

And flowers, and grass, and I, and all,  
 Will in one common ruin fall;  
 For Juliana comes, and she,  
 What I do to the grass, does to my thoughts and me.

And thus ye meadows, which have been  
 Companions of my thoughts more green,  
 Shall now the heraldry become  
 With which I shall adorn my tomb;  
 For Juliana comes, and she,  
 What I do to the grass, does to my thoughts and me.

### The Garden

How vainly men themselves amaze  
 To win the palm, the oak, or bays,<sup>1</sup>  
 And their uncessant labors see  
 Crowned from some single herb or tree,  
 Whose short and narrow-vergèd shade  
 Does prudently their toils upbraid;  
 While all flowers and all trees do close<sup>2</sup>  
 To weave the garlands of repose!

Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,  
 And Innocence, thy sister dear?  
 Mistaken long, I sought you then  
 In busy companies of men.  
 Your sacred plants, if here below,  
 Only among the plants will grow;  
 Society is all but rude,  
 To<sup>3</sup> this delicious solitude.

No white nor red<sup>4</sup> was ever seen  
 So amorous as this lovely green.  
 Fond lovers, cruel as their flame,  
 Cut in these trees their mistress' name:  
 Little, alas, they know or heed  
 How far these beauties hers exceed!  
 Fair trees, wheresoe'er your barks I wound,  
 No name shall but your own be found.<sup>5</sup>

When we have run our passion's heat,  
 Love hither makes his best retreat.  
 The gods, that mortal beauty chase,  
 Still in a tree did end their race:  
 Apollo hunted Daphne so,  
 Only that she might laurel grow;

1. Honors, respectively, for military, civic, and poetic achievement.

2. Unite, agree.

3. Compared to.

4. Colors traditionally associated with female beauty.

5. Marvell proposes to carve in the bark of trees, not *Sylvia* or *Laura*, but *Beech* and *Oak*.

And Pan did after Syrinx speed,  
Not as a nymph, but for a reed.<sup>6</sup>

What wondrous life in this I lead!  
Ripe apples drop about my head;  
The luscious clusters of the vine 35  
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;  
The nectarine and curious peach  
Into my hands themselves do reach;  
Stumbling on melons<sup>7</sup> as I pass,  
Insnared with flowers, I fall on grass. 40

Meanwhile the mind, from pleasure less,<sup>8</sup>  
Withdraws into its happiness;  
The mind, that ocean where each kind  
Does straight its own resemblance find;<sup>9</sup>  
Yet it creates, transcending these, 45  
Far other worlds and other seas,  
Annihilating all that's made  
To a green thought in a green shade.

Here at the fountain's sliding foot,  
Or at some fruit tree's mossy root, 50  
Casting the body's vest<sup>1</sup> aside,  
My soul into the boughs does glide:  
There like a bird it sits and sings,  
Then whets<sup>2</sup> and combs its silver wings,  
And, till prepared for longer flight, 55  
Waves in its plumes the various light.<sup>3</sup>

Such was that happy garden-state,  
While man there walked without a mate:  
After a place so pure and sweet,  
What other help could yet be meet!<sup>4</sup> 60  
But 'twas beyond a mortal's share  
To wander solitary there:  
Two paradises 'twere in one  
To live in paradise alone.

How well the skillful gardener drew  
Of flowers and herbs this dial new,<sup>5</sup> 65  
Where from above the milder sun

6. Apollo chased Daphne until she turned into a laurel, and Pan pursued Syrinx until she became a reed, out of which he made panpipes. The gods' motives were, of course, sexual, not horticultural.

7. "Melons," which have their etymological roots in the Greek word for *apple*, may be intended to recall a particularly remote apple over which all humankind once stumbled. "Curious": exquisite. (The nectarine is a curious variety of peach.)

8. "Less" may modify either pleasure or mind. In the latter sense ("drawn in on itself") it chimes on "withdraws" and "annihilating," later in the stanza.

9. As the ocean supposedly contained a counterpart of every creature on land, so also the ocean of the mind.

1. Garment.

2. Preens.

3. The many-colored light of this world, contrasted with the white radiance of eternity.

4. Genesis 2.18 records the Lord's decision to make a "help meet" for Adam, i.e., Eve.

5. The garden itself, enlarged metaphorically to a sundial. While the sun keeps time on it, the bee (line 69) is busy with the thyme in it.



Does through a fragrant zodiac run;  
 And as it works, th' industrious bee  
 Computes its time as well as we!  
 How could such sweet and wholesome hours  
 Be reckoned but with herbs and flowers?

### An Horatian Ode

#### *Upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland*<sup>1</sup>

The forward youth that would appear  
 Must now forsake his Muses dear,  
     Nor in the shadows sing  
     His numbers languishing:

'Tis time to leave the books in dust  
 And oil th' unused armor's rust,  
     Removing from the wall  
     The corselet of the hall.<sup>2</sup>

So restless Cromwell could not cease  
 In the inglorious arts of peace,  
     But through adventurous war  
     Urgèd his active star;

And, like the three-forked lightning, first  
 Breaking the clouds where it was nursed,  
     Did thorough his own side  
     His fiery way divide:<sup>3</sup>

For 'tis all one to courage high,  
 The emulous, or enemy;  
     And with such, to enclose  
     Is more than to oppose.

Then burning through the air he went,  
 And palaces and temples rent;  
     And Caesar's head at last  
     Did through his laurels blast.<sup>4</sup>

1. Cromwell returned from conquering Ireland in May 1650, about eighteen months after the execution of Charles I. The two events were vaguely but persistently connected: Cromwell's victory over the Irish was somehow a "vindication" of his career to this point, a sign that God did not disapprove of his laying violent hands on the sacred person of the monarch. The title phrase, "An Horatian Ode," promises a poem of cool and balanced judgment, not "enthusiastic" or heroic like the odes of Pindar. Balanced judgments of Cromwell were not politic in the Restoration: the poem was canceled from all but two known copies of the 1681 edition.

2. The "forward" (eager) youth who removes armor from the wall owes something to a similar figure in the first

book of Lucan's *Pharsalia*, which is also a poem about force, justice, and civil war. Marvell was not by any means dropping books and picking up armor in 1650.

3. Cromwell had begun as a relatively inconspicuous Presbyterian, but soon became the leader of the more radical group variously known as the "Rump" or the "Independents." The "three-forked lightning" he with identifies him with Zeus, and his giving birth to himself, presumably) through his own side (party, of course, but a part of the body, too) might remind a reader of Athena's birth through Zeus' ear.

4. Laurels were used for royal crowns precisely because they were supposed to protect from lightning. "Caesar," of course, is Charles I.