

# Epitaph on the Tombstone of a Child, the Last of Seven that Died Before

By Aphra Behn

This Little, Silent, Gloomy Monument,  
Contains all that was sweet and innocent ;  
The softest pratler that e'er found a Tongue,  
His Voice was Musick and his Words a Song ;  
Which now each List'ning Angel smiling hears,  
Such pretty Harmonies compose the Spheres;  
Wanton as unfledg'd Cupids, ere their Charms  
Has learn'd the little arts of doing harms ;  
Fair as young Cherubins, as soft and kind,  
And tho translated could not be refin'd ;  
The Seventh dear pledge the Nuptial Joys had given,  
Toil'd here on Earth, retir'd to rest in Heaven ;  
Where they the shining Host of Angels fill,  
Spread their gay wings before the Throne, and smile.



Aphra Behn was the first English woman to earn her living as a writer. Her fiction — including a work critical of slavery — is often political and her plays are frequently bawdy. She sometimes scandalized her audience, but her work broke new literary ground and sold well.