

# The Author to Her Book

BY ANNE BRADSTREET

Thou ill-form'd 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, expos'd to publick view,  
Made thee in raggs, halting to th' press to trudge,  
Where errors were not lessened (all may judg).  
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 wash'd thy face, but more defects I saw,  
And rubbing off a spot, still made a flaw.  
I stretched thy joynts to make thee even feet,  
Yet still thou run'st more hobling then is meet;  
In better dress to trim thee was my mind,  
But nought save home-spun Cloth, i' th' house I find.  
In this array 'mongst Vulgars mayst thou roam.  
In Criticks hands, beware thou dost not come;  
And take thy way where yet thou art not known,  
If for thy Father askt, say, thou hadst none:  
And for thy Mother, she alas is poor,  
Which caus'd her thus to send thee out of door.

# Verses upon the Burning of our House, July 10th, 1666

BY ANNE BRADSTREET

*Here Follows Some Verses Upon the Burning  
of Our house, July 10th. 1666. Copied Out of  
a Loose Paper.*

In silent night when rest I took,  
For sorrow near I did not look,  
I wakened was with thund'ring noise  
And piteous shrieks of dreadful voice.  
That fearful sound of "fire" and "fire,"  
Let no man know is my Desire.  
I, starting up, the light did spy,  
And to my God my heart did cry  
To straighten me in my Distress  
And not to leave me succourless.  
Then, coming out, behold a space  
The flame consume my dwelling place.  
And when I could no longer look,  
I blest His name that gave and took,  
That laid my goods now in the dust.  
Yea, so it was, and so 'twas just.  
It was his own, it was not mine,  
Far be it that I should repine;  
He might of all justly bereft  
But yet sufficient for us left.  
When by the ruins oft I past  
My sorrowing eyes aside did cast  
And here and there the places spy  
Where oft I sate and long did lie.  
Here stood that trunk, and there that  
chest,  
There lay that store I counted best.  
My pleasant things in ashes lie  
And them behold no more shall I.  
Under thy roof no guest shall sit,

Nor at thy Table eat a bit.  
No pleasant talk shall 'ere be told  
Nor things recounted done of old.  
No Candle e'er shall shine in Thee,  
Nor bridegroom's voice e'er heard  
shall be.  
In silence ever shalt thou lie,  
Adieu, Adieu, all's vanity.  
Then straight I 'gin my heart to  
chide,  
And did thy wealth on earth abide?  
Didst fix thy hope on mould'ring  
dust?  
The arm of flesh didst make thy  
trust?  
Raise up thy thoughts above the sky  
That dunghill mists away may fly.  
Thou hast a house on high erect  
Framed by that mighty Architect,  
With glory richly furnished,  
Stands permanent though this be  
fled.  
It's purchased and paid for too  
By Him who hath enough to do.  
A price so vast as is unknown,  
Yet by His gift is made thine own;  
There's wealth enough, I need no  
more,  
Farewell, my pelf, farewell, my store.  
The world no longer let me love,  
My hope and treasure lies above.

However, she finds that when she looks at the book, she cannot reconcile what she sees as errors. When she starts to edit her work, she seems to only make matters worse; she sees more and more wrong with the book the more time she spends with it. Metaphor and Symbolism. Ultimately, the narrator is forced to realize that her book will never be "finished" because she cares too much for it—she has put too much of herself into it. It is her child. The narrator is forced into a crisis. She has to give up her book. With foreboding and pity, she bids it farewell. She warns it against finding its way