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**Philips, Katherine, 1631-1664: [from Poems (1667)]**

**Volume**

**Cowley, Abraham, 1618-1667:**

**On the Death of Mrs Katherine Philips . [from Philips, Katherine, 1631-1664: Poems (1667)]**

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**Cowley, Abraham, 1618-1667: On the Death of M<sup>rs</sup> Katherine Philips. [from Philips, Katherine, 1631-1664: Poems (1667)]**

[1.]

1 *Cruel Disease! Ah could it not suffice*  
 2 *Thy old and constant spight to exercise*  
 3 *Against the gentlest and the fairest sex,*  
 4 *Which still thy Depredations most do vex?*  
 5 *Where still thy malice most of all*  
 6 *(Thy malice or thy lust) does on the fairest fall?*  
 7 *And in them most assault the fairest place,*  
 8 *The Throne of Empress Beauty, even the Face?*  
 9 *There was enough of that here to assuage*  
 10 *(One would have thought) either thy Lust or Rage:*  
 11 *Wast not enough, when thou, Profane Disease,*

12 *Didst on this glorious Temple seize,*  
 13 *Wast not enough, like a wild zealot there,*  
 14 *All the rich outward ornaments to tear,*  
 15 *Deface the Innocent Pride of beauteous Images?*  
 16 *Wast not enough thus rudely to defile,*  
 17 *But thou must quite destroy the goodly Pile?*  
 18 *And thy unbounded Sacrilege commit*  
 19 *On the inward Holyest Holy of her Wit?*  
 20 *Cruel Disease! there thou mistook'st thy Power;*  
 21 *No Mine of Death can that Devour;*  
 22 *On her Embalmed Name it will abide*  
 23 *An Everlasting Pyramide,*  
 24 *As high as Heaven the Top, as Earth the Basis wide.*

## 2.

25 *All Ages past, Record; all Countrys now*  
 26 *In various kinds such equal Beauties show,*  
 27 *That even Judge Paris would not know*  
 28 *On whom the Golden Apple to bestow.*  
 29 *Though Goddesses to his sentence did submit,*  
 30 *Women and Lovers would appeal from it;*  
 31 *Nor durst he say, of all the female race*  
 32 *This is the sovereign Face.*  
 33 *And some (though these be of a kind that's Rare,*  
 34 *That's much, oh much less frequent then the Fair)*  
 35 *So equally renown'd for virtue are,*  
 36 *That it the Mother of the Gods might pose,*  
 37 *When the best Woman for her guide she chose,*

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38 *But if Apollo should design*  
 39 *A Woman Laureat to make,*  
 40 *Without dispute he would Orinda take,*  
 41 *Though Sappho and the famous Nine*  
 42 *Stood by, and did repine.*  
 43 *To be a Princess or a Queen*  
 44 *Is Great, but 'tis a Greatness always seen,*  
 45 *The World did never but two Women know*  
 46 *Who, one by fraud, the other by wit did rise*  
 47 *To the two tops of Spiritual dignities;*  
 48 *One Female Pope of old, one Female Poet now.*

## 3.

49 *Of Female Poets who had names of old,*  
 50 *Nothing is shewn, but onely told,*  
 51 *And all we hear of them, perhaps may be*  
 52 *Male Flattery onely, and Male Poetry;*  
 53 *Few minutes did their Beauties Lightning wast,*  
 54 *The Thunder of their voice did longer last,*  
 55 *But that too soon was paste*  
 56 *The certain proofs of our Orinda's Wit*  
 57 *In her own lasting characters are writ,*  
 58 *And they will long my praise of them survive,*  
 59 *Though long perhaps too that may live.*  
 60 *The trade of Glory managed by the pen*  
 61 *Though great it be, and every where is found,*  
 62 *Does bring in but small profit to us men;*  
 63 *'Tis by the number of the sharers drown'd,*  
 64 *Orinda in the female Coasts of fame*  
 65 *Engrosses all the Goods of a Poetique name,*  
 66 *She does no Partner with her see;*  
 67 *Does all the Business there Alone which we*  
 68 *Are forced to carry on by a whole company.*

## 4

69 *But Wit's like a Luxuriant Vine,*  
 70 *Unless to Virtues prop it join,*  
 71 *Firm and erect towards Heaven bound,*  
 72 *Though it with beauteous leaves and pleasant fruit be crown'd*  
 73 *It lies deform'd, and rotting on the ground.*

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74 *Now shame and blushes on us all*  
 75 *Who our own Sex superiour call;*  
 76 *Orinda does our boasting Sex out-do,*  
 77 *Not in wit only, but in virtue too:*  
 78 *She does above our best examples rise,*  
 79 *In hate of vice, and scorn of vanities.*  
 80 *Never did spirit of the manly make,*  
 81 *And dipt all o're in Learnings sacred Lake,*  
 82 *A temper more invulnerable take;*  
 83 *No violent passion could an entrance find*  
 84 *Into the tender goodness of her mind:*  
 85 *Through walls of stone those furious bullets may*  
 86 *Force their impetuous way;*  
 87 *When her soft breast they hit, damped and dead they lay.*

## 5.

88     *The fame of friendship, which so long had told*  
89     *Of three or four illustrious Names of old,*  
90     *Till hoarse and weary of the tale she grew,*  
91         *Rejoyces now to have got a new,*  
92         *A new, and more surprising story*  
93     *Of fair Lucasia and Orinda's glory.*  
94     *As when a prudent man does once perceive*  
95     *That in some forreign Country he must live,*  
96     *The Language and the Manners he does strive*  
97         *To understand and practise here,*  
98         *That he may come no stranger there;*  
99     *So well Orinda did her self prepare,*  
100    *In this much different Clime for her remove,*  
101    *To the glad world of Poetry and Love;*  
102    *There all the blest do but one body grow,*  
103    *And are made one too with their glorious Head,*  
104         *Whom there triumphantly they wed,*  
105    *After the secret Contract past below;*  
106    *There Love into Identity does go,*  
107    *'Tis the first unities Monarchique Throne,*  
108    *The Centre that knits all, where the great Three's but One.*

*Abraham Cowley.*

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