1616

TO CELIA

Ben Jonson
Jonson, Ben (1573-1637) - English poet and dramatist. As a playwright, he stands second only to Shakespeare (who appeared as a cast member in Jonson’s early play, “Every Man in his Humour”). Jonson’s comedies are generally considered his best work. He was named Poet Laureate in 1619. To Celia (1616) - Paraphrased from passages in letters written by Philostratus, a late Greek rhetorician.

Opening lines: Drink to me only with thine eyes, / And I will pledge with mine; ...
TO CELIA

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup
And I’ll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine;
But might I of Jove’s nectar sup,
I would not change for thine.
I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honouring thee
As giving it a hope that there
It could not wither’d be;
But thou thereon didst only breathe
And sent’st it back to me;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself but thee!

THE END