

# “On My First Son” (1616)

By Ben Jonson

Farewell, thou child of my right hand, and joy;  
My sin was too much hope of thee, lov'd boy.  
Seven years tho' wert lent to me, and I thee pay,  
Exacted by thy fate, on the just day.  
O, could I lose all father now! For why  
Will man lament the state he should envy?  
To have so soon 'scap'd world's and flesh's rage,  
And if no other misery, yet age?  
Rest in soft peace, and, ask'd, say, "Here doth lie  
Ben Jonson his best piece of poetry."  
For whose sake henceforth all his vows be such,  
As what he loves may never like too much.