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## **The Sun Rising**

By John Donne

Busy old fool, unruly sun,  
Why dost thou thus,  
Through windows, and through curtains call on us?  
Must to thy motions lovers' seasons run?  
Saucy pedantic wretch, go chide  
Late school boys and sour prentices,  
Go tell court huntsmen that the king will ride,  
Call country ants to harvest offices,  
Love, all alike, no season knows nor clime,  
Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time.

### **Analysis:**

The poem opens with a very unconventional tone. The sun holds the status of God in almost all the societies. But here, the poet calls him 'busy, old, fool, unruly'. The sun has been called 'busy' because it moves all the time. As per the astronomical theory of Ptolemy, which prevailed during the time of Donne, it is the sun which moves round the earth. Again, the sun is called 'old' because it has been giving light to the earth since time immemorial which, according to the speaker-lover, is a foolish work. Hence, the sun is called 'fool'. Lastly, he is called 'unruly' because nobody can rule or control the sun.

The setting of the poem is the bed-room of the lovers. As the sunlight falls on the lovers, the lover gets irritated and disturbed. That is why he starts scolding the sun. He questions the sun why he is disturbing them by its light through windows and curtains. He further questions the sun whether he thinks that the lovers should follow the timings of the sun. The speaker-lover suggests that the sun should go away and tell the school boys to get ready, tell the apprentices to do their work, tell the

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huntsmen that their king is coming and tell the slaves, who works like ants all the time, to do their work. The sun should not disturb them because lovers are not bound by time.

Thy beams, so reverend and strong  
Why shouldst thou think?  
I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,  
But that I would not lose her sight so long;  
If her eyes have not blinded thine,  
Look, and tomorrow late, tell me,  
Whether both th' Indias of spice and mine  
Be where thou leftst them, or lie here with me.  
Ask for those kings whom thou saw'st yesterday,  
And thou shalt hear, All here in one bed lay.

**Analysis:**

Once again, in the second paragraph the lover asks question to the sun. He asks the sun whether he thinks that his beams are very powerful. It may be powerful for others but not for the lovers. He can eclipse the sunbeams by closing his eyes. But by winking his eyes he will lose the sight of her beloved. That is why he does not want to close his eyes even for a second. The lover goes on to saying that the sight of her beloved is more powerful than the sunbeams. Then he tells the sun that he may visit several places on the earth like the East Indies, known for its spice, the West Indies, known for its gold mines, and come back the next day; he will find everything in their bedroom. All the kings and the queens of the world are to be found in their bedroom only.

She's all states, and all princes, I,  
Nothing else is.  
Princes do but play us; compared to this,  
All honor's mimic, all wealth alchemy.  
Thou, sun, art half as happy as we,  
In that the world's contracted thus.  
Thine age asks ease, and since thy duties be  
To warm the world, that's done in warming us.  
Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere;  
This bed thy center is, these walls, thy sphere.

**Analysis:**

The last line of the second stanza creates doubt in the mind of a reader. The reader thinks how it can be possible that all the kings and queens of the world are present in the lovers' bedroom. The answer to this doubt is available in the last stanza. The speaker-lover says that his beloved is the kingdom and by possessing her he becomes the prince. A king or a prince has only

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one state but he, by possessing her, has all the states. Therefore, he is richer than any other prince in the world. All the honour, wealth and happiness are nothing in comparison to the love of his beloved. The sun is half as happy as the lover. Finally, the lover gets the answer to the question raised by him in beginning of the poem. He says that the sun's duty is to give light to the whole world and for this purpose the sun has to travel a lot all the time. As the sun has become old, it must take rest. The sun gives light to the bedroom of the lovers, thereby giving light to the whole world. According to the lover, giving light to microcosmic bedroom means giving light to the macrocosmic world as he says, "Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere."

For further study please visit:

1. <https://www.gradesaver.com/donne-poems/study-guide/summary-the-sunne-rising>
2. <https://www.sparknotes.com/poetry/donne/section4/>
3. <https://owlcation.com/humanities/Analysis-of-Poem-The-Sun-Rising-by-John-Donne>

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