Easter[1]

Rise, heart, thy lord is risen. Sing his praise
Without delays,
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise
With him may'st rise;
That, as his death calcined[0] thee to dust, *burned, to powder*
His life may make thee gold, and, much more, just.

Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part
With all thy art.
The cross taught all wood to resound his name
Who bore the same.
His stretched sinews taught all strings what key
Is best to celebrate this most high day.

Consort, both heart and lute, and twist[2] a song
Pleasant and long;
Or, since all music is but three parts vied[3]
And multiplied,
Oh let thy blessed spirit bear a part,
And make up our defects with his sweet art.

The Song

I got me flowers to straw[0] thy way,[4] *strew*
I got me boughs off many a tree;
But thou wast up by break of day
And brought'st thy sweets along with thee.

The sun arising in the east,
Though he give light and th' east perfume,
If they should offer to contest
With thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this,
Though many suns to shine endeavor?
We count three hundred, but we miss:° *misunderstand*
There is but one, and that one ever.

]. The first three stanzas work out the poetics of writing hymns; then comes the hymn itself.
2. Weave. "Consort": harmonize.
3. Increased by repetition. Harmony is based on the triad, the chord.
4. Evokes the scene of Christ's entry into Jerusalem (Matthew 21.8).

Yet, though thou troublest me, I must be meek;
In weakness must be stout.
Well, I will change the service, and go seek
Some other master out.
Ah, my dear God! though I am clean forgot,
Let me not love thee, if I love thee not.

Prayer (1)[1]

Prayer, the church's banquet; angels' age,
God's breath in man returning to his birth;
The soul in paraphrase,[2] heart in pilgrimage;
The Christian plummet,[3] sounding heaven and earth;

Engine against th' Almighty, sinner's tower,
Reversed thunder, Christ-side-piercing spear,
The six-days' world transposing[4] in an hour;
A kind of tune which all things hear and fear:

Softness and peace and joy and love and bliss;
Exalted manna,[5] gladness of the best;
Heaven in ordinary,[6] man well dressed,
The milky way, the bird of paradise,

Church bells beyond the stars heard, the soul's blood,
The land of spices; something understood.

Jordan (1)[1]

Who says that fictions only and false hair
Recome a verse? Is there in truth no beauty?
Is all good structure in a winding stair?
May no lines pass, except they do their duty[0] *pay reverence*
Not to a true, but painted chair?[2]

Is it no verse, except enchanted groves
And sudden arbors shadow coarse-spun lines?[3]
Must purling[0] streams refresh a lover's loves? *rippling*
Must all be veiled,[4] while he that reads, divines,
Catching the sense at two removes?

1. This extraordinary sonnet is a series of epithets without a main verb, defining prayer by metaphor.
2. Clarifying by expansion.
3. A weight used to measure ("sound") the depth of water.
4. A musical term indicating sounds produced at another pitch from the original.
5. The food God supplied to the Israelites in the wilderness.
6. I.e., everyday heaven.

1. The river Jordan, which the Israelites crossed to enter the Promised Land, was also taken as a symbol for baptism.
2. It was the custom for men to bow before a throne, whether it was occupied or not (see Donne, "Satire 3," lines 47-48, p. 1286), but to require bowing before a throne in a painting would be ridiculous.
3. "Sudden," i.e., that appear unexpectedly (an artificial effect much sought after in landscape gardening). "Shadow": shade.
4. As in allegory.

Virtue

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky:
The dew shall weep thy fall tonight,
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue, angry and brave,[1]
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye:
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets[0] compacted lie; *perfumes*
My music shows ye have your closes,[2]
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber, never gives;
But though the whole world turn to coal,[3]
Then chiefly lives.

Man

My God, I heard this day
That none doth build a stately habitation,
But he that means to dwell therein.
What house more stately hath there been,
Or can be, than is man? to[1] whose creation
All things are in decay.

For man is every thing
And more; he is a tree, yet bears more[2] fruit;
A beast, yet is or should be more;
Reason and speech we only bring.[3]
Parrots may thank us, if they are not mute:
They go upon the score.[4]

Man is all symmetry,
Full of proportions, one limb to another,
And all to all the world besides;[5]
Each part may call the farthest, brother;
For head with foot hath private amity,
And both with moons and tides.

1. Splendid. "Angry": having the hue of anger, red.
2. Concluding cadences in music. This poem has often been set to music.
3. Will be reduced to a cinder at the Last Judgment.

1. Compared to.
2. A textual variant is "no."
3. Man has a vegetable, an animal, and a spiritual nature; he is the only creature that speaks and reasons.
4. Parrots are indebted to us for speech.
5. The notion of man as microcosm, whose parts all correspond to features of the great world. Cf. Donne, *Holy Sonnet* 5, p. 1295, and Browne, *Religio Medici,* p. 1587.

Nothing hath got so far
But man hath caught and kept it as his prey.
His eyes dismount[0] the highest star: *bring dawn to earth*
He is in little all the sphere.[0] *the universe*
Herbs gladly cure our flesh; because that they
Find their acquaintance there.

For us the winds do blow,
The earth doth rest, heav'n move, and fountains flow;
Nothing we see but means our good,
As our delight, or as our treasure.
The whole is either our cupboard of food,
Or cabinet of pleasure.

The stars have us to bed;
Night draws the curtain which the sun withdraws,
Music and light attend our head.
All things unto our flesh are kind[0] *akin*
In their descent and being; to our mind
In their ascent and cause.

Each thing is full of duty.
Waters united are our navigation,
Distinguished,[0] our habitation; *separated*
Below, our drink; above, our meat;[6]
Both are our cleanliness. Hath one such beauty?
Then how are all things neat!

More servants wait on man
Than he'll take notice of; in every path,
He treads down that[7] which doth befriend him,
When sickness makes him pale and wan.
O mighty love! Man is one world, and hath
Another to attend him.

Since then, my God, thou hast
So brave[0] a palace built, O, dwell in it, *splendid*
That it may dwell with thee at last!
Till then, afford us so much wit,
That, as the world serves us, we may serve thee,
And both thy servants be.

Jordan (2)[1]

When first my lines of heavenly joys made mention,
Such was their luster, they did so excel,
That I sought out quaint words and trim invention;
My thoughts began to burnish,[0] sprout, and swell, *burgeon*

6. Oceans are valuable for navigation; the earth was created by dividing waters from waters (Genesis 1.6—7); on earth water is drink; from above it provides rain to grow our food ("meat").

7. The herb that will cure him when he's sick.

1. Cf. "Jordan (1)" (p. 1611), and Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella* 1 (p. 975).

Curling with metaphors a plain intention,
Decking the sense, as if it were to sell.[0] *for sale*

Thousands of notions in my brain did run,
Offering their service, if I were not sped:[0] *su-pplied, satisfied*
I often blotted what I had begun;
This was not quick[0] enough, and that was dead. *lively*
Nothing could seem too rich to clothe the sun,
Much less those joys which trample on his head.[2]

As flames do work and wind when they ascend,
So did I weave myself into the sense;
But while I bustled, I might hear a friend
Whisper, "How wide[3] is all this long pretense!
There is in love a sweetness ready penned:
Copy out only that, and save expense."

Time

Meeting with Time, "Slack thing," said I,[1]
"Thy scythe is dull; whet it for shame."
"No marvel, sir," he did reply,
"If it at length deserve some blame;
But where one man would have me grind it,
Twenty for one too sharp do find it."

"Perhaps some such of old did pass,
Who above all things loved this life;
To whom thy scythe a hatchet was,
Which now is but a pruning knife.[2]
Christ's coming hath made man thy debtor,
Since by thy cutting he grows better.

"And in his blessing thou art blessed,
For where thou only wert before
is An executioner at best,
Thou art a gardener now, and more,
An usher to convey our souls
Beyond the utmost stars and poles.

"And this is that makes life so long,
While it detains us from our God.
Ev'n pleasures here increase the wrong,
And length of days lengthens the rod.[0] *used for blows*
Who wants[0] the place where God doth dwell *lacks*
Partakes already half of hell.

2. The "joys which trample on" the sun's head are heavenly joys (line 1).
3. Irrelevant, wide of the mark.
1. Herbert's speaker reports his dialogue with Time.
2. A hatchet kills, a pruning knife improves growing things.

Death

Death, thou wast once an uncouth, hideous thing,
Nothing but bones,
The sad effect of sadder groans:
Thy mouth was open, but thou couldst not sing.

For we considered thee as at some six
Or ten years hence,
After the loss of life and sense,
Flesh being turned to dust and bones to sticks.

We looked on this side of thee, shooting short,
Where we did find
The shells of fledge-souls left behind-
Dry dust, which sheds no tears, but may extort.[1]

But since our Savior's death did put some blood
Into thy face,
Thou art grown fair and full of grace,
Much in request, much sought for as a good.

For we do now behold thee gay and glad
As at doomsday,
When souls shall wear their new array,
And all thy bones with beauty shall be clad.

Therefore we can go die as sleep, and trust
Half that we have
Unto an honest faithful grave,
Making our pillows either down or dust.

Love (3)

Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back,
Guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack[0] *hesitant*
From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning
If I lacked anything.[1]

"A guest," I answered, "worthy to be here":
Love said, "You shall be he."
"I, the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear,
I cannot look on thee."
Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
"Who made the eyes but I?"

1. Souls that have left the body and gone to heaven are like fledgling chicks that have left the shell behind; that corpse ("dry dust") sheds no tears but may draw ("extort") tears from the survivors.

1. The first question of tavern waiters to an entering customer would be "What d'ye lack?" (i.e., want).

"Truth, Lord; but I have marred them; let my shame
Go where it doth deserve."
"And know you not," says Love, "who bore the blame?"
"My dear, then I will serve."
"You must sit down," says Love, "and taste my meat."
So I did sit and eat.[2]

2. In addition to the sacrament of Communion, the reference is especially to the banquet in heaven, when the Lord "shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them" (Luke 12.37).

HENRY VAUGHAN
1621-1695

Born to a family with deep roots in Wales, Henry Vaughan was educated at Oxford and the Inns of Court but returned to his native county of Breconshire at the outbreak of the civil war and spent the rest of his life there. He served as secretary to the Welsh circuit courts until 1645; briefly fought for King Charles at Chester, just over the border with England; and in his later years took up the practice of medicine without much formal study. In a volume of verse published in 1651, *Olor Iscanus* (The Swan of Usk), he drew attention to his heritage by terming himself "the Silurist": the Silures were an ancient tribe from southeast Wales. Some features of Vaughan's poetry derive from the rich Welsh-language poetic tradition: the frequency of assonance, consonance, and alliteration; the multiplication of comparisons and similes (*dyfalu*); and the sensitivity to nature, especially the countryside around the Usk River.

Some of Vaughan's poetry is secular—*Poems with the Tenth Satire of Juvenal, Englished* (1646), *Olor Iscanus* (1651), and a late-published collection of earlier verse, *Thalia Rediviva* (1678). Vaughan's modern reputation, though, rests almost entirely on his religious poetry. In 1650 Vaughan published his major collection of religious verse, *Silex Scintillans* (The Flashing Flint); it was republished in 1655 with a second book added. A conversion experience may have prompted Vaughan's turn to religious themes: the title of the book is explicated by the emblem of a flintlike heart struck by a bolt of lightning from the hand of God.

In the preface to *Silex Scintillans* Vaughan places himself among the many "pious converts" gained by George Herbert's holy life and verse. While his secular poetry recalls Ben Jonson's, the religious poetry overtly and consciously models itself on Herbert's. Some twenty-six poems appropriate their titles from *The Temple,* several owe their metrical form to Herbert, and many begin by quoting one of Herbert's lines (compare Vaughan's "Unprofitableness" with Herbert's "The Flower"). Yet no one with an ear for poetry will mistake Vaughan's long, loose poetic lines for Herbert's artful precision. Vaughan's religious sensibility too differs markedly from Herbert's. Unable to locate himself in a national Church of England, which was now dismantled by war, he wanders unaccompanied through a landscape at once biblical, emblematic, and contemporary, mourning lost innocence. One unifying motif of the poems in *Silex Scintillans* is pilgrimage, though the arrival at the destination is typically deferred. Vaughan seems unable to experience Christ as a friend or supporter in present trials, as Herbert so often does; instead, he longs for a full relationship with the divine yet to come, at the Last Day. Despite his restless solitude, however, Vaughan finds vestiges of the divine everywhere. "I saw eternity the other night," he begins his most famous poem, "The World," situating the "ring of pure and endless light" in a specific,

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