

When I am gone, dream me some happiness,  
 Nor let thy looks our long-hid love confess;  
 Nor praise nor dispraise me, bless nor curse  
 50 Openly love's force, nor in bed fright thy nurse  
 With midnight's startings, crying out "Oh, oh!  
 Nurse, oh my love is slain, I saw him go  
 O'er the white Alps alone; I saw him, I,  
 Assailed, fight, taken, stabbed, bleed, fall, and die."  
 55 Augur me better chance, except dread Jove  
 Think it enough for me t' have had thy love.

1635

Elegy 19. To His Mistress Going to Bed<sup>1</sup>

Come, Madam, come, all rest my powers defy,  
 Until I labor, I in labor lie.<sup>2</sup>  
 The foe oft-times having the foe in sight,  
 Is tired with standing though he never fight.  
 5 Off with that girdle,<sup>0</sup> like heaven's zone<sup>0</sup> glistening, *belt / zodiac*  
 But a far fairer world encompassing.  
 Unpin that spangled breastplate<sup>3</sup> which you wear  
 That th' eyes of busy fools may be stopped there.  
 Unlace yourself, for that harmonious chime  
 10 Tells me from you that now it is bed-time.  
 Off with that happy busk,<sup>o</sup> which I envy, *bodice*  
 That still<sup>0</sup> can be and still can stand so nigh. *always*  
 Your gown going off, such beauteous state reveals  
 As when from flowery meads th' hill's shadow steals.  
 15 Off with that wiry coronet and show  
 The hairy diadem which on you doth grow;  
 Now off with those shoes, and then safely tread  
 In this love's hallowed temple, this soft bed.  
 In such white robes, heaven's angels used to be  
 20 Received by men; thou, angel, bring'st with thee  
 A heaven like Mahomet's paradise;<sup>4</sup> and though  
 Ill spirits walk in white, we easily know  
 By this these angels from an evil sprite,  
 Those set our hairs, but these our flesh upright.  
 25 License my roving hands, and let them go  
 Before, behind, between, above, below.  
 O my America! my new-found-land,  
 My kingdom, safeliest when with one man manned,  
 My mine of precious stones, my empery,<sup>0</sup> *empire*  
 30 How blest am I in this discovering thee!  
 To enter in these bonds is to be free;

1. This poem reworks the central situation of Ovid's *Amores* 1.5 in much more dramatic terms.

2. "Labor" in the dual sense of "get to work (sexually)" and "distress."

3. The stomacher, an ornamental, often jeweled,

covering for the chest, worn under the lacing of the bodice.

4. A place of sensual pleasure, thought to be populated by seductive houris for the delectation of the faithful.

There where my hand is set, my seal shall be.<sup>5</sup>  
 Full nakedness! All joys are due to thee.  
 As souls unbodied, bodies unclothed must be,  
 To taste whole joys. Gems which you women use  
 Are like Atalanta's balls,<sup>6</sup> cast in men's views,  
 That when a fool's eye lighteth on a gem,  
 His earthly soul may covet theirs, not them.  
 Like pictures, or like books' gay coverings, made  
 For laymen, are all women thus arrayed;  
 Themselves are mystic books, which only we  
 (Whom their imputed grace will dignify)  
 Must see revealed.<sup>7</sup> Then since that I may know,  
 As liberally as to a midwife show  
 Thyself: cast all, yea, this white linen hence,  
 Here is no penance, much less innocence.<sup>8</sup>  
 To teach thee, I am naked first; why then  
 What need'st thou have more covering than a man?

1669

**Satire 3** In satire the author holds a subject up to ridicule. Like his elegies, Donne's five verse satires were written in his twenties and are in the forefront of an effort in the 1590s (by Donne, Ben Jonson, Joseph Hall, and John Marston) to naturalize those classical forms in England. While elements of satire figure in many different kinds of literature, the great models for formal verse satire were the Roman poets Horace and Juvenal, the former for an urbanely witty style, the latter for an indignant or angry manner. While Donne's other satires call on these models, his third satire more nearly resembles those of a third Roman satirist, Persius, known for an abstruse style and moralizing manner. This work is a strenuous discussion of an acute theological problem, for the age and for Donne himself: How may one discover the true Christian church among so many claimants to that role? At the time Donne wrote this, he was in the process of leaving the Roman Catholic Church of his heritage for the Church of England.

### Satire 3

Kind pity chokes my spleen;<sup>1</sup> brave<sup>0</sup> scorn forbids *defiant*  
 Those tears to issue which swell my eyelids;  
 I must not laugh, nor weep<sup>o</sup> sins, and be wise: *lament*  
 Can railing then cure these worn maladies?

5. The jokes mingle law with sex: where he has signed a document (placed his hand) he will now place his seal; and in the bonds of her arms he will find freedom.

6. Atalanta, running a race against her suitor Hippomenes, was beaten when he dropped golden apples ("balls") for her to pick up. Donne reverses the story.

7. By granting favors to their lovers, women impute to them grace that they don't deserve, as

God (in Calvinist doctrine) imputes grace to undeserving sinners. Laymen can only look at the covers of mystic books (clothed women), but "we" elect can read them (see women naked).

8. Some manuscripts read: "There is no penance due to innocence." White garments would be appropriate either for the innocent virgin or for the sinner doing formal penance.

1. The seat of bile, hence scorn and ridicule.