

**JOHN DONNE (1572-1631)**

**A VALEDICTION: FORBIDDING MOURNING**

As virtuous men pass mildly away,  
And whisper to their souls to go,  
Whilst some of their sad friends do say  
The breath goes now, and some say, No;

So let us melt, and make no noise,  
No tear-floods, nor sigh-tempests move,  
'Twere profanation of our joys  
To tell the laity our love.

Moving of th' earth brings harm and fears,  
Men reckon what it did, and meant:  
But trepidation of the spheres,  
Though greater far, is innocent.

Dull sublunary lovers' love  
(Whose soul is sense) cannot admit  
Absence, because it doth remove  
Those things which elemented it.

But we by a love so much refined  
That our selves know not what it is,  
Inter-assured of the mind,  
Care less, eyes, lips, and hands to miss.

Our two souls therefore, which are one,  
Though I must go, endure not yet  
A breach, but an expansion  
Like gold to airy thinness beat.

If they be two, they are two so  
As stiff twin compasses are two;  
Thy soul, the fixt foot, makes no show  
To move, but doth, if th' other do.

And though it in the center sit,  
Yet when the other far doth roam,  
It leans, and harkens after it,  
And grows erect, as that comes home.

Such wilt thou be to me, who must  
Like th' other foot, obliquely run;

Thy firmness makes my circle just,  
And makes me end where I begun.