



Selected Poems (Oxford World's Classics)

Earl of Rochester John Wilmot, Paul Davis

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'If I by miracle can be
This livelong minute true to thee
'Tis all that heav'n allows.'

The Earl of Rochester was England's first celebrity poet, a byword for the theatricality, licentiousness, and scepticism of the Restoration age. But his scandalous reputation belies the variety and sophistication of his work: his love poems set new standards not only of sexual explicitness but also of psychological acuity and lyric grace, while his satires broke new ground as much by the refinement of their ironies as in the brutality of their invective. A fascinatingly contradictory figure,

Rochester emerges more clearly than ever from this new edition, the first selection of his work in modern spelling to take account of recent revolutionary advances in textual scholarship. It includes only poems now securely attributed to the poet, in texts based not on the posthumous and unreliable printed editions but on the most authoritative manuscripts which circulated in his lifetime.

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