**Ebb**

Edna St. Vincent Millay

I know what my heart is like

      Since your love died:

It is like a hollow ledge

Holding a little pool

      Left there by the tide,

      A little tepid pool,

Drying inward from the edge.

**Sonnet 87**

William Shakespeare

Farewell! thou art too dear for my possessing,

And like enough thou knowst thy estimate.

The Charter of thy worth gives thee releasing;

My bonds in thee are all determinate.

For how do I hold thee but by thy granting,

And for that riches where is my deserving?

The cause of this fair gift in me is wanting,

And so my patent back again is swerving.

Thy self thou gav’st, thy own worth then not knowing,

Or me, to whom thou gav’st is, else mistaking,

So thy great gift, upon misprision growing,

Comes home again, on better judgement making.

   Thus have I had thee as a dream doth flatter:

   In sleep a king, but waking no such matter.

**Idea 61**

Michael Drayton

Since there’s no help, come let us kiss and part.

Nay, I have done, you get no more of me;

And I am glad, yea glad with all my heart,

That thus so cleanly I myself can free.

Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,

And when we meet at any time again,

Be it not seen in either of our brows

That we one jot of former love retain.

Now at the last gasp of Love’s latest breath,

When, his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies;

When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,

And Innocence is closing up his eyes—

Now, if thou wouldst, when all have given him over,

From death to life thou might’st him yet recover!

**Love’s Diet**

John Donne

TO what a cumbersome unwieldiness

And burdenous corpulence my love had grown,

But that I did, to make it less,

And keep it in proportion,

Give it a diet, made it feed upon

That which love worst endures, discretion.

Above one sigh a day I allow’d him not,

Of which my fortune, and my faults had part;

And if sometimes by stealth he got

A she sigh from my mistress’ heart,

And thought to feast on that, I let him see

’Twas neither very sound, nor meant to me.

If he wrung from me a tear, I brined it so

With scorn or shame, that him it nourish’d not;

If he suck’d hers, I let him know

’Twas not a tear which he had got;

His drink was counterfeit, as was his meat;

For eyes, which roll towards all, weep not, but sweat.

Whatever he would dictate I writ that,

But burnt her letters when she writ to me;

And if that favour made him fat,

I said, “If any title be

Convey’d by this, ah! what doth it avail,

To be the fortieth name in an entail?”

Thus I reclaim’d my buzzard love, to flie

At what, and when, and how, and where I choose.

Now negligent of sports I lie,

And now, as other falconers use,

I spring a mistress, swear, write, sigh, and weep;

And the game kill’d, or lost, go talk or sleep.

### Advice to a Discarded Lover

Fleur Adcock

Think, now: if you have found a dead bird,  
not only dead, not only fallen,  
but full of maggots: what do you feel -  
more pity or more revulsion?

Pity is for the moment of death,  
and the moments after. It changes  
when decay comes, with the creeping stench  
and the wriggling, munching scavengers.

Returning later, though, you will see  
a shape of clean bone, a few feathers,  
an inoffensive symbol of what  
once lived. Nothing to make you shudder.

It is clear then. But perhaps you find  
the analogy I have chosen  
for our dead affair rather gruesome -  
too unpleasant a comparison.

It is not accidental. In you  
I see maggots close to the surface.  
You are eaten up by self-pity,  
crawling with unlovable pathos.

If I were to touch you I should feel  
against my fingers fat, moist worm-skin.  
Do not ask me for charity now:  
go away until your bones are clean.

**[Sonnet] You jerk you didn't call me up**

[Bernadette Mayer](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/bernadette-mayer)

You jerk you didn't call me up

I haven't seen you in so long

You probably have a fucking tan

& besides that instead of making love tonight

You're drinking your parents to the airport

I'm through with you bourgeois boys

All you ever do is go back to ancestral comforts

Only money can get—even Catullus was rich but

Nowadays you guys settle for a couch

By a soporific color cable t.v. set

Instead of any arc of love, no wonder

The G.I. Joe team blows it every other time

Wake up! It's the middle of the night

You can either make love or die at the hands of the Cobra Commander

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To make love, turn to page 121.

To die, turn to page 172.