

1. a. *The Flea*

by John Donne

Mark but this flea, and mark in this,
How little that which thou deny'st me is;
It sucked me first, and now sucks thee,
And in this flea, our two bloods mingled be;
Thou knowest that this cannot be said
A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead.
Yet this enjoys before it woo,
And pampered, swells with one blood made of two,
And this, alas, is more than we would do.
Oh 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 are met
And cloistered 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 sucked from thee?
Yet thou triumph'st, and sayest that thou
Find'st not thyself, nor me, the weaker now.
'Tis true, then learn how false fears be;
Just so much honor, when thou yieldst to me,
Will waste, as this flea's death took life from thee.

1. b. *To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time*

by Robert 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.
That 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.
Then be not coy, but use your time,
And while ye may, go marry;
For having lost but once your prime,
You may forever tarry.

1. c. *To His Coy Mistress*

by Andrew Marvell

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;
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.

1. d. Ausonius (c. 310–395)

*collige, virgo, rosas, dum flos novus et nova pubes,
et memor esto aevum sic properare tuum.*

2. a. Horace, Odes 1.11

Mercuri, – nam te docilis magistro
mouit Amphion lapides canendo, –
tuque testudo resonare septem
 callida nervis,
nec loquax olim neque grata, nunc et 5
diuitum mensis et amica templis,
dic modos, Lyde quibus obstinatas
 applicet auris,
quae uelut latis equa trima campis
ludit exultim metuitque tangi, 10
nuptiarum expers et adhuc proteruo
 cruda marito.
tu potes tigris comitesque siluas
ducere et riuos celeres morari;
cessit inmanis tibi blandienti 15
 ianitor aulae
Cerberus, quamuis furiale centum
muniant angues caput eius atque
spiritus taeter saniesque manet
 ore trilingui. 20
quin et Ixion Tityosque uoltu
risit inuito, stetit urna paulum
sicca, dum grato Danai puellas
 carmine mulces.
audiat Lyde scelus atque notas 25
uirginum poenas et inane lymphae
dolum fundo pereuntis imo
 seraque fata,
quae manent culpas etiam sub Orco.
Impiae (nam quid potuere maius?) 30
impiae sponso potuere duro
 perdere ferro.
una de multis face nuptiali
digna periurum fuit in parentem
splendide mendax et in omne uirgo 35
 nobilis aeuom,
'Surge', quae dixit iuueni marito,
'surge, ne longus tibi somnus, unde
non times, detur; socerum et scelestas
 falle sorores, 40
quae uelut nactae uitulos leaenae
singulos eheu lacerant. Ego illis
mollior nec te feriam neque intra
 claustra tenebo.
me pater saeuus oneret catenis, 45
quod uiro clemens misero peperci,
me uel extremos Numidarum in agros
 classe releget.
i, pedes quo te rapiunt et aurae,
dum fauet Nox et Venus, i secundo 50
omine et nostri memorem sepulcro
 scalpe querellam.'

Maidens, gather roses, while blooms are fresh and youth is fresh, and be mindful that your life-time hastes away.

Mercury (since, taught by you, his master, Amphion could move the stones, with his singing), and you, tortoise shell, clever at making your seven strings echo, you, who were neither eloquent nor lovely, but welcomed, now, by rich tables and temples, play melodies to which Lyde might apply a reluctant ear, who gambols friskily, like a three year old filly, over the widening plain, fears being touched, a stranger to marriage, who's not yet ripe for a forceful mate. You've the power to lead tigers and forests as attendants, and hold back the swift-running streams: Cerberus, the frightful doorkeeper of Hell, yielded to your charms, though a hundred snakes guarded his fearful head, and a hideous breath flowed out of his mouth and poisoned venom was frothing around his triple-tongued jaws. Even Ixion and Tityos smiled, with unwilling faces, and, for a little while, the urns were dry, as your sweet song delighted Danaus' daughters. Lyde should listen to those girls' wickedness and their punishment, it's well known: their wine jars empty, water vanishing through the bottom: that fate long-delayed that still waits for wrongdoers down in Orcus. Impious (what worse could they have committed?) impious, they had the power to destroy their lovers with cruel steel. Hypermnestra alone of the many was worthy of marriage, splendidly deceiving her lying father, a girl rendered noble for ages to come, 'Up, up,' she cried to her young husband, 'lest sleep, that lasts forever, comes, to you, from a source you wouldn't expect: escape from my father, my wicked sisters, ah, they're like lionesses who each has seized a young bullock, and tears at it: I, gentler than them, will never strike you, or hold you under lock and key. Let my father weigh me down with cruel chains, because in mercy I spared my wretched man: let him banish me in a ship to the far Numidian lands. Go, wherever your feet and the winds take you, while Venus, and Night, both favour you: luck be with you: and carve an epitaph on my tomb, in fond memory.

2. b. Horace, *Odes* 3.10

extremum Tanain si biberes, Lyce,
saeuo nupta uiro, me tamen asperas
porrectum ante foris obicere incolis
 plorares Aquilonibus.
audis quo strepitu ianua, quo nemus 5
inter pulchra satum tecta remugiat
uentis, et positas ut glaciet niues
 puro numine Iuppiter?
ingratam Veneri pone superbiam,
ne currente retro funis eat rota: 10
non te Penelopen difficilem procis
 Tyrrhenus genuit parens.
o quamuis neque te munera nec preces
nec tinctus uiola pallor amantium
nec uir Pieria paelice saucius 15
 curuat, supplicibus tuis
parcas, nec rigida mollior aesculo
nec Mauris animum mitior anguibus:
non hoc semper erit liminis aut aquae
 caelestis patiens latus. 20

If you drank the water of furthest Don, Lyce, married to some fierce husband, you'd still expose me to the wailing winds of your native North country, stretched out here by your cruel door. Hear how the frame creaks, how the trees that are planted inside your beautiful garden moan in the wind, and how Jupiter's pure power and divinity ices over the fallen snow. Set aside your disdain, it's hateful to Venus, lest the rope fly off, while the wheel is still turning: you're no Penelope, resistant to suitors, nor born of Etruscan parents. O, spare your suppliants, though nothing moves you, not gifts, not my prayers, not your lover's pallor, that's tinged with violet, nor your husband smitten with a Pierian mistress, you, no more pliant than an unbending oak-tree, no gentler in spirit than a Moorish serpent. My body won't always put up with your threshold, or the rain that falls from the sky.

2. c. Horace, *Odes* 3.7

Quid fles, Asterie, quem tibi candidi
primo restituent uere Fauonii
 Thyna merce beatum,
 constantis iuuenem fide
Gygen? Ille Notis actus ad Oricum 5
post insana Caprae sidera frigidas
 noctes non sine multis
 insomnis lacrimis agit.
atqui sollicitae nuntius hospitae,
suspirare Chloen et miseram tuis 10
 dicens ignibus uri,
 temptat mille uafere modis.
ut Proetum mulier perfida credulum
falsis inpulerit criminibus nimis
 casto Bellerophonatae 15
 maturare necem, refert;
narrat paene datum Pelea Tartaro,
Magnessam Hippolyten dum fugit abstinens,
 et peccare docentis
 fallax historias monet. 20
frustra: nam scopulis surdior Icari
uocis audit adhuc integer. At tibi
 ne uicinus Enipeus
 plus iusto placeat caue;
quamuis non alius flectere equum sciens 25
aeque conspicitur gramine Martio,
 nec quisquam citus aeque
 Tusco denatat alueo,

prima nocte domum claude neque in uias
sub cantu querulae despice tibiae 30
 et te saepe uocanti
 duram difficilis mane.

Why weep, Asterie, for Gyges, whom west winds will bring back to you at the first breath of springtime, your lover constant in faith, blessed with goods, from Bithynia? Driven by easterlies as far as Epirus, now, after Capella's wild rising, he passes chill nights of insomnia, and not without many a tear. Yet messages from his solicitous hostess, telling how wretched Chloë sighs for your lover, and burns with desire, tempts him subtly and in a thousand ways. She tells how a treacherous woman, making false accusations, drove credulous Proteus to bring a too-hasty death to a too-chaste Bellerophon: she tells of Peleus, nearly doomed to Hades, fleeing Magnesian Hippolyte in abstinence: and deceitfully teaches tales that encourage wrongdoing. All in vain: still untouched, he hears her voice, as deaf as the Icarian cliffs. But take care yourself lest Enipeus, next door, pleases you more than is proper: even though no one else is considered as fine at controlling his horse, on the Campus's turf, and no one else swims as fast as him, down the Tiber's channel.

3. a. Horace, *Odes* 1.11

Tu ne quaesieris (scire nefas) quem mihi, quem tibi
finem di dederint, Leuconoe, nec Babylonios
temptaris numeros. Vt melius quicquid erit pati!
Seu pluris hiemes seu tribuit Iuppiter ultimam,
quae nunc oppositis debilitat pumicibus mare 5
Tyrrhenum, sapias, uina liques et spatio breui
spem longam reseces. Dum loquimur, fugerit inuida
aetas: carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero.

Leuconoë, don't ask, we never know, what fate the gods grant
us, whether your fate or mine, don't waste your time on
Babylonian, futile, calculations. How much better to suffer
what happens, whether Jupiter gives us more winters or this is
the last one, one debilitating the Tyrrhenian Sea on opposing
cliffs. Be wise, and mix the wine, since time is short: limit that
far-reaching hope. The envious moment is flying now, now,
while we're speaking: Seize the day, place in the hours that
come as little faith as you can.

3. b. Horace, *Odes* 1.23

vitas inuleo me similis, Chloe,
quaerenti pauidam montibus auis
matrem non sine uano
aurarum et siluae metu.
nam seu mobilibus ueris inhorruit 5
aduentus folliis, seu uirides rubum
dimouere lacertae,
et corde et genibus tremit.
atqui non ego te, tigris ut aspera
Gaetulusue leo, frangere persequor: 10
tandem desine matrem
tempestiua sequi uiro.

You run away from me as a fawn does, Chloë, searching the
trackless hills for its frightened mother, not without aimless
terror of the pathless winds, and the woods. For if the coming
of spring begins to rustle among the trembling leaves, or if a
green lizard pushes the brambles aside, then she trembles in
heart and limb. And yet I'm not chasing after you to crush you
like a fierce tiger, or a Gaetolian lion: stop following your
mother, now, you're ready for a man.

3. c. Horace, *Odes* 2.5

Nondum subacta ferre iugum ualet
ceruice, nondum munia comparis
aequare nec tauri ruentis
in uenerem tolerare pondus.
circa uirentis est animus tuae 5
campos iuuencae, nunc fluuiis grauem
solantis aestum, nunc in udo
ludere cum uitulis salicto
praegestientis. Tolle cupidinem
immitis uuae: iam tibi liuidos 10
distinguet autumnus racemos
purpureo uarius colore;
iam te sequetur; currit enim ferox
aetas et illi quos tibi dempserit
adponet annos; iam proterua
fronte petet Lalage maritum, 15
dilecta, quantum non Pholoë fugax,
non Chloris albo sic umero nitens
ut pura nocturno renidet
luna mari Cnidiusue Gyges, 20
quem si puellarum insereres choro,
mire sagacis falleret hospites
discrimen obscurum solutis
crinibus ambiguoque uoltu.

She's not ready to bear a yoke on her bowed neck yet, she's
not yet equal to the duty of coupling, or bearing the heavy
weight of a charging bull in the mating act. The thoughts of
your heifer are on green pastures, on easing her burning heat in
the river, and sporting with the eager calves in the depths of
moist willow plantations. Forget this passion of yours for the
unripe grape: autumn, the season of many-colours, will soon
be dyeing bluish clusters a darker purple, on the vine, for you.
Soon she'll pursue you, since fierce time rushes on and will
add to her the years it takes from you, soon Lalage herself will
be eager to search you out as a husband, Lalage, beloved as
shy Pholoë was not, nor your Chloris, with shoulders gleaming
white, like a clear moon shining over a midnight sea, nor
Cnidian Gyges, that lovely boy, whom you could insert in a
choir of girls, and the wisest of strangers would fail to tell the
difference, with him hidden behind his flowing hair, and
ambiguous looks.