

Title

Introductory discussion of Montrose, Milton, sovereignty, loyalty, poetry.
Perhaps a page long?

Sovereignty in Danger

Can little beasts with lions roar,
And little birds with eagles soar?
Can shallow streams command the seas,
And little ants the humming-bees?
No, no, no, no—it is not meet
The head should stoop unto the feet.

5

Montrose

On the Faithfulness and Venality of the Times

Unhappy is the man
 To whose breast is confined
The sorrows and distresses all
 Of an afflicted mind.

The extremity is great— 5
 He dies if he conceal,
The world's so void of secret friends.
 Betrayed if he reveal.

Then break, afflicted heart,
 And live not in these clays, 10
When all prove merchants of their faith,
 None trusts what other says.

For when the sun doth shine
 Then shadows do appear,
But when the sun doth hide his face 15
 They with the sun retire.

Some friends as shadows are
 And fortune as the sun;
They never proffer any help
 Till fortune hath begun;

Montrose

When the Assault Was Intended to the City

Captain, or Colonel, or Knight in Arms,
Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize,
If deed of honour did thee ever please,
Guard them, and him within protect from harms.
He can requite thee; for he knows the charms 5
That call fame on such gentle acts as these,
And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas,
Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.
Lift not thy spear against the Muses' bower:
The great Emathian conqueror bid spare 10
The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
Went to the ground; and the repeated air
Of sad Electra's poet had the power
To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

Milton

On Receiving News of the Death of Charles I

Great, Good, and Just, could I but rate
My grief with thy too rigid fate,
I'd weep the world in such a strain
As it should deluge once again.

But since thy loud-tongued blood demands supplies 5
More from Briareus' hands than Argus' eyes,
I'll sing thine obsequies with trumpet sounds
And write thine epitaph in blood and wounds.

Montrose

On the Death of Charles I

Burst out my soul in main of tears,
And thou, my heart, sigh's tempest move,
My tongue let never plaints forbear,
But murmur still my crossed love;
Combine together all in one, 5
And thunder forth my tragic moan!

But tush, poor drop, cut breath, broke air!
Can you my passions e'er express?
No, rather but augment my care,
In making them appear the less; 10
Seeing that but from small woes words do come,
But great ones they are always dumb.

My swelling grief, then, bend yourself
This fatal breast of mine to fill,
The centre where all griefs distil; 15
That, silent thus, in plaints I may
Consume and melt myself away.

Yet, that I may contented die,
I only wish, before my death,
Transparent that my breast may be, 20
Ere that I do expire my breath.
Since sighs, tears, plaints, express no smart,
It might be seen into, my heart.

Montrose

Written on the Eve of His Execution

Let them bestow on every airth a limb,
Then open all my veins that I may swim
To thee, my Maker, in that crimson lake;
Then place my parboiled head upon a stake,
Scatter my ashes, strew them in the air— 5
Lord! since thou knowest where all these atoms are,
I'm hopeful thou'lt recover once my dust,
And confident thou'lt raise me with the just.

Montrose

To the Lord General Cromwell

Cromwell, our chief of men, who through a cloud,
Not of war only, but detractions rude,
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast ploughed,
And on the neck of crownèd Fortune proud 5
Hast reared God's trophies, and His work pursued,
While Darwen stream, with blood of Scots imbrued,
And Dunbar field, resounds thy praises loud,
And Worcester's laureate wreath: yet much remains
To conquer still; peace hath her victories 10
No less renowned than war: new foes arise,
Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains.
Help us to save free conscience from the paw
Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw.

Milton