



XX ELEGIES

JOHN DONNE & C.E. PUTNAM

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JOHN DONNE

C.E. PUTNAM

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by John Donne & C.E. Putnam

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BOOK I

C.E. PUTNAM

XX ELEGIES

“Much hope which they should nourish will be
dead”

—John Donne

TO SIR JOHN DONNE

SIR,

I am sure you have no idea what I have done to your *Elegies* nor in turn what they have done to me. It was the summer of ninety-seven, and finding myself in possession of a volume of your *Elegies* something soon started that I could not stop.

It began innocently enough in the reading, consuming pages slowly at first, in spare moments at lunch or on the metro. But your book soon took hold, and I found that the deeper I went into the language, the reading, the more the language became me. It was as if your poems took on physical form, a Golem text brought to obscene life by the simple act of my reading it.

Then, all at once, the writing started in a torrent rush. At night, fueled by tawny port and black coffee, I would labor, writing through your fabulously strange and disturbed poem series of sex and death, longing and loss. Listening to the poems as if through some ancient hearing trumpet, I found new words, writing and re-writing them until the early hours of the

morning. Then by day, nearly sleepless, I would go to work, and in the many stolen, and thankfully unmonitored moments of my temporary posting as an interoffice shipping clerk, I continued to write. It was as frenzied and as close to a twenty-four hour operation as I could physically manage; I could not escape and could not stop. The language, the reading, the writing, held me fixed. It truly would not let me go.

I am happy, dear friend, to present our *Elegies* together for the very first time, so that within this single volume, our two texts can eternally exist together: tombstone and shadow.

Most Hoogily,

C.E. Putnam
Second Tuesday
in February, 2012.

ELEGY I

JEALOSIE

I.

All inhabitants!
there will be more
to fear before your
home is burned
peppered skin
swollen with fire
and then bored
straight through
by his deformity
hook pulling you
out of yourself.

II.

All bodies
a set of riddles
puddles mucked black
green and red
the courteous thank you
then band hearts
to juice long vomit
swallows the dog hungry
sound of digestible you.

III.

Ready to cough crotch can
short and thick genital
breath draws the room
closer coating the scabs
with a body his bed
his last swollen greatness
a dead husband to me
free of bark or desire
the woman fondling the dead
woman I have become.

12 JUNE 1997

ELEGY II

THE ANAGRAMME

I.

The Ghost Twins
fasten themselves
to impossibility witches
tightening the drum
over the nunnery moors
the night sea turns
the clouds away
an absent face
guarding.

II.

Her arms move
in cities inside
the marshland eunuchs
the marmosets are safe
in the night's free and open air
one upon one or two
upon three or more
nothing brings
the angels back
to the good
like this hard
stewing we are
taught everything
through powders.

III.

Musicians sing
when they could
just say the words
the leaning letters
in the anagram
of my body sing
she fixes the figures
in her throat
perfumed swallowings
amber musk
flesh white
and red with lye
pleasing.

IV.

One is one
in the meat
of her leather
journey back
to birth head
red hairs give
yellow give
cheeks rough
troughs of dead
skin the fallen
heads wave.

V.

Enough light is dim
though bodies become
teeth though the mouth
slack the eyes swallow
the body's last thought
a ribbon a final taste
of these beautiful things.

13 JUNE 1997

ELEGY III

CHANGE

I.

Skin wounds spoil
stink up the water
sea vats for the bride
blood tickling wild
change the love glue
licks me wet
giving us Volga
to receive the seas.

II.

Rooked roots ruin
the land Volga pushes
through more ground
people washed in its seed
plowing free damn these
wooden clog-men
attached to my feet
I want wild bodies
please bodies for me
to walk upon goat or fox
or leopard
or fire.

III.

Yippee! knot me raw
the flying fish captured
with a single string to open
what I forced shut
I am afraid of this rocking
cage and nothing will stop
me falling me
loving the spine
I curl to I am
made good by your
steady hand.

14 JUNE 1997

ELEGY IV

THE PERFUME

I.

The dead fathers perfume
the corpse's good flesh
joined together
you smell burnt
teeth extruding skin
called from far away
from the bottom of the falls
a voice echoing a stain
in the breath.

II.

This sick drawing sucks
the amorous out
of you the sound of
lepers confusing
the earth the
excrement stayed in me
the blister sweet water
whistling silks.

III.

I shiver pale gunpowder
blood coconut skull
betrayals in the bed
the scent entrances
when we were young
the nose fathers wept
could never hire that stench
eight-foot-tall wizard men
guarding my dirty sea letters
you were blushing in the night
my little ink spot
I have forgotten all three
questions the bear
asked of the thief.

IV.

A gull hovers singing
strange rock notes
meat and skin embrace
the notes blue and green
kiss them orange
pink again and again
she has hook arms
I search her wigs
because she takes turns
with them at night
to take all the light
out of sleep
to the bed's advantage.

V.

Eyes buried
our last secret
dear father
hydraulic and thirsty
I have lost the fire
escape plan
they will only find me
once I am gone.

15 JUNE 1997

ELEGY V

HIS PICTURE

I.

Feeding on nurse
milk the place
to put the mouth
the eye takes home
a photograph of a man
who loved bee
keepers blowing
powders from broken
bones and dragging
the drone sacks
over my hands.

II.

Rashes care for me
my mother's haircloth
her breast a hive
for my face a home torn
the broken oars of a ship
my child's hands armed
with pencils predict
the weather with simple
lines before the sea
shadows come more
whirling dead I
now live engraved
and sing that though
this is only an image
it will take my body
back to her.

16 JUNE 1997

ELEGY VI

OH LET ME NOT SERVE

I.

It hurts to come to Rome
without purple drinks
why did my brain go
deep to the beginning
dry channels remembering
the eddies the entrances
to the body the roaring sources
why was I worried grapes
the banks made wine?

II.

The brow pressed
against the kiss
went down the boughs
swell and bend
children swing into the water
the blossom channel
the ride towards sleep
murmuring stories around.

III.

Tales that begin at the feet
and end with the wings
if we believe it we can
both fly and burn dizzy
the tapered eye drowns
and follows the whirlpool
curling our faces
water our reflection
from the sky.

IV.

We are still flying
wax arms breathing
new skin the names of the dead
pay for these services sway
on the page and ripple
books keep spelling
your name you spend
the day looking up words
and fatten on them
they swerve to me
they will not let me go.

17 JUNE 1997

ELEGY VII

NATURES LAY IDIOT

I.

I'm the ready made horse
Saturday's seals force
the colts open
for the glass ribbon
my snap-on legs
and mane I taste
strangers in their trees
refined delicacies
with sugary veins.

II.

I have seen severed
worlds fragments
of a living hand
here a foot can answer
the pebbles and ash
I used to use words
to remember the mute
delivery of a secret
alphabet set to flower
a new fever changing
form in the eye's water.

III.

The air is different bubbles
form into words
to prove that you will not
know who you are
the sophisticated groomsman
born hoofless again
billowing who are you?
nature's original idiot boy!

17 JUNE 1997

ELEGY VIII

THE COMPARISON

I.

Priests are nice as turtles
the last rights your sores
in my shaky hand
made worse by my attention
to detail sucking on worms
to get to the hook
there are no fish
cook your body
shake.

II.

Burnt grass grows
around the lip
the volcano turns
the clay and coughs
a gun is fired into
the mouth hot
liquids and metals
dread the best
part of loving
stale skins peeled
cut into quarters
turning the ear
to the earth the best
part of loving
the lymbeck fire
is equal to itself + 2
the chemist's gouty
fingers the baby
carrots stand and dance.

III.

Parched from scourging
the devils in the head
the men bring the baby skin
of elm boughs sagging stalks
slender with stink and dust
grave clothes in trunks
you are still eating the worms
eating your breast your body
their urn their fortune
chest for keeping you
in potatoes.

IV.

The white porcupine's
shadow quills prick
the blood marks on the eyes
the garden statues after dark
resemble the children's
marbled parents a ball
a bone toy on the side
of every head worlds hang
skin pulled over tin wheels
saffron stones rubbing
the faint boots parboiled
potato men starved
to enforce the law
which boils ripe tissue
menstruous sperm all over
the gown we froth womb
sweat corset pearls.

V.

Set to skin the neck
the corpse water drops early
I set my face to the east
balm almighty
midnight swill song
pours too easily
roses back in the garden
sweet ass of you.

22 JUNE 1997

ELEGY IX

THE AUTUMNAL

I.

I will go to branches
without growing
all summer
painting the hill
journey and descent
this natural motion
leaves you going
down on yourself
everyday daywear
cradles then entombs.

II.

The goats clothe me
in extreme hat feathers
and green-felted
all these heads of mine
wear out their given names
the resurrectionalist revival
at the all-souls' retreat and cookout
go back to the tooth worn
thin alive with nerves
rather holes are our mouths
in the body's shade light
seeks the eye's purse slack
faces winter violet
the shortest day coming soon
composing one in fifty
things I've spent ages with
you younger you are as large
as the stone age where the trees
are paleolithic in love.

III.

Strange x-rays put
the past in stone for us
proof of a hand
touching another
hand a leaf left
and kept in a rock face
appetites taste us brittle
when our season comes
when June blood ripens
the wine when September
fixes listeners to the words
your volumes of night
noon early evening song
a tomb building a grave.

IV.

To wrinkle these wishes
asking for more sun
when there is no more
sun you are flaming
and now golden
when our names were first
our names I would have taken
your affections in the grass
rock upon rock shame
pressed into shame.

23 JUNE 1997

ELEGY X

THE DREAM

I.

No wits no vital senses
no necessary heart
organs gone to thatch
you left me for glass
I'd rather grind
this dream to snuff
than admit myself
back to earth.

II.

A slumbering tuber
fist rolling loose
in the dirt the best
image makers sonnets
and songs what ever
happened to your voice?
you could sing could
make sweet love repeating
sweet love nothing
and wake fucking
me with fruit after the three day
lock down strawberries
passed through bars
mesh a rhubarb crumbles
I scrape fanatical.

III.

Reason has met me
and gone again
ill colored crabs
the women of Crete
purple cigar check
dancing one horned
elf you are ah ha ha
you are driving
that infuriating carriage
the wheels brake
before the wall and I will
not die this time
a-doy doy die.

IV.

We teach the dull
to entertain our possessions
can have a strong sense
of us we leave marks
in and on them
then Fantasy Soul Queen
I will accept an equal value
of Coy King stamps
as I love loving her
makes and meddles me
biting on a wax thumb
makes my impression full
I who am spitting
a final image of her.

28 JUNE 1997

ELEGY XI

THE BRACELET

UPON THE LOSS OF HIS MISTRESS'
CHAIN, FOR WHICH HE CAN'T GET NO
SATISFACTION

I.

There is a cord between
the knees and the neck
I pull on it to forgive
circus signs face painted
freaks and a thing that has
not yet a face groans
and counts with its three
fingers the instant when
its first man moment ripens.

II.

When you escape
your body your body
will throw a party for you
the blood plague travelers
will bring exotica gifts
every new love sore
gives off a different scent
when opened by heat devils
itching the wound that grows
inside a growling bread lust
with new forms of speech
I will happily pay you for this.

III.

Feasts flail myself
a wild grouse
green in my corduroy
shirt grooves
shadows manacled
around your wrist
produce different light
one upon another.

IV.

Workers sent to harvest
a heavy curse wing dust
from milk bones
I take away the yellow
grins the YOU GUILTY varnish
there are less of you
to renumber now
that Five and Seven are gone
you make nakedness
hungry for clothing
I want you to bring
this good message
to the angels I cannot
will you light
these fires so that
the forest is a furnace
good moth
fire for you alone?

V.

Your form is gone
we gave you form
but no body
these ill shaped angels
gone bad ugly shaven
stare at me eyes fallen out
the mouth a grudging doom box
everyone that enters this room
will know themselves by looking
at the marks on their arms
whore tenement heavens
divided by paper clouds.

VI.

It is fantastic flying
over the ocean
can break the mind
into equal halves
every thought a roar
I will hire a goat boy
ride him bare and lean
pleasing cries squeaking
loud hoof scraped alone
to my love varnish
all of it.

VII.

Let me push my lusty head
into your youth and eat
this lunch dead nourishment
I dirtied myself and pulled
out fire-stubble nobody
knew which Scotland I was
fighting for I ruined France
to become gorgeous
mushroom fields
silly quicken the soil
from the juice the twelve
exiled Crow Kings gavage
me fat with fresh blue cream.

VIII.

I am a furnace again
not the forest but a city
my sentences are written
by the twelve tides
the enemies of great tapestries
guide me with detailed descriptions
of heaven and the leavened heart
lost the sevenfold
and we should love this knit
these drifting mists that cover
me I am still here
because my charred skin.

IX.

I often wear my hands
on opposite arms
to feel what made me
I am armlets
bracelets of hair chained
around your wrists
and ankles they are
the color of me
but I am not
that color
I am me I
am no longer in it.

25-26 JUNE 1997

ELEGY XII

HIS PARTING FROM HER

I.

The trees persuade the suspect
in us to listen to the fire
symphony a vulgar purgatory
chirping frogs mating
tree squirrels sensitive
to our subtle rocking
I change when the poles
move by slight degrees
to be comfortable
with my reflection
in hut-sized cabbages.

II.

An unfortunate consequence
of this self pleasure
for the world amazing
nipples but inedible
I will keep all
of the light of Antarctica
from you where cold
is light where snow is
born lets throw
a birthday party
for your nightgown
where it parts
snowball.

III.

You are
love me! lost
in your images of winter
the autumnal mushrooms
the summer when the beginning
was in love with spring passages
our loose bodies reassuring
the earth rolling questions
your suggestive water wear your
soft water tap into me
can you move any slower?
a quiet note beside the whale
lamp the sun can contain
can be our bodies.

IV.

Our divide
cannot sunder
in us a harm
against the soft
stroke against
your barrel arms
coming too close
to my heart.

V.

My least worthy characteristic
bad handwriting hysterics
severe eye strain
rivers full of holes
I am freezing the ivy
we want to grow lips
on our brains
turn our eyes inward too
a painting of the many
headed deity blue skin
red palms it looks into us
proving we have written
all our illegible words
out of feet dialogues
speaking directly
to floorboards.

VI.

Though the language lives
inside negligee shadow
embracements conferences
meetings print deadlines
for other kinds of bliss
there is correspondence
we have the constant duck
sweet oil goggle framed eyes.

VII.

Ambushed by silverware
dark paths of clothes
lead to the bed
punctured by a spike
heeled shoe
up to the waist
in undergarments
clouds blown out
pushed into my house
with chanting torches
local pitchforks
my name on angry signs.

VIII.

I bring dove sex down
to this I am
blinded by my fingers
I steam down
to a drop one
drop I loved
you it was
my fault
despite my merits
the mutual cry
I run and run.

IX.

We have pain in the old
view of the house
the water wheel turns
the river breaks on us
torrents mixed with fire
forces me within fires
to feel this burning
today the lender of dark
shapes quits the stars
Venus and the Moon
the shadows I write
come with me environ the night
I must go to them and you
must see the darkness
in the trees these last
words for you
this morning
a final throat song
now all of my own.

2 JULY 1997

ELEGY XIII

JULIA

I.

I am as bad
as half spoiled poi
I am the sun inside
your bosom thron
thatched skirts
roofs swarming
atoms body
moles growing
in the sun.

II.

Lost dingoes corrupt
the ship's logs
Captain Misshapen
bends his sextant
and heads laughing
to the edge of the sea
all his abuses
my daily projects
The Curses free themselves
from The Mustache
O dear the legions of orca
buck the waves
O the salmon men
singing their salmon shanties
hi-ho-the-salmon-go
they pay no mind to you
you fill your gullet
eating without your hands
a rusty fork so prosperous
tetanus juice springs
drink it Mr. Lockjaw.

III.

Your breath grinds
down to a whistle
tooth nothing
giving the bodice cries
the voice of a crow
night tongued
feeds the Captain's
and the Mister's
anger anger
burning burning
funny to clowns
I will lay me down
all around.

IV.

The paint came back
to eat us alive the monsters
repeat it the monsters
wait for the shower scene
the drain swallows every dog
to tear me apart my
dearest friends thumb
to thumb a throat to choke
to pure white I will practice
on my new body and continue
with yours a calamity of veins
half blushed a mad creation
my Julia my only over described
love you will hear this you
will envy this good news
I am barking.

10 JULY 1997

ELEGY XVI

A TALE OF A CITIZEN AND HIS WIFE

I.

Citizen wife song
promised wine
for a share of my body
she holds me to him
prays with my hands
in his I am pleased
that she is willing
and I am both of them
and I am me.

II.

Though we are far away
from each other
I am still due refreshment
she is made of meal refuse
on the rope swing
an oaky musk around
his golden head plate
cracked I am often all inside
of me accustomed to bourbon
wells even the wine bins
have wives lovers mistresses
of both sexes I can assume
you will take them too.

III.

I've visited beds of crocodile
skin of bubble beards
the bright inn sign
a neon cowgirl lassoing
a cowboy the horse rearing
up her winking eye buzzing
her heart busts out of her
chest I was loved there
from the inside
the rope around my legs
dredged through the desert
twisted cigars and beans
all wisdom for the prediction
of the final coming of
the scrivener that I am
for our gloved get off
the cleavage I was
one of the cowboys.

IV.

The tavern keeps their bawd
their glutton their last hope
the stone heads are very big heads
to trade our city for ruin
to lay down cold
for the night to take heat from
your lover to brave the itch
the calling caves where the voice
records over itself I am railed
to his face I smiled at hers
now I am not courting
both of my consciences
rubbing tease spine to spine
with her by returning
to the tongue shelf
I am inside all lemon
flavored a half-wetness
my only remaining element.

V.

Every blank space filled
the number asked for
I apply I apply
I am fine nothing! I am
fine haunted! to get behind
his wife and to kiss her
before riding the kind man
it is springtime again
the smack the crop
the wife on his head
his back turning lecher
my feet fit well into her
stretching her eye agape
I rode a rubber horse again
riding both of us now
and the other wife his
and the citizen hers
and the pale or red
whipped remains will recount
this tale as true by word
of frothing mouth libeler
I am true but this tale will be
remembered for your
filthy omnivorous fist.

VI.

I am grease a sow's fat
to touch me I am
beginning to chalk
out the cyclops
then butcher then judge
I am poor a jugular
officer a knave captain
reduced to can counting
and teaching them
the cuckold's bowed
dance the right way
to soothe the good
out of them out
of us this metered harm
you are only now
first singing for me.

16 JULY 1997

ELEGY XV

THE EXPOSTULATION

I.

Part profane part sea kelp
photographs of our past
intent to grow with the company
tongues gave you boss eyes
the first time you saw me
I could not make the vehicle
work right could not
these costumier days shorten
the length of pleasure
more than your love in me.

II.

Custard our crust
I have a bowl
and a beast like
dogs on dogs
watch them
on the beach
for enjoyment.

III.

A raven fastens
to tongue bowels
eating a vulture's
heart set against
itself and all
is after this
and what is after
and you are this
tendrill of yellow hair
wet around my ankle
before switching on
the engine after the mass
execution by drowning.

IV.

His eye in his eye
redoubled the earth
wanderer may be
a third as cunning
with words simple
to make a cast of my face
the sound begins
in the air spaces
of the abdomen world
the streams blinding June
would ice would ribs
would bubble the river
sooner than the sea.

V.

Forward this groin lust
the profane ocean curl
you desire I am empty
should the shroud pull
tight over the sprinkled
body should sighs should
words breathe their wind
their water writing surface
messages with the eyes
you study the arc of bathing
beauty colors not from nature
all day at my terrible job.

VI.

I thought you were
a strong swimmer
in the upper body
the arms stretched
kicking chopped my surf
floats the green
channels pain daily
ebb and flow.

17 JULY 1997

ELEGY XVI

ON HIS MISTRESS

I.

You had to have me
thinking of milk
enough of you!
but you are better
than sugared blood
I saw white apes
in the trees I was
in love translucent
my nurse O crying
starlings starting O
the midnight nurse swing
shifting in my fright
bed love opening or
curse crib I am what
presence calls form.

II.

The expectations in walking in
walking with you
in walking the gallerie
the pictures with you
blue green yellow peach
the fountains the water
with you here is my hand
O! stay! I will dutch hyrdoponique!
Go spongy! hide from our guests
to the greenhouse! and lust such
scratch with you!

III.

We think of warm
passes we are Italian
indifferent and changeable
as the Moon Men of France
drawing the skin back on
your eclipsed body
the apes are called THE APES
when they are clothed
I am blushing myself a new face
a disguise to rest my head
in your body everywhere I can
I touch you.

IV.

Nothing willingly disassembles itself
this feeding proved good
love sore shivering
peaches and mangoes
the professor reading Wild
Borneo Adventures aloud
to teach us how to love
seas move ships to the land
I am from where
what a person is before
they are a person
if I come back again
as a black goat
and am thirsty mind
me my nurse that
you are still here
knotted still and dangerous
you will wear this tight wrapping.

V.

I am rivaled by an image
a memory your persuasive
words the wrong tomb
my remorse for this thing
to have you and conjure this
these wonton pains
a mummy's calm
my starving long hours
but ours did happen did find
did therefore which desires are all
desire all by this interview
I ask you what happened
strange for all of this
to occur on this first occasion
of me touching you your hands
your legs your hair.

21 JULY 1997

ELEGY XVII

VARIETY

I.

In the beginning you begin
by drawing a circle
around yourself
when you sit inside
the circle a desert
grows around it
and you grow sea
grasses and flowers
a few trees watching
makes it all happen.

II.

The Moon judgment
makes me dizzy
my open heart
messages in your hand
returning firmer
legs in sand currents
running through
the troop of moderns
in the breast milk grows
in the boy and hardens
against him ancient seeds
resist the bruise dart
bones sinew eyes
with wings to milk you.

III.

I am you but dryer
my first form grows
a whale accounting
for helmets lost
the World's End requires
my failings my
fallings my orbital love
not bending the circle
askew that I abuse
and must return
all this golden brown.

IV.

Such feathers
nymph solid
sawing bone
I am your service
fat and pink
I am your back
your arms there
is no word for my body
I will turn away
after I am lovable.

V.

I will be employed
by the Great Dead Lakes
streams spreading fat
where pleasure is clearer
than the rivers' appetite
for mother fruit
the food full mouth
on the outside
to be delighted
my malcontented
butter-churner.

VI.

Today back to a chair
in a room some light
on the chair some sand
on the floor a circle
if there is pleasure
enough to divide the body
from breath from variety
many will not be loved in that.

VII.

I should know all
the motions in heaven
turn as in the window
the same fly is both inside
and outside the window
I am in motion in this chair
am still am body am circle
am desert am chair again
it is all outside all inside all
it is that which I am
as you are becoming.

24 JULY 1997

ELEGY XVIII

LOVE'S PROGRESS

I.

Only stomach meat
can cure the noise
headache of the next
exchequer citizens
obey snuffling lambs
begging hefty
under his wool thumb
have been laid good
in their O mouths
their pursy double
pocketed ram sacs
empty the rich
elements combine
because who can resist?

II.

Aetherial birds move faster
than humans move
free as frogs a lover's foot
the King's paper knees
crease every amphibian
since the hand since
the transplanted face
since the kiss invention
refined our bed activities.

III.

Firmness figured into this emblem
the maps part where
the foot wants to go
your mind will follow
on the first night
with a new love
an army practices below you
on the second night a navy
and so on the shipwreck
survivors floating embryo
a bad pilot that cannot read
the current the Atlantic
takes you to India your
scattered sails land
you on the Mole Island
a heavy tapping low funk
shaking all asses free.

IV.

Eyes in the sand dune
the sea's bounds
between two breasts
pigeon droppings
Hellespont nests
muscle shells and pipers
love my straight chin
too her promontory
dwelling for the mythic
tongue suck gassy wail
fish that can crack
any hull and around
you pearls creak.

V.

Your ears are a home
for an anchor
the oracle's song lips swell
her ambrosial canaries
fainting fortunes
the islands direct
side hemisphere cheeks
leave the sun between
west and east not
the meridian taste this
at night I breathe
the pinecone crush
first light eye to eye
all noses found
in the grave
were wrinkled.

VI.

The immortal septum
a smoothness as barnacles
in forest hair the face
desired the love we made
words the earth the earth
above bodies pinpoint
see holes and pits
erotic sputum slicked back
I serve and serve
and lay on Devil Pluto & Co
with the ground
right under the Godhead
a firmament sphere
for every adulterous butler.

VII.

She is a virtue
to love making love
angels finding good ole
necromancy's short comings
I cloud cool to free fire
from soil from rot from
application from salve I am
a dead seed tailless
and flagging lost
inside her body
I prefer to untie his better
the smell of cheap wine
on a rusty hammer.

VIII.

A man's face groans
that monster a calf
monster a lump
a cannibal milking itself
to love me alabaster
how wasted feathers
goodbye licking our curls
sour licking the new skin
born we whelp and bear
our love sickness
blowing soap bubbles
on every unclean fork.

IX.

Nothing for this
for the sea
going for the end
the shore the true
purpose of this journey
to the sea
a proposal this song
makes me love
whoever is
calling whoever
is making
that awful sound.

29 JULY 1997

ELEGY XIX

TO HIS MISTRESS GOING TO BED

I.

Cover more than what you need
to teach nakedness to
the innocent characters
you know inside
mystical books
pictures I covet
looking at pages in bed
an illuminated book
their eyes fool them
when they watch
bodies unbodied
as you do to me all
nakedness is full
of hands entering you.

II.

Discover this roving license
for upright flesh I am blessed
in my empire stones
a myrrh maimed man
at one with the New America
our hair sets itself
I am building a tire fire
below the sea
between the houses
behind the mountains you let
go of my hands.

III.

What you take off first
becomes the circumference
of the body wheel
the coronet wail rolls
thick wiring the hillside
mead brewed from flowers
the state comes apart hooray!
leaning against your night
stand brushing you happy
both of us spinning off
the bed and on you
are telling my body
to chime I unlace you
it is a siren fool
bushy eyes.

IV.

Wearing a breastplate I unravel
the encompassing world
legged a glittering zone
a mangle sight a mind
used to bring power to
the lifeless when called
your body will always
come back to me.

30 JULY 1997

ELEGY XX

LOVE'S WAR

I.

Back at home we shoot
off our arms a limb wheel
turns spring it is May
they half nothing
double nothing
on the grass
wound tight flat
on your back
the sky skirts
around your neck
my handful of blood
a breed off
from the war engines
their smoky hum.

II.

These arms mine
imprisoned mine
feet mine dead
mine blood mine
a batter speech
let it let me loose let it
fry another world
death ships
the lone boat bobs
a voyage swaggering
ochre waters
save me cloister
the hand from speech
un-fleshed it falls drunken
fingers in a bone-filled hull.

III.

I turn ashes to dust
climb the mast
for Midas' food
rolling Spanish gold
a forbidden blood
letting the vein
head tears me
free when she
is good her cure will
her augury will
tan fevers
sallow shake
and falling.

IV.

As in a dream
a choice
which well
do you sing
into our relics
our late giddy lunatique
frays the final death machine
counting heads
the triangular waves
break your body for me
and I will hold onto
this piece this drop
this fragment of you
until as a brick
I imagine you
a hole over
and over again.

5 AUGUST 1997

BOOK II

JOHN DONNE

XX ELEGIES

“you spend
the day looking up words
and fatten on them
they swerve to me
they will not let me go.”

—C.E. Putnam

TO SIR C.E. PUTNAM

SIR,

When you have a desire to work a miracle, and raise a Book from the dead, and the dead that are in it; of which I am one, but that a hope that I have a room in your favour keeps me alive, which you shall abundantly confirme to me, and I shall tell you that these words will be the first words of the second part of that book. A book built of past and future, not proposing any constant present; they have more pleasures then we, but not more pleasure; they joy oftner, we longer; and no man but of so much understanding as may deliver him from being a fool, would change with a mad-man, which had a better proportion of wit in his often Lucidis.

But I meant to speake of nothing but the libells, of which, all which are brought into these parts, are so tastelesse and flat, that I protest to you. If any of them grudge this book a room, and suspect it of new or dangerous doctrine, you who know us all, can best moderate. If I continue thus, I shall have comfort in this. If I die, it shall come to you in that fashion that your Book desires it. If it be the Gout, I am miserable.

It is not the first time that our age hath seen that art practised, That when there are witty and sharp libels made which not onely for the liberty of speaking, but for the

elegancie, and composition, would take deep root, and make durable impressions in the memory, no other way hath been thought so fit to suppress them, as to divulge some course [coarse], and railing one. I Make accompt that this book hath enough performed that which it undertook, both by argument and example. So, Sir, I kisse your hands; and deliver to you an intire and clear heart; which shall ever when I am with you be in my face and tongue, and when I am from you, in my Poems, for I will never draw Curtain between you and I.

Your affectionate friend,

J. Donne.
First Saturday in
May, 1607.

ELEGY I

JEALOSIE

FOND woman, which would'st have thy husband die,
And yet complain'st of his great jealousie;
If swolne with poyson, hee Jay in 'his last bed,
His body with a sere-barke covered,
Drawing his breath, as thick and short, as can
The nimblest crocheting Musitian,
Ready with loathsome vomiting to spue
His Soule out of one hell, into a new,
Made deafe with his poore kindreds howling cries,
Begging with few feign'd teares, great legacies,
Thou would'st not weepe, but jolly, 'and frolicke bee,
As a slave, which to morrow should be free;
Yet weep'st thou, when thou seest him hungerly
Swallow his owne death, hearts-bane jealousies
O give him many thanks, he'is courteous,
That in suspecting kindly warneth us.
Wee must not, as wee us'd, flout openly,
In scoffing ridles, his deformitie;
Nor at his boord together being satt,
With words, nor touch, scarce lookes adulterate.
Nor when he swolne, and pamper'd with great fare
Sits downe, and snorts, cag'd in his basket chaire,
Must wee usurpe his owne bed any more,
Nor kisse and play in his house, as before.
Now I see many dangers; for that is
His realme, his castle, and his diocesse.

But if, as envious men, which would revile
Their Prince, or coyne his gold, themselves exile
Into another countrie, 'and doe it there,
Wee play'in another house, what should we feare?
There we will scorne his household policies,
His seely plots, and pensionary spies,
As the inhabitants of Thames right side
Do Londons Major; or Germans, the Popes pride.

ELEGY II

THE ANAGRAMME

MARRY, and love thy Flavia, for, she
Hath all things, whereby others beauteous bee,
For, though her eyes be small, her mouth is great,
Though they be Ivory, yet her teeth be jeat,
Though they be dimme, yet she is light enough,
And though her harsh haire fall, her skinne is rough,
What though her cheeks be yellow, her haire's red,
Give her thine, and she hath a maydenhead.
These things are beauties elements, where these
Meet in one, that one must, as perfect, please.
If red and white and each good quality
Be in thy wench, ne'r aske where it doth lye.
In buying things perfum'd, we aske; if there
Be muske and amber in it, but not where.
Though all her parts be not in th'usuall place,
She'hath yet an Anagram of a good face.
If we might put the letters but one way,
In the leane dearth of words, what could we say?
When by the Gamut some Musitians make
A perfect song, others will undertake,
By the same Gamut chang'd, to equall it.
Things simply good, can never be unfit.
She's faire as any, if all be like her,
And if none be, then she is singular.
All love is wonder; if wee justly doe
Account her wonderfull, why not lovely too?

Love built on beauty, soone as beauty, dies,
 Chuse this face, chang'd by no deformities.
 Women are all like Angels; the faire be
 Like those which fell to worse; but such as thee,
 Like to good Angels, nothing can impair:
 'Tis lesse grieve to be foule, than to'have beene faire.
 For one nights revels, silke and gold we chuse,
 But, in long journeyes, cloth, and leather use.
 Beauty is barren oft; best husbands say,
 There is best land, where there is foulest way.
 Oh what a soveraigne Plaister will shee bee,
 If thy past sinnes have taught thee jealousies
 Here needs no spies, nor eunuches; her commit
 Safe to thy foes; yea, to a Marmosit.
 When Belgiaes citties, the round countries drowne,
 That durty foulennesse guards, and armes the towne:
 So doth her face guard her; and so, for thee,
 Which, forc'd by businesses absent oft must bee,
 Shee, whose face, like clouds, turnes the day to night,
 Who, mightier than the sea, makes Moores seem white,
 Who, though seaven yeares, she in the Stews had laid,
 A Nunnery durst receive, and thinke a maid,
 And though in childbeds labour she did lie,
 Midwives would swear, 'twere but a tympanie,
 Whom, if shee accuse her selfe, I credit lesse
 Than witches, which impossibles confesses
 Whom Dildoes, Bedstaves, and her Velvet Glasse
 Would be as loath to touch as Joseph was:
 One like none, and lik'd of none, fittest were,
 For, things in fashion every man will weare.

ELEGY III

CHANGE

ALTHOUGH thy hand and faith, and good workes too,
Have seal'd thy love which nothing should undoe,
Yea though thou fall backe, that apostasie
Confirme thy love; yet much, much I feare thee.
Women are like the Arts, forc'd unto none,
Open to'all searchers, unpriz'd, if unknowne.
If I have caught a bird, and let him flie,
Another fouler using these meanes, as I,
May catch the same bird; and, as these things bee,
Women are made for men, not him, nor mee.
Foxes and goats; all beasts change when they please.
Shall women, more hot, wily, wild than these,
Be bound to one man, and did Nature then
Idly make them apter to'endure than men?
They'are our clogges, not their owne; if a man bee
Chain'd to a galley, yet the galley'is free;
Who hath a plow-land, casts all his seed corne there,
And yet allows his ground more corne should beare;
Though Danuby into the sea must flow,
The sea receives the Rhene, Volga, and Po.
By nature, which gave it, this liberty
Thou lov'st, but Oh! canst thou love it and mee?
Likenesse glues love: and if that thou so doe,
To make us like and love, must I change too?
More than thy hate, I hate'it, rather let mee
Allow her change, than change as oft as shee,

And soe not teach, but force my'opinion
To love not any one, nor every one.
To live in one land, is captivitie,
To runne all countries, a wild roguery;
Waters stincke soone, if in one place they bide,
And in the vast sea are more putrifid:
But when they kisse one banke, and leaving this
Never looke backe, but the next banke doe kisse,
Then are they purest; Change'is the nursery
Of musicke, joy, life, and eternity.

ELEGY IV

THE PERFUME

ONCE, and but once found in thy company,
All thy supposd escapes are laid on mee;
And as a thiefe at barre, is question'd there
By all the men, that have beene rob'd that yeare,
So am I, (by this traiterous meanes surpriz'd)
By thy Hydroptique father catechiz'd.
Though he had wont to search with glazed eyes,
As though he came to kill a Cockatrice,
Though he hath oft sworne, that he would remove
Thy beauties beauties and food of our love,
Hope of his goods, if I with thee were seene,
Yet close and secret, as our soules, we've beene.
Though thy immortall mother which doth lye
Still buried in her bed, yet will not dye,
Takes this advantage to sleepe out day-light,
And watch thy entries, and returns all night,
And, when she takes thy hand, and would seeme kind,
Doth search what rings, and armelets she can finde,
And kissing notes the colour of thy face,
And fearing least thou'art swolne, doth thee embrace;
To trie if thou long, doth name strange meates,
And notes thy palenesse, blushing, sighs, and sweats;
And politiquely will to thee confesse
The sinnes of her owne youths ranke lustinesse;
Yet love these Sorceries did remove, and move
Thee to gull thine owne mother for my love.

Thy little brethren, which like Faiery Sprights
Oft skipt into our chamber, those sweet nights,
And kist, and ingled on thy fathers knee,
Were brib'd next day, to tell what they did see:
The grim eight-foot-high iron-bound serving-man,
That oft names God in oathes, and onely then,
He that to barre the first gate, doth as wide
As the great Rhodian Colossus stride,
Which, if in hell no other paines there were,
Makes mee feare hell, because he must be there:
Though by thy father he were hir'd to this,
Could never wisse any touch or kisse.
But Oh, too common ill, I brought with mee
That, which betray'd mee to myemie:
A loud perfume, which at my entrance cryed
Even at thy fathers nose, so were wee spied.
When, like a tyran King, that in his bed
Smelt gunpowder, the pale wretch shivered.
Had it beene some bad smell, he would have thought
That his owne feet, or breath, that smell had wrought.
But as wee in our Ile emprisoned,
Where cattell onely, 'and diverse dogs are bred,
The pretious Unicornes, strange monsters call,
So thought he good, strange, that had none at all.
I taught my silkes, their whistling to forbearer
Even my opprest shoes, dumbe and speechlesse were,
Onely, thou bitter sweet, whom I had laid
Next mee, mee traiterously hast betraid,
And unsuspected hast invisibly
At once fled unto him, and staid with mee.
Base excrement of earth, which dost confound

Sense, from distinguishing the sicke from sound;
By thee the seely Amorous sucks his death
By drawing in a leprous harlots breath;
By thee, the greatest staine to mans estate
Falls on us, to be call'd effeminate;
Though you be much lov'd in the Princes hall,
There, things that seeme, exceed substantiall.
Gods, when yee fum'd on altars, were pleas'd well,
Because you'were burnt, not that they lik'd your smell;
You'are loathsome all, being taken simply alone,
Shall wee love ill things joyn'd, and hate each one?
If you were good, your good doth soone decay;
And you are rare, that takes the good away.
All my perfumes, I give most willingly
To'embalme thy fathers corse; What? will hee die?

ELEGY V

HIS PICTURE

HERE take my Picture; though I bid farewell,
Thine, in my heart, where my soule dwels, shall dwell.
'Tis like me now but I dead, 'twill be more
When wee are shadowes both, than'twas before.
When weather-beaten I come backe; my hand,
Perhaps with rude cares torne, or Sun beams tann'd,
My face and brest of hairecloth, and my head
With cares rash sodaine stormes, being o'rspread,
My body'a sack of bones, broken within,
And powders blew staines scatter'd on my skinne;
If rivall fooles taxe thee to'have lov'd a man,
So foule, and course, as, Oh, I may seeme then,
This shall say what I was: and thou shalt say,
Doe his hurts reach mee? doth my worth decay?
Or doe they reach his judging minde, that hee
Should now love lesse, what hee did love to see?
That which in him was faire and delicate,
Was but the milke, which in loves childish state
Did nurse it: who now is growne strong enough
To feed on that, which to disus'd tasts seemes tough.

ELEGY VI

OH LET ME NOT SERVE

OH, let mee not serve so, as those men serve
Whom honours smoakes at once fatten and sterve;
Poorely enrich't with great mens words or lookes;
Nor so write my name in thy loving bookes
As those Idolatrous flatterers, which still
Their Princes stiles, with many Realmes fulfill
Whence they no tribute have, and where no sway.
Such services I offer as shall pay
Themselves, I hate dead names: Oh then let mee
Favorite in Ordinary, or no favorite bee.
When my Soule was in her owne body sheath'd,
Nor yet by oathes betroth'd, nor kisses breath'd
Into my Purgatory, faithlesse thee,
Thy heart seem'd waxe, and steele thy constancie:
So, carelesse flowers strow'd on the waters face,
The curled whirlpooles suck, smack, and embrace,
Yet drowne them; so, the tapers beemie eye
Amorously twinkling, beckens the giddie flie,
Yet burnes his wings; and such the devill is,
Scarce visiting them, who are intirely his
When I behold a streamer which, from the spring,
Doth with doubtfull melodious murmuring,
Or in a speechlesse slumber, calmly ride
Her wedded channels bosome, and then chide
And bend her browes, and swell if any bough
Do but stoop downe, or kisse her upmost brow:

Yet, if her often gnawing kisses winne
The traitorous banke to gape, and let her in,
She rusheth violently, and doth divorce
Her from her native, and her long-kept course,
And roes, and braves it, and in gallant scorne,
in flattering eddies promising retorne,
She flouts the channell, who thenceforth is drie
Then say I; that is shee, and this am I.
Yet let not thy deepe bitterness beget
Carelesse despaire in mee, for that will whet
My minde to scorne; and Oh, love dull'd with paine
Was ne'r so wise, nor well arm'd as disdain.
Then with new eyes I shall survay thee, 'and spie
Death in thy cheekes, and darknesse in thine eye.
Though hope bred faith and love: thus taught, I shall
As nations do from Rome, from thy love fall.
My hate shall outgrow thine, and utterly
I will renounce thy dalliance: and when I
Am the Recusant, in that resolute state,
What hurts it mee to be'excommunicate?

ELEGY VII

NATURES LAY IDIOT

NATURES lay Ideot, I taught thee to love,
And in that sophistries Oh, thou dost prove
Too subtile: Foole, thou didst not understand
The mystique language of the eye nor hand:
Nor couldst thou judge the difference of the aire
Of sighes, and say, this lies, this sounds despaire:
Nor by the'eyes water call a maladie
Desperately hot, or changing feaverously.
I had not taught thee then, the Alphabet
Of flowers, how they devisefully being set
And bound up, might with speechlesse secrecie
Deliver arrands mutely, and mutually.
Remember since all thy words us'd to bee
To every suitor; I, if my friends agree;
Since, household charmes, thy husbands name to teach,
Were all the love trickes, that thy wit could reach;
And since, an houres discourse could scarce have made
One answer in thee, and that ill arraid
In broken proverbs, and tome sentences.
Thou are not by so many duties his,
That from the worlds Common having sever'd thee,
Inlaid thee, neither to be seene, nor see,
As mine: who have with amorous delicacies
Refin'd thee into a blis-full Paradise.
Thy graces and good words my creatures bee;
I planted knowledge and lifes tree in thee,

Which Oh, shall strangers taste? Must I alas
Frame and enamell Plate, and drinke in Glasse?
Chafe waxe for others seales? breake a colts force
And leave him then, beeing made a ready horse?

ELEGY VIII

THE COMPARISON

AS the sweet sweat of Roses in a Still,
As that which from chaf'd muskats pores doth trill,
As the Almighty Balme of th'early East,
Such are the sweat drops of my Mistris breast,
And on her [brow] her skin such lustre sets,
They seeme no sweat drops, but pearle coronets.
Ranke sweaty froth thy Mistresse's brow defiles,
Like spermatique issue of ripe menstruous boiles,
Or like the skumme, which, by needs lawlesse law
Enforc'd, Sanserra's starved men did draw
From parboild shooes, and bootes, and all the rest
Which were with any soveraigne fatnes blest,
And like vile lying stones in saffrond tinne,
Or warts, or wheales, they hang upon her skinne.
Round as the world's her head, on every side,
Like to the fatall Ball which fell on Ide,
Or that whereof God had such iealousie,
As, for the ravishing thereof we die.
Thy head is like a rough-hewne statue of jeat,
Where marks for eyes, nose, mouth, are yet scarce set;
Like the first Chaos, or flat seeming face
Of Cynthia, when th'earths shadowes her embrace.
Like Proserpines white beauty-keeping chest,
Or joves best fortunes urne, is her faire breast.
Thine's like worme eaten trunkes, clothld in seals skin,
Or grave, that's dust without, and stinke within.

And like that slender stalke, at whose end stands
The wood-bine quivering, are her armes and hands.
Like rough bark'd elmboughes, or the russet skift
Of men late scurg'd for madnes, or for sinne,
Like Sun-parch'd quarters on the citie gate,
Such is thy tann'd skins lamentable state.
And like a bunch of ragged carrets stand
The short swolne fingers of thy gouty hand.
Then like the Chymicks masculine equall fire,
Which in the Lymbecks warme wombe doth inspire
Into th'earths worthlesse durt a soule of gold,
Such cherishing heat her best lov'd part doth hold.
Thine's like the dread mouth of a fired gunne,
Or like hot liquid metallis newly runne
into clay moulds, or like to that Ætna
Where round about the grasse is burnt away.
Are not your kisses then as filthy, and more,
As a worme sucking an invenom'd sore?
Doth not thy fearefull hand in feeling quake,
As one which gath'ring flowers, still feares a snake?
Is not your last act harsh, and violent,
As when a Plough a stony ground doth rent?
So kisse good Turtles, so devoutly nice
Are Priests in handling reverent sacrifice,
And such in searching wounds the Surgeon is
As wee, when wee embrace, or touch, or kisse.
Leave her, and I will leave comparing thus,
She, and comparisons are odious.

ELEGY IX

THE AUTUMNAL

NO Spring, nor Summer Beauty hath such grace,
As I have seen in one Autumnall face.
Yong, Beauties force our love, and that's a Rape,
This doth but counsaile, yet you cannot scape.
If t'were a shame to love, here t'were no shame,
Affection here takes Reverences name.
Were her first yeares the Golden Age; That's true,
But now she's gold oft tried, and ever new.
That was her torrid and inflaming time,
This is her tolerable Tropique clyme.
Faire eyes, who askes more heate than comes from hence,
He in a fever wishes pestilence.
Call not these wrinkles, graves; If graves they were,
They were Loves graves; for else he is no where.
Yet lies not Love dead here, but here doth sit
Vow'd to this trench, like an Anachorit.
And here, till hers, which must be his death, come,
He doth not digge a Grave, but build a Tombe.
Here dwells he, though he sojourne ev'ry where,
In Progressse, yet his standing house is here.
Here, where still Evening is; not noone, nor night;
Where no voluptuousness, yet all delight.
In all her words, unto all hearers fit,
You may at Revels, you at Counsaile, sit.
This is loves timber, youth his under-wood;
There he, as wine in June, enrages blood,
Which then comes seasonabliest, when our tast

And appetite to other things, is past.
Xerxes strange Lydian love, the Platane tree,
Was lov'd for age, none being so large as shee,
Or else because, being yong, nature did blesse
Her youth with ages glory, Barrennesse.
If we love things long sought, Age is a thing
Which we are fifty yeares in compassing.
If transitory things, which soone decay,
Age must be lovelyest at the latest day.
But name not Winter-faces, whose skin's slacke;
Lanke, as an unthrifts purse; but a soules sacke;
Whose Eyes seeke light within, for all here's shade;
Whose mouthes are holes, rather worne out, than made;
Whose every tooth to a severall place is gone,
To vexe their soules at Resurrection;
Name not these living Deaths-heads unto mee,
For these, not Ancient, but Antique be.
I hate extreames; yet I had rather stay
With Tombes, than Cradles, to weare out a day.
Since such loves naturall lation is, may still
My love descend, and journey downe the hill,
Not panting after growing beauties, so,
I shall ebbe out with them, who home-ward goe.

ELEGY X

THE DREAM

IMAGE of her whom I love, more than she,
Whose faire impression in my faithfull heart,
Makes mee her Medall, and makes her love mee,
As Kings do coynes, to which their stamps impart
The value: goe, and take my heart from hence,
Which now is growne too great and good for me:
Honours oppresse weake spirits, and our sense
Strong objects dull; the more, the lesse wee see.
When you are gone, and Reason gone with you,
Then Fantasie is Queene and Soule, and all;
She can present joyes meaner than you do;
Convenient, and more proportionall.
So, if I dreame I have you, I have you,
For, all our joyes are but fantasticall.
And so I scape the paine, for paine is true;
And sleepe which locks up sense, doth lock out all.
After a such fruition I shall wake,
And, but the waking, nothing shall repent;
And shall to love more thankfull Sonnets make,
Than if more honour, teares, and paines were spent.
But dearest heart, and dearer image stay;
Alas, true joyes at best are dreame enough;
Though you stay here you passe too fast away:
For even at first lifes Taper is a snuffe.
Fill'd with her love, may I be rather grown
Mad with much heart, than ideot with none.

ELEGY XI

THE BRACELET

UPON THE LOSS OF HIS MISTRESS' CHAIN, FOR WHICH
HE MADE SATISFACTION

NOT that in colour it was like thy haire,
For Armelets of that thou maist let me weare:
Nor that thy hand is oft embrac'd and kist,
For so it had that good, which oft I mist:
Not for that silly old moralitie,
That as these linkes were knit, our love should bee:
Mourne I that I thy seavenfold chaine have lost;
Nor for the luck sake; but the bitter cost.
O, shall twelve righteous Angels, which as yet
No leaven of vile soder did admit;
Nor yet by any way have straid or gone
From the first state of their Creation;
Angels, which heaven commanded to provide
All things to me, and be my faithfull guide;
To gaine new friends, t'appease great enemies;
To comfort my soule, when I lie or rise;
Shall these twelve innocents, by thy severe
Sentence (dread judge) my sins great burden beare?
Shall they be damn'd, and in the furnace throwne,
And punish't for offences not their owne?
They save not me, they doe not ease my paines,
When in that hell they're burnt and tyed in chains.
Were they but Crownes of France, I cared not,
For, most of these, their naturall Countreys rot
I think possesseth, they come here to us,

So pale, so lame, so leane, so ruinous;
 And howsoe'r French Kings most Christian be,
 Their Crownes are circumcised most jewishly.
 Or were they Spanish Stamps, still travelling,
 That are become as Catholique as their King,
 Those unlickt beare-whelps, unfil'd pistolets
 That (more than Canon shot) availles or lets;
 Which negligently left unrounded, looke
 Like many angled figures, in the booke
 Of some great Conjuror that would enforce
 Nature, as these doe justice, from her course;
 Which, as the soule quickens head, feet and heart,
 As streames, like veins, run through th'earth's every part,
 Visit all Countries, and have slily made
 Georgeous France, ruin'd, ragged and decay'd;
 Scotland, which knew no State, proud in one day:
 And mangled seventeen-headed Belgia.
 Or were it such gold as that wherewithall
 Almighty Chymiques from each minerall,
 Having by subtle fire a soule out-pull'd;
 Are dirtely and desperately gull'd:
 I would not spit to quench the fire they're in,
 For, they are guilty of much hainous Sin.
 But, shall my harmlesse angels perish? Shall
 I lose my guard, my ease, my food, my all?
 Much hope which they should nourish will be dead,
 Much of my able youth, and lustyhead
 Will vanish; if thou love let them alone,
 For thou wilt love me lesse when they are gone;
 And be content that some lowd squeaking Cryer
 Well-pleas'd with one leane thred-bare groat, for hire,

May like a devill roare through every street;
And gall the finders conscience, if they meet.
Or let mee creepe to some dread Conjuror,
That with phantastique scheames fills full much paper;
Which hath divided heaven in tenements,
And with whores, theeves, and murderers stuff his rents,
So full, that though hee passe them all in sin,
He leaves himselfe no roome to enter in.
But if, when all his art and time is spent,
Hee say 'twill ne'r be found; yet be content;
Receive from him that doome ungrudgingly,
Because he is the mouth of destiny.
Thou say'st (alas) the gold doth still remaine,
Though it be chang'd, and put into a chaine;
So in the first falne angels, resteth still
Wisdom and knowledge; but, 'tis turn'd to ill:
As these should doe good works; and should
provide Necessities; but now must nurse thy pride.
And they are still bad angels; Mine are none;
For, forme gives being, and their forme is gone:
Pitty these Angels; yet their dignities
Passe Vertues, Powers, and Principalities.
But, thou art resolute; Thy will be done!
Yet with such anguish, as her onely sonne
The Mother in the hungry grave doth lay,
Unto the fire these Martyrs I betray.
Good soules, (for you give life to every thing)
Good Angels, (for good messages you bring)
Destin'd you might have beene to such an one,
As would have lov'd and worship'd you alone:
One that would suffer hunger, nakednesse,

Yea death, ere he would make your number lesse.
But, I am guilty of your sad decay;
May your few fellowes longer with me stay.
But ô thou wretched finder whom I hate
So, that I almost pittie thy estate:
Gold being the heaviest metal amongst all,
May my most heavy curse upon thee fall:
Here fetter'd, manacled, and hang'd in chains,
First mayst thou bee; then chaine'd to hellish paines;
Or be with forraine gold brib'd to betray
Thy Countrey, and faile both of that and thy pay.
May the next thing thou stoop'st to reach, containe
Poyson, whose nimble fume rot thy moist braine;
Or libels, or some interdicted thing,
Which negligently kept, thy ruine bring.
Lust-bred diseases rot thee; and dwell with thee
Itchy desire, and no abilitie.
May all the evils that gold ever wrought;
All mischiefes that all devils ever thought;
Want after plenty; poore and gouty age;
The plagues of travellers; love; marriage
Afflict thee, and at thy lives last moment,
May thy swolne sinnes themselves to thee presen
But, I forgive; repent thee honest man:
Gold is Restorative, restore it then:
But if from it thou beest loath to depart,
Because 'tis cordiall, would 'twere at thy heart.

ELEGY XII

HIS PARTING FROM HER

SINCE she must go, and I must mourn, come Night,
Environ me with darkness, whilst I write:
Shadow that hell unto me, which alone
I am to suffer when my Love is gone.
Alas the darkest Magick cannot do it,
Thou and greate Hell to boot are shadows to it.
Should Cinthia quit thee, Venus, and each starre,
It would not forme one thought dark as mine are.
I could lend thee obscureness now, and say,
Out of my self, There should be no more Day,
Such is alread my felt want of sight,
Did not the fires within me force a light.
Oh Love, that fire and darkness should be mixt,
Or to thy Triumphs soe strange torments fixt!
Is't because 'thou thy self art blind, that wee
Thy Martyrs must no more each other see?
Or tak'st thou pride to break us on the wheel,
And view old Chaos in the Pains we feel?
Or have we left undone some mutual Rite,
Through holy fear, that merits thy despight?
No, no. The falt was mine, impute it to me,
Or rather to conspiring destinie,
Which (since I lov'd for forme before) decreed,
That I should suffer when I lov'd indeed:
And therefore now, sooner than I can say,
I saw the golden fruit, 'tis rapt away.

Or as I had watcht one drop in a vast stream,
And I left wealthy only in a dream.
Yet Love, thou'rt blinder than thy self in this,
To vex my Dove-like friend for my amiss:
And, where my own sad truth may expiate
Thy wrath, to make her fortune run my fate:
So blinded justice doth, when Favorites fall,
Strike them, their house, their friends, their followers all.
Was't not enough that thou didst dart thy fires
Into our blouds, inflaming our desires,
And made'st us sigh and glow, and pant, and burn,
And then thy self into our flame did'st turn?
Was't not enough, that thou didst hazard us
To paths in love so dark, so dangerous:
And those so ambush'd round with household spies,
And over all, thy husbands trowing eyes
That flam'd with oylie sweat of jealousy:
Yet went we not still on with Constance?
Have we not kept our guards, like spie on spie?
Had correspondence whilst the foe stood by?
Stoln (more to sweeten them) our many blisses
Of meetings, conference, embracements, kisses?
Shadow'd with negligence our most respects?
Varied our language through all dialects,
Of becks, winks, looks, and often under-boards
Spoak dialogues with our feet far from our words?
Have we prov'd all these secrets of our Art,
Yea, thy pale inwards, and thy panting heart?
And, after all this passed Purgatory,
Must sad divorce make us the vulgar story?
First let our eyes be rivited quite through

Our turning brains, and both our lips grow to:
Let our armes clasp like Ivy, and our fear
Freese us together, that we may stick here,
Till Fortune, that would rive us, with the deed,
Strain her eyes open, and it make them bleed.
For Love it cannot be, whom hitherto
I have accus'd, should such a mischief doe.
Oh Fortune, thou'rt not worth my least exclaime,
And plague enough thou hast in thy own shame.
Do thy great worst, my friend and I have armes,
Though not against thy strokes, against thy harmes.
Rend us in sunder, thou canst not divide
Our bodies so, but that our souls are ty'd,
And we can love by letters still and gifts,
And thoughts and dreams; Love never wanteth shifts.
I will not look upon the quickning Sun,
But straight'her beauty to my sense shall run,
The ayre shall note her soft, the fire most pure;
Water suggest her clear, and the earth sure.
Time shall not lose our passages; the Spring
How fresh our love was in the beginning;
The Summer how it ripened in the eare;
And Autumn, what our golden harvests were.
The Winter I'll not think on to spite thee,
But count it a lost season, so shall shee.
And dearest Friend, since we must part, drown night
With hope of Day, burthens well born are light.
Though cold and darkness longer hang somewhere,
Yet Phoebus equally lights all the Sphere.
And what he cannot in like Portions pay,
The world enjoyes in Mass, and so we may.

Be then ever your self, and let no woe
Win on your health, your youth, your beauty: so
Declare your self base fortunes Enemy,
No less by your contempt than constancy:
That I may grow enamoured on your mind,
When my own thoughts I there reflected find.
For this to th'comfort of my Dear I vow,
My Deeds shall still be what my words are now;
The Poles shall move to teach me ere I start;
And when I change my Love, I'll change my heart;
Nay, if I wax but cold in my desire,
Think, heaven hath motion lost, and the world fire:
Much more I could, but many words have made
That, oft, suspected which men would perswade;
Take therefore all in this: I love so true,
As I will never look for less in you.

ELEGY XIII

JULIA

HARKE newes, ô envy, thou shalt heare descry'd
My Julia; who as yet was ne'r envy'd.
To vomit gall in slander, swell her vaines
With calunmy, that hell it selfe disdaines,
Is her continuall practice; does her best,
To teare opinion even out of the brest
Of dearest friends, and (which is worse than vilde)
Sticks jealousy in wedlock; her'owne childe
Scapes not the showres of envie, To repeate
The monstrous fashions, how, were, alive, to eate
Deare reputation. Would to God she were
But halfe so loath to act vice, as to heare
My milde reproofe. Liv'd Mantuan now againe,
That foemall Mastix, to limme with his penne
This she Chymera, that hath eyes of fire,
Burning with anger, anger feeds desire,
Tongued like the night-crow, whose ill boding cries
Give out for nothing but new injuries,
Her breath like to the juice in Tenarus
That blasts the springs, though ne'r so prosperous,
Her hands, I know not how, us'd more to spill
The food of others, than her selfe to fill.
But oh her minde, that Orcus, which includes
Legions of mischiefs, countlesse multitudes
Of formlesse curses, projects unmade up,
Abuses yet unfashion'd, thoughts corrupt,
Mishapen Cavils, palpable untroths,
Inevitable errours, self-accusing oaths:
These, like those Atoms swarming in the Sunne,
Throng in her bosome for creation.
I blush to give her halfe her due; yet say,
No poyson's halfe so bad as Julia.

ELEGY XIV

A TALE OF A CITIZEN AND HIS WIFE

I SING no harme good sooth to any wight,
To Lord or foole, Cuckold, begger or knight,
To peace-teaching Lawyer, Proctor, or brave
Reformed or reduced. Captaine, Knave,
Officer, Jugler, or Justice of peace,
Juror or Judge; I touch no fat sowes grease,
I am no Libeller, nor will be any,
But (like a true man) say there are too many.
I feare not ore tenus; for my tale,
Nor Count nor Counsellour will redd or pale.
A citizen and his wife the other day
Both riding on one horse, upon the way
I overtooke, the wench a pretty peate,
And (by her eye) well fitting for the feate.
I saw the lecherous Citizen turne backe
His head, and on his wifes lip steale a smacke,
Whence apprehending that the man was kinde,
Riding before, to kisse his wife behinde,
To get acquaintance with him I began
To sort discourse fit for so fine a man:
I ask'd the number of the Plaguy Bill,
Ask'd if the Custome Farmers held out still,
Of the Virginian plot, and whether Ward
The traffique of the I [n] land seas had marr'd,
Whether the Brittain Burse did fill apace,
And likely were to give th'Exchange disgrace;

Of new-built Algate, and the More-field crosses,
 Of store of Bankerouts, and poore Merchants losses
 I urged him to speake; But he (as mute
 As an old Courtier worne to his last suite)
 Replies with onely yeas and naves; At last
 (To fit his element) my theame I cast
 On Tradesmens gaines', that set his tongue agoing:
 Alas, good sir (quoth he) There is no doing
 In Court nor City now; she smil'd and I,
 And (in my conscience) both gave him the lie
 In one met thought: but he went on apace,
 And at the present time with such a face
 He rail'd, as fray'd me; for he gave no praise,
 To any but my Lord of Essex dayes;
 Call'd those the age of action true (quoth Hee)
 There's now as great an itch of bravery,
 And heat of taking up, but cold lay downe,
 For, put to push of pay, away they runne;
 Our onely City trades of hope now are
 Bawd, Tavern-keeper, Whore and Scrivener;
 The much of priviled'd kingsmen, and the store
 Of fresh protections make the rest all poore;
 In the first state of their Creation,
 Though many stoutly stand, yet proves not one
 A righteous paymaster. Thus ranne he on
 In a continued rage: so void of reason
 Seem'd his harsh talke, I sweat for feare of treason.
 And (troth) how could I lesse? when in the prayer
 For the protection of the wise Lord Major
 And his wise brethrens worships, when one prayeth,
 He swore that none could say Amen with faith.

To get him off from what I glowed to heare
(In happy time) an *Angel* did appeare,
The bright *Signe* of a lov'd and wel-try'd *Inne*,
Where many *Citizens* with their wives have bin
Well us'd and often; here I pray'd him stay,
To take some due refreshment by the way'
Looke how hee look'd that hid the gold (his hope)
And at's returne found nothing but a *Rope*,
So he on me, refus'd and made away,
Though willing she pleaded a weary day:
I found my misse, struck hands, and praid him tell
(To hold acquaintance still) where he did dwell;
He barely nam'd the street, promis'd the *Wine*,
But his kinde wife gave me the very *Signe*.

ELEGY XV

THE EXPOSTULATION

TO make the doubt cleare, that no woman's true,
Was it my fate to prove it strong in you?
Thought I, but one had breathed purest aire,
And must she needs be false because she's faire?
Is it your beauties marke, or of your youth,
Or your perfection, not to study truth?
Or thinke you heaven is deafe, or hath no eyes?
Or those it hath, smile at your perjuries?
Are vowes so cheape with women, or the matter
Whereof they are made, that they are writ in water,
And blowne away with winde? Or doth their breath
(Both hot and cold at once) make life and death?
Who could have thought so many accents sweet
Form'd into words, so many sighs should meete
As from our hearts, so many oathes, and teares
Sprinkled among, (all sweeter by our feares
And the divine impression of stolne kisses,
That seal'd the rest) should now prove empty blisses?
Did you draw bonds to forfeit? signe to breake?
Or must we reade you quite from what you speake,
And finde the truth out the wrong way? or must
Hee first desire you false, would wish you just?
O I prophane, though most of women be
This kinde of beast, my thought shall except thee;
My dearest love, though froward jealousies
With circumstance might urge thy inconstancie,

Sooner I'll thinke the Sunne will cease to cheare
The teeming earth, and that forget to beare,
Sooner that rivers will runne back, or Thames
With ribs of Ice in June would bind his streames,
Or Nature, by whose strength the world endures,
Would change her course, before you alter yours.
But that treacherous breast to whom weake you
Did trust our Counsell, and wee both may rue,
Having his falsehood found too late, 'twas hee
That made me cast you guilty, and you me,
Whilst he, black wretch, betray'd each simple word
Wee spake, unto the cunning of a third.
Curst may hee be, that so our love hath slaine,
And wander on the earth, wretched as Cain,
Wretched as hee, and not deserve least pittie;
In plaguing him, let misery be witty;
Let all eyes shunne him, and hee shunne each eye,
Till hee be noysome as his infamie;
May he without remorse deny God thrice,
And not be trusted more on his Soules price;
And after all selfe torment, when hee dyes,
May Wolves teare out his heart, Vultures his eyes,
Swine eate his bowels, and his falsen tongue
That utter'd all, be to some Raven flung,
And let his carrion coarse be a longer feast
To the Kings dogges, than any other beast.
Now have I curst, let us our love revive;
In mee the flame was never more alive;
I could beginne againe to court and praise,
And in that pleasure lengthen the short dayes
Of my lifes lease; like Painters that do take

Delight, not in made worke, but whiles they make;
I could renew those times, when first I saw
Love in your eyes, that gave my tongue the law
To like what you lik'd; and at maskes and playes
Commend the self same Actors, the same wayes;
Aske how you did, and often with intent
Of being officious, be impertinent;
All which were such soft pastimes, as in these
Love was as subtilly catch'd, as a disease;
But being got it is a treasure sweet,
Which to defend is harder than to net:
And ought not be prophan'd on either part,
For though'tis got by chance,'tis kept by art.

ELEGY XVI

ON HIS MISTRESS

BY our first strange and fatall interview,
By all desires which thereof did ensue,
By our long starving hopes, by that remorse
Which my words masculine perswasive force
Begot in thee, and by the memory
Of hurts, which spies and rivals threatned me,
I calmly beg: But by thy fathers wrath,
'By all paines, which want and divorcement hath,
I conjure thee, and all the oathes which I
And thou have sworne to seale joynt constancy,
Here I unswear, and overswear them thus,
Thou shalt not love by wayes so dangerous.
Temper, ô faire Love, loves impetuous rage,
Be my true Mistris still, not my faign'd Page;
I'll goe, and, by thy kinde leave, leave behinde
Thee, onely worthy to nurse in my minde,
Thirst to come backe; ô if thou die before,
My soule from other lands to thee shall soare.
Thy (else Almighty) beautie cannot move
Rage from the Seas, nor thy love teach them love,
Nor tame wilde Boreas harshnesse; Thou hast reade
How roughly hee in peeces shivered
Faire Orithea, whom he swore he lov'd.
Fall ill or good, 'tis madnesse to have prov'd
Dangers unurg'd; Feed on this flattery,
That absent Lovers one in th'other be.

Dissemble nothing, not a boy, nor change
Thy bodies habite, nor mindes; bee not strange
To thy selfe onely; All will spie in thy face
A blushing womanly discovering grace;
Richly cloath'd Apes, are call'd Apes, and as soone
Ecclips'd as bright we call the Moone the Moone.
Men of France, changeable Camelions,
Spittles of diseases, shops of fashions,
Loves fuellers, and the rightest company
Of Players, which upon the worlds stage be,
Will quickly know thee, and no lesse, alas!
Th'indifferent Italian, as we passe
His warme land, well content to thinke thee Page,
Will hunt thee with such lust, and hideous rage,
As Lots faire guests were vext. But none of these
Nor spungy hydroptique Dutch shall thee displease,
If thou stay here. O stay here, for, for thee
England is onely a worthy Gallerie, hence
To walke in expectation, till from thence
Our greatest King call thee to his presence.
When I am gone, dreame me some happinesse,
Nor let thy lookes our long hid love confesses
Nor praise, nor dispraise me, nor blesse nor curse
Openly loves force, nor in bed fright thy Nurse
With midnights starlings, crying out, oh, oh
Nurse, ô my love is slaine, I saw him goe
O'r the white Alpes alone; I saw him I,
Assail'd, fight, taken, stabb'd, bleed, fall, and die.
Augure me better chance, except dread Jove
Thinke it enough for me to'have had thy love.

ELEGY XVII

VARIETY

THE heavens rejoyce in motion, why should I
Abjure my so much lov'd variety,
And not with many youth and love divide?
Pleasure is none, if not diversifi'd:
The sun that sitting in the chaire of light
Sheds flame into what else soever doth seem bright,
Is not contented at one Signe to Inne,
But ends his year and with a new beginnes.
All things doe willingly in change delight,
The fruitfull mother of our appetite:
Rivers the clearer and more pleasing are,
Where their fair spreading streames run wide and farr;
And a dead lake that no strange bark doth greet,
Corrupts it self and what doth live in it.
Let no man tell me such a one is faire,
And worthy all alone my love to share.
Nature in her hath done the liberall part
Of a kinde Mistresse, and imploy'd her art
To make her loveable, and I aver
Him not humane that would turn back from her:
I love her well, and would, if need were, dye
To doe her service. But followes it that I
Must serve her onely, when I may have choice
Of other beauties, and in change rejoyce?
The law is hard, and shall not have my voice.
The last I saw in all extreames is faire,

And holds me in the Sun-beames of her haire;
Her nymph-like features such agreements have
That I could venture with her to the grave:
Another's brown, I like her not the worse,
Her tongue is soft and takes me with discourse:
Others, for that they well descended are,
Do in my love obtain as large a shaxe;
And though they be not fair, 'tis much with mee
To win their love onely for their degree.
And though I faile of my required ends,
The attempt is glorious and it self commends.
How happy were our Syres in ancient time,
Who held plurality of loves no crime!
With them it was accounted charity
To stirre up race of all indifferently;
Kindreds were not exempted from the bands:
Which with the Persian still in usage stands.
Women were then no sooner asked than won,
And what they did was honest and well done.
But since this title honour hath been us'd,
Our weake credulity hath been abus'd;
The golden laws of nature are repeald,
Which our first Fathers in such reverence held;
Our liberty's revers'd, our Charter's gone,
And we're made servants to opinion,
A monster in no certain shape attir'd,
And whose originall is much desir'd,
Formlesse at first, but growing on it fashions,
And doth prescribe manners afid laws to nations.
Here love receiv'd immedicable harmes,
And was despoiled of his daring armes.

A greater want than is his daring eyes,
He lost those awfull wings with which he flies;
His sinewy bow, and those immortall darts
Wherewith he 'is wont to bruise resisting hearts.
Onely some few strong in themselves and free
Retain the seeds of antient liberty,
Following that part of Love although deprest,
And make a throne for him within their brest,
In spight of modern censures him avowing
Their Sovereigne, all service him allowing.
Amongst which troop although I am the least,
Yet equall in perfection with the best,
I glory in subjection of his hand,
Nor ever did decline his least command:
For in whatever forme the message came
My heart did open and receive the same.
But time will in his course a point discry
When I this loved service must deny,
For our allegiance temporary is,
With firmer age returns our liberties.
What time in years and judgement we repos'd,
Shall not so easily be to change dispos'd,
Nor to the art of severall eyes obeying;
But beauty with true worth securely weighing,
Which being found assembled in some one,
Wee'l love her ever, and love her alone.

ELEGY XVIII

LOVE'S PROGRESS

WHO ever loves, if he do not propose
The right true end of love, he's one that goes
To sea for nothing but to make him sick:
Love is a bear-whelp born, if we o're lick
Our love, and force it new strange shapes to take,
We erre, and of a lump a monster make.
Were not a Calf a monster that were grown
Face'd like a man, though better than his own?
Perfection is in unities: preferr
One woman first, and then one thing in her.
I, when I value gold, may think upon
The ductilness, the application,
The wholesomness, the ingenuitie,
From rust, from soil, from fire ever free:
But if I love it, 'tis because 'tis made
By our new nature (Use) the soul of trade.
All these in women we might think upon
(If women had them) and yet love but one.
Can men more injure women than to say
They love them for that, by which they're not they?
Makes virtue woman? must I cool my bloud
Till I both be, and find one wise and good?
May barren Angels love so. But if we
Make love to woman; virtue is not she:
As beauty is not nor wealth: He that strays thus
From her to hers, is more adulterous,

Than if he took her maid. Search every sphear
And firmament, our Cupid is not there:
He's an infernal god and under ground,
With Pluto dwells, where gold and fire abound:
Men to such Gods, their sacrificing Coles
Did not in Altars lay, but pits and holes.
Although we see Celestial bodies move
Above the earth, the earth we Till and love:
So we her ayres contemplate, words and heart,
And virtues; but we love the Centrique part.
Nor is the soul more worthy, or more fit
For love, than this, as infinite as it.
But in attaining this desired place
How much they erre; that set out at the face?
The hair a Forest is of Ambushes,
Of springes, snares, fetters and manacles:
The brow becalms us when 'tis smooth and plain,
And when 'tis wrinckled, shipwrecks us again.
Smooth, 'tis a Paradice, where we would have
Immortal stay, and wrinckled 'tis our grave.
The Nose (like to the first Meridian) runs
Not 'twixt an East and West, but 'twixt two suns;
It leaves a Cheek, a rosie Hemisphere
On either side, and then directs us where
Upon the Islands fortunate we fall,
(Not faynte Canaries, but Ambrosiall)
Her swelling lips; To which when wee are come,
We anchor there, and think our selves at home,
For they seem all: there Syrens songs, and there
Wise Delphick Oracles do fill the ear;
There in a Creek where chosen pearls do swell,

The Remora, her cleaving tongue doth dwell.
These, and the glorious Promontory, her Chin
Ore past; and the streight Hellespont betweene
The Sestos and Abydos of her breasts,
(Not of two Lovers, but two Loves the neasts)
Succeeds a boundless sea, but yet thine eye
Some Island moles may scattered there descry;
And Sailing towards her India, in that way
Shall at her fair Atlantick Navell stay;
Though thence the Current be thy Pilot made,
Yet ere thou be where thou wouldst be embay'd,
Thou shalt upon another Forest set,
Where many Shipwrack, and no further get.
When thou art there, consider what this chace
Mispent by thy beginning at the face.
Rather set out below; practice my Art,
Some Symetry the foot hath with that part
Which thou dost seek, and is thy Map for that
Lovely enough to stop, but not stay at:
Least subject to disguise and change it is;
Men say the Devil never can change his.
It is the Emblem that hath figured
Firmness; 'tis the first part that comes to bed.
Civilitie we see refin'd: the kiss
Which at the face began, transplanted is,
Since to the hand, since to the Imperial knee,
Now at the Papal foot delights to be:
If Kings think that the nearer way, and do
Rise from the foot, Lovers may do so too;
For as free Spheres move faster far than can
Birds, whom the air resists, so may that man

Which goes this empty and Ætherial way,
Than if at beauties elements he stay.
Rich Nature hath in women wisely made
Two purses, and their mouths aversely laid:
They then, which to the lower tribute owe,
That way which that Exchequer looks, must go:
He which doth not, his error is as great,
As who by Clyster gave the Stomack meat.

ELEGY XIX

TO HIS MISTRESS GOING TO BED

COME, Madam come, all rest my powers defie,
Until I labour, I in labour lie.
The foe oft-times having the foe in sight,
Is tir'd with standing though he never fight.
Off with that girdle, like heavens Zone glistening,
But a far fairer world encompassing.
Unpin that spangled breastplate which you wear,
That th'eyes of busie fooles may be stopt there.
Unlace your self, for that harmonious chyme,
Tells me from you, that now it is bed time.
Off with that happy busk, which I envie,
That still can be, and still can stand so nigh.
Your gown going off, such beauteous state reveals,
As when from flowry meads th'hills shadow steales.
Off with that wyerie Coronet and shew
The haiery Diademe which on you doth grow:
Now off with those shooes, and then safely tread
In this loves hallow'd temple, this soft bed.
In such white robes, heaven's Angels us'd to be
Receavd by men; Thou Angel bringst with thee
A heaven like Mahomets 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 roaving hands, and let them go,
Before, behind, between, above, below.

O my America! my new-found-land,
My kingdome, safeliest when with one man man'd,
My Myne of precious stones, My Emperie,
How blest am I in this discovering thee!
To enter in these bonds, is to be free;
Then where my hand is set, my seal shall be.
Full nakedness! All joyes are due to thee,
As souls unbodied, bodies uncloth'd must be
To taste whole joyes. Gems which you women use
Are like Atlanta's balls, cast in mens views,
That when a fools eye lighteth on a Gem,
His earthly soul may covet theirs, not them.
Like pictures, or like books gay coverings made
For lay-men, are all women thus array'd;
Themselves are mystick books, which only wee
(Whom their imputed grace will dignifie)
Must see reveal'd. Then since that I may know;
As liberally, as to, a Midwife, shew
Thy self: cast all yea, this white lynnens hence,
There is no pennance due to innocence.
To teach thee, I am naked first; why then
What needst thou have more covering than a man.

ELEGY XX

LOVE'S WAR

TILL I have peace with thee, warr other Men,
And when I have peace, can I leave thee then?
All other Warrs are scrupulous; Only thou
fayr free Citty, maist thyselfe allow
To any one: In Flanders, who can tell
Whether the Master presse; or men rebell?
Only we know, that which all Ideots say,
They beare most blows which come to part the fray.
France in her lunatique giddines did hate
Ever our men, yea and our God of late;
Yet she relyes upon our Angels well,
Which nere returne; no more than they which fell.
Sick Ireland is with a strange warr possest
Like to an Ague; now raging, now at rest;
Which time will cure: yet it must doe her good
If she were purg'd, and her head vayne let blood.
And Midas joyes our Spanish journeys give,
We touch all gold, but find no food to live.
And I should be in the hott parching clime,
To dust and ashes turn'd before my time.
To mew me in a Ship, is to intrall
Mee in a prison, that weare like to fall;
Or in a Cloyster; save that there men dwell
In a calme heaven, here in a swaggering hell.
Long voyages are long consumptions,
And ships are carts for executions.
Yea they are Deaths; Is't not all one to flye

Into an other World, as t'is to dye?
Here lett mee warr; in these armes lett mee lye;
Here lett mee parle, batter, bleede, and dye.
Thyne armes imprison me, and myne armes thee,
Thy hart thy ransome is, take myne for mee.
Other men war that they their rest may gayne;
But wee will rest that wee may fight agayne.
Those warrs the ignorant, these th'experienc'd love,
There wee are alwayes under, here above.
There Engins farr off breed a just true feare,
Neere thrusts, pikes, stabs, yea bullets hurt not here.
There lyes are wrongs; here safe uprightly ly;
Tltere men kill men, we'll make one by and by,
Thou nothing; I not halfe so much shall do
In these Warrs, as they may which from us two
Shall spring. Thousands wee see which travaile not
To warrs; But stay swords, armes, and shott
To make at home; And shall not I do then
More glorious service, staying to make men?

The letter to C.E. Putnam at the beginning of Book II was adapted from John Donne's letters to the following recipients:

The worthiest Lady Mrs Bridget White; Sir H. Goodere;
The Noblest Knight Sr Edward Herbert L. of Cherbury.

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