

But beauty shall be bright and clear;
 This city pure is not for thee,
 For things unclean there shall not be.
 If I of heaven may have my fill,
 Take thou the world and all that will.

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1678

The Author to Her Book¹

Thou ill-formed offspring of my feeble brain,
 Who after birth didst by my side remain,
 Till snatched from thence by friends, less wise than true,
 Who thee abroad, exposed to public view,
 Made thee in rags, halting to th' press to trudge,
 Where errors were not lessened (all may judge).
 At thy return my blushing was not small,
 My rambling brat (in print) should mother call,
 I cast thee by as one unfit for light,
 Thy visage was so irksome in my sight;
 Yet being mine own, at length affection would
 Thy blemishes amend, if so I could:
 I washed thy face, but more defects I saw,
 And rubbing off a spot still made a flaw.
 I stretched thy joints to make thee even feet,²
 Yet still thou run'st more hobbling than is meet;
 In better dress to trim thee was my mind,
 But nought save homespun cloth i' th' house I find.
 In this array 'mongst vulgars³ may'st thou roam.
 In critic's hands beware thou dost not come,
 And take thy way where yet thou art not known;
 If for thy father asked, say thou hadst none;
 And for thy mother, she alas is poor,
 Which caused her thus to send thee out of door.

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1678

Before the Birth of One of Her Children

All things within this fading world hath end,
 Adversity doth still our joys attend;
 No ties so strong, no friends so dear and sweet,
 But with death's parting blow is sure to meet.
 The sentence past is most irrevocable,

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1. Bradstreet is thought to have written this poem in 1666, when the second edition of *The Tenth Muse* was contemplated.

2. I.e., metrical feet; thus to smooth out the lines.
 3. The common people.