

JESSICA CORY

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Of Flowers

So long I shewed you  
near the fire in its prime,  
the beauty observed in colour  
and smell. Gather the least

wet and dewy, the sun  
will dry them well,  
the plant and planet,  
if either will not keep.

## ABOUT THE POEM

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“Of Flowers” was created from the *Complete Herbal* by Nicholas Culpeper (1653). About the poem and the process of composing it, Jessica Cory writes:

I challenged myself in creating this poem. While all of the words in this poem came from Culpeper’s Chapter 2, “Of Flowers,” I wanted to write a poem that avoided the use of the word “flowers” and instead pushed readers to think about what connections we might make between floral attributes and other aspects of the environment. What else might we gather in our day-to-day lives? What else cannot be kept? While I’m spanning out from Culpeper’s original intent, I can’t help but wonder if he’d appreciate the connections between flowers and countless other potential elements of nature.

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