

Status Report
After John Donne's "The Triple Foole"

BUT I RETRACT THE FIRST PART!

I

It's bothersome enough
To burden paper with this stuff.
No sinner is set free
By packaged thoughts tied up in poetry
That precious few will see.
Attempting to reach people who won't hear
Suggests the role of universal twit.
My self-excoriating jeer
Was interrupted--something like a hit.
My cheek began to sting as if a blow
Had struck, a smart rebuke from Erato.

Alone, I glanced around;
No explanation could be found.
My face was burning red--
Appropriate for twice a fool, I said,
Whose verses rule his head.
I might as well accept my impotence
And write a comic strip for ten-year-olds.
This pose, this height of arrogance,
Is ludicrous. The sorry truth unfolds.
Reproached anew, no slap, more of a jolt--
The Muse released a forking lightning bolt!

II

Madame, you've made your point.
I wish you'd simply just anoint
Your poor affiliates
With fragrant potpourri that stimulates
But never aggravates
These tender spots in need of soothing oils.
Come ease this poet's growing pains and turn
Prosaic mantras into foils
For profound love all people can discern.
Erotic or agape, I'd express
The finest feelings humans can possess.

Ah, Erato, I'm not
Satirical, I've truly got
A worthy pitch to play
To mankind's heart and feet made out of clay.
I'd waken all distraught
Savants half-buried under feral oats,
All loiterers on bars of shifty sands.
Let rhymes enhance my pithy notes
And rhythms reason with their wayward bands.
Revive my pen but spare them my mistakes,
And please make sure the higher meaning takes.