

*Songs &
Sonnets*



*John
Donne*

In the Attic:
Lit Links: John Donne Songs & Sonnets

John Donne

Chronology

- ❖ 1572 Born in London into an affluent Catholic family; related to Sir Thomas More on his mother's side; father dies in 1576
- ❖ 1584 Enters Oxford but leaves before age 16 & the 39 "articles"
- ❖ 1587 Studies at Cambridge but leaves prior to the Oath of Supremacy
- ❖ 1592 Enters Lincoln's Inn to study law
- ❖ 1593 Brother Henry dies in Newgate prison
- ❖ 1596 Sails with Essex to Cadiz
- ❖ 1598 Secretary to Thomas Egerton, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal
- ❖ 1601 Secretly marries 17 year-old Anne More, Egerton's niece; is fired and briefly imprisoned
- ❖ 1605 Travels abroad; settles in Mitcham; cultivates patronage
- ❖ 1610 Publishes *Pseudo-Martyr*; wins favor of King James & earns honorary MA from Oxford
- ❖ 1615 Takes holy orders; earns honorary DD from Cambridge
- ❖ 1616 Reader of Divinity at Lincoln's Inn; preaches at court for first time
- ❖ 1619 Anne dies after giving birth to their 12th child (7 still alive)
- ❖ 1621 Dean of St. Paul's
- ❖ 1631 Preaches his own funeral sermon before the king on 2/25; dies on 3/31

John Donne

Disassociation of Sensibility. *A divergence of thought and feeling in poetry, originating in the 17th Century. Thus:*

“When a poet’s mind is perfectly equipped for its work, it is constantly amalgamating disparate experience; the ordinary man’s experience is chaotic, irregular, fragmentary. The latter falls in love, or reads Spinoza, and these two experiences have nothing to do with each other, or with the noise of the typewriter or the smell of cooking; in the mind of the poet these experiences are always forming new wholes.”

T.S. Eliot, “The Metaphysical Poets” (1921)

John Donne

“With Donne, whose muse on dromedary trots,
Wreathe iron pokers into true-love knots;
Rhyme's sturdy cripple, fancy's maze and clue,
Wit's forge and fire-blast, meaning's press and screw.”

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

John Donne

Conceit. *A figure of speech involving an elaborate and often surprising comparison between two apparently dissimilar things, often in the form of an extended metaphor.*

A **Metaphysical Conceit** uses esoteric ideas or, alternatively, commonplace objects or references in an unfamiliar way.

The **Metaphysical Poets** wrote lyrical poems, often in the form of an argument, characterized by an analytical approach, originality, wit, and intellectual tone. They reacted against idealized Elizabethan love poetry in substance and style, using colloquial language, irregular rhythmic patterns, and metaphysical conceits.

A Bad Elizabethan Love Lyric

From *Two Books of Aires*, by Thomas Campion (1613)

COME, you pretty false-eyed wanton,
Leave your crafty smiling!
Think you to escape me now
With slipp'ry words beguiling?
No; you mocked me th' other day;
When you got loose, you fled away;
But, since I have caught you now,
I'll clip your wings for flying:
Smoth'ring kisses fast I'll heap
And keep you so from crying.



Another Bad Elizabethan Love Lyric

“What Cunning can Express” by Edward de Vere

What cunning can express
The favour of her face ?
To whom in this distress,
I do appeal for grace.
A thousand Cupids fly
About her gentle eye.
From which each throws a dart,
That kindleth soft sweet fire:
Within my sighing heart,
Possessed by Desire.
No sweeter life I try,
Than in her love to die.



See the Difference?

from “Love’s Growth” by John Donne

If, as in water stirr'd more circles be
Produced by one, love such additions take,
Those like so many spheres but one heaven make,
For they are all concentric unto thee ;
And though each spring do add to love new heat,
As princes do in times of action get
New taxes, and remit them not in peace,
No winter shall abate this spring's increase.

John Donne: Epigrams

Disinherited

Thy father all from thee, by his last will,
Gave to the poor: thou hast good title still.



Zoppo

‘I am unable’, yonder beggar cries,
‘To stand or move!’ If he say true, he lies.

John Donne

We will generally work on two poems in each class; read them ahead of time and be ready to discuss the basic concepts and identify the conceits. Try some close reading on your own; you'll learn more that way. But then, who would take advice from a bloodsucking parasite?



**Long
before Gregor
existed,
there was:
“The Flea”**



English V IB Mr. Nigro

John Donne: Lyric Poems

aka: "Songs"

"The Good Morrow"

"Go and Catch a Falling Star"

"The Sun Rising"

"The Canonization"

"The Triple Fool"

"Sweetest Love, I do Not Go"

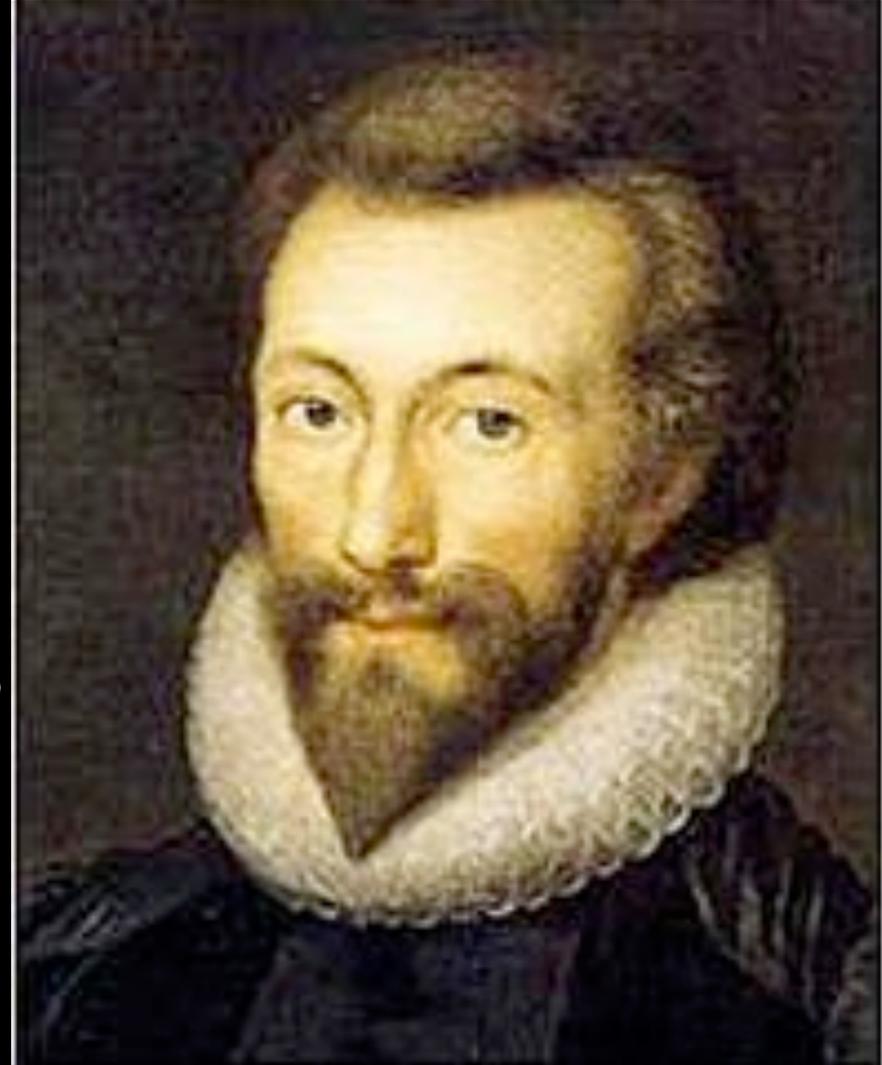
"The Anniversary"

"Valediction: Forbidding Mourning"

"A Nocturnal Upon St. Lucy's Day"

"The Damp"

"Twickenham Garden"



John Donne: Divine Poems

Holy Sonnet 4: "O my black soul"
Holy Sonnet 5: "I am a little world"
Holy Sonnet 10: "Death, be not proud"
Holy Sonnet 14: "Batter my heart"
Holy Sonnet 17: "Since she whom I loved"
Holy Sonnet 18: "Show me, dear Christ"
"Good Friday, 1613. Riding Westward"
"A Hymn to God...in My Sickness"

