

On a Drop of Dew

BY ANDREW MARVELL

See how the orient dew,
Shed from the bosom of the morn
Into the blowing roses,
Yet careless of its mansion new,
For the clear region where 'twas born
Round in itself incloses:
And in its little globe's extent,
Frames as it can its native element.
How it the purple flow'r does slight,
Scarce touching where it lies,
But gazing back upon the skies,
Shines with a mournful light,
Like its own tear,
Because so long divided from the sphere.
Restless it rolls and unsecure,
Trembling lest it grow impure,
Till the warm sun pity its pain,
And to the skies exhale it back again.
So the soul, that drop, that ray
Of the clear fountain of eternal day,
Could it within the human flow'r be seen,
Remembering still its former height,
Shuns the sweet leaves and blossoms green,
And recollecting its own light,
Does, in its pure and circling thoughts, express
The greater heaven in an heaven less.
In how coy a figure wound,
Every way it turns away:
So the world excluding round,
Yet receiving in the day,
Dark beneath, but bright above,
Here disdainful, there in love.
How loose and easy hence to go,
How girt and ready to ascend,
Moving but on a point below,
It all about does upwards bend.
Such did the manna's sacred dew distill,

White and entire, though congealed and chill,
Congealed on earth : but does, dissolving, run
Into the glories of th' almighty sun.

Andrew Marvell [1621-1678] was an English metaphysical poet and politician who sat in the House of Commons at various times between 1659 and 1678. As a metaphysical poet, he is associated with John Donne and George Herbert. He was a colleague and friend of John Milton. His poems include 'To His Coy Mistress', 'The Garden', 'An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland', 'The Mower's Song' and the country house poem 'Upon Appleton'.