

An Exequy To his Matchlesse never to be  
forgotten Freind

Accept, thou Shrine of my Dead Saint!  
Instead of Dirges this Complaint;  
And, for sweet flowres to crowne thy Hearse,  
Receive a strew of weeping verse  
From thy griev'd Friend; whome Thou might'st see 5  
Quite melted into Teares for Thee.

Deare Losse! since thy untimely fate  
My task hath beene to meditate  
On Thee, on Thee: Thou art the Book,  
The Library whereon I look 10

Though almost blind. For Thee (Lov'd Clay!)  
I Languish out, not Live the Day,  
Using no other Exercise

But what I practise with mine Eyes.  
By which wett glasses I find out 15  
How lazily Time creepes about  
To one that mournes: This, only This  
My Exercise and bus'nes is:  
So I compute the weary howres  
With Sighes dissolved into Showres. 20

Nor wonder if my time goe thus  
Backward and most præposterous;  
Thou hast Benighted mee. Thy Sett  
This Eve of blacknes did begett,  
Who wast my Day, (though overcast 25  
Before thou hadst thy Noon-tide past)

And I remember must in teares,  
Thou scarce hadst scene so many Yeeres  
As Day tells Howres. By thy cleere Sunne  
My Love and Fortune first did run; 30  
But Thou wilt never more appeare  
Folded within my Hemispheare:  
Since both thy Light and Motion  
Like a fledd Starr is fall'n and gone;  
And 'twixt mee and my Soule's deare wish 35

The Earth now interposed is,  
Which such a straunge Ecclipse doth make  
As ne're was read in Almanake.

I could allow Thee for a time  
To darken mee and my sad Clime, 40  
Were it a Month, a Yeere, or Ten,  
I would thy Exile live till then;  
And all that space my mirth adjourne,  
So Thou wouldst promise to returne,  
And putting off thy ashy Shrowd 45  
At length disperse this Sorrowe's Cloud.

But woe is mee! the longest date  
Too narrowe is to calculate  
These empty hopes. Never shall I  
Be so much blest, as to descry 50  
A glympse of Thee, till that Day come  
Which shall the Earth to cinders doome,  
And a fierce Feaver must calcine  
The Body of this World, like Thine,  
(My Little World!) That fitt of Fire 55  
Once off, our Bodyes shall aspire  
To our Soules' blisse: Then wee shall rise,  
And view our selves with cleerer eyes  
In that calme Region, where no Night  
Can hide us from each other's sight. 60

Meane time, thou hast Hir Earth: Much good  
May my harme doe thee. Since it stood  
With Heaven's will I might not call  
Hir longer Mine; I give thee all 65  
My short liv'd right and Interest  
In Hir, whome living I lov'd best:  
With a most free and bounteous grief,  
I give thee what I could not keep.  
Be kind to Hir: and prethee look  
Thou write into thy Doomsday book 70  
Each parcell of this Rarity,  
Which in thy Caskett shrin'd doth ly:  
See that thou make thy reck'ning streight,  
And yeeld Hir back againe by weight;  
For thou must Auditt on thy trust 75  
Each Grane and Atome of this Dust:  
As thou wilt answere Him, that leant,  
Not gave thee, my deare Monument.

68-72.  
The Poems of Henry King, ed. Margaret Cruik (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965),

So close the ground, and 'bout hir shade  
Black Curtaines draw, My Bride is lay'd. 80  
Sleep on (my Love!) in thy cold bed  
Never to be disquieted.  
My last Good-night! Thou wilt not wake  
Till I Thy Fate shall overtake:  
Till age, or grief, or sicknes must 85  
Marry my Body to that Dust  
It so much loves; and fill the roome  
My heart keepes empty in Thy Tomb.  
Stay for mee there: I will not faile  
To meet Thee in that hollow Vale. 90  
And think not much of my delay;  
I am already on the way,  
And follow Thee with all the speed  
Desire can make, or Sorrowes breed.  
Each Minute is a short Degree 95  
And e'ry Howre a stepp towards Thee.  
At Night when I betake to rest,  
Next Morne I rise neerer my West  
Of Life, almost by eight Howres' sayle,  
Then when Sleep breath'd his drowsy gale. 100  
Thus from the Sunne my Bottome steares,  
And my Daye's Compasse downward beares.  
Nor labour I to stemme the Tide,  
Through which to Thee I swiftly glide.  
'Tis true; with shame and grief I yeild 105  
Thou, like the Vann, first took'st the Field,  
And gotten hast the Victory  
In thus adventuring to Dy  
Before Mee; whose more yeeres might crave  
A just praecedence in the Grave. 110  
But hark! My Pulse, like a soft Drum  
Beates my Approach, Tells Thee I come;  
And, slowe howe're my Marches bee,  
I shall at last sitt downe by Thee.

The thought of this bids mee goe on, 115  
And wait my dissolution  
With Hope and Comfort. Deare! (forgive  
The Crime) I am content to live  
Divided, with but half a Heart,  
Till wee shall Meet and Never part. 120