

1616

ON MY FIRST SON

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. On My First Son (1616) - In memory of Jonson's son who died during the plague in 1603 at the age of seven. Opening lines: Farewell, thou child of my right hand, and joy; / My sin was too much hope of thee, loved boy. ...

ON MY FIRST SON

Farewell, thou child of my right hand, and joy;
My sin was too much hope of thee, loved boy.
Seven years thou wert lent to me, and I thee pay,
Exacted by thy fate, on the just day.
Oh, could I lose all father now! For why
Will man lament the state he should envy?
To have so soon 'scaped world's and flesh's rage,
And if no other misery, yet age!
Rest in soft peace, and asked, 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. - -

THE END