

On My First Daughter  
Ben Jonson (1572-1637)

Here lies, to each her parents' ruth,  
Mary, the daughter of their youth;  
Yet all heaven's gifts being heaven's due,  
It makes the father less to rue.  
At six months' end she parted hence  
With safety of her innocence;  
Whose soul heaven's queen, whose name she bears,  
In comfort of her mother's tears,  
Hath placed amongst her virgin-train:  
Where, while that severed doth remain,  
This grave partakes the fleshly birth;  
Which cover lightly, gentle earth!

Ode on Melancholy  
John Keats (1795-1821)

I

No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist  
    Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous wine;  
Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kiss'd  
    By nightshade, ruby grape of Proserpine;  
Make not your rosary of yew-berries,  
    Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be  
    Your mournful Psyche, nor the downy owl  
A partner in your sorrow's mysteries;  
    For shade to shade will come too drowsily,  
    And drown the wakeful anguish of the soul.

II

But when the melancholy fit shall fall  
    Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,  
That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,  
    And hides the green hill in an April shroud;  
Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose,  
    Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-wave,  
    Or on the wealth of globed peonies;  
Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,  
    Emprison her soft hand, and let her rave,  
    And feed deep, deep upon her peerless eyes.

III

She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that must die;  
    And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips  
Bidding adieu; and aching Pleasure nigh,  
    Turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips:  
Ay, in the very temple of Delight  
    Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine,  
    Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue  
Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine;  
    His soul shalt taste the sadness of her might,  
    And be among her cloudy trophies hung.

*Amoretti: Sonnet 86*  
Edmund Spenser (1552-1599)

Since I did leave the presence of my Love,  
Many long weary days I have outworn,  
And many nights, that slowly seem'd to move  
Their sad protract from evening until morn.  
For, when as day the heaven doth adorn,  
I wish that night the noyous day would end:  
And when as night hath us of light forlorn,  
I wish that day would shortly reascend.  
Thus I the time with expectation spend,  
And feign my grief with changes to beguile,  
That further seemes his terme still to extend,  
And maketh every minute seem a mile.

So sorrow still doth seem too long to last;  
But joyous hours do fly away too fast.

This is My Play's Last Scene  
John Donne (1572-1631)

This is my play's last scene; here heavens appoint  
My pilgrimage's last mile; and my race,  
Idly, yet quickly run, hath this last pace,  
My span's last inch, my minute's latest point;  
And gluttonous death will instantly unjoint  
My body and my soul, and I shall sleep a space;  
But my'ever-waking part shall see that face  
Whose fear already shakes my every joint.  
Then, as my soul to'heaven, her first seat, takes flight,  
And earth-born body in the earth shall dwell,  
So fall my sins, that all may have their right,  
To where they're bred, and would press me, to hell.  
Impute me righteous, thus purg'd of evil,  
For thus I leave the world, the flesh, the devil.