

# An Apology For Her Poetry

By Duchess of Newcastle Margaret Cavendish

I language want to dress my fancies in,  
The hair's uncurled, the garment's loose and thin.  
Had they but silver lace to make them gay,  
They'd be more courted than in poor array;  
Or, had they art, would make a better show;  
But they are plain; yet cleanly do they go.  
The world in bravery doth take delight,  
And glistening shows do more attract the sight:  
And every one doth honor a rich hood,  
As if the outside made the inside good.  
And every one doth bow and give the place,  
Not for the man's sake but the silver lace.  
Let me intreat in my poor book's behalf,  
That all will not adore the golden calf.  
Consider, pray, gold hath no life therein,  
And life, in nature, is the richest thing.  
Be just, let Fancy have the upper place,  
And then my verses may perchance find grace.

Source: *The Cavalier and His Lady*



Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle-upon-Tyne was an English aristocrat, a prolific writer, and a scientist. She became the second wife of William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1645. Cavendish was a poet, philosopher, writer of prose romances, essayist, and playwright who published under her own name at a time when most women writers published anonymously. Her writing addressed a number of topics, including gender, power, manners, scientific method, and philosophy. Her utopian romance, *The Blazing World*, is one of the earliest examples of science fiction.

[See More By This Poet](#)