



The Complete Poems (Penguin Classics)

Ben Jonson

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His adoption of classical ideals was combined with a vigorous interest in contemporary life and a strong faith in native idiom. Within the urbane elegance of his verse forms he contrived a directness and energy of statement clearly related to colloquial speech, and this characteristic fusion of restraint and vitality gave to the seventeenth-century lyric its most distinctive quality. As well as the entire body of Jonson's non-dramatic verse, extensively annotated, this edition contains many of the songs from his plays and masques and his translation of 'Horace, of the Art of Poetry'. His 'Conversations with Drummond', which adds much to our sense of the man, appears as an Appendix, as does 'Discoveries'; together they shed valuable light on Jonson's poetic theory and practice.

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