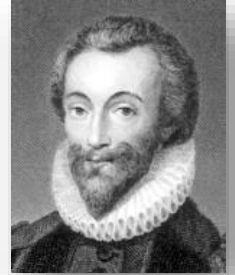


JOHN DONNE

1572-1631

The Canonization



For God's sake hold your tongue, and let me love,
Or chide my palsy, or my gout,
My five gray hairs, or ruined fortune, flout,
With wealth your state, your mind with arts improve,
5 Take you a course, get you a place,
Observe his honor, or his grace,
Or the King's real, or his stamped face
Contemplate; what you will, approve,
So you will let me love.

10 Alas, alas, who's injured by my love?
What merchant's ships have my sighs drowned?
Who says my tears have overflowed his ground?
When did my colds a forward spring remove?
When did the heats which my veins fill
15 Add one more to the plaguy bill?
Soldiers find wars, and lawyers find out still
Litigious men, which quarrels move,
Though she and I do love.

Call us what you will, we're made such by love;
20 Call her one, me another fly,
We're tapers too, and at our own cost die,
And we in us find th'eagle and the dove,
The phoenix riddle hath more wit
By us: we two being one, are it.
25 So, to one neutral thing both sexes fit.
We die and rise the same, and prove
Mysterious by this love.

We can die by it, if not live by love,
And if unfit for tombs and hearse
30 Our legend be, it will be fit for verse;

And if no piece of chronicle we prove,
We'll build in sonnets pretty rooms;
As well a well-wrought urn becomes
The greatest ashes, as half-acre tombs;
35 And by these hymns, all shall approve
Us canonized for love.

And thus invoke us: You whom reverend love
Made one another's hermitage;
You, to whom love was peace, that now is rage,
40 Who did the whole world's soul contract, and drove
Into the glasses of your eyes
So made such mirrors, and such spies,
That they did all to you epitomize,
Countries, towns, courts: Beg from above
45 A pattern of your love!

1633

