TO MY DEAR AND LOVING HUSBAND

by: Anne Bradstreet (c.1612-1672)

If ever two were one, then surely we.
If ever man were lov'd by wife, then thee.
If ever wife was happy in a man,
Compare with me, ye women, if you can.
I prize thy love more than whole Mines of gold
Or all the riches that the East doth hold.
My love is such that Rivers cannot quench,
Nor ought but love from thee give recompence.
Thy love is such I can no way repay.
The heavens reward thee manifold, I pray.

Then while we live, in love let's so persever
That when we live no more, we may live ever.

"To my Dear and Loving Husband" is reprinted from Several Poems. Anne Bradstreet. Boston: John Foster, 1678.

The Author to Her Book

By: Anne Bradstreet

Thou ill-formed offspring of my feeble brain,
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,
The 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,
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 vulgars 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.
Make me, O Lord, Thy spinning wheel complete,
   Thy holy word my distaff make for me,
Make mine affections Thy swift flyers neat,
   And make my soul Thy holy spool to be.
My conversation make to be Thy reel,
   And reel the yarn thereon spun of Thy wheel.
Make me Thy loom then, knit therein this twin;
   And make Thy holy spirit, Lord, wind quills;
Then weave the web Thyself. The yarn is fine.
   Thine ordinances make my fulling mills.
Then dye the same in heavenly colors choice,
   All pinked with varnished flowers of paradise.
Then clothe therewith mine understanding, will,
   Affections, judgment, conscience, memory,
My words and actions, that their shine may fill
   My ways with glory and Thee glorify.
Then mine apparel shall display before Ye
   That I am clothed in holy robes for glory.