



John Donne's Satyres
&
Absolutely Nothing Else

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FOREWORD

It's a reasonable question: Why the fuck are you re-publishing *John Donne's* satires? The guy's so old he spells an egregiously arcane genre in a completely arcane manner. *With a Y???*

Donne's style of linguistics is a one-of-one, but most contemporary fans (if there are any left after Eliot died back in '65?) focus on his lyrical output. Not for illegitimate reasons!

His lyric poems are great (and also more voluminous). But I think there's a certain magic when Donne's acerbic wit is paired with his double knotted linguistic acumen, for some of the more sui generis lyrical short stories penned in our language.

The Satire, for our purposes in the 2020s, is fundamentally a *battle-rap-as-short-story*. And Donne's, while free to read in the public domain, are unfortunately usually buried in the back of this or that 800 page collection from 1826, between lyrics, religious work, and, you know, verse letters and shit.

I felt as though they deserved a little more ... space to breathe?

—Nicholas Katsafanas

August 2026

SATYRE I

Away thou fondling motley humorist,
Leave mee, and in this standing wooden chest,
Consorted with these few bookes, let me lye
In prison, and here be coffin'd, when I dye;
Here are Gods conduits, grave Divines; and here
Natures Secretary, the Philosopher;
And jolly Statesmen, which teach how to tie
The sinewes of a cities mistique bodie;
Here gathering Chroniclers, and by them stand
Giddie fantastique Poëts of each land.
Shall I leave all this constant company,
And follow headlong, wild uncertaine thee?
First sweare by thy best love in earnest
(If thou which lov'st all, canst love any best)
Thou wilt not leave mee in the middle street,
Though some more spruce companion thou dost
meet,
Not though a Captaine do come in thy way
Bright parcell gilt, with forty dead mens pay,
Not though a briske perfum'd piert Courtier
Deigne with a nod, thy courtesie to answer.
Nor come a velvet Justice with a long
Great traine of blew coats, twelve, or fourteen
strong,
Wilt thou grin or fawne on him, or prepare
A speech to Court his beautious sonne and heire!

For better or worse take mee, or leave mee:
 To take, and leave mee is adultery.
 Oh monstrous, superstitious puritan,
 Of refin'd manners, yet ceremoniall man,
 That when thou meet'st one, with enquiring eyes
 Dost search, and like a needy broker prize
 The silke, and gold he weares, and to that rate
 So high or low, dost raise thy formall hat:
 That wilt consort none, untill thou have knowne
 What lands hee hath in hope, or of his owne,
 As though all thy companions should make thee
 Jointures, and marry thy deare company.
 Why should'st thou (that dost not onely approve,
 But in ranke itchie lust, desire, and love
 The nakednesse and barenesse to enjoy,
 Of thy plumpe muddy whore, or prostitute boy)
 Hate vertue, though shee be naked, and bare?
 At birth, and death, our bodies naked are;
 And till our Soules be unapparrelled
 Of bodies, they from blisse are banished.
 Mans first blest state was naked, when by sinne
 Hee lost that, yet hee was cloath'd but in beasts
 skin,
 And in this course attire, which I now weare,
 With God, and with the Muses I conferre.
 But since thou like a contrite penitent,
 Charitably warn'd of thy sinnes, dost repent
 These vanities, and giddinesses, loe

I shut my chamber doore, and come, lets goe.
But sooner may a cheape whore, who hath beene
Worne by as many severall men in sinne,
As are black feathers, or musk-colour hose,
Name her childs right true father, 'mongst all
those:

Sooner may one guesse, who shall beare away
The Infanta of London, Heire to an India;
And sooner may a gulling weather Spie
By drawing forth heavens Scheme tell certainly
What fashioned hats, or ruffes, or suits next yeare
Our subtile-witted antique youths will weare;
Then thou, when thou depart'st from mee, canst
show

Whither, why, when, or with whom thou wouldst
go.

But how shall I be pardon'd my offence
That thus have sinn'd against my conscience?
Now we are in the street; He first of all
Improvidently proud, creepes to the wall,
And so imprisoned, and hem'd in by mee
Sells for a little state his libertie;
Yet though he cannot skip forth now to greet
Every fine silken painted foole we meet,
He them to him with amorous smiles allures,
And grins, smacks, shrugs, and such an itch
endures,
As prentises, or schoole-boyes which doe know

Of some gay sport abroad, yet dare not goe.
And as fiddlers stop lowest, at highest sound,
So to the most brave, stoops hee nigh'st the
ground.

But to a grave man, he doth move no more
Then the wise politique horse would heretofore,
Or thou O Elephant or Ape wilt doe,
When any names the King of Spaine to you.
Now leaps he upright, Joggs me, & cryes, Do you
see

Yonder well favoured youth? Which? Oh, 'tis hee
That dances so divinely; Oh, said I,
Stand still, must you dance here for company?
Hee droopt, wee went, till one (which did excell
Th'Indians, in drinking his Tobacco well)
Met us; they talk'd; I whispered, let'us goe,
'T may be you smell him not, truely I doe;
He heares not mee, but, on the other side
A many-coloured Peacock having spide,
Leaves him and mee; I for my lost sheep stay;
He followes, overtakes, goes on the way,
Saying, him whom I last left, all repute
For his device, in hansoming a sute,
To judge of lace, pinke, panes, print, cut, and
plight,
Of all the Court, to have the best conceit;
Our dull Comedians want him, let him goe;

But Oh, God strengthen thee, why stoop'st thou
so?

Why? he hath travayld; Long? No; but to me
(Which understand none,) he doth seeme to be
Perfect French, and Italian; I replyed,
So is the Poxe; He answered not, but spy'd
More men of fort, of parts, and qualities;
At last his Love he in a windowe spies,
And like light dew exhal'd, he flings from mee
Violently ravish'd to his lechery.
Many were there, he could command no more;
Hee quarrell'd fought, bled; and turn'd out of dore
Directly came to mee hanging the head,
And constantly a while must keepe his bed.

SATYRE II

Sir; though (I thanke God for it) I do hate
Perfectly all this towne, yet there's one state
In all ill things so excellently best,
That hate, toward them, breeds pittie towards the
rest.

Though Poëtry indeed be such a sinne
As I thinke that brings dearths, and Spaniards in,
Though like the Pestilence and old fashion'd love,
Ridlingly it catch men; and doth remove
Never, till it be sterv'd out; yet their state
Is poore, disarm'd, like Papists, not worth hate.
One, (like a wretch, which at Barre judg'd as dead,
Yet prompts him which stands next, and cannot
read,

And saves his life) gives ideot actors meanes
(Starving himselfe) to live by his labor'd sceanes;
As in some Organ, Puppits dance above
And bellows pant below, which them do move.
One would move Love by rithmes; but witchcrafts
charms

Bring not now their old feares, nor their old
harmes:

Rammes, and slings now are seely battery,
Pistolets are the best Artillerie.
And they who write to Lords, rewards to get,
Are they not like singers at doores for meat?

And they who write, because all write, have still
 That excuse for writing, and for writing ill;
 But hee is worst, who (beggarly) doth chaw
 Others wits fruits, and in his ravenous maw
 Rankly digested, doth those things out-spue,
 As his owne things; and they are his owne, 'tis true,
 For if one eate my meate, though it be knowne
 The meate was mine, th'excrement is his owne:
 But these do mee no harme, nor they which use
 To out-doe Dildoes, and out-usure Jewes;
 To out-drinke the sea, to out-sweare the Letanie;
 Who with sinnes all kindes as familiar bee
 As Confessors; and for whose sinfull sake,
 Schoolemen new tenements in hell must make:
 Whose strange sinnes, Canonists could hardly tell
 In which Commandements large receipt they dwell.
 But these punish themselves; the insolence
 Of Coscus onely breeds my just offence,
 Whom time (which rots all, and makes botches
 poxe,
 And plodding on, must make a calfe an oxe)
 Hath made a Lawyer, which was (alas) of late
 But a scarce Poët; jollier of this state,
 Then are new benefic'd ministers, he throwes
 Like nets, or lime-twigs, wheresoever he goes,
 His title of Barrister, on every wench,
 And wooes in language of the Pleas, and Bench:
 A motion, Lady; Speake Coscus; I have beene

In love, ever since tricesimo of the Queene,
 Continuall claimes I have made, injunctions got
 To stay my rivals suit, that hee should not
 Proceed; spare mee; In Hillary terme I went,
 You said, If I return'd next size in Lent,
 I should be in remitter of your grace;
 In th'interim my letters should take place
 Of affidavits: words, words, which would teare
 The tender labyrinth of a soft maids eare,
 More, more, then ten Sclavonians scolding, more
 Then when winds in our ruin'd Abbeyes rore.
 When sicke with Poëtrie, and possest with muse
 Thou wast, and mad, I hop'd; but men which chuse
 Law practise for meere gaine, bold soule, repute
 Worse then imbrothel'd strumpets prostitute.
 Now like an owlelike watchman, hee must walke
 His hand still at a bill, now he must talke
 Idly, like prisoners, which whole months will
 swear
 That onely suretiship hath brought them there,
 And to every suitor lye in every thing,
 Like a Kings favourite, yea like a King;
 Like a wedge in a blocke, wring to the barre,
 Bearing-like Asses; and more shamelesse farre
 Then carted whores, lye, to the grave Judge; for
 Bastardy abounds not in Kings titles, nor
 Symonie and Sodomy in Churchmens lives,
 As these things do in him; by these he thrives.

Shortly (as the sea) hee will compasse all our land;
From Scots, to Wight; from Mount, to Dover
strand.

And spying heires melting with luxurie,
Satan will not joy at their sinnes, as hee.
For as a thrifty wench scrapes kitching-stuffe,
And barrelling the droppings, and the snuffe,
Of wasting candles, which in thirty yeare
(Relique-like kept) perchance buyes wedding
geare;

Peecemeale he gets lands, and spends as much
time

Wringing each Acre, as men pulling prime.
In parchments then, large as his fields, hee drawes
Assurances, bigge, as gloss'd civill lawes,
So huge, that men (in our times forwardnesse)
Are Fathers of the Church for writing lesse.
These hee writes not; nor for these written payes,
Therefore spares no length; as in those first dayes
When Luther was profest, He did desire
Short Pater nosters, saying as a Fryer
Each day his beads, but having left those lawes,
Addes to Christs prayer, the Power and glory
clause.

But when he sells or changes land, he'impaires
His writings, and (unwatch'd) leaves out, ses
heires,
As slily as any Commenter goes by

Hard words, or sense; or in Divinity
As controverters, in vouch'd Texts, leave out
Shrewd words, which might against them cleare
the doubt.

Where are those spread woods which cloth'd
hertofore
Those bought lands? not built, nor burnt within
dore.

Where's th'old landlords troops, and almes? In
great hals

Carthusian fasts, and fulsome Bachanalls
Equally I hate; meanes blesse; in rich mens homes
I bid kill some beasts, but no Hecatombs,
None starve, none surfet so; But (Oh) we allow,
Good workes as good, but out of fashion now,
Like old rich wardrops; but my words none drawes
Within the vast reach of th'huge statute lawes.

SATYRE III

Kinde pitty chokes my spleene; brave scorn forbids
Those teares to issue which swell my eye-lids;
I must not laugh, nor weepe sinnes, and be wise,
Can railing then cure these worne maladies?
Is not our Mistresse faire Religion,
As worthy of all our Soules devotion,
As vertue was to the first blinded age?
Are not heavens joyes as valiant to asswage
Lusts, as earths honour was to them? Alas,
As wee do them in meanes, shall they surpasse
Us in the end, and shall thy fathers spirit
Meete blinde Philosophers in heaven, whose merit
Of strict life may be imputed faith, and heare
Thee, whom hee taught so easie wayes and neare
To follow, damn'd? O if thou dar'st, feare this;
This feare great courage, and high valour is.
Dar'st thou ayd mutinous Dutch, and dar'st thou
 lay
Thee in ships wooden Sepulchers, a prey
To leaders rage, to stormes, to shot, to dearth?
Dar'st thou dive seas, and dungeons of the earth?
Hast thou couragious fire to thaw the ice
Of frozen North discoueries? and thrise
Colder then Salamanders, like divine
Children in th'oven, fires of Spaine, and the line,
Whose countries limbecks to our bodies bee,

Canst thou for gaine beare? and must every hee
 Which cryes not, Goddesses, to thy Mistresse, draw,
 Or eate thy poysonous words? courage of straw!
 O desperate coward, wilt thou seeme bold, and
 To thy foes and his (who made thee to stand
 Sentinell in his worlds garrison) thus yeeld,
 And for forbidden warres, leave th'appointed field?
 Know thy foes: The foule Devill (whom thou
 Strivest to please,) for hate, not love, would allow
 Thee faine, his whole Realme to be quit; and as
 The worlds all parts wither away and passe,
 So the worlds selfe, thy other lov'd foe, is
 In her decrepit wayne, and thou loving this,
 Dost love a withered and worne strumpet; last,
 Flesh (it selves death) and joyes which flesh can
 taste,
 Thou loveft; and thy faire goodly soule, which doth
 Give this flesh power to taste joy, thou dost loath.
 Seeke true religion. O where? Mirreus
 Thinking her unhous'd here, and fled from us,
 Seekes her at Rome; there, because hee doth know
 That shee was there a thousand yeares agoe,
 He loves her ragges so, as wee here obey
 The statecloth where the Prince sate yesterday.
 Crantz to such brave Loves will not be intrall'd,
 But loves her onely, who at Geneva is call'd
 Religion, plaine, simple, sullen, yong,
 Contemptuous, yet unhansome; As among

Lecherous humors, there is one that judges
No wenches wholesome, but course country
drudges.

Graius stayes still at home here, and because
Some Preachers, vile ambitious bauds, and lawes
Still new like fashions, bid him thinke that shee
Which dwels with us, is onely perfect, hee
Imbraceth her, whom his Godfathers will
Tender to him, being tender, as Wards still
Take such wives as their Guardians offer, or
Pay valewes. Carelesse Phrygius doth abhorre
All, because all cannot be good, as one
Knowing some women whores, dares marry none.
Graccus loves all as one, and thinkes that so
As women do in divers countries goe
In divers habits, yet are still one kinde,
So doth, so is Religion; and this blind-
nesse too much light breeds; but unmoved thou
Of force must one, and forc'd but one allow;
And the right; aske thy father which is shee,
Let him aske his; though truth and falshood bee
Neare twins, yet truth a little elder is;
Be busie to seeke her, beleeeve mee this,
Hee's not of none, nor worst, that seekes the best.
To adore, or scorne an image, or protest,
May all be bad; doubt wisely; in strange way
To stand inquiring right, is not to stray;
To sleepe, or runne wrong, is. On a huge hill,

Cragged, and steep, Truth stands, and hee that will
Reach her, about must, and about must goe;
And what the hills suddennes resists, winne so;
Yet strive so, that before age, deaths twilight,
Thy Soule rest, for none can worke in that night.
To will, implies delay, therefore now doe:
Hard deeds, the bodies paines; hard knowledge too
The mindes indeavours reach, and mysteries
Are like the Sunne, dazling, yet plaine to all eyes.
Keepe the truth which thou hast found; men do
not stand

In so ill case here, that God hath with his hand
Sign'd Kings blanck-charters to kill whom they
hate,

Nor are they Vicars, but hangmen to Fate.

Foole and wretch, wilt thou let thy Soule be tyed

To mans lawes, by which she shall not be tryed

At the last day? Oh, will it then boot thee

To say a Philip, or a Gregory,

A Harry, or a Martin taught thee this?

Is not this excuse for mere contraries,

Equally strong? cannot both sides say so?

That thou mayest rightly obey power, her bounds
know;

Those past, her nature, and name is chang'd; to be

Then humble to her is idolatrie.

As streames are, Power is; those blest flowers that
dwell

At the rough streames calme head, thrive and do
well,
But having left their roots, and themselves given
To the streames tyrannous rage, alas, are driven
Through mills, and rockes, and woods, and at last,
almost
Consum'd in going, in the sea are lost:
So perish Soules, which more chuse mens unjust
Power from God claym'd, then God himselfe to
trust.

SATYRE IIII

Well; I may now receive, and die; My sinne
Indeed is great, but I have beene in
A Purgatorie, such as fear'd hell is
A recreation to, and scarce map of this.
My minde, neither with prides itch, nor yet hath
been

Poyson'd with love to see, or to bee seene,
I had no suit there, nor new suite to shew,
Yet went to Court; But as Glaze which did goe
To'a Masse in jest, catch'd, was faine to disburse
The hundred markes, which is the Statutes curse;
Before he scapt, So'it pleas'd my destinie
(Guilty of my sin of going,) to thinke me
As prone to all ill, and of good as forget-
full, as proud, as lustfull, and as much in debt,
As vaine, as witlesse, and as false as they
Which dwell at Court, for once going that way.
Therefore I suffered this; Towards me did runne
A thing more strange, then on Niles slime, the
Sunne

E'r bred; or all which into Noahs Arke came;
A thing, which would have pos'd Adam to name;
Stranger then seaven Antiquaries studies,
Then Africks Monsters, Guianaes rarities.
Stranger then strangers; One, who for a Dane,
In the Danes Massacre had sure beene slaine,

If he had liv'd then; And without helpe dies,
 When next the Prentises'gainst Strangers rise.
 One, whom the watch at noone lets scarce goe by,
 One, to whom, the examining Justice sure would
 cry,
 Sir, by your priesthood tell me what you are.
 His cloths were strange, though coarse; and black,
 though bare;
 Sleevelesse his jerkin was, and it had beene
 Velvet, but'twas now (so much ground was seene)
 Become Tufftaffatie; and our children shall
 See it plaine Rashe awhile, then nought at all.
 This thing hath travail'd, and saith, speakes all
 tongues
 And only knoweth what to all States belongs.
 Made of th'Accents, and best phrase of all these,
 He speakes no language; If strange meats
 displease,
 Art can deceive, or hunger force my tast,
 But Pedants motley tongue, souldiers bumbast,
 Mountebankes drugtongue, nor the termes of law
 Are strong enough preparatives, to draw
 Me to beare this: yet I must be content
 With his tongue, in his tongue, call'd complement:
 In which he can win widdowes, and pay scores,
 Make men speake treason, cosen subtlest whores,
 Out-flatter favorites, or outlie either
 Jovius, or Surius, or both together.

He names mee, and comes to mee; I whisper, God!
 How have I sinn'd, that thy wraths furious rod,
 This fellow chuseth me? He saith, Sir,
 I love your judgement; Whom doe you prefer,
 For the best linguist? And I seelily
 Said, that I thought Calepines Dictionarie;
 Nay, but of men, most sweet Sir; Beza then,
 Some other Jesuites, and two reverend men
 Of our two Academies, I named; There
 He stopt mee, and said; Nay, your Apostles were
 Good pretty linguists, and so Panurge was;
 Yet a poore gentleman, all these may passe
 By travaile. Then, as if he would have sold
 His tongue, he prais'd it, and such wonders told
 That I was faine to say, If you'had liv'd, Sir,
 Time enough to have beene Interpreter
 To Babells bricklayers, sure the Tower had stood.
 He adds, If of court life you knew the good,
 You would leave lonenesse. I said, not alone
 My lonenesse is, but Spartanes fashion,
 To teach by painting drunkards, doth not last
 Now; Aretines pictures have made few chaste;
 No more can Princes courts, though there be few
 Better pictures of vice, teach me vertue;
 He, like to a high stretcht lute string squeakt, O
 Sir,
 'Tis sweet to talke of Kings. At Westminster,
 Said I, The man that keepes the Abbey tombes,

And for his price doth with who ever comes,
Of all our Harries, and our Edwards talke,
From King to King and all their kin can walke:
Your eares shall heare nought, but Kings; your eyes
meet

Kings only; The way to it, is Kingstreet.
He smack'd, and cry'd, He's base, Mechanique,
coarse,

So are all your Englishmen in their discourse.
Are not your Frenchmen neate? Mine? as you see,
I have but one Frenchman, looke, hee followes
mee.

Certes they are neatly cloth'd; I, of this minde am,
Your only wearing is your Grogaram.

Not so Sir, I have more. Under this pitch
He would not flie; I chaff'd him; But as Itch
Scratch'd into smart, and as blunt iron ground
Into an edge, hurts worse: So, I (foole) found,
Crossing hurt mee; To fit my sullenness,
He to another key, his stile doth addresse,
And askes, what newes? I tell him of new playes.
He takes my hand, and as a Still, which staies
A Sembriefe, 'twixt each drop, he nigardly,
As loth to enrich mee, so tells many a lye.
More then ten Hollensheads, or Halls, or Stowes,
Of triviall houshold trash he knowes; He knowes
When the Queene frown'd, or smil'd, and he
knowes what

A subtle States-man may gather of that;
He knowes who loves; whom; and who by poyson
Hasts to an Offices reversion;
He knowes who'hath sold his land, and now doth
beg

A licence, old iron, bootes, shooes, and egge-
shells to transport; Shortly boyes shall not play
At span-counter, or blow-point, but they pay
Toll to some Courtier; And wiser then all us,
He knowes what Ladie is not painted; Thus
He with home-meats tries me; I belch, spue, spit,
Looke pale, and sickly, like a Patient; Yet
He thrusts on more; And as if he'd undertooke
To say Gallo-Belgicus without booke
Speakes of all States, and deeds, that have been
since

The Spaniards came, to the losse of Amyens.
Like a bigge wife, at sight of loathed meat,
Readie to travaile: So I sigh, and sweat
To heare this Makeron talke: In vaine; for yet,
Either my humour, or his owne to fit,
He like a priviledg'd spie, whom nothing can
Discredit, Libells now'gainst each great man.
He names a price for every office paid;
He saith, our warres thrive ill, because delai'd;
That offices are entail'd, and that there are
Perpetuities of them, lasting as farre
As the last day; And that great officers,

Doe with the Pirates share, and Dunkirkers.
Who wasts in meat, in clothes, in horse, he notes;
Who loves whores, who boyes, and who goats.
I more amas'd then Circes prisoners, when
They felt themselves turne beasts, felt my selfe
then

Becomming Traytor, and mee thought I saw
One of our Giant Statutes ope his jaw
To sucke me in; for hearing him, I found
That as burnt venome Leachers do grow sound
By giving others their soares, I might growe
Guilty, and he free: Therefore I did shew
All signes of loathing; But since I am in,
I must pay mine, and my forefathers sinne
To the last farthing; Therefore to my power
Toughly and stubbornly I beare this crosse; But
the'houre

Of mercy now was come; He tries to bring
Me to pay a fine to scape his torturing,
And saies, Sir, can you spare me; I said, willingly;
Nay, Sir, can you spare me a crowne? Thankfully I
Gave it, as Ransome; But as fiddlers, still,
Though they be paid to be gone, yet needs will
Thrust one more jigge upon you: so did hee
With his long complementall thanks vex me.
But he is gone, thanks to his needy want,
And the prerogative of my Crowne: Scant
His thanks were ended, when I, (which did see

All the court fill'd with more strange things then
hee)

Ran from thence with such or more hast, then one
Who feares more actions, doth make from prison.
At home in wholesome solitarinesse
My precious soule began, the wretchednesse
Of suiters at court to mourne, and a trance
Like his, who dreamt he saw hell, did advance
It selfe on mee, Such men as he saw there,
I saw at court, and worse, and more; Low feare
Becomes the guiltie, not the accuser; Then,
Shall I, nones slave, of high borne, or rais'd men
Feare frownes? And, my Mistresse Truth, betray
thee

To th'huffing braggart, puft Nobility?
No, no, Thou which since yesterday hast beene
Almost about the whole world, hast thou seene,
O Sunne, in all thy journey, Vanitie,
Such as swells the bladder of our court? I
Thinke he which made your waxen garden, and
Transported it from Italy to stand
With us, at London, flouts our Presence, for
Just such gay painted things, which no sappe, nor
Tast have in them, ours are; And naturall
Some of the stocks are, their fruits, bastard all.
'Tis ten a clock and past; All whom the Mues,
Baloune, Tennis, Dyet, or the stewes,
Had all the morning held, now the second

Time made ready, that day, in flocks, are found
 In the Presence, and I, (God pardon mee.)
 As fresh, and sweet their Apparrells be, as bee
 The fields they sold to buy them; For a King
 Those hose are, cry the flatterers; And bring
 Them next weeke to the Theatre to sell;
 Wants reach all states; Me seemes they doe as well
 At stage, as court; All are players; who e'r lookes
 (For themselves dare not goe) o'r Cheapside books,
 Shall finde their wardrops Inventory. Now,
 The Ladies come; As Pirats, which doe know
 That there came weak ships fraught with
 Cutchannel,
 The men board them; and praise, as they thinke,
 well,
 Their beauties; they the mens wits; Both are
 bought.
 Why good wits ne'r weare scarlet gownes, I
 thought
 This cause, These men, mens wits for speeches
 buy,
 And women buy all reds which scarlets die.
 He call'd her beauty limetwigs, her haire net;
 She feares her drugs ill laid, her haire loose set.
 Would not Heraclitus laugh to see Macrine,
 From hat to shooe, himselfe at doore refine,
 As if the Presence were a Moschite, and lift
 His skirts and hose, and call his clothes to shrift,

Making them confesse not only mortall
Great staines and holes in them; but veniall
Feathers and dust, wherewith they fornicate:
And then by Durers rules survey the state
Of his each limbe, and with strings the odds trye
Of his neck to his legge, and wast to thighe.
So in immaculate clothes, and Symetrie
Perfect as circles, with such nicetie
As a young Preacher at his first time goes
To preach, he enters, and a Lady which owes
Him not so much as good will, he arrests,
And unto her protests protests protests,
So much as at Rome would serve to have throwne
Ten Cardinalls into the Inquisition;
And whisperd by Jesu, so often, that A
Pursevant would have ravish'd him away
For saying of our Ladies psalter; But'tis fit
That they each other plague, they merit it.
But here comes Glorius that will plague them both,
Who, in the other extreme, only doth
Call a rough carelesnesse, good fashion;
Whose cloak his spurres teare; whom he spits on
He cares not, His ill words doe no harme
To him; he rusheth in, as if arme, arme,
He meant to crie; And though his face be as ill
As theirs which in old hangings whip Christ, still
He strives to looke worse, he keeps all in awe;
Jeasts like a licenc'd foole, commands like law.

Tyr'd, now I leave this place, and but pleas'd so
As men which from gaoles to execution goe,
Goe through the great chamber (why is it hung
With the seaven deadly sinnes?). Being among
Those Askaparts, men big enough to throw
Charing Crosse for a barre, men that doe know
No token of worth, but Queenes man, and fine
Living, barrells of beefe, flaggons of wine;
I shooke like a spyed Spie. Preachers which are
Seas of Wit and Arts, you can, then dare,
Drowne the sinnes of this place, for, for mee
Which am but a scarce brooke, it enough shall bee
To wash the staines away; Although I yet
With Macchabees modestie, the knowne merit
Of my worke lessen: yet some wise man shall,
I hope, esteeme my writs Canonically.

SATYRE V

Thou shalt not laugh in this leafe, Muse, nor they
Whom any pittie warmes; He which did lay
Rules to make Courtiers, (hee being understood
May make good Courtiers, but who Courtiers
good?)

Frees from the sting of jests all who in extreme
Are wreched or wicked: of these two a theame
Charity and liberty give me. What is hee
Who Officers rage, and Suiters misery
Can write, and jest? If all things be in all,
As I thinke, since all, which were, are, and shall
Bee, be made of the same elements:
Each thing, each thing implyes or represents.
Then man is a world; in which, Officers
Are the vast ravishing seas; and Suiters,
Springs; now full, now shallow, now drye; which,
to

That which drownes them, run: These selfe
reasons do

Prove the world a man, in which, officers
Are the devouring stomacke, and Suiters
The excrements, which they voyd. All men are
dust;

How much worse are Suiters, who to mens lust
Are made preyes? O worse then dust, or wormes
meat,

For they do eate you now, whose selves wormes
shall eate.

They are the mills which grinde you, yet you are
The winde which drives them; and a wastfull warre
Is fought against you, and you fight it; they
Adulterate lawe, and you prepare their way
Like wittals; th'issue your owne ruine is.
Greatest and fairest Empresse, know you this?
Alas, no more then Thames calme head doth know
Whose meades her armes drowne, or whose corne
o'rflow:

You Sir, whose righteousnes she loves, whom I
By having leave to serve, am most richly
For service paid, authoriz'd, now beginne
To know and weed out this enormous sinne.
O Age of rusty iron! Some better wit
Call it some worse name, if ought equall it;
The iron Age that was, when justice was sold; now
Injustice is sold dearer farre. Allow
All demands, fees, and duties, gamsters, anon
The mony which you sweat, and sweare for, is gon
Into other hands: So controverted lands
Scape, like Angelica, the strivers hands.
If Law be in the Judges heart, and hee
Have no heart to resist letter, or fee,
Where wilt thou appeale? powre of the Courts
below

Flow from the first maine head, and these can
 throw
 Thee, if they sucke thee in, to misery,
 To fetters, halters; But if the injury
 Steele thee to dare complaine, Alas, thou go'st
 Against the stream, when upwards: when thou art
 most
 Heavy and most faint; and in these labours they,
 'Gainst whom thou should'st complaine, will in the
 way
 Become great seas, o'r which, when thou shalt bee
 Forc'd to make golden bridges, thou shalt see
 That all thy gold was drown'd in them before;
 All things follow their like, only who have may
 have more.
 Judges are Gods; he who made and said them so,
 Meant not that men should be forc'd to them to
 goe,
 By meanes of Angels; When supplications
 We send to God, to Dominations,
 Powers, Cherubins, and all heavens Courts, if wee
 Should pay fees as here, Daily bread would be
 Scarce to Kings; so 'tis. Would it not anger
 A Stoicke, a coward, yea a Martyr,
 To see a Pursivant come in, and call
 All his cloathes, Copes; Bookes, Primers; and all
 His Plate, Challices; and mistake them away,
 And aske a fee for comming? Oh, ne'r may

Faire lawes white reverend name be strumpeted,
 To warrant thefts: she is established
 Recorder to Destiny, on earth, and shee
 Speakes Fates words, and but tells us who must bee
 Rich, who poore, who in chaires, who in jayles:
 Shee is all faire, but yet hath foule long nailes,
 With which she scracheth Suiters; In bodies
 Of men, so in law, nailes are th'extremities,
 So Officers stretch to more then Law can doe,
 As our nailes reach what no else part comes to.
 Why barest thou to yon Officer? Foole, Hath hee
 Got those goods, for which erst men bar'd to thee?
 Foole, twice, thrice, thou hast bought wrong, and
 now hungerly
 Beg'st right; But that dole comes not till these dye.
 Thou had'st much, and lawes Urim and Thummim
 trie
 Thou wouldst for more; and for all hast paper
 Enough to cloath all the great Carricks Pepper.
 Sell that, and by that thou much more shalt leese,
 Then Haman, when he sold his Antiquities.
 O wretch that thy fortunes should moralize
 Esops fables, and make tales, prophesies.
 Thou'art the swimming dog whom shadows
 cosened,
 And div'st, neare drowning, for what's vanished.