

XXXI: To Antenor, on a Paper of Mine which J. Jones threatens to publish to prejudice him.

Must then [my Crimes](#) become his [Scandal](#) too?

Why, sure the Devil hath not much to doe.

The weakness of the other Charge is clear,

When such a trifle must bring up the Rear.

But this is mad design, for who before

Lost his Repute upon anothers score?

My Love and Life I must confess are thine,

But not my Errours, they are only mine.

And if my Faults must be for thine allow'd,

It will be hard to dissipate the Cloud:

For Eve's Rebellion did not Adam blast,

Untill himself forbidden Fruit did taste.

'Tis possible this Magazine of Hell

'(Whose name would turn a Virge into a spell,

Whose mischief is congenial to his life)

May yet enjoy an honourable Wife.

Nor let his ill be reckoned as her blame,

Nor yet my Follies blast Antenor's name.

But if those lines a Punishment could call

Lasting and great as this dark Lanthorn's gall;

Alone I'd court the Torments with content,

To testifie that thou art Innocent.

So if my Ink through malice prov'd a stain,

My Bloud should justly wash it off again.

But since that Mint of slander could invent

To make so dull a Ryme his Instrument,

Let Verse revenge the quarrel. But he's worse

Then wishes, and below a Poet's curse;

And more than this Wit knows not how to give,
Let him be still himself, and let him live.