

A Letter to Her Husband, Absent upon Public Employment  
Anne Bradstreet (c. 1612-1672)

My head, my heart, mine eyes, my life, nay, more,  
My joy, my magazine of earthly store,  
If two be one, as surely thou and I,  
How stayest thou there, whilst I at Ipswich lie?  
5 So many steps, head from the heart to sever,  
If but a neck, soon should we be together.  
I, like the Earth this season, mourn in black,  
My Sun is gone so far in's zodiac,  
Whom whilst I 'joyed, nor storms, nor frost I felt,  
10 His warmth such frigid colds did cause to melt.  
My chilled limbs now numbed lie forlorn,-  
Return, return, sweet Sol, from Capricorn;  
In this dead time, alas, what can I more  
Than view those fruits which through thy heat I bore?  
15 Which sweet contentment yield me for a space,  
True living pictures of their father's face.  
O strange effect! now thou art southward gone,  
I weary grow the tedious day so long;  
But when thou northward to me shalt return,  
20 I wish my Sun may never set, but burn  
Within the Cancer of my glowing breast,  
The welcome house of him my dearest guest.  
Where ever, ever stay, and go not thence,  
Till nature's sad decree shall call thee hence;  
25 Flesh of thy flesh, bone of thy bone,  
I here, thou there, yet both but one. [1678]