

Pi20 Great potent Duke, whom fortune rais'd soe high

Notes. In the poem “Away, away, great George, o come not here”, Buckingham’s shade laments that “each Letter of my Name shalbe / A Theame for their Invencions, to let flee / Abroad to all the World, even my black Deeds”. This cleverly worked acrostic is a neat example of what he meant.

“An Acrostic”

Great potent Duke, whom fortune rais'd soe high,

Even to the height of greatest Majesty;

Our Admirall¹ admir'd, not for his birth

Regarded;² now is dead, & of noe worth,

Gone with his fame to blisse, or what is worse,

5

Ever to live, or die in damned curse.

Vile is thy name, worse were thy ends,

Ill were thy acts, few were thy freinds,

Lust rul'd thy heart, pride did the sway,

Life loath'd thy breath, Felton did the slay.

10

Even such thou wert, just was thy fate,

Rais'd from the dust, pulld from thy state.

Soe now adeiw, brave Duke, not Englands freind:

For want of letters, heere I am to end.

Source. Bodleian MS Tanner 465, fol. 102v

Pi20

¹ *Admirall*: Buckingham was Lord Admiral.

² *not for his birth / Regarded*: Buckingham’s relatively humble—if nevertheless gentle—family background was a target for his critics throughout his ascendancy. This poem repeats the slur later, when describing the Duke as “Rais’d from the dust”.
