

BY THOMAS TRAHERNE

But that which most I wonder at, which most  
I did esteem my bliss, which most I boast,  
And ever shall enjoy, is that within  
I felt no stain, nor spot of sin.

No darkness then did overshadow,  
    But all within was pure and bright,  
No guilt did crush, nor fear invade  
    But all my soul was full of light.

A joyful sense of purity  
    Is all I can remember;  
The very night to me was bright,  
    'Twas summer in December.

A serious meditation did employ  
My soul within, which taken up with joy  
Did seem no outward thing to note, but fly  
All objects that do feel the eye.

While it those very objects did  
    Admire, and prize, and praise, and love,  
Which in their glory most are hid,  
    Which presence only doth remove.

    Their constant daily presence i  
Rejoicing at, did see;  
    And that which takes them from the eye  
Of other, offer'd them to me.

No inward inclination did I feel  
To avarice or pride: my soul did kneel  
In admiration all the day. No lust, nor strife,  
Polluted then my infant life.

No fraud nor anger in me mov'd,  
    No malice, jealousy, or spite;  
All that I saw I truly lov'd.  
    Contentment only and delight

Were in my soul. O Heav'n! what bliss  
Did I enjoy and feel!

What powerful delight did this  
Inspire! For this I daily kneel.

Whether it be that nature is so pure,  
And custom only vicious; or that sure  
God did by miracle the guilt remove,  
And make my soul to feel his love

So early: or that 'twas one day,  
Wherein this happiness I found;  
Whose strength and brightness so do ray,  
That still it seems me to surround;

What ere it is, it is alight  
So endless unto me  
That I a world of true delight  
Did then and to this day do see.

That prospect was the gate of Heav'n, that day  
The ancient light of Eden did convey  
Into my soul: I was an Adam there  
A little Adam in a sphere

Of joys! O there my ravish'd sense  
Was entertain'd in Paradise,  
And had a sight of innocence  
What was beyond all bound and price.

An antepast of Heaven sure!  
I on the earth did reign;  
Within, without me, all was pure;  
I must become a child again.