

= The Good @-@ Morrow =

" The Good @-@ Morrow " is a poem by John Donne , published in his 1633 collection Songs and Sonnets . Written while Donne was a student at Lincoln 's Inn , the poem is one of his earliest works and is thematically considered to be the " first " work in Songs and Sonnets . Although referred to as a sonnet , the work does not follow the most common rhyming scheme of such works ? a 14 @-@ line poem , consisting of an eight @-@ line stanza followed by a six @-@ line conclusion ? but is instead 21 lines long , divided into three stanzas . " The Good @-@ Morrow " is written from the point of view of an awaking lover and describes the lover 's thoughts as he wakes next to his partner . The lover 's musings move from discussing sensual love to spiritual love as he realises that , with spiritual love , the couple are liberated from fear and the need to seek adventure . The poem makes use of biblical and Catholic writings , indirectly referencing the legend of the Seven Sleepers and Paul the Apostle 's description of divine , agapic love ? two concepts with which , as a practising Catholic , Donne would have been familiar .

Donne 's cartographic references in the third stanza have been the subject of much analysis , although academics have differed in their interpretation of their meaning and what the lines reference . Robert L. Sharp argues that these references can be logically interpreted as yet another reference to love ; the maps Donne with which would have been familiar were not the Mercator @-@ style maps that are common in the modern era , but instead cordiform maps , which appear in the shape of a heart and allow for the display of multiple worlds , which Donne alludes to in lines 11 to 18 . Julia M. Walker , while noting that Sharp 's work is " essential to an intelligent discussion of this extended image " , disagrees with his conclusions and argues that Donne is actually referring to a map showing one world .

= = Background and structure = =

Poet John Donne was born on 21 January 1572 to John Donne , a wealthy ironmonger and one of the wardens of the Worshipful Company of Ironmongers , and his wife Elizabeth . After his father 's death when he was four , Donne was , instead of being prepared to enter a trade , trained as a gentleman scholar ; his family used the money his father had made from ironmongering to hire private tutors who trained him in grammar , rhetoric , mathematics , history and foreign languages . Elizabeth was soon remarried to a wealthy doctor , ensuring that the family remained comfortable ; as a result , despite being the son of an ironmonger and portraying himself in his early poetry as an outsider , Donne refused to accept that he was anything other than a gentleman . After study at Hart Hall , Oxford , Donne 's private education eventually saw him study at Lincoln 's Inn , one of the Inns of Court , where he occupied his time with history , poetry , theology and " Humane learning and languages " . It was at Lincoln 's Inn that Donne first began writing poetry , looking upon it as " a life @-@ sign or minor irritation " rather than something which defined him . This early poetry included " The Good @-@ Morrow " as well as many other works which later went on to comprise his collection Songs and Sonnets , published in 1633 , two years after his death ; " The Good @-@ Morrow " is considered , in terms of its theme and maturity , to be the first of this collection 's poems .

Sonnets are , canonically , poems of 14 lines with assorted rhyming schemes . Originating in the 14th century works of Petrarch , the most common form of the sonnet is known as the Italian Sonnet : a stanza of eight lines in which the writer lays out a complex thought , followed by a pause and a six @-@ line conclusion " which is characteristically both unpredictable and intense " . This was interlinked with the idea of courtly love , in which the goal of a romance is not simply passion , but a more significant moral perfection . " The Good @-@ Morrow " , although identified by Donne as a sonnet , does not follow this structural layout , although it does follow the thematic one ; Donne used " sonnet " simply to refer to any piece of love poetry , ignoring the fact that " The Good @-@ Morrow " was a 21 @-@ line work divided into three stanzas .

= = Poem = =

The poem opens with a reference to a Catholic legend as Donne says :

I wonder by my troth , what thou and I

Did , till we loved ? were we not wean 'd till then ?

But suck 'd on country pleasures , childishly ?

Or snorted we in the Seven Sleepers ' den ? ( lines 1 ? 4 )

This refers to the Seven Sleepers , the Catholic legend of seven Christian children , persecuted for their faith during the reign of the Roman emperor Decius , who fled to the shelter of a cave where they slept for more than 200 years . Donne , one of six or seven children and a baptised Catholic during a time of strong anti @-@ Catholic sentiment from both the populace and the government , would certainly have been familiar with the story .

And now good @-@ morrow to our waking souls ,

Which watch not one another out of fear ;

For love all love of other sights controls ,

And makes one little room an everywhere .

Let sea @-@ discoverers to new worlds have gone ;

Let maps to other , worlds on worlds have shown ;

Let us possess one world ; each hath one , and is one . ( lines 8 ? 14 )

In this passage , the speaker experiences a sense of wonder , having awoken in bed with his lover ; he makes the discovery that their love makes finding " new worlds " pale in importance . " [ S ] ouls " also awake , not just bodies , " as if called by love from the sleep of ordinary life and mere lust " .

My face in thine eye , thine in mine appears ,

And true plain hearts do in the faces rest ;

Where can we find two better hemispheres

Without sharp north , without declining west ?

Whatever dies , was not mix 'd equally ; ( lines 15 ? 19 )

This passage shows the speaker communicating to his lover that they have proceeded from their former " childish " pleasures to this moment , where their souls have finally awakened ; something " miraculous " has happened , because the speaker feels the sort of love that Paul the Apostle claimed would only be encountered in heaven .

If our two loves be one , or thou and I

Love so alike that none can slacken , none can die . ( lines 20 ? 21 )

While the version found in Songs and Sonnets includes this passage as the last two lines , other manuscripts and a later volume of poetry give the last lines as , " If our two loves be one , both thou and I / Love just alike in all , none of these loves can die " .

= = Themes = =

A love poem , " The Good @-@ Morrow " is thematically centred on several concepts . The poem is primarily to do with evolving love ; the movement from pure lust , in the first stanza , to a nascent and evolving spirituality which liberates the lovers because they no longer " watch each other out of fear " but can instead see clearly . The lovers ' faith in each other allows them to be brave , unlike the Seven Sleepers , who were forced out of fear to hide their beliefs ; with love , the lovers can allow others to pursue their own dreams , accepting that " Let us possess one world ; each hath one , and is one " ? with each other , there is no need to search further for adventure . Harold Bloom notes the intertwining of both sensual and spiritual love , arguing that Donne is suggesting that it is impossible for those buried in sensual love , " busying themselves in mundane matters " , to experience true love . Donne 's emphasis on the importance of spiritual love can be seen from the biblical allusions ; Achsah Guibbory states that the tone and wording of the poem is an intentional reference to Paul the Apostle 's description of divine , agapic love ; " At moments like these ... eros merges with agape . Walls collapse , the veil parts , we know as we are known ; our deepest , truest selves exposed " . Alfred W. Satterthwaite , writing in The Explicator , argues that the story of the Seven Sleepers itself contains this theme ; in the story , the Sleepers awoke to find themselves "

thunderstruck " in their new environment , something analogous to " the radiant revelation love grants to the lovers in the poem " .

Some scholars , such as William Empson , maintain that the poem also indicates that Donne seriously believed in separate planets and planes , and also the existence of more than one Christ ? a belief that Donne later abandoned . Academics also see the poem as a more general allegory of the evolution of minds from childishness , as typified by the first stanza where the lovers " suck 'd on country pleasures , childishly " , towards a more mature form of love . Much has also been made of Donne 's references to compasses and maps in the third stanza . Robert L. Sharp , writing in *Modern Language Notes* , argues that these references can be logically interpreted as yet another reference to love . The maps Donne would have been familiar with are not the Mercator @-@ style maps , but instead cordiform maps , which appear in the shape of a heart . More than simply heart @-@ shaped , cordiform maps also allow the display of multiple worlds , with opposing hemispheres ? and Sharp argues that Donne 's work references such a multiple world map in lines 11 to 18 .

Julia M. Walker , writing in *The Review of English Studies* , notes that Sharp 's work is " essential to an intelligent discussion of this extended image " , but disagrees with his conclusions . In particular , she argues that Sharp 's conclusions are incorrect , and that the actual words of the poem refer to a cordiform map showing a single world rather than one showing two worlds ; " my face on thine eye " , for example , not " eyes " . Instead , Walker suggests that Donne was basing his work on William Cunningham 's *Cosmographical Glasse* , a 1559 book which showed a single @-@ leafed cordiform map . More importantly , it gave a way to draw a two @-@ leafed , heart @-@ shaped map that displayed only a single world ; this interpretation would " reconcile and unify " the problems with interpreting " *The Good @-@ Morrow* " . The essential distinction is thus that , while both interpret Donne 's work as referencing cordiform maps , Sharp sees it as referencing a map showing two worlds , while Walker maintains that the reference is to a map showing only one .