



Metaphysical and Cavalier Poetry





Death Be Not Proud by J. Donne

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure, then from thee much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.



On My First Son by B. Johnson

Farewell, thou child of my right hand, and joy;
My sin was too much hope of thee, loved boy.
Seven years thou wert lent to me, and I thee pay,
Exacted by thy fate, on the just day.
O, could I lose all father now! For why
Will man lament the state he should envy?
To have so soon 'scaped world's and flesh's rage,
And, if no other misery, yet age?
Rest in soft peace, and, asked, say here doth lie
Ben Jonson his best piece of poetry;
For whose sake, henceforth, all his vows be such,
As what he loves may never like too much.



*To The Virgins, To Make Much of
Time by R. Herrick*

Gather ye rosebuds, while ye may,
Old time is still a-flying:
And this same flower that smiles today
Tomorrow will be dying.
The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
The higher he's a-getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.
The age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times still succeed the former...



Why So Pale and Wan, Fond Lover?

By Sir J. Suckling

Why so pale and wan, fond lover?

Prithee, why so pale?

Will, when looking well can't move her,
Looking ill prevail?

Prithee, why so pale?

Why so dull and mute, young sinner?

Prithee, why so mute?

Will, when speaking well can't win her,
Saying nothing do 't?

Prithee, why so mute?...



To Lucasta, Going to the War by R.

Lovelace

Tell me not, sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore;
I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honor more.