz'd,  
Where Gods of Love do Sacrifice;  
That awful Throne, that Paradise,  
Where Rage is tam'd, and Anger pleas'd;  
That Living Fountain, from whose Trills  
The melted Soul in liquid Drops distils.

Her balmy Lips encountering his,  
Their Bodies as their Souls are joyn'd,  
Where both in Transports were confin'd,  
Extend themselves upon the Moss.  
Cloris half dead and breathless lay,  
Her Eyes appear'd like humid Light,  
Such as divides the Day and Night;  
Or falling Stars, whose Fires decay;  
And now no signs of Life she shows,  
But what in short-breath-sighs returns and goes.

He saw how at her length she lay,  
He saw her rising Bosom bare,  
Her loose thin Robes, through which appear  
A Shape design'd for Love and Play;  
Abandon'd by her Pride and Shame,  
She do's her softest Sweets dispence,  
Offering her Virgin-Innocence  
A Victim to Loves Sacred Flame;  
Whilst th' or'e ravish'd Shepherd lies,  
Unable to perform the Sacrifice.

Ready to taste a Thousand Joys,  
Thee too transported hapless Swain,  
Found the vast Pleasure turn'd to Pain:  
Pleasure, which too much Love destroys!  
The willing Garments by he laid,  
And Heav'n all open to his view;  
Mad to possess, himself he threw  
On the defenceless lovely Maid.  
But oh! what envious Gods conspire  
To snatch his Pow'r, yet leave him the Desire!

Natures support, without whose Aid  
She can no humane Being give,  
It self now wants the Art to live,  
Faintness it slacken'd Nerves invade:  
In vain th' enraged Youth assaid  
To call his fleeting Vigour back,  
No Motion 'twill from Motion take,  
Excess of Love his Love betray'd;  
In vain he Toils, in vain Commands,  
Th' Insensible fell weeping in his Hands.

In this so Am'rous cruel strife,  
Where Love and Fate were too severe,  
The poor Lisander in Despair,  
Renounc'd his Reason with his Life.  
Now all the Brisk and Active Fire  
That should the Nobler Part inflame,  
Unactive Frigid, Dull became,  
And left no Spark for new Desire;  
Not all her Naked Charms cou'd move,  
Or calm that Rage that had debauch'd his Love.

Cloris returning from the Trance  
Which Love and soft Desire had bred,  
Her tim'rous Hand she gently laid,  
Or guided by Design or Chance,  
Upon that Fabulous Priapus,  
That Potent God (as Poets feign.)  
But never did young Shepherdess  
(Gath'ring of Fern upon the Plain)  
More nimbly draw her Fingers back,  
Finding beneath the Verdant Leaves a Snake.

Then Cloris her fair Hand withdrew,  
Finding that God of her Desires  
Disarm'd of all his pow'rful Fires,  
And cold as Flow'rs bath'd in the Morning-dew.  
Who can the Nymphs Confusion guess?  
The Blood forsook the kinder place,  
And strew'd with Blushes all her Face,  
Which both Disdain and Shame express;  
And from Lisanders Arms she fled,  
Leaving him fainting on the gloomy Bed.

Like Lightning through the Grove she hies,  
Or Daphne from the Delphick God;  
No Print upon the Grassie Road  
She leaves, t' instruct pursuing Eyes.  
The Wind that wanton'd in her Hair,  
And with her ruffled Garments plaid,  
Discover'd in the flying Maid  
All that the Gods e're made of Fair.  
So Venus, when her Love was Slain,  
With fear and haste flew o're the fatal Plain.

The Nymphs resentments, none but I  
 Can well imagin, and Condole;  
 But none can guess Lisander's Soul,  
 But those who sway'd his Destiny:  
 His silent Griefs, swell up to Storms,  
 And not one God, his Fury spares,  
 He Curst his Birth, his Fate, his Stars,  
 But more the Shepherdesses Charms ;  
 Whose soft bewitching influence,  
 Had Damn'd him to the Hell of Impotence.

(1680)

*Song*

Love in fantastic triumph sate  
 Whilst bleeding hearts around him flow'd,  
 For whom fresh pains he did create  
 And strange tyrannic power he show'd:  
 From thy bright eyes he took his fires,  
 Which round about in sport he hurl'd;  
 But 'twas from mine he took desires  
 Enough t' undo the amorous world.

From me he took his sighs and tears,  
 From thee his pride and cruelty;  
 From me his languishments and fears,  
 And every killing dart from thee.  
 Thus thou and I the god have arm'd  
 And set him up a deity;  
 But my poor heart alone is harm'd,  
 Whilst thine the victor is, and free!

(1688)

*Libertine*

A thousand martyrs I have made,  
All sacrificed to my desire,  
A thousand beauties have betray'd  
That languish in resistless fire:  
The untamed heart to hand I brought,  
And fix'd the wild and wand'ring thought.

I never vow'd nor sigh'd in vain,  
But both, tho' false, were well received;  
The fair are pleased to give us pain,  
And what they wish is soon believed:  
And tho' I talk'd of wounds and smart,  
Love's pleasures only touch'd my heart.

Alone the glory and the spoil  
I always laughing bore away;  
The triumphs without pain or toil,  
Without the hell the heaven of joy;  
And while I thus at random rove  
Despise the fools that whine for love.

(1688)

EDWARD YOUNG  
(1683–1765)

Edward Young was born at his father's rectory at Upham, near Winchester, in 1683. He was educated at Winchester College and in 1702 matriculated at New College, Oxford. In 1708 he was nominated to a law fellowship at All Souls'. He wrote a series of dedications to a number of important personalities of his time (including Queen Anne, the Countess of Salisbury, and Joseph Addison) using an extravagant style and a pious tone. In 1728 Young became a royal chaplain and then the rector of Welwyn in 1730, where he spent the remainder of his life. His literary work includes two plays, *Busiris*, a tragedy of violence and ungoverned passion, successfully produced at Drury Lane in 1719, and *The Revenge*, another tragedy, produced in 1721. In 1725–28 Young published a series of satires under the title *The Universal Passion* (the Love of Fame). These were quite witty and brilliant, and much admired. *The Complaint, or Night Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality* (a didactic poem of some 10,000 lines of blank verse, in nine books) was published in 1742, and followed by other "Nights," the eighth and ninth appearing in 1745. This is the work by which he is principally remembered and had made him immediately famous. Although *Night Thoughts* is long and somewhat disconnected, it abounds in brilliant isolated passages. The work has been translated into many languages and became a classic of the romantic school in Germany and France. He published *The Brothers*, a tragedy written in 1753, and *Resignation*, his last considerable poem in 1762. He died at Welwyn in 1765.

*The Complaint: or Night Thoughts on Life, Death,  
and Immortality*

*The Last Day*

(Excerpt ll. 169–192)

Book I

Sooner or later, in some future date,  
(A dreadful secret in the book of Fate)  
This hour, for aught all human wisdom knows,

Or when ten thousand harvests more have rose;  
When scenes are chang'd on this revolving Earth,  
Old empires fall, and give new empires birth;  
While other Bourbons rule in other lands,  
And, (if man's sin forbids not) other Annes;  
While the still busy world is treading o'er  
The paths they trod five thousand years before,  
Thoughtless as those who now life's mazes run,  
Of earth dissolv'd, or an extinguish'd sun;  
(Ye sublunary worlds, awake, awake!  
Ye rulers of the nation, hear and shake)  
Thick clouds of darkness shall arise on day;  
In sudden night all Earth's dominions lay;  
Impetuous winds the scatter'd forests rend;  
Eternal mountains, like their cedars, bend;  
The valleys yawn, the troubled ocean roar  
And break the bondage of his wonted shore;  
A sanguine stain the silver moon o'erspread;  
Darkness the circle of the sun invade;  
From inmost Heaven incessant thunders roll  
And the strong echo bound from pole to pole.

(1713)

*Night the First*

*(Excerpt ll.1371–1422)*

By Nature's law, what may be, may be now;  
There's no prerogative in human hours.  
In human hearts what bolder thought can rise,  
Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn?  
Where is to-morrow? In another world.  
For numbers this is certain; the reverse  
Is sure to none; and yet on this perhaps,  
This peradventure, infamous for lies,  
As on a rock of adamant we build  
Our mountain hopes, spin out eternal schemes



As we the Fatal Sisters could out-spin,  
And big with life's futuritics, expire.  
Not ev'n Philander had bespoke his shroud,  
Nor had he cause; a warning was deny'd:  
How many fall as sudden, not as safe!  
As sudden, though for years admonish'd home.  
Of human ills the last extreme beware;  
Beware, Lorenzo, a slow-sudden death.  
How dreadful that deliberate surprise!  
Be wise to-day; 'tis madness to defer;  
Next day the fatal precedent will plead;  
Thus on, till wisdom is push'd out of life.  
Procrastination is the thief of time;  
Year after year it steals, till all are fled,  
And to the mercies of a moment leaves  
The vast concerns of an eternal scene.  
If not so frequent, would not this be strange?  
That 'tis so frequent, this is stranger still.  
Of man's miraculous mistakes this bears  
The palm, "That all men are about to live,"  
For ever on the brink of being born,  
All pay themselves the compliment to think  
They, one day, shall not drivel: and their pride  
On this reversion takes up ready praise;  
At least, their own; their future selves applauds;  
How excellent that life they ne'er will lead!  
Time lodg'd in their own hands is Folly's vails;  
That lodg'd in Fate's to Wisdom they consign.  
The thing they can't but purpose, they postpone.  
'Tis not in folly not to scorn a fool,  
And scarce in human wisdom to do more.  
All promise is poor dilatory man,  
And that through every stage; when young, indeed,  
In full content we sometimes nobly rest,  
Unanxious for ourselves; and only wish,  
As duteous sons our fathers were more wise.  
At thirty man suspects himself a fool,  
Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan;

At fifty chides his infamous delay,  
Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve;  
In all the magnanimity of thought  
Resolves, and re-resolves, then dies the same.

(1742)

**ALEXANDER POPE**  
(1688–1744)

He was the son of a Roman Catholic linen-draper of London. His health was ruined and his figure distorted by a severe illness at the age of 12. Being a Roman Catholic he was not allowed to attend public schools or university. He began writing very early. At the age of nine he translated a Latin poem into English, at twelve he wrote a play. Because of his religion there were few jobs available to him, so he decided to make literature his life's work. In 1712 he wrote *The Rape of the Lock* (a playful mock-epic describing a feud between two families, because a young gentleman cut off a lock of hair without a young lady's acknowledgement), which made his name known all over England. For the next twelve years Pope was busy with poetry. In 1715 he issued the first volume of Homer's *Iliad*, which was completed in 1720. He bought himself a villa at Twickenham and settled there. Here his literary friends (Swift, Gay, Arbuthnot, Atterbury, etc.) came to visit him. *Essay on Man* is a poem written by Alexander Pope in 1734. It is a rationalistic effort to use philosophy in order to, as John Milton attempted, justify the ways of God to man. More than any other work, it popularized optimistic philosophy throughout England and the rest of Europe. He died on 30th May 1744, and was buried at Twickenham, because his religion denied him the honour, which he certainly deserved, of being buried in Poets' Corner.

*The Rape of the Lock*

An Heroi-Comical Poem In Five Cantos  
Nolueram, Belinda, tuos violare capillos;  
Sed juvat, hoc precibus me trebuisse tuis. – Martial  
To Mrs. Arabella Fermor  
MADAM,

It will be vain to deny that I have some Value for this Piece, since I dedicate it to You. Yet You may bear me Witness, it was intended only to divert a few young Ladies, who have good Sense and good Humour enough, to laugh not only at their Sex's little unguarded Follies, but at their own. But as it was communicated with the Air of a Secret, it soon

found its Way into the World. An imperfect Copy having been offered to a Bookseller, You had the good-Nature for my Sake to consent to the Publication of one more correct: This I was forced to before I had executed half my Design, for the *Machinery* was entirely wanting to compleat it. The *Machinery*, Madam, is a term invented by the Criticks, to signify that Part which the Deities, Angels, or Dæmons, are made to act in a Poem: For the ancient Poets are in one Respect like many modern Ladies: Let an Action be never so trivial in itself, they always make it appear of the utmost Importance. These Machines I determin'd to raise on a very new and odd Foundation, the *Rosicrucian* Doctrine of Spirits.

I know how disagreeable it is to make use of hard Words before a Lady: but 'tis so much the Concern of a Poet to have his works understood, and particularly by your Sex, that You must give me leave to explain two or three difficult Terms.

The *Rosicrucians* are a People I must bring You acquainted with. The best Account I know of them is in a French book called *Le Comte de Gabalis*, which both in its Title and Size is so like a Novel, that many of the Fair Sex have read it for one by Mistake. According to these Gentlemen the four Elements are inhabited by Spirits, which they call *Sylphs*, *Gnomes*, *Nymphs*, and *Salamanders*. The *Gnomes*, or Daemons of Earth, delight in Mischief: but the *Sylphs*, whose Habitation is Air, are the best-conditioned Creatures imaginable. For they say, any Mortals may enjoy the most intimate Familiarities with these gentle Spirits, upon a Condition very easy to all true *Adepts*, an inviolate Preservation of Chastity.

As to the following Canto's, all the Passages of them are as Fabulous, as the Vision at the Beginning, or the Transformation at the End; (except for the Loss of your Hair, which I always name with Reverence.) The Human Persons are as Fictitious as the Airy ones; and the Character of *Belinda*, as it is now manag'd, resembles You in nothing but in Beauty.

If this Poem had as many Graces as there are in Your Person, or in Your Mind, yet I could never hope it should pass thro' the World half so Uncensured as You have done. But let its Fortune be what it will, mine is happy enough, to have given me this Occasion of assuring You that I am, with the truest Esteem,

*Madam,*  
*Your most Obedient*  
*Humble Servant,*  
A. POPE

## Canto I

What dire Offence from am'rous Causes springs,  
 What mighty Contests rise from trivial Things,  
 I sing-This verse to Caryll, Muse! is due;  
 This, ev'n *Belinda* may vouchsafe to view:  
 Slight is the Subject, but not so the Praise,  
 If She inspire, and He approve, my Lays.  
 Say what strange Motive, Goddess! cou'd compel  
 A well-bred *Lord* t'assault a gentle *Belle*?  
 Oh say what stranger Cause, yet unexplor'd,  
 Cou'd make a gentle *Belle* reject a *Lord*?  
 In tasks so bold, can little Men engage,  
 And in soft Bosoms, dwell such mighty Rage?  
 Sol through white Curtains shot a tim'rous Ray,  
 And ope'd those Eyes that must eclipse the Day:  
 Now Lap-dogs give themselves the rousing Shake,  
 And sleepless Lovers, just at Twelve, awake:  
 Thrice rung the Bell, the Slipper knock'd the Ground,  
 And the press'd Watch return'd a silver sound,  
*Belinda* still her downy Pillow prest,  
 Her guardian *Sylph* prolong'd the balmy rest.  
 'Twas he had summon'd to her silent Bed  
 The Morning Dream that hover'd o'er her Head.  
 A Youth more glitt'ring than a Birth-night Beau  
 (That ev'n in slumber caus'd her Cheek to glow)  
 Seem'd to her Ear his winning Lips to lay,  
 And thus in Whispers said, or seem'd to say.  
 Fairest of Mortals, thou distinguish'd Care  
 Of thousand bright Inhabitants of Air!  
 If e'er one Vision touch'd thy infant Thought,  
 Of all the Nurse and all the Priest have taught,  
 Of airy Elves by Moonlight Shadows seen,  
 The silver Token, and the Circled Green,  
 Or Virgins visited by Angel-powers  
 With Golden Crowns and Wreaths of heav'nly Flow'rs;  
 Hear and believe! thy own Importance know,  
 Nor bound thy narrow Views to things below.

Some secret Truths, from Learned Pride conceal'd,  
To Maids alone and Children are reveal'd:  
What tho' no Credit doubting Wits may give?  
The Fair and Innocent shall still believe.  
Know then, unnumber'd Spirits round thee fly,  
The light *Militia* of the lower sky:  
These, tho' unseen, are ever on the Wing,  
Hang o'er the *Bax*, and hover round the *Ring*.  
Think what an Equipage thou hast in Air,  
And view with scorn *Two Pages* and a *Chair*.  
As now your own, our Beings were of old,  
And once inclos'd in Woman's beauteous Mold;  
Thence, by a soft Transition, we repair  
From earthly Vehicles to these of Air.  
Think not, when Woman's transient Breath is fled,  
That all her Vanities at once are dead.  
Succeeding Vanities she still regards,  
And tho' she plays no more, o'erlooks the Cards.  
Her Joy in gilded Chariots, when alive,  
And love of Ombre, after Death survive.  
For when the Fair in all their Pride expire,  
To their first Elements the Souls retire:  
The Sprites of fiery Termagants in Flame  
Mount up, and take a *Salamander's* name.  
Soft yielding Minds to Water glide away,  
And sip, with *Nymphs*, their elemental Tea.  
The graver Prude sinks downward to a *Gnome*,  
In search of Mischief still on Earth to roam.  
The light Coquettes in *Sylphs* aloft repair,  
And sport and flutter in the Fields of Air.  
Know further yet; Whoever fair and chaste  
Rejects Mankind, is by some *Sylph* embrac'd:  
For Spirits, freed from mortal Laws, with ease  
Assume what Sexes and what Shapes they please.  
What guards the Purity of melting Maids,  
In Courtly Balls, and Midnight Masquerades,  
Safe from the treach'rous Friend, the daring Spark,  
The Glance by Day, the Whisper in the Dark;

When kind Occasion prompts their warm Desires,  
When Music softens, and when Dancing fires?  
'Tis but their *Sylph*, the wise Celestials know,  
Tho' *Honour* is the Word with Men below.  
Some Nymphs there are, too conscious of their Face,  
For Life predestin'd to the *Gnomes'* Embrace.  
Who swell their Prospects and exalt their Pride,  
When Offers are disdain'd, and Love deny'd.  
Then gay Ideas crowd the vacant Brain,  
While Peers and Dukes, and all their sweeping Train,  
And Garters, Stars, and Coronets appear,  
And in soft sounds, Your Grace salutes their Ear.  
'Tis these that early taint the Female Soul,  
Instruct the eyes of young *Coquettes* to roll,  
Teach Infant Cheeks a bidden Blush to know,  
And little Hearts to flutter at a *Beau*.  
Oft when the World imagine Women stray,  
The *Sylphs* through Mystic mazes guide their Way.  
Thro' all the giddy Circle they pursue,  
And old Impertinence expel by new.  
What tender Maid but must a Victim fall  
To one Man's Treat, but for another's Ball?  
When *Florio* speaks, what Virgin could withstand,  
If gentle *Damon* did not squeeze her Hand?  
With varying Vanities, from ev'ry Part,  
They shift the moving Toyshop of their Heart;  
Where Wigs with Wigs, with Sword-knots Sword-knots strive,  
Beaux banish Beaux, and Coaches Coaches drive.  
This erring Mortals Levity may call,  
Oh blind to Truth! the *Sylphs* contrive it all.  
Of these am I, who thy Protection claim,  
A watchful Sprite, and *Ariel* is my name.  
Late, as I rang'd the crystal Wilds of Air,  
In the clear Mirror of thy ruling *Star*  
I saw, alas! some dread Event impend,  
Ere to the Main this morning's Sun descend,  
But Heav'n reveals not what, or how, or where:  
Warn'd by thy *Sylph*, oh pious Maid beware!

This to disclose is all thy Guardian can.  
Beware of all, but most beware of Man!  
He said: when *Shock*, who thought she slept too long,  
Leap'd up, and wak'd his Mistress with his Tongue.  
'Twas then, *Belinda*! if Report say true,  
Thy Eyes first open'd on a *Billet-doux*;  
*Wounds*, *Charms*, and *Ardors*, were no sooner read,  
But all the Vision vanish'd from thy Head.  
And now, unveil'd, the *Toilet* stands display'd,  
Each Silver Vase in mystic Order laid.  
First, rob'd in White, the Nymph intent adores  
With Head uncover'd, the *Cosmetic* Pow'rs.  
A heav'nly Image in the Glass appears,  
To that she bends, to that her Eyes she rears;  
Th' inferior Priestess, at her Altar's side,  
Trembling, begins the sacred Rites of Pride.  
Unnumber'd Treasures ope at once, and here  
The various Offerings of the World appear;  
From each she nicely culls with curious Toil,  
And decks the Goddess with the glitt'ring Spoil.  
This casket *India's* glowing Gems unlocks,  
And all *Arabia* breathes from yonder Box.  
The Tortoise here and Elephant unite,  
Transform'd to *Combs*, the speckled and the white.  
Here Files of Pins extend their shining Rows,  
Puffs, Powders, Patches, Bibles, Billet-doux.  
Now awful Beauty puts on all its Arms;  
The Fair each moment rises in her Charms,  
Repairs her Smiles, awakens ev'ry Grace,  
And calls forth all the Wonders of her Face;  
Sees by Degrees a purer Blush arise,  
And keener Lightnings quicken in her Eyes.  
The busy *Sylphs* surround their darling Care;  
These set the Head, and those divide the Hair,  
Some fold the Sleeve, whilst others plait the Gown;  
And Betty's prais'd for labours not her own.



*Canto II*

Not with more Glories, in th' Ethereal Plain,  
 The Sun first rises o'er the purpled Main,  
 Than issuing forth, the Rival of his Beams  
 Launch'd on the Bosom of the Silver *Thames*.  
 Fair Nymphs, and well-drest Youths around her shone,  
 But ev'ry Eye was fix'd on her alone.  
 On her white Breast a sparkling *Cross* she wore,  
 Which *Jews* might kiss, and Infidels adore.  
 Her lively Looks a sprightly Mind disclose,  
 Quick as her Eyes, and as unfix'd as those:  
 Favours to none, to all she Smiles extends,  
 Oft she rejects, but never once offends.  
 Bright as the Sun, her Eyes the Gazers strike,  
 And, like the Sun, they shine on all alike.  
 Yet graceful Ease, and Sweetness void of Pride,  
 Might hide her Faults, if *Belles* had Faults to hide:  
 If to her share some Female Errors fall,  
 Look on her Face, and you'll forget 'em all.  
 This Nymph, to the Destruction of Mankind,  
 Nourish'd two Locks which graceful hung behind  
 In equal Curls, and well conspir'd to deck  
 With shining Ringlets the smooth Iv'ry Neck.  
 Love in these Labyrinths his Slaves detains,  
 And mighty Hearts are held in slender Chains.  
 With hairy sprindges we the Birds betray,  
 Slight lines of Hair surprise the Finny Prey,  
 Fair Tresses Man's Imperial Race insnare,  
 And Beauty draws us with a single Hair.  
 Th' Advent'rous *Baron* the bright Locks admir'd,  
 He saw, he wish'd, and to the Prize aspir'd:  
 Resolv'd to win, he meditates the way,  
 By Force to ravish, or by Fraud betray;  
 For when Success a Lover's Toil attends,  
 Few ask, if Fraud or Force attain'd his Ends.  
 For this, ere Phoebe rose, he had implor'd  
 Propitious Heav'n, and ev'ry Power ador'd,

But chiefly *Love-to Love* an Altar built,  
Of twelve vast *French* Romances, neatly gilt.  
There lay three Garters, half a Pair of Gloves,  
And all the Trophies of his former Loves.  
With tender *Billet-doux* he lights the Pyre,  
And breathes three am'rous Sighs to raise the Fire.  
Then Prostrate falls, and begs with ardent Eyes  
Soon to obtain, and long possess the Prize:  
The Pow'rs gave Ear, and granted half his Pray'r,  
The rest, the Winds dispers'd in empty Air.  
But now secure the painted Vessel glides,  
The Sun-beams trembling on the floating Tydes,  
While Musick steals upon the Sky,  
And soften'd Sounds along the Waters die.  
Smooth flow the Waves, the Zephyrs gently play,  
*Belinda* smil'd, and all the World was gay.  
All but the *Sylph*-With careful Thoughts oppress,  
Th' impending Woe sat heavy on his Breast.  
He summons straight his Denizens of Air;  
The lucid Squadrons round the Sails repair:  
Soft o'er the Shrouds Aerial Whispers breath,  
That seem'd but Zephyrs to the Train beneath.  
Some to the Sun their Insect-Wings unfold,  
Waft on the Breeze, or sink in Clouds of Gold.  
Transparent Forms, too fine for mortal Sight,  
Their fluid Bodies half dissolv'd in Light.  
Loose to the Wind their airy Garments flew,  
Thin glitt'ring Textures of the filmy Dew;  
Dipt in the richest Tincture of the Skies,  
Where Light disports in ever-mingling Dies,  
While ev'ry Beam new transient Colours flings,  
Colours that change whene'er they wave their Wings.  
Amid the Circle, on the gilded mast,  
Superiour by the Head, was *Ariel* plac'd:  
His Purple Pinions op'ning to the Sun,  
He rais'd his Azure Wand, and thus begun.  
Ye *Slyphs* and *Sylphids*, to your Chief give ear,  
*Fays, Fairies, Genii, Elves, and Daemons* hear!

Ye know the Spheres and various Tasks assign'd  
By Laws Eternal to th' Aerial Kind.  
Some in the Fields of purest *Aether* play,  
And bask and whiten in the Blaze of Day.  
Some guide the Course of wand'ring Orbs on high,  
Or roll the Planets through the boundless Sky.  
Some less refin'd, beneath the Moon's pale Light  
Pursue the Stars that shoot athwart the Night;  
Or suck the Mists in grosser Air below,  
Or dip their Pinions in the painted Bow,  
Or brew fierce Tempests on the wintry Main,  
Or o'er the Glebe distil the kindly Rain.  
Others on Earth o'er human Race preside,  
Watch all their Ways, and all their Actions guide:  
Of these the Chief the Care of Nations own,  
And guard with Arms Divine the *British Throne*.  
Our humbler Province is to tend the Fair,  
Not a less pleasing, tho' less glorious Care.  
To save the Powder from too rude a Gale,  
Nor let th' imprison'd Essences exhale;  
To draw fresh Colours from the vernal Flow'rs,  
To steal from Rainbows ere they drop in Show'rs  
A brighter Wash; to curl their waving Hairs,  
Assist their Blushes, and inspire their Airs;  
Nay oft, in Dreams, Invention we bestow,  
To change a Flounce, or add a *Furbelo*!  
This Day, black Omens threat the brightest Fair  
That e'er deserv'd a watchful Spirit's Care;  
Some dire Disaster, or by Force, of Slight,  
But what, or where, the Fates have wrapt in Night.  
Whether the Nymph shall break Diana's law,  
Or some frail *China* jar receive a Flaw,  
Or stain her Honour, or her new Brocade,  
Forget her Pray'rs, or miss a Masquerade,  
Or lose her Heart, or Necklace, at a Ball;  
Or whether Heav'n has doom'd that *Shock* must fall.  
Haste then ye Spirits! to your Charge repair;  
The flutt'ring Fan be *Zephyretta's* Care;

The Drops to thee, *Brillante*, we consign;  
And, *Momentilla*, let the watch be thine;  
Do thou, *Crispissa*, tend her fav'rite Lock;  
*Ariel* himself shall be the guard of *Shock*  
To Fifty chosen *Sylphs*, of special Note,  
We trust th' important Charge, the *Petticoat*:  
Oft have we known that sev'nfold Fence to fail,  
Tho' stiff with Hoops, and arm'd with Ribs of Whale.  
Form a strong Line about the Silver Bound,  
And guard the wide Circumference around.  
Whatever Spirit, careless of his Charge,  
His Post neglects, or leaves the Fair at large,  
Shall feel sharp Vengeance soon o'ertake his Sins,  
Be stop'd in *Vials*, or transfixt with *Pins*;  
Or plung'd in Lakes of bitter *Washes* lie,  
Or wedg'd whole Ages in a Bodkin's Eye:  
*Gums* and *Pomatus* shall his Flight restrain,  
While clog'd he beats his silken Wings in vain;  
Or *Alom-Stypticks* with contracting Pow'r  
Shrink his thin Essence like a rivell'd Flower.  
Or, as *Ision* fix'd, the Wretch shall feel  
The giddy Motion of the whirling Mill,  
Midst Fumes of burning Chocolate shall glow,  
And tremble at the Sea that froaths below!  
He spoke; the Spirits from the Sails descend;  
Some, Orb in Orb, around the Nymph extend,  
Some thrid the mazy Ringlets of her Hair,  
Some hang upon the Pendants of her Ear;  
With beating Hearts the dire Event they wait,  
Anxious, and trembling for the Birth of Fate.

### *Canto III*

Close by those Meads for ever crown'd with Flow'rs,  
Where *Thames* with Pride surveys his rising Tow'rs,  
There stands a Structure of Majestic Fame,  
Which from the neighb'ring *Hampton* takes its Name.

Her *Britain's* Statesmen oft the Fall foredoom  
Of foreign Tyrants, and of Nymphs at home;  
Here Thou, great *Anna!* whom three Realms obey,  
Dost sometimes Counsel take-and sometimes *Tea*.  
Hither the Heroes and the Nymphs resort,  
To taste awhile the Pleasures of a Court;  
In various Talk th' instructive Hours they past,  
Who gave a *Ball*, or paid the *Visit* last:  
One speaks the Glory of the *British Queen*,  
And one describes a charming *Indian Screen*;  
A third interprets Motions, Looks, and Eyes;  
At every Word a Reputation dies.  
*Snuff*, or the *Fan*, supply each Pause of Chat,  
With singing, laughing, ogling, *and all that*.  
Mean while, declining from the Noon of Day,  
The Sun obliquely shoots his burning Ray;  
The hungry Judges soon the Sentence sign,  
And Wretches hang that Jury-men may Dine;  
The Merchant from th' *Exchange* returns in Peace,  
And the long Labours of the Toilet cease.  
*Belinda* now, whom Thirst of Fame invites,  
Burns to encounter two adventurous Knights,  
At *Ombre* singly to decide their Doom;  
And swells her Breast with Conquests yet to come.  
Straight the three Bands prepare in Arms to join,  
Each Band the number of the Sacred Nine.  
Soon as she spreads her Hand, th' Aerial Guard  
Descend, and sit on each important Card:  
First *Ariel* perch'd upon a *Matadore*,  
Then each, according to the Rank they bore;  
For *Sylphs*, yet mindful of their ancient Race,  
Are, as when women, wond'rous fond of Place.  
Behold, four *Kings*, in Majesty rever'd,  
With hoary Whiskers and a forky Beard;  
And four fair *Queens* whose Hands sustain a Flow'r,  
Th' expressive Emblem of their softer Pow'r;  
Four *Knaves* in Garbs succinct, a trusty Band;  
Caps on their heads, and Halberds in their hand;

And particolour'd Troops, a shining Train,  
Draw forth to combat on the Velvet Plain.  
The skilful Nymph reviews her Force with Care;  
*Let Spades be Trumps!* she said, and Trumps they were.  
Now move to War her Sable *Matadores*,  
In show like Leaders of the swarthy *Moors*.  
*Spadillio* first, unconquerable Lord!  
Let off two captive Trumps, and swept the Board.  
As many more *Manillio* forc'd to yield,  
And march'd a Victor from the verdant Field.  
Him *Basto* follow'd, but his Fate more hard  
Gain'd but one Trump and one *Plebian* card.  
With his broad Sabre next, a Chief in Years,  
The hoary Majesty of *Spades* appears;  
Puts forth one manly *Leg*, to sight reveal'd,  
The rest, his many-colour'd Robe conceal'd.  
The Rebel-*Knave*, that dares his Prince engage,  
Proves the just Victim of his Royal Rage.  
Ev'n mighty *Pam*, that Kings and Queens o'erthrew,  
And mow'd down Armies in the Fights of *Lu*,  
Sad Chance of War! now, destitute of Aid,  
Falls undistinguish'd by the Victor *Spade*!  
Thus far both Armies to *Belinda* yield;  
Now to the *Baron* Fate inclines the Field.  
His warlike *Amazon* her Host invades,  
Th' Imperial Consort of the Crown of *Spades*.  
The *Club*'s black Tyrant first her Victim dy'd,  
Spite of his haughty Mien, and barb'rous Pride:  
What boots the Regal Circle on his Head,  
His Giant Limbs, in State unwieldy spread;  
That long behind he trails his pompous Robe,  
And of all Monarchs only grasps the Globe?  
The *Baron* now his *Diamonds* pours apace;  
Th' embroider'd *King* who shows but half his Face,  
And his refulgent *Queen*, with pow'rs combin'd,  
Of broken Troops an easy Conquest find.  
*Clubs*, *Diamonds*, *Hearts*, in wild Disorder seen,  
With Throngs promiscuous strew the level Green.

Thus when dispers'd a routed Army runs,  
Of *Asia's* Troops, and *Afric's* Sable Sons,  
With like Confusion different Nations fly,  
In various Habits, and of various Dye,  
The pierc'd Battalions dis-united fall,  
In Heaps on Heaps; one Fate o'erwhelms them all.  
The *Knave of Diamonds* tries his wily Arts,  
And wins (oh shameful Chance!) the *Queen of Hearts*.  
At this, the Blood the Virgin's Check forsook,  
A livid Paleness spreads o'er all her Look;  
She sees, and trembles at th' approaching Ill,  
Just in the Jaws of Ruin, and *Codille*.  
And now (as oft in some distemper'd State)  
On one nice *Trick* depends the gen'ral Fate,  
An *Ace* of Hearts steps forth: The *King* unseen  
Lurk'd in her Hand, and mourn'd his captive *Queen*.  
He springs to Vengeance with an eager Pace,  
And falls like Thunder on the prostrate *Ace*  
The Nymph exulting fills with Shouts the Sky;  
The Walls, the Woods, and long Canals reply.  
Oh thoughtless Mortals! ever blind to Fate,  
Too soon dejected, and too soon elate!  
Sudden these Honours shall be snatch'd away,  
And curs'd for ever this Victorious Day.  
For lo! the Board with Cups and Spoons is crown'd,  
The Berries crackle, and the Mill turns round;  
On shining Altars of *Japan* they raise  
The silver Lamp, and fiery Spirits blaze:  
From silver Spouts the grateful Liquors glide,  
And *China's* earth receives the smoking Tyde.  
At once they gratify their Scent and Taste,  
While frequent Cups prolong the rich Repast.  
Strait hover round the Fair her Airy Band;  
Some, as she sipp'd, the fuming Liquor fann'd,  
Some o'er her Lap their careful Plumes display'd,  
Trembling, and conscious of the rich Brocade.  
*Coffee* (which makes the Politician wise,  
And see through all things with his half-shut Eyes)

Sent up in Vapours to the *Baron's* Brain  
New Stratagems, the radiant Lock to gain.  
Ah cease rash Youth! desist ere 'tis too late,  
Fear the just Gods, and think of *Scylla's* Fate!  
Chang'd to a Bird, and sent to flit in Air,  
She dearly pays for *Nisus'* injur'd Hair!  
But when to Mischief Mortals bend their Will,  
How soon they find fit Instruments of Ill!  
Just then, *Clarissa* drew with tempting Grace  
A two-edg'd Weapon from her shining Case;  
So Ladies in Romance assist their Knight,  
Present the Spear, and arm him for the Fight.  
He takes the Gift with rev'rence, and extends  
The little Engine on his Fingers' Ends;  
This just behind *Belinda's* Neck he spread  
As o'er the fragrant Steams she bends her Head:  
Swift to the Lock a thousand Sprights repair,  
A thousand Wings, by turns, blow back the Hair;  
And thrice they twitch'd the Diamond in her Ear,  
Thrice she look'd back, and thrice the Foe drew near.  
Just in that instant, anxious *Ariel* sought  
The close Recesses of the Virgin's thought;  
As on the Nosegay in her Breast reclin'd,  
He watch'd th' Ideas rising in her Mind,  
Sudden he view'd, in spite of all her Art,  
An Earthly Lover lurking at her Heart.  
Amaz'd, confus'd, he found his Power expir'd,  
Resign'd to Fate, and with a Sigh retir'd.  
The *Peer* now spreads the glittering *Forfex* wide,  
T' inclose the Lock; now joins it, to divide.  
Ev'n then, before the fatal Engine clos'd,  
A wretched *Sylph* too fondly interpos'd;  
Fate urg'd the Sheers, and cut the *Sylph* in twain,  
(But Airy Substance soon unites again)  
The meeting Points the sacred Hair dis sever  
From the fair Head, for ever and for ever!  
Then flah'd the living Lightnings from her Eyes,  
And Screams of Horror rend th' affrighted Skies.



Not louder Shrieks to pitying Heav'n are cast,  
When Husbands, or when Lapdogs breath their last,  
Or when rich *China* Vessels, fal'n from high,  
In glitt'ring Dust and painted Fragments lie!  
Let Wreaths of Triumph now my Temples twine,  
(The Victor cry'd) the glorious Prize is mine!  
While Fish in Streams, or Birds delight in Air,  
Or in a Coach and Six the *British* Fair,  
As long as *Atalantis* shall be read,  
Or the small Pillow grace a Lady's Bed,  
While *Visits* shall be paid on solemn Days,  
When num'rous Wax-lights in bright Order blaze,  
While Nymphs take Treats, or Assignations give,  
So long my Honour, Name, and Praise shall live!  
What Time would spare, from Steel receives its date,  
And Monuments, like Men, submit to Fate!  
Steel cou'd the Labour of the Gods destroy,  
And strike to Dust th' Imperial Tow'rs of *Troy*;  
Steel cou'd the Works of mortal Pride confound,  
And hew Triumphal Arches to the Ground.  
What Wonder then, fair Nymph! thy Hair shou'd feel  
The conqu'ring Force of unresisted Steel?

#### *Canto IV*

But anxious Cares the pensive Nymph oppress'd,  
And secret Passions labour'd in her Breast.  
Not youthful Kings in Battle seiz'd alive,  
Not scornful Virgins who their Charms survive,  
Not ardent Lovers robb'd of all their Bliss,  
Not ancient Ladies when refus'd a Kiss,  
Not Tyrants fierce that unrepenting die,  
Not *Cynthia* when her *Manteau's* pinn'd awry,  
E'er felt such Rage, Resentment, and Despair,  
As Thou, sad Virgin! for thy ravish'd Hair.  
For, that sad moment, when the *Sylphs* withdrew,  
And *Ariel* weeping from *Belinda* flew,

*Umbriel*, a dusky, melancholy Sprite,  
As ever sully'd the fair Face of Light,  
Down to the Central Earth, his proper Scene,  
Repair'd to search the gloomy Cave of *Spleen*.  
Swift on his sooty Pinions flits the *Gnome*,  
And in a Vapour reach'd the dismal Dome.  
No cheerful Breeze this sullen Region knows,  
The dreaded *East* is all the Wind that blows.  
Here in a Grotto, shelter'd close from Air,  
And screen'd in Shades from Day's detested Glare,  
She sighs for ever on her pensive Bed,  
*Pain* at her Side, and *Megrim* at her Head.  
Two Handmaids wait the Throne: Alike in Place,  
But differing far in Figure and in Face.  
Here stood *Ill-nature* like an *ancient Maid*,  
Her wrinkled form in *Black* and *White* array'd;  
With store of Pray'rs, for Mornings, Nights, and Noons,  
Her Hand is fill'd; her Bosom with Lampoons.  
There *Affectation* with a sickly Mien,  
Shows in her Cheek the Roses of Eighteen,  
Practis'd to Lisp, and hang the Head aside,  
Faints into Airs, and languishes with Pride;  
On the rich Quilt sinks with becoming Woe,  
Wrapt in a Gown, for Sickness, and for Show.  
The Fair ones feel such Maladies as these,  
When each new Night-Dress gives a new Disease.  
A constant *Vapour* o'er the Palace flies;  
Strange Phantoms rising as the Mists arise;  
Dreadful, as Hermits' Dreams in haunted Shades,  
Or bright, as Visions of expiring Maids.  
Now glaring Fiends, and Snakes on rolling Spires,  
Pale Spectres, gaping Tombs, and Purple Fires:  
Now Lakes of liquid Gold, *Elysian* Scenes,  
And Crystal Domes, and Angels in Machines.  
Unnumber'd Throngs, on ev'ry side are seen,  
Of Bodies chang'd to various forms by *Spleen*.  
Here living *Teapots* stand, one Arm held out,  
One bent; the Handle this, and that the Spout:

A Pipkin there like *Homer's Tripod* walks;  
Here sighs a Jar, and there a Goose-pye talks;  
Men prove with Child, as pow'rful Fancy works,  
And Maids turn'd Bottels, call aloud for Corks.  
Safe past the *Gnome* through this fantastic Band,  
A branch of healing *Spleenwort* in his Hand.  
Then thus address the Pow'r-Hail wayward Queen;  
Who rule the Sex to Fifty from Fifteen,  
Parent of Vapors and of Female Wit,  
Who give th' *Hysteric* or *Poetic* Fit,  
On various Tempers act by various Ways,  
Make some take Physic, others scribble Plays;  
Who cause the Proud their Visits to delay,  
And send the Godly in a Pett, to pray.  
A Nymph there is, that all thy pow'r disdains,  
And thousands more in equal Mirth maintains.  
But oh! if e'er thy *Gnome* could spoil a Grace,  
Or raise a Pimple on a beauteous Face,  
Like Citron-Waters Matrons' Cheeks inflame,  
Or change Complexions at a losing Game;  
If e'er with airy Horns I planted Heads,  
Or rumpled Petticoats, or tumbled Beds,  
Or cause'd Suspicion when no Soul was rude,  
Or discompos'd the Head-Dress of a Prude,  
Or e'er to costive Lap-Dog gave Disease,  
Which not the Tears of brightest Eyes could ease:  
Hear me, and touch *Belinda* with Chagrin;  
That single Act gives half the World the Spleen.  
The Goddess with a discontented Air  
Seems to reject him, tho' she grants his Pray'r.  
A wond'rous Bag with both her Hands she binds,  
Like that where once *Ulysses* held the Winds;  
There she collects the Force of Female Lungs,  
Sighs, Sobs, and Passions, and the War of Tongues.  
A Vial next she fills with fainting Fears,  
Soft Sorrows, melting Griefs, and flowing Tears.  
The *Gnome* rejoycing bears her Gift away,  
Spreads his black Wings, and slowly mounts to Day.

Sunk in *Thalestris*' Arms the Nymph he found,  
Her Eyes dejected, and her Hair unbound.  
Full o'er their Heads the swelling Bag he rent,  
And all the Furies issu'd at the Vent.  
*Belinda* burns with more than mortal Ire,  
And fierce *Thalestris* fans the rising Fire.  
O wretched Maid! she spread her Hands, and cry'd,  
(While *Hampton*'s Ecchoes, wretched Maid! reply'd)  
Was it for this you took such constant Care  
The *Bodkin*, *Comb* and *Essence* to prepare;  
For this your Locks in Paper-Durance bound,  
For this with tort'ring Irons wreath'd around!  
For this with Fillets strain'd your tender Head,  
And bravely bore the double Loads of Lead?  
Gods! shall the Ravisher display your Hair,  
While the Fops envy, and the Ladies stare!  
*Honour* forbid! at whose unrivall'd Shrine  
Ease, Pleasure, Virtue, All, our Sex resign.  
Methinks already I your Tears survey,  
Already hear the horrid Things they say,  
Already see you a degraded Toast,  
And all your Honour in a Whisper lost!  
How shall I, then, your hapless Fame defend?  
'Twill then be Infamy to seem your Friend!  
And shall this Prize, th' inestimable Prize,  
Expos'd through Crystal to the gazing Eyes,  
And heighten'd by the Diamond's circling Rays,  
On that Rapacious Hand for ever blaze?  
Sooner shall Grass in *Hide-Park Circus* grow,  
And Wits take Lodgings in the sound of *Bow*;  
Sooner let Earth, Air, Sea, to *Chaos* fall,  
Men, Monkeys, Lap-dogs, Parrots, perish all!  
She said; then raging to Sir *Plume* repairs,  
And bids her *Beau* demand the precious Hairs:  
(Sir *Plume*, of *Amber Snuff-box* justly vain,  
And the nice Conduct of a *Clouded Cane*)  
With earnest Eyes and round unthinking Face,  
He first the Snuff-box open's, then the Case,

And thus broke out – "My Lord, why, what the Devil!  
"Z——ds! damn the Lock! 'fore Gad, you must be civil!  
"Plague on't! 'tis past a Jest—nay, prithee, Pox!  
"Give her the Hair" – he spoke, and rapp'd his Box.  
It grieves me much (replied the Peer again)  
Who speaks so well shou'd ever speak in vain.  
But by this Lock, this sacred Lock I swear,  
(Which never more shall join its parted Hair;  
Which never more its Honours shall renew,  
Clipp'd from the lovely Head where late it grew)  
That while my Nostrils draw the vital Air,  
This Hand, which won it, shall for ever wear.  
He spoke, and speaking, in proud Triumph spread  
The long-contended Honours of her Head.  
But *Umbriel*, hateful *Gnome*! forbears not so;  
He breaks the Vial whence the Sorrows flow.  
Then see! the Nymph in beauteous Grief appears,  
Her Eyes half-languishing, half-drown'd in Tears;  
On her heav'd Bosom hung her drooping Head,  
Which with a Sigh, she rais'd; and thus she said.  
For ever curs'd be this detested Day,  
Which snatch'd my best, my fav'rite Curl away!  
Happy! ah ten times happy had I been,  
If *Hampton-Court* these Eyes had never seen!  
Yet am not I the first mistaken Maid,  
By love of *Courts* to num'rous Ills betray'd.  
Oh had I rather unadmir'd remain'd  
In some lone Isle, or distant *Northern* land;  
Where the gilt *Chariot* never mark'd the way,  
Where none learn *Ombre*, none e'er taste *Bohea*!  
There kept my Charms conceal'd from the mortal Eye,  
Like Roses that in Desarts bloom and die.  
What mov'd my Mind with youthful Lords to rome?  
O had I stay'd, and said my Pray'rs at home!  
'Twas this the Morning *Omens* did foretel;  
Thrice from my trembling Hand the *Patch-box* fell;  
The tott'ring *China* shook without a Wind,  
Nay, *Poll* sate mute, and *Shock* was most Unkind!

A *Sylph* too warn'd me of the Threats of Fate,  
In mystic Visions, now believ'd too late!  
See the poor Remnants of these slighted Hairs!  
My Hands shall rend what ev'n thy Rapine spares.  
These, in two sable Ringlets taught to break,  
Once gave new Beauties to the snowy Neck.  
The Sister-Lock now sits uncouth, alone,  
And in its Fellow's Fate foresees its own;  
Uncurl'd it hangs, the fatal Sheers demands;  
And tempts once more thy sacrilegious Hands.  
Oh hadst thou, Cruel! been content to seize  
Hairs less in sight, or any Hairs but these!

*Canto V*

She said: The pitying Audience melt in Tears,  
But *Fate* and *Jove* had stopp'd the *Baron's* Ears.  
In vain *Thalestris* with Reproach assails,  
For who can move when fair *Belinda* fails?  
Not half so fix'd the *Trojan* could remain,  
While *Anna* begg'd and *Dido* rag'd in vain.  
Then grave *Clarissa* graceful wav'd her Fan;  
Silence ensu'd, and thus the Nymph began.  
Say, why are Beauties prais'd and honour'd most,  
The Wise Man's Passion, and the Vain Man's Toast?  
Why deck'd with all that Land and Sea afford,  
Why Angels call'd, and Angel-like ador'd?  
Why round our Coaches crowd the white-gloved Beaux,  
Why bows the Side-box from its inmost Rows?  
How vain are all these Glories, all our Pains,  
Unless good Sense preserve what Beauty gains:  
That Men may say, when we the Front-box grace,  
Behold the first in Virtue as in Face!  
Oh! if to dance all Night, and dress all Day,  
Charm'd the Small-pox, or chas'd old Age away;  
Who would not scorn what Housewife's Cares produce,  
Or who would learn one earthly Thing of Use?

To patch, nay ogle, might become a Saint,  
Nor could it sure be such a Sin to paint.  
But since, alas! frail Beauty must decay,  
Curf'd or uncurf'd, since Locks will turn to grey;  
Since painted, or not painted, all shall fade,  
And she who scorns a Man, must die a Maid,  
What then remains but well our Pow'r to use,  
And keep good Humour still whate'er we lose?  
And trust me, dear! good Humour can prevail,  
When Airs, and Flights, and Screams, and Scolding fail.  
Beauties in vain their pretty Eyes may roll;  
Charms strike the Sight, but Merit wins the Soul.  
So spoke the Dame, but no Applause ensu'd:  
*Belinda* frown'd, *Thalestris* call'd her Prude.  
To Arms, to Arms! the fierce Virago cries,  
And swift as Lightning to the Combate flies.  
All side in Parties, and begin th' Attack;  
Fans clap, Silks rustle, and tough Whalebones crack;  
Heroes' and Heroins' Shouts confus'dly rise,  
And base, and treble Voices strike the Skies.  
No common Weapons in their Hands are found,  
Like Gods they fight, nor dread a mortal Wound.  
So when bold *Homer* makes the Gods engage,  
And heav'nly Breasts with human Passions rage;  
'Gainst *Pallas*, *Mars*; *Latona*, *Hermes*, Arms;  
And all *Olympus* rings with loud Alarms.  
*Jove's* Thunder roars, Heav'n trembles all around;  
Blue *Neptune* storms, the bellowing Deeps resound;  
*Earth* shakes her nodding Tow'rs, the Ground gives way,  
And the pale Ghosts start at the Flash of Day!  
Triumphant *Umbriel* on a Sconce's Height  
Clapp'd his glad Wings, and sate to view the Fight,  
Propp'd on their Bodkin Spears the Sprites survey  
The growing Combat, or assist the Fray.  
While through the Press enrag'd *Thalestris* flies,  
And scatters Death around from both her Eyes,  
A *Beau* and *Witling* perish'd in the Throng,  
One dy'd in *Metaphor*, and one in *Song*.

O cruel Nymph! a living death I bear,  
Cried *Dapperwit*, and sunk beside his Chair.  
A mournful Glance Sir *Fopling* upwards cast,  
*Those eyes are made so killing* – was his last:  
Thus on *Meander*'s flow'ry Margin lies  
Th' expiring Swan, and as he sings he dies.  
As bold Sir *Plume* had drawn *Clarissa* down,  
*Chloe* stepp'd in, and kill'd him with a Frown;  
She smil'd to see the doughty Hero slain,  
But at her Smile, the Beau reviv'd again.  
Now *Jove* suspends his golden Scales in Air,  
Weighs the Men's Wits against the Lady's Hair;  
The doubtful Beam long nods from side to side;  
At length the Wits mount up, the Hairs subside.  
See fierce *Belinda* on the *Baron* flies,  
With more than usual Lightning in her Eyes:  
Nor fear'd the Chief th' unequal Fight to try,  
Who sought no more than on his Foe to die.  
But this bold Lord, with manly Strength endu'd,  
She with one Finger and a Thumb subdu'd:  
Just where the Breath of Life his Nostrils drew,  
A charge of *Snuff* the wily Virgin threw;  
The *Gnomes* direct, to ev'ry Atome just,  
The pungent Grains of titillating Dust,  
Sudden, with starting Tears each Eye o'erflows,  
And the high Dome re-echoes to his Nose.  
Now meet thy Fate, incens'd *Belinda* cry'd,  
And drew a deadly *Bodkin* from her Side.  
(The same, his ancient Personage to deck,  
Her great great Grandsire wore about his Neck  
In three *Seal-Rings*; which after melted down,  
Form'd a vast *Buckle* for his Widow's Gown:  
Her infant Grandame's *Whistle* next it grew,  
The Bells she gingled, and the *Whistle* blew;  
Then in a *Bodkin* grac'd her Mother's hairs,  
Which long she wore, and now *Belinda* wears.)  
Boast not my Fall (he cry'd) insulting Foe!  
Thou by some other shalt be laid as low.



Nor think, to die dejects my lofty Mind.  
 All that I dread, is leaving you behind!  
 Rather than so, ah let me still survive,  
 And burn in *Cupid's* Flames-but burn alive.  
*Restore the Lock!* she cries; and all around  
*Restore the Lock!* the Vaulted Roofs rebound.  
 Not fierce *Othello* in so loud a Strain  
 Roar'd for the Handkerchief that caus'd his Pain.  
 But see how oft Ambitious Aims are cross'd,  
 And Chiefs contend 'till all the Prize is lost!  
 The Lock, obtain'd with Guilt, and kept with Pain,  
 In ev'ry place is sought, but sought in vain:  
 With such a Prize no Mortal must be blest,  
 So Heav'n decrees! with Heav'n who can contest?  
 Some thought it mounted to the Lunar Sphere,  
 Since all things lost on Earth, are treasur'd there.  
 There Heroe's Wits are kept in pond'rous Vases,  
 And Beau's in *Snuff-boxes* and *Tweezer-cases*.  
 There broken Vows, and Death-bed Alms are found,  
 And Lovers' Hearts with Ends of Riband bound;  
 The Courtier's Promises, and the Sick Man's Pray'rs,  
 The Smiles of Harlots, and the Tears of Heirs,  
 Cages for Gnats, and Chains to Yoak a Flea;  
 Dried Butterflies, and Tomes of Casuistry.  
 But trust the Muse-she saw it upward rise,  
 Tho' marked by none but quick Poetic eyes:  
 (So *Rome's* great Founder to the Heav'ns withdrew,  
 To *Proculus* alone confess'd in view.)  
 A sudden Star, it shot through liquid Air,  
 And drew behind a radiant *Trail of Hair*.  
 Not *Berenice's* Locks first rose so bright,  
 The Skies bespangling with dishevel'd Light.  
 The *Sylphs* behold it kindling as it flies,  
 And pleas'd pursue its Progress through the Skies.  
 This the Beau-monde shall from the *Mall survey*,  
 And hail with *Musick* its propitious Ray.  
 This the blest Lover shall for *Venus* take,  
 And send up Vows from *Rosamonda's* Lake.

This *Partridge* soon shall view in cloudless Skies  
When next he looks through *Gallileo's* Eyes;  
And hence th' Egregious Wizard shall foredoom  
The fate of *Louis*, and the fall of *Rome*.  
Then cease, bright Nymph! to mourn the ravish'd Hair  
Which adds new Glory to the shining Sphere!  
Not all the Tresses that fair Head can boast  
Shall draw such Envy as the Lock you lost.  
For, after all the Murders of your Eye,  
When, after Millions slain, yourself shall die;  
When those fair Suns shall set, as set they must,  
And all those Tresses shall be laid in dust;  
This *Lock*, the Muse shall consecrate to fame,  
And 'midst the stars inscribe *Belinda's* Name!

(1712)

(1714)

From *An Essay on Man*  
*Epistle 1. Of the Nature and State of Man,*  
*With Respect to the Universe*

VIII.

See thro' this air, this ocean, and this earth  
All matter quick, and bursting into birth:  
Above, how high progressive life may go!  
Around, how wide! how deep extend below!  
Vast chain of being! which from God began;  
Natures ethereal, human, angel, man,  
Beast, bird, fish, insect, who no eye can see,  
No glass can reach; from infinite to thee;  
From thee to nothing. – On superior powers  
Were we to press, inferior might on ours;  
Or in the full creation leave a void,  
Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroyed:  
From Nature's chain whatever link you like,  
Tenth, or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.

And if each system in gradation roll,  
Alike essential to th' amazing Whole,  
The least confusion but in one, not all  
That system only, but the Whole must fall.  
Let earth unbalanced from her orbit fly,  
Planets and stars run lawless thro' the sky;  
Let ruling angels from their spheres be hurl'd,  
Being on being wreck'd, and world on world;  
Heav'n's whole foundations to their centre nod,  
And Nature tremble to the throne of God!  
All this dread order break – for whom? for thee?  
Vile worm! – O madness! pride! impiety!

(1733)

**JAMES THOMSON**  
(1700–1748)

Thomson was born in 1700 in Ednam, Roxburghshire near the Scottish boundary with England. He received a Scottish Calvinist upbringing from his father, who was a Presbyterian minister. Thomson studied at the College of Edinburgh (which later became the University of Edinburgh). His early writing clearly showed his fondness for rustic scenes. In 1725 he went to London, where he met other literary figures including Alexander Pope. He wrote *Winter* the first of his *Seasons*, which was published in 1726, and soon became popular. He published *Summer* (1727), *Spring* (1728), and *Autumn* in the first collected edition of *The Seasons* (1730), to which he also added the *Hymn to the Seasons*. Thomson continued to revise and add to this poem, which gradually grew in length to 5,541 lines. *Seasons* is a didactic poem consisting of four parts presenting the seasonal cycle which combines empirical description of the natural world through a belief in the workings of Divine Providence. The poem continued to be popular well into the Romantic period, and was printed fifty times between 1730 and 1800. Thomson also produced a series of tragedies, *Sophonisba* (1730), *Agamemnon* (1738), *Edward and Eleonora* (1739), but his last two plays *Sigismunda* (1745) and *Coriolanus* (1749) were produced after his death. His last poem *The Castle of Indolence* (1748) contains a portrait of himself as an inmate of the castle and is a witty imitation of Edmund Spenser.

*The Seasons: Winter*  
(Excerpt ll. 1–16)

See, Winter comes to rule the varied year,  
Sullen and sad, with all his rising train –  
Vapours, and clouds, and storms. Be these my theme,  
These, that exalt the soul to solemn thought  
And heavenly musing. Welcome, kindred glooms!  
Congenial horrors, hail! With frequent foot,  
Pleas'd have I, in my cheerful morn of life,  
When nurs'd by careless solitude I liv'd

And sung of Nature with unceasing joy,  
 Pleas'd have I wander'd through your rough domain;  
 Trod the pure virgin-snows, myself as pure;  
 Heard the winds roar, and the big torrent burst;  
 Or seen the deep-fermenting tempest brew'd  
 In the grim evening-sky. Thus pass'd the time,  
 Till through the lucid chambers of the south  
 Look'd out the joyous Spring—look'd out and smil'd.

(1726)

*The Seasons: Summer*  
 (Excerpt ll. 352–411)

Now swarms the village o'er the jovial mead;  
 The rustic youth, brown with meridian toil,  
 Healthful and strong; full as the summer-rose  
 Blown by prevailing suns, the ruddy maid,  
 Half-naked, swelling on the sight, and all  
 Her kindled graces burning o'er her cheek.  
 Even stooping age is here; and infant-hands  
 Trail the long rake, or with the fragrant load  
 O'ercharg'd, amid the kind oppression roll.  
 Wide flies the tedded grain; all in a row  
 Advancing broad, or wheeling round the field,  
 They spread the breathing harvest to the sun  
 That throws refreshful round a rural smell;  
 Or, as they rake the green-appearing ground,  
 And drive the dusky wave along the mead,  
 The russet hay-cock rises thick behind,  
 In order gay: while, heard from dale to dale,  
 Waking the breeze, resounds the blended voice  
 Of happy labour, love, and social glee.

Or rushing thence, in one diffusive band,  
 They drive the troubled flocks, by many a dog  
 Compell'd, to where the mazy-running brook  
 Forms a deep pool; this bank abrupt and high,  
 And that fair-spreading in a pebbled shore.

Urg'd to the giddy brink, much is the toil,  
The clamour much of men, and boys, and dogs,  
Ere the soft, fearful people to the flood  
Commit their woolly sides. And oft the swain,  
On some impatient seizing, hurls them in:  
Embolden'd then, nor hesitating more,  
Fast, fast, they plunge amid the flashing wave,  
And, panting, labour to the farther shore.  
Repeated this, till deep the well-wash'd fleece  
Has drunk the flood, and from his lively haunt  
The trout is banish'd by the sordid stream;  
Heavy, and dripping, to the breezy brow  
Slow move the harmless race; where, as they spread  
Their swelling treasures to the sunny ray,  
Inly disturb'd, and wondering what this wild  
Outrageous tumult means, their loud complaints  
The country fill; and, toss'd from rock to rock,  
Incessant bleatings run around the hills.  
At last, of snowy white, the gather'd flocks  
Are in the wattled pen innumerable press'd,  
Head above head; and, rang'd in lustrous rows,  
The shepherds sit, and whet the sounding shears.  
The housewife waits to roll her fleecy stores,  
With all her gay-dress'd maids attending round.  
One, chief, in gracious dignity enthron'd,  
Shines o'er the rest, the pastoral queen, and rays  
Her smiles, sweet-beaming, on her shepherd-king;  
While the glad circle round them yield their souls  
To festive mirth, and wit that knows no gall.  
Meantime, their joyous task goes on apace:  
Some mingling stir the melted tar, and some,  
Deep on the new-shorn vagrant's heaving side  
To stamp his master's cipher ready stand;  
Others the unwilling wether drag along;  
And, glorying in his might, the sturdy boy  
Holds by the twisted horns th' indignant ram.

(1727)

*The Seasons: Spring*  
(Excerpt ll. 1–18)

At last from Aries rolls the bounteous sun,  
And the bright Bull receives him. Then no more  
Th' expansive atmosphere is cramp'd with cold;  
But, full of life and vivifying soul,  
Lifts the light clouds sublime, and spreads them thin,  
Fleecy and white, o'er all-surrounding heaven.  
Forth fly the tepid airs; and unconfin'd,  
Unbinding earth, the moving softness strays.  
Joyous, th' impatient husbandman perceives  
Relenting Nature, and his lusty steers  
Drives from their stalls, to where the well-us'd plough  
Lies in the furrow, loosen'd from the frost.  
There, unrefusing, to the harness'd yoke,  
They lend their shoulder, and begin their toil,  
Cheer'd by the simple song and soaring lark.  
Meanwhile incumbent o'er the shining share  
The master leans, removes th' obstructing clay,  
Winds the whole work, and sidelong lays the glebe.

(1728)

*The Seasons: Autumn*  
(Excerpt ll. 1–33)

Defeating oft the labours of the year,  
The sultry South collects a potent blast.  
At first, the groves are scarcely seen to stir  
Their trembling tops; and a still murmur runs  
Along the soft-inclining fields of corn.  
But as th' aerial tempest fuller swells,  
And in one mighty stream, invisible,  
Immense, the whole excited atmosphere  
Impetuous rushes o'er the sounding world;  
Strain'd to the root, the stooping forest pours  
A rustling shower of yet untimely leaves.

High-beat, the circling mountains eddy in,  
From the bare wild, the dissipated storm,  
And send it in a torrent down the vale.  
Expos'd and naked to its utmost rage,  
Through all the sea of harvest rolling round,  
The billowy plain floats wide; nor can evade,  
Though pliant to the blast, its seizing force;  
Or whirl'd in air, or into vacant chaff  
Shook waste. And sometimes too a burst of rain,  
Swept from the black horizon, broad, descends  
In one continuous flood. Still overhead  
The mingling tempest weaves its gloom, and still  
The deluge deepens; till the fields around  
Lie sunk and flatted in the sordid wave.  
Sudden, the ditches swell; the meadows swim.  
Red, from the hills, innumerable streams  
Tumultuous roar, and high above its banks  
The river lift; before whose rushing tide,  
Herds, flocks, and harvests, cottages and swains,  
Roll mingled down; all that the winds had spar'd  
In one wild moment ruin'd, the big hopes  
And well-earn'd treasures of the painful year.

(1730)



THOMAS GRAY  
(1716–1771)

Gray was educated at Eton with Horace Walpole, and at Cambridge. He accompanied Walpole on a tour of the Continent in 1739-41, but they quarrelled in 1741 and returned home separately. Their friendship was renewed in 1744. Gray then resided at Cambridge. He refused the laureateship in 1757, and was appointed professor of history and modern languages at Cambridge in 1768. He was buried at Stoke Poges in Buckinghamshire, a village with which the *Elegy in a Country Churchyard* is traditionally identified. The “Elegy” was recognized immediately for its beauty and skill, and the Churchyard Poets are so named because they wrote in the shadow of Gray’s great poem.

*Ode On the Death of a Favourite Cat,  
Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fishes*

’Twas on a lofty vase’s side,  
Where China’s gayest art had dyed  
The azure flowers, that blow;  
Demurest of the tabby kind,  
The pensive Selima reclined,  
Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared;  
The fair round face, the snowy beard,  
The velvet of her paws,  
Her coat that with the tortoise vies,  
Her ears of jet and emerald eyes,  
She saw; and purred applause.

Still had she gazed; but ‘midst the tide  
Two angel forms were seen to glide,  
The genii of the stream:  
Their scaly armour’s Tyrian hue  
Through richest purple to the view  
Betrayed a golden gleam.

The hapless nymph with wonder saw:  
A whisker first and then a claw,  
With many an ardent wish,  
She stretched in vain to reach the prize.  
What female heart can gold despise?  
What cat's averse to fish?

Presumptuous maid! with looks intent  
Again she stretched, again she bent,  
Nor knew the gulf between.  
(Malignant Fate sat by and smiled)  
The slippery verge her feet beguiled,  
She tumbled headlong in!

Eight times emerging from the flood  
She mewed to every watery god,  
Some speedy aid to send: -  
No dolphin came, no Nereid stirred:  
Nor cruel Tom nor Susan heard.  
A favourite has no friend!

From hence, ye beauties, undeceived,  
Know, one false step is ne'er retrieved,  
And be with caution bold:  
Not all that tempts your wandering eyes  
And heedless hearts is lawful prize;  
Nor all that glisters, gold!

(1748)

### *Ode on the Spring*

Lo! where the rosy-bosom'd Hours,  
Fair Venus' train appear,  
Disclose the long-expecting flowers,  
And wake the purple year!  
The Attic warbler pours her throat,  
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,

The untaught harmony of spring:  
While whisp'ring pleasure as they fly,  
Cool zephyrs thro' the clear blue sky  
Their gather'd fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch  
A broader, browner shade;  
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech  
O'er-canopies the glade,  
Beside some water's rushy brink  
With me the Muse shall sit, and think  
(At ease reclin'd in rustic state)  
How vain the ardour of the crowd,  
How low, how little are the proud,  
How indigent the great!

Still is the toiling hand of Care:  
The panting herds repose:  
Yet hark, how thro' the peopled air  
The busy murmur glows!  
The insect youth are on the wing,  
Eager to taste the honied spring,  
And float amid the liquid noon:  
Some lightly o'er the current skim,  
Some show their gaily-gilded trim  
Quick-glancing to the sun.

To Contemplation's sober eye  
Such is the race of man:  
And they that creep, and they that fly,  
Shall end where they began.  
Alike the busy and the gay  
But flutter thro' life's little day,  
In fortune's varying colours drest:  
Brush'd by the hand of rough Mischance,  
Or chill'd by age, their airy dance  
They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear in accents low  
The sportive kind reply:  
Poor moralist! and what art thou?  
A solitary fly!  
Thy joys no glitt'ring female meets,  
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,  
No painted plumage to display:  
On hasty wings thy youth is flown;  
Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone –  
We frolic, while 'tis May.

(1748)

*Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,  
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,  
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,  
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,  
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,  
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,  
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower  
The moping owl does to the moon complain  
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,  
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,  
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,  
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,  
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,  
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,  
The cock's shrill clarion or the echoing horn,  
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,  
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:  
No children run to lisp their sire's return,  
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,  
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;  
How jocund did they drive their team afield!  
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,  
Their homely joys and destiny obscure;  
Nor Grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,  
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,  
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,  
Awaits alike the inevitable hour.  
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye Proud, impute to these the fault,  
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,  
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault  
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust  
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?  
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,  
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid  
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;  
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,  
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample  
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;  
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,  
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene  
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear:  
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden that with dauntless breast  
The little tyrant of his fields withstood;  
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,  
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

The applause of listening senates to command,  
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,  
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,  
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade: nor circumscribed alone  
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;  
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,  
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,  
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,  
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride  
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife  
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;  
Along the cool sequestered vale of life  
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet even these bones from insult to protect  
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,  
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,  
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by the unlettered muse,  
The place of fame and elegy supply:  
And many a holy text around she strews,  
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,  
 This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,  
 Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,  
 Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,  
 Some pious drops the closing eye requires;  
 Ev'n from the tomb the voice of nature cries,  
 Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee who, mindful of the unhonoured dead,  
 Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;  
 If chance, by lonely Contemplation led,  
 Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,  
 'Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn  
 'Brushing with hasty steps the dews away  
 'To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

'There at the foot of yonder nodding beech  
 'That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,  
 'His listless length at noontide would he stretch,  
 'And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

'Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,  
 'Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove,  
 'Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,  
 'Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

'One morn I missed him on the custom'd hill,  
 'Along the heath and near his favourite tree;  
 'Another came; nor yet beside the rill,  
 'Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

'The next with dirges due in sad array  
 'Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne.  
 'Approach and read (for thou can'st read) the lay,  
 'Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.'

*The Epitaph*

*Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth  
A youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown.  
Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,  
And Melancholy marked him for her own.*

*Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,  
Heaven did a recompense as largely send:  
He gave to Misery all he had, a tear,  
He gained from Heaven ('twas all he wished) a friend.*

*No farther seek his merits to disclose,  
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode  
(There they alike in trembling hope repose),  
The bosom of his Father and his God.*

(1751)



ANNA LETITIA BARBAULD  
(1743–1825)

Anna Barbault, born Anna Letitia Aikin, was born on June 20th, 1743. Her family lived near the village of Kibworth Harcourt, in Leicestershire. Her father, John Aikin, was a Presbyterian minister and schoolteacher. She made her literary debut with *Poems*, a work that went through five editions between 1773 and 1777, and immediately established her as a leading poet. In 1774 she married Rochemont Barbault, a dissenting minister, and with him co-managed a boarding school at Palgrave, in Suffolk. She was strongly in favour of abolition, as shown by her *Epistle to William Wilberforce, Esq. on the Rejection of the Bill for Abolishing the Slave Trade of 1791*. Mrs. Barbault became increasingly active in London literary circles. She edited the six volumes of Samuel Richardson's *Correspondence* (1804), and published a 50-volume collection, *The British Novelists* (1810), which included biographical essays and critical reviews. Anna Lætitia Aikin Barbault's writing spans a wide range, from the poetry that brought her both acclaim and rebuffs, to her essays, literary reviews, educational writings, and political works. Oliver Goldsmith, the young Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth all admired her poetry. Barbault often wrote of home, of children, and of her faith, but she did so in an individual voice, speaking from personal conviction and generally avoiding clichés. Her educational and political writing also reflects her independence of thought, and strength of conviction.

*To Mr. S. T. Coleridge*

Midway the hill of Science, after steep  
And rugged paths that tire th' unpractised feet,  
A Grove extends, in tangled mazes wrought,  
And fill'd with strange enchantment: – dubious shapes  
Flit thro' dim glades, and lure the eager foot  
Of youthful ardour to eternal chase.  
Dreams hang on every leaf; unearthly forms  
Glide thro' the gloom, and mystic visions swim

Before the cheated sense. Athwart the mists,  
Far into vacant space, huge shadows stretch  
And seem realities; while things of life,  
Obvious to sight and touch, all glowing round  
Fade to the hue of shadows. Scruples here  
With filmy net, most like th' autumnal webs  
Of floating Gossamer, arrest the foot  
Of generous enterprize; and palsy hope  
And fair ambition, with the chilling touch  
Of sickly hesitation and blank fear.  
Nor seldom Indolence these lawns among  
Fixes her turf-built seat, and wears the garb  
Of deep philosophy, and museful sits,  
In dreamy twilight of the vacant mind,  
Soothed by the whispering shade; for soothing soft  
The shades; and vistas lengthening into air,  
With moon beam rainbows tinted. Here each mind  
Of finer mould, acute and delicate,  
In its high progress to eternal truth  
Rests for a space, in fairy bowers entranced;  
And loves the softened light and tender gloom;  
And, pampered with most unsubstantial food,  
Looks down indignant on the grosser world,  
And matter's cumbrous shapings. Youth below'd  
Of Science—of the Muse below'd, not here,  
Not in the maze of metaphysic lore  
Build thou thy place of resting; lightly tread  
The dangerous ground, on noble aims intent;  
And be this Circe of the studious cell  
Enjoyed, but still subservient. Active scenes  
Shall soon with healthful spirit brace thy mind;  
And fair exertion, for bright fame sustained,  
For friends, for country, chase each spleen-fed fog  
That blots the wide creation—  
Now Heaven conduct thee with a Parent's love!

(1797)

(1799)

*A Thought on Death*

When life, as opening buds, is sweet,  
And golden hopes the fancy greet,  
And youth prepares his joys to meet,  
    Alas! how hard it is to die!

When just is seiz'd some valu'd prize,  
And duties press, and tender ties  
Forbid the soul from earth to rise,  
    How awful then it is to die!

When, one by one, those ties are torn,  
And friend from friend is snatched forlorn,  
And man is left alone to mourn,  
    Ah! then, how easy 'tis to die!

When faith is firm, and conscience clear,  
And words of peace the spirit cheer,  
And vision'd glories half appear,  
    'Tis joy, 'tis triumph, then to die!

When trembling limbs refuse their weight,  
And films, slow gathering, dim the sight,  
And clouds obscure the mental light,  
    'Tis nature's precious boon to die!

(1821)

*The Caterpillar*

No, helpless thing, I cannot harm thee now;  
Depart in peace, thy little life is safe,  
For I have scanned thy form with curious eye,  
Noted the silver line that streaks thy back,  
The azure and the orange that divide  
Thy velvet sides; thee, houseless wanderer,  
My garment has enfolded, and my arm  
Felt the light pressure of thy hairy feet;

Thou hast curled round my finger; from its tip,  
Precipitous descent! with stretched out neck,  
Bending thy head in airy vacancy,  
This way and that, inquiring, thou hast seemed  
To ask protection; now, I cannot kill thee.  
Yet I have sworn perdition to thy race,  
And recent from the slaughter am I come  
Of tribes and embryo nations: I have sought  
With sharpened eye and persecuting zeal,  
Where, folded in their silken webs they lay  
Thriving and happy; swept them from the tree  
And crushed whole families beneath my foot;  
Or, sudden, poured on their devoted heads  
The vials of destruction. – This I've done  
Nor felt the touch of pity: but when thou, –  
A single wretch, escaped the general doom,  
Making me feel and clearly recognise  
Thine individual existence, life,  
And fellowship of sense with all that breathes, –  
Present'st thyself before me, I relent,  
And cannot hurt thy weakness. – So the storm  
Of horrid war, o'erwhelming cities, fields,  
And peaceful villages, rolls dreadful on:  
The victor shouts triumphant; he enjoys  
The roar of cannon and the clang of arms,  
And urges, by no soft relentings stopped,  
The work of death and carnage. Yet should one,  
A single sufferer from the field escaped,  
Panting and pale, and bleeding at his feet,  
Lift his imploring eyes, – the hero weeps;  
He is grown human, and capricious Pity,  
Which would not stir for thousands, melts for one  
With sympathy spontaneous: – 'Tis not Virtue,  
Yet 'tis the weakness of a virtuous mind.

(1825)

CHARLOTTE SMITH  
(1749–1806)

Charlotte Turner Smith was born into a well-to-do family, and brought up in Southern England. At the early age of fourteen, she was married to Benjamin Smith. However, his wealth did not last and in 1783 he was imprisoned for debt. At that time she decided to publish some of her poems to support her ever-increasing family. Her first book published in 1784 with the bold title *Elegiac Sonnets, and Other Essays*, went through nine expanding editions in the following sixteen years. Charlotte put down her thoughts in the form of sonnets, helping to initiate a revival of the form, which had been out of fashion since the mid-1600s. Her poetry, famous for its melancholy and sadness, became highly popular in the following years. Major Romantic poets such as William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge were influenced by her poetical work. Coleridge in his 1796 introductory essay on the sonnet used Smith as a principle example and remarked that “those sonnets appear to me the most exquisite, in which moral Sentiments, Affections, or Feelings, are deduced from, and associated with, the scenery of Nature.” Thus Smith helped to originate one of the most distinctive genres of English literature that has been called “the greater Romantic lyric.” In the late 1780s Charlotte Smith began to write novels to earn money for her family. *Emmeline* was published in 1788, *Ethelinde* in 1789, then followed *Celestina* (1791), *Desmond* (1792) and *The Old Manor House* (1793). In 1806 Charlotte Turner Smith died at Tilford near Farnham in Surrey.

*Written in the Church-yard at Middleton, in Sussex.*

Press'd by the moon, mute arbitress of tides,  
While the loud equinox its power combines,  
The sea no more its swelling surge confines,  
But o'er the shrinking land sublimely rides.  
The wild blast, rising from the western cave,  
Drives the huge billows from their heaving bed;  
Tears from their grassy tombs the village dead,  
And breaks the silent sabbath of the grave!

With shells and sea-weed mingled, on the shore,  
Lo! their bones whiten in the frequent wave;  
But vain to them the winds and waters rave;  
They hear the warring elements no more:  
While I am doom'd—by life's long storm oppress,  
To gaze with envy on their gloomy rest.

(1789)

*To The Shade Of Burns*

Mute is thy wild harp, now, O bard sublime!  
Who, amid Scotia's mountain solitude,  
Great Nature taught to "build the lofty rhyme,"  
And even beneath the daily pressure, rude,  
Of labouring poverty, thy generous blood,  
Fired with the love of freedom—Not subdued  
Wert thou by thy low fortune: but a time  
Like this we live in, when the abject chime  
Of echoing parasite is best approved,  
Was not for thee—Indignantly is fled  
Thy noble spirit; and no longer moved  
By all the ills o'er which thine heart has bled,  
Associate, worthy of the illustrious dead,  
Enjoys with them "the liberty it loved."

(1796)

(1797)

*Huge Vapours Brood above the Clifted Shore*

Huge vapours brood above the clifted shore,  
Night o'er the ocean settles, dark and mute,  
Save where is heard the repercussive roar  
Of drowsy billows, on the rugged foot  
Of rocks remote; or still more distant tone  
Of seamen, in the anchored bark, that tell  
The watch relieved; or one deep voice alone,  
Singing the hour, and bidding "strike the bell."

All is black shadow, but the lucid line  
Marked by the light surf on the level sand,  
Or where afar, the ship-lights faintly shine  
Like wandering fairy fires, that oft on land  
Mislead the pilgrim; such the dubious ray  
That wavering reason lends, in life's long darkling way.

(1797)

**ROBERT BURNS**  
(1759–1796)

Burns was the son of a cottar, and educated by his father. He set to work as a farm labourer. He developed an inclination for literature early on. From 1784 to 1788 he farmed, and during this period wrote some of his best works (eg. *To a Mouse*). In 1786 he published the Kilmarnock edition of his early poems, which made him rather famous, and took him to Edinburgh, where he made the acquaintance of James Johnson, an engraver and music-seller, who was then engaged in preparing the *Scots Musical Museum*. Burns contributed two songs to this edition, and from the autumn of 1787 almost until his death, was largely literary and musical editor of the work. The second edition of his poems provided him with enough money to be able to settle down on a small farm at Ellisland, and to marry Jean Armour, one of his many loves. His inclination to convivial living gradually undermined his health, and he died in 1796. Burns is revered as a national poet by the Scottish nation. His talents were largely based on a native ballad tradition. Burns derived much of his inspiration from the past and old Scottish national music, in which he wrote new songs to old airs, thereby giving it a new, and artistically improved, expression. Through the use and refinement of his spoken Scottish dialect Burns strove to emulate the “glorious” revival of the Scottish bards of earlier times.

*To A Mouse, On Turning Her Up In Her Nest With The Plough*

Wee, sleekit, cow'rin, tim'rous beastie,  
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!  
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,  
Wi' bickering brattle!  
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,  
Wi' murd'ring pattle!



I'm truly sorry man's dominion,  
Has broken nature's social union,  
An' justifies that ill opinion,  
Which makes thee startle  
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,  
An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whiles, but thou may thieve;  
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!  
A daimen icker in a thrave  
'S a sma' request;  
I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,  
An' never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!  
It's silly wa's the win's are strewin!  
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,  
O' foggage green!  
An' bleak December's winds ensuin,  
Baith snell an' keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,  
An' weary winter comin fast,  
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,  
Thou thought to dwell-  
Till crash! the cruel coulter past  
Out thro' thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble,  
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!  
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,  
But house or hald,  
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,  
An' cranreuch cauld!

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane,  
In proving foresight may be vain;  
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' 'men  
Gang aft agley,  
An'lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,  
For promis'd joy!

Still thou art blest, compar'd wi' me  
The present only toucheth thee:  
But, Och! I backward cast my e'e,  
On prospects drear!  
An' forward, tho' I canna see,  
I guess an' fear!

(1786)

*Green Grow the Rashes*<sup>43</sup>

Chor. – Green grow the rashes<sup>44</sup>, O;  
Green grow the rashes, O;  
The sweetest hours that e'er I spend,  
Are spent among the lasses, O.

1

There's nought but care on ev'ry han',  
In ev'ry hour that passes, O:  
What signifies the life o' man,  
An' 'twere na for the lasses, O.  
Green grow, &c.

2

The war'ly race may riches chase,  
An' riches still may fly them, O;  
An' tho' at last they catch them fast,  
Their hearts can ne'er enjoy them, O.  
Green grow, &c.

---

43 This is Burns's revision of a song long current in a number of versions, most of them bawdy.

44 Rushes

3

But gie me a cannie hour at e'en,  
My arms about my dearie, O;  
An' war'ly cares, an' war'ly men,  
May a' gae tapsalteerie, O!  
Green grow, &c.

4

For you sae douce, ye sneer at this;  
Ye're nought but senseless asses, O:  
The wisest man the warl' e'er saw,  
He dearly lov'd the lasses, O.  
Green grow, &c.

5

Auld Nature swears, the lovely dears  
Her noblest work she classes, O:  
Her prentice han' she try'd on man,  
An' then she made the lasses, O.  
Green grow, &c.

(1787)

*Holy Willie's Prayer*

"And send the godly in a pet to pray." – Pope.  
Argument.

Holy Willie was a rather oldish bachelor elder, in the parish of Mauchline, and much and justly famed for that polemical chattering, which ends in tipping orthodoxy, and for that spiritualised bawdiness which refines to liquorish devotion. In a sessional process with a gentleman in Mauchline – a Mr. Gavin Hamilton – Holy Willie and his priest, Father Auld, after full hearing in the presbytery of Ayr, came off but second best; owing partly to the oratorical powers of Mr. Robert Aiken, Mr. Hamilton's counsel; but chiefly to Mr. Hamilton's being one of the most irreproachable and truly respectable characters in the county. On losing the process, the muse overheard him [Holy Willie] at his devotions, as follows: –

O Thou, who in the heavens does dwell,  
Who, as it pleases best Thyself,  
Sends ane to heaven an' ten to hell,  
A' for Thy glory,  
And no for only gude or ill  
They've done afore Thee!

I bless and praise Thy matchless might,  
When thousands Thou hast left in night,  
That I am here afore Thy sight,  
For gifts an' grace  
A burning and a shining light  
To a' this place.

What was I, or my generation,  
That I should get sic exaltation,  
I wha deserve most just damnation  
For broken laws,  
Five thousand years ere my creation,  
Thro' Adam's cause?

When frae my mither's womb I fell,  
Thou might hae plunged me in hell,  
To gnash my gums, to weep and wail,  
In burnin lakes,  
Where damned devils roar and yell,  
Chain'd to their stakes.

Yet I am here a chosen sample,  
To show thy grace is great and ample;  
I'm here a pillar o' Thy temple,  
Strong as a rock,  
A guide, a buckler, and example,  
To a' Thy flock.

O Lord, Thou kens what zeal I bear,  
When drinkers drink, an' swearers swear,  
An' singin there, an' dancin here,  
Wi' great and sma';  
For I am keepit by Thy fear  
Free frae them a'.

But yet, O Lord! confess I must,  
At times I'm fash'd wi' fleshly lust:  
An' sometimes, too, in wardly trust,  
Vile self gets in:  
But Thou remembers we are dust,  
Defil'd wi' sin.

O Lord! yestreen, Thou kens, wi' Meg-  
Thy pardon I sincerely beg,  
O! may't ne'er be a livin plague  
To my dishonour,  
An' I'll ne'er lift a lawless leg  
Again upon her.

Besides, I farther maun allow,  
Wi' Leezie's lass, three times I trow-  
But Lord, that Friday I was fou,  
When I cam near her;  
Or else, Thou kens, Thy servant true  
Wad never steer her.

Maybe Thou lets this fleshly thorn  
Buffet Thy servant e'en and morn,  
Lest he owre proud and high shou'd turn,  
That he's sae gifted:  
If sae, Thy han' maun e'en be borne,  
Until Thou lift it.

Lord, bless Thy chosen in this place,  
For here Thou hast a chosen race:  
But God confound their stubborn face,  
An' blast their name,  
Wha bring Thy elders to disgrace  
An' public shame.

Lord, mind Gaw'n Hamilton's deserts;  
He drinks, an' swears, an' plays at cartes,  
Yet has sae mony takin arts,  
Wi' great and sma',  
Frac God's ain priest the people's hearts  
He steals awa.

An' when we chaster'd him therefor,  
Thou kens how he bred sic a splor,  
An' set the world in a roar  
O' laughing at us; -  
Curse Thou his basket and his store,  
Kail an' potatoes.

Lord, hear my earnest cry and pray'r,  
Against that Presbyt'ry o' Ayr;  
Thy strong right hand, Lord, make it bare  
Upo' their heads;  
Lord visit them, an' dinna spare,  
For their misdeeds.

O Lord, my God! that glib-tongu'd Aiken,  
My vera heart and flesh are quakin,  
To think how we stood sweatin', shakin,  
An' p-d wi' dread,  
While he, wi' hingin lip an' snakin,  
Held up his head.

Lord, in Thy day o' vengeance try him,  
Lord, visit them wha did employ him,  
And pass not in Thy mercy by 'em,  
Nor hear their pray'r,  
But for Thy people's sake, destroy 'em,  
An' dinna spare.

But, Lord, remember me an' mine  
Wi' mercies temp'ral an' divine,  
That I for grace an' gear may shine,  
Excell'd by nane,  
And a' the glory shall be thine,  
Amen, Amen!

(1789)

*John Anderson, My Jo*

John Anderson, my jo, John,  
When we were first acquent;  
Your locks were like the raven,  
Your bonie brow was brent;  
But now your brow is beld, John,  
Your locks are like the snaw;  
But blessings on your frosty pow,

John Anderson, my jo.  
John Anderson, my jo, John,  
We clamb the hill thegither;  
And mony a cantie day, John,  
We've had wi' ane anither:  
Now we maun totter down, John,  
And hand in hand we'll go,  
And sleep thegither at the foot,  
John Anderson, my jo.

(1789)

(1790)

*A Red, Red Rose*

O my Luve's like a red, red rose,  
That's newly sprung in June:  
O my Luve's like the melodie,  
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonie lass,  
So deep in luve am I;  
And I will luve thee still, my dear,  
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,  
And the rocks melt wi' the sun;  
And I will luve thee still, my dear,  
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare-thee-weel, my only Luve!  
And fare-thee-weel, a while!  
And I will come again, my Luve,  
Tho' 'twere ten thousand mile!

(1796)