

"The Flea"

By John Donne

*Transcription, correction, editorial commentary, and
markup by Students and Staff of the University of Virginia*

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POEMS,
By J. D[onne].
WITH
ELEGIES
ON THE AUTHOR'S
Death.

LONDON.

Printed by *M. F.* for [J]OHN MARRIOT,
and are to be sold at his shop in St *Dunstons*
Church-yard in *Fleet-street.* 1633.

The Flea.

1 Marke but this flea, and marke in this,
2 How little that which thou deny'st me is;
3 It suck'd me first, and now sucks thee,
4 And in this flea, our two bloods mingled bee;
5 Thou know'st that this cannot be said
6 A sinne, nor shame nor losse of maidenhead,
7 Yet this enjoys before it wooe,
8 And pamper'd swells with one blood made of two,
9 And this, alas, is more then wee would doe.

10 Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare,
11 Where wee almost, yea more then maryed are.
12 This flea is you and I, and this
13 Our mariage bed, and mariage temple is;
14 Though parents grudge, and you, w'are met,
15 And cloysterd in these living walls of Jet.
16 Though use make you apt to kill mee,
17 Let not to that, selfe murder added bee,
18 And sacrilege, three sinnes in killing three.

19 Cruell and sodaine, hast thou since
20 Purpled thy naile, in blood of innocence?
21 Wherein could this flea guilty bee,
22 Except in that drop which it suckt from thee?
23 Yet thou triumph'st, and saist that thou
24 Find'st not thy selfe, nor mee the weaker now;
25 'Tis true, then learne how false, feares bee;
26 Just so much honor, when thou yeeld'st to mee,
27 Will wast, as this flea's death tooke life from thee.