

THE FLEA.  
by John Donne

1MARK but this flea, and mark in this,  
2How little that which thou deniest me is;  
3It suck'd me first, and now sucks thee,  
4And in this flea our two bloods mingled be  
5Thou know'st that this cannot be said  
6A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead;  
7Yet this enjoys before it woo,  
8And pamper'd swells with one blood made of two;  
9And this, alas ! is more than we would do

10O stay, three lives in one flea spare  
11Where we almost, yea, more than married are  
12This flea is you and I, and this  
13Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is.  
14Though parents grudge, and you, we're met,  
15And cloister'd in these living walls of jet.  
16Though use make you apt to kill me,  
17Let not to that self-murder added be,  
18And sacrilege, three sins in killing three.

19Cruel and sudden, hast thou since  
20ourpled thy nail in blood of innocence?  
21Wherein could this flea guilty be,  
22Except in that drop which it suck'd from thee?  
23Yet thou triumph'st, and say'st that thou  
24Find'st not thyself nor me the weaker now.  
25'Tis true ; then learn how false fears be;  
26Just so much honour, when thou yield'st to me,  
27Will waste, as this flea's death took life from thee.