

ANDREW MARVELL'S "ON A DROP OF DEW" (1678)*

Formal diction,
* syntax + tone

* Central idea = human soul comes into world from Heaven & is anxious to go back there

* alterations bet. "here" & "there" (12x3)
hint from Shakespeare's line: "doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven."

* opening 2-stanzas describe drop as it lies trembling on petal; scornful of the flower (earth) keeps gazing at the sky where it came from

* sun takes pity on dew & arranges flight back to Heaven (evaporation)

* expresses philosophical or metaphysical ideas thr. the extend. metaphorical lang. & personification
* expands on lit. allusion of Platonic Christianity =

indifferent

See how the orient¹ dew, personification = soul/human
Shed from the bosom of the morn > personification (mother)
Into the blowing roses,

Line (5) Yet careless of its mansion new, metaphor for earth
For the clear region where 'twas born

Round in itself incloses: dew
And in its little globe's extent,

Frames as it can its native element.

(10) personif. How it the purple flow'r does slight,
Scarce touching where it lies,
But gazing back upon the skies, cannot.
Shines with a mournful light,
Color symbol of royalty

extended metaphor = dew drop is the human soul

(15) Like its own tear, simile
Because so long divided from the sphere, > Heaven?
Restless it rolls and unsecure, unwise?
Trembling lest it grow impure,

flower = the earth
sky = sphere
> Heaven

(20) Till the warm sun pities its pain, sin
And to the skies exhale it back again. < personif.
So the soul, that drop, that ray

metaphors for soul or personific

(25) Of the (clear fountain of eternal day), > metaphor for Heaven
Could it within the human flow'r be seen, > Heaven
Remembering still its former height,
Shuns the sweet leaves and blossoms

Symbol: renewal green, hope

(25) And recollecting its own light,
Does, in its pure and circling thoughts, express
The greater heaven in an heaven less.

metaphors for sin/temptations of world (fallen) the flesh-body

(30) In how coy³ a figure wound,
Every way it turns away:
So the world excluding round, movement
yet receiving in the day,
Dark beneath, but bright above, juxtaposition
Here disdainful, there in love. (2)

(35) How loose and easy hence to go, > eager for ret. to Heaven
How girt and ready to ascend,
Moving but on a point below,
It all about does upwards bend.

(40) Such did the manna's sacred dew distill, alluv.
White and entire, though congealed and chill, death
Congealed on earth: but does, dissolving, run, eager
Into the glories of th' almighty sun.

Heaven metaphor metaphor for Jesus (son)

¹ pearly, sparkling
² blooming

³ modest

Christoplatonism - the belief that the soul is both good and evil