

Renascence Editions

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Mac Flecknoe.

John Dryden.

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Mac Flecknoe,
OR A
S A T Y R
UPON THE
TRUE-BLEW-PROTESTANT
P O E T, T.S.

By the Author of
ABSALOM & ACHITOPHEL

L O N D O N,
Printed for *D. Green*, 1682.

Mac Flecknoe,
OR A
S A T Y R

UPON THE
True-Blew-Protestant POET, T.S.

ALL humane things are subject to decay,
And when Fate Summons, Monarch's must obey;
This *Flecknoe* found, who like *Augustus* young,
Was call'd to Empire, and had Govern'd long;
In Prose and Verse was own'd without Dispute,
Through all the Realms of Nonsense, Absolute;
This Aged Prince now flourishing in Peace,
And blest with Issue of a large Increase,
Worn out with Business, did at length Debate,
To settle the Succession of the State,
And Pond'ring, which of all his Sons were fit
To reign, and Wage Immortal Wars, with Wit,
Cry'd 'tis Resov'd (for Nature pleads, that he
Should only Rule, who most resembles me,) *Shad---*
Shad--- alone my perfect Image Bears,
Mature in Dulness from his Tender Years;
Shad--- alone of all my Sons, is He
Who stands confirm'd in full Stupidity;
The rest, to some faint meaning make Pretence,
But *Shad--* never deviates into Sence;
Some Beams of Wit on other Souls may fall,
Strike through, and make a Lucid Interval;
But *Shad---* Genuine Night admits no Ray,
His rising Fogs prevail upon the Day;
Besides, his goodly Fabric fills the Eye,
And seems design'd for thoughtless Majesty;
Thoughtless as Monarch-Oaks that shade the Plain,
And spread in solemn State, supinely Reign;
Heywood and *Shirly* were but Types of Thee,

Thou last great Prophet of Tautology.
 Ev'n I a Dunce of more renown than they,
 Was sent before but to prepare thy way;
 I courtly Cloath'd in Drugget Russet, came
 To teach the Nations in thy greater name;
 My warbling Lute, the Lute I whilome strung,
 When to King *John* of *Portugal* I Sung,
 Was but a prelude to that Glorious Day,
 When thou on Siluer *Thames* didst cut thy Way,
 With well-tim'd Oars before the Royal-Barge,
 Swell'd with the Pride of thy Celestial Charge,
 And big with Hymn, Commanders of an Host,
 The like was ne're in *Epsom* Blankets Tost.
 Methinks I see the new *Arion* Sail,
 The Lute still trembles underneath thy Nail;
 At thy well sharpned Thumb, from Shore to Shore
 The Treble squeaks doe fear, the Bases Rore;
 Eccho from *Pissing-Alley*, *Shad---* Call,
 And *Shad---* they resound from *Aston-Hall*;
 About thy Boat the little Fishes throng,
 And gently waft the over all along;
 Sometimes as Prince of thy Harmonious Band,
 Thou weild'st thy Paper in thy Thrashing-Hand.
 St. *Andrew*'s Feet ne're kept more equal Time,
 Not even the Feet of thy own *Psyches* Rhime;
 Though they in Number, as in Sence excel,
 So Just, so like Tautology they fell;

That Pale with Envy *Singleton* forswore
 The Lute and Sword, which he in Triumph wore,
 And Vow'd he ne're would Act *Villerius* more.
 Here stopt the good old Sire, and wept for Joy,
 In silent Raptures of the Hopeful Boy;
 All Arguments (but most his Plays) persuade,
 That for Anointed Dulness he was made.

 Close by the Walls which fair *Augusta* Bind,
 (The fair *Augusta* much to Fears Incl'in'd)
 An Ancient Fabrick rais'd t'Inform the sight,

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There stood of Yore (and *Barbican* it Hight,)
 A Watch-Tower once, but now (so Fate ordeins)
 An Empty name of all the Pile Remains;
 From its old Ruins Brothel-Houses rise,
 Scenes of lewd Love, and of Polluted Joys;
 Where their vast Courts the Mother Strumpets keep,
 And undisturb'd by Watch, in silence sleep;
 Near these a Nursery Erects its Head,
 Where Queens are Form'd, and future Heroes Bred,

Where unfledg'd Actors learn to Laugh and Cry,
 Where Infant Puncks their tender Voices try,
 And little *Maximins* the Gods Defie.
 Great *Fletcher* never treads in Buskins here,
 Nor greater *Johnson* dares in Socks appear;
 But gentle *Simpkin* just reception finds
 Amidst these Monuments of Varnisht Minds:
 Pure Clinches the *Suburbane* Muse Affords,
 And *Panton* waging Harmless War with Words;
 Here *Flecknoe* as a place to Fame well known,
 Ambitiously designed his *Shad---* Throne.

For ancient *Decker* Prophecy'd long since,
 That in this Isle should Reign a mighty Prince,
 Born for a Scourge of Wit, and Flaile of Sence;
 To whom true Dulness should some *Psyche's* owe,
 But Worlds of *Misers* from his Pen should flow:
 Humorists and Hypocrite's his Pen should produce
 Whole *Raymond* Families and Tribes of *Bruce*;
 Now Empress Fame had Publish'd the Renown
 Of *Shad---*s Coronation through the Town;
 Rous'd by report of Pomp, the Nations meet
 From near *Bunhill*, to distant *Watling street*;
 No *Persian* Carpet spread th'*Imperial* way,
 But scattered Limbs of Mangled Poets lay;
 From Dusty Shops neglected Authors come,
 Martyrs of Pies, and Reliques of the Bum;
 Much *Heywood*, *Shirly*, *Ogilby*, there lay,

But Loads of *Shad*--- almost Choak'd the way;
 Bilk'd Stationers for Yeomen stood prepar'd,
 And *Herringman* was Captain of the Guard;
 The Hoary Prince in Majesty appear'd
 High on a State of his own Labors rear'd;
 At his Right-Hand our young *Ascanius* Sate,
Romes other Hope, and Pillar of the State;
 His Brows thick Fogs, instead of Glories-Grace,
 And Lambent Dulness plaid about his Face.
 As *Hannibal* did to the Altars come,
 Sworn by his Sire a Mortal Fore to *Rome*;
 So *Shad*--- Sworn, nor should his Vow be vain,
 That he to Death true Dulnes would maintain,
 And in his Fathers Right and Realms Defence,
 Wou'd bid defiance unto Wit and Sense;
 The King himself the Sacred Unction made,
 As King by Office, and as Priest by Trade;
 In his Sinister-Hand, instead of Ball,
 Was plac'd a mighty Mug of Potent Ale.
 Love's Kingdom to his Right he did Convey,
 At once his Scepter, and his Rule of Sway;
 Whose Righteous Love the Prince had practic'd Young,
 And from whose Loins Recorded *Psyche* Sprung;
 His Temples (last) with Poppey were o'respread,
 That Nodding seem'd to Consecrate his Head;
 Just at that point of time, (if Fame not lie,)
 On his Left-Hand *Twelve Reverend Owls* did flie;
 So *Romulus* ('tis Sung) by *Tiber's* Brook,
 Presage of Sway from Twice six Vultures took;
 Th'advancing throng loud Acclamations make,
 And Omens of the future Empire take;
 The Sire then shook the Honours on his head,
 And from his brows damps of Oblivion Shed:

Full of the filial Dulness long he stood,
 Repelling from his Brest the Raging God,
 At length burst out in this Prophetick Mood.

Heaven bless my Son, from *Ireland* let him Reign

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To fair *Barbadoes* on the Western Mayn,
 Of his Dominion may no end be known,
 And greater than his Fathers be his Throne;
 Beyond loves Kingdoms may he s[tr]etch his Pen,
 He paws'd--and all the People cry'd--*Amen*.
 Then thus continued he, my Son advance
 Still in new Impudence, new Ignorance,
 Success let others teach, learn thou from me,
 Pangs without Birth, a fruitless Industry.
 Let *Virtuoso's* in five Years be Writ,
 Yet not one thought accuse thy Soul of Wit;
 Let Gentle *George* with Triumph Tread the Stage,
 Make *Dorimant* betray, and *Loveit* rage,
 Let Cully *Cockwood*, *Fopling* charm the Pit,
 And in their folly show the Writers Wit;
 Yet still thy fools shall stand in thy Defence,
 And justifie their Authors want of Sense,
 Let them be all of thy own Model made
 Of Dulness; and desire no Forreign Aid,
 That they to after Ages may be known,
 Not Copies drawn, but Issues of thine own;
 Nay, let thy Men of Wit too be the same,
 All like to thee, and differing but in Name;
 But let no Alien *Sydney* Interpose,
 To lard with Wit thy hungry *Epsome* Prose:
 And when false Flowers of Rhet'rick thou wouldst cull
 Trust Nature, do not labour to be dull;
 But Write thy best on th'top, and in each line
 Sir *Formal's* Oratory Wit be thine;
 Sir *Formal* tho unsought attends thy Quill,
 And doth thy Northern Dedications fill
 Nor let false Friends seduce thy Mind to Fame,
 By Arrogating *Johnson's* Hostile Name;
 Let Father *Flecknoe* Fire thy Mind with Praise,
 And Uncle *Ogleby* thy Envy raise;
 Thou art my Blood where *Johnson* hath no part,
 What share have we in Nature, or in Art?
 Where did his Wit or Learning fix a *Brand*?

Or rail at Arts he did not understand?
 Where made he love in *Prince Nycanders Vain*?
 Or swept the Durst in *Psyches* humble Strain?
 Where sold he Bargains? *Whip-stich. Kiss mine A--s*,
 Promis'd a Play, and dwindled to a Farce.
 Where did his Muse from *Fletchers* Scenes purloin,
 As thou whole *Etheridge* dost transfuse to thine?
 But so transfus'd as Oyls on Water Flow,
 His always Floats above, thine Sinks Below;
 This is thy Promise, this thy wondrous Way,
 New Humours to Invent for each New Play;
 This is that Boasted Bias of the Mind,
 By which one way to Dulness 'tis Incl'in'd;
 Which makes thy Writings lame on one side still
 And in all Charges, that way bends thy will;
 Nor let thy Mountain Belly make Pretence,
 Of likeness, thine's a Tympany of Sence.
 A *Tun* of Man in thy *large Bulk* is Writ,
 But sure thou art a *Kilderkin* of Wit;
 Like mine thy Gentle Numbers feebly creep,
 Thy Tragick Muse gives Smiles, thy Comick sleep;
 With what e're Gall thou sets thy self to write,
 Thy Inoffensive Satyrs never bite;
 In thy Felonious Heart, though Venom lies,
 It doth but touch thy Irish Pen and dies;
 Thy Genius calls the not to purchase Fame,
 In keen *iambicks*, but wild *Anagram*;
 Leave writing Plays, and choose for thy Command,
 Some peaceful Province in *Acrostick* Land.
 There thou mayst Wings display, and Alters raise,
 And torture one poor Word ten thousand ways;
 Of if thou wouldst thy different Talent suite,
 Set thy one Songs, and Sing them to thy Lute.

He said, but his last words were scarcely heard
 For *Bruce* and *Longvile* had a Trap prepar'd
 And down they sent the yet declining *Bard*;
 Sinking, he left the Drugget Robes behind,

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Born upwards by a Subteranean Wind,
The Mantle fell to the young Prophets part
With doubled Portion of his Fathers Art.

FINIS.

A Gentleman having a curious Colection of Poetry by the most Ingenious of the Age, Intends to oblige the World with a Poem every Wednesday Morning, and with all New ones as they come to his hand.

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Mac Flecknoe. [Launch Audio in a New Window](#). By John Dryden. A Satire upon the True-blue Protestant Poet T.S. All human things are subject to decay, And, when Fate summons, monarchs must obey: This Flecknoe found, who, like Augustus, young. Here Flecknoe, as a place to fame well known, Ambitiously design'd his Shadwell's throne. For ancient Decker prophesi'd long since, That in this pile should reign a mighty prince, Born for a scourge of wit, and flail of sense: To whom true dullness should some Psyches owe Mac Flecknoe (full title: Mac Flecknoe; or, A satyr upon the True-Blew-Protestant Poet, T.S.[1]) is a verse mock-heroic satire written by John Dryden. It is a direct attack on Thomas Shadwell, another prominent poet of the time. It opens with the lines: Bust of Mac Flecknoe from an 18th century edition of Dryden's poems. All human things are subject to decay, And when fate summons, monarchs must obey[2]. Mac Flecknoe study guide contains a biography of John Dryden, literature essays, quiz questions, major themes, characters, and a full summary and analysis of the poem Mac Flecknoe. About Mac Flecknoe Poem Text Mac Flecknoe Summary Character List Glossary Themes Quotes and Analysis Mac Flecknoe Summary and Analysis Symbols, Allegory and Motifs Flecknoe and Shadwell Literary Elements Related Links Essay Questions Quiz 1 Quiz 2 Quiz 3 Citations.