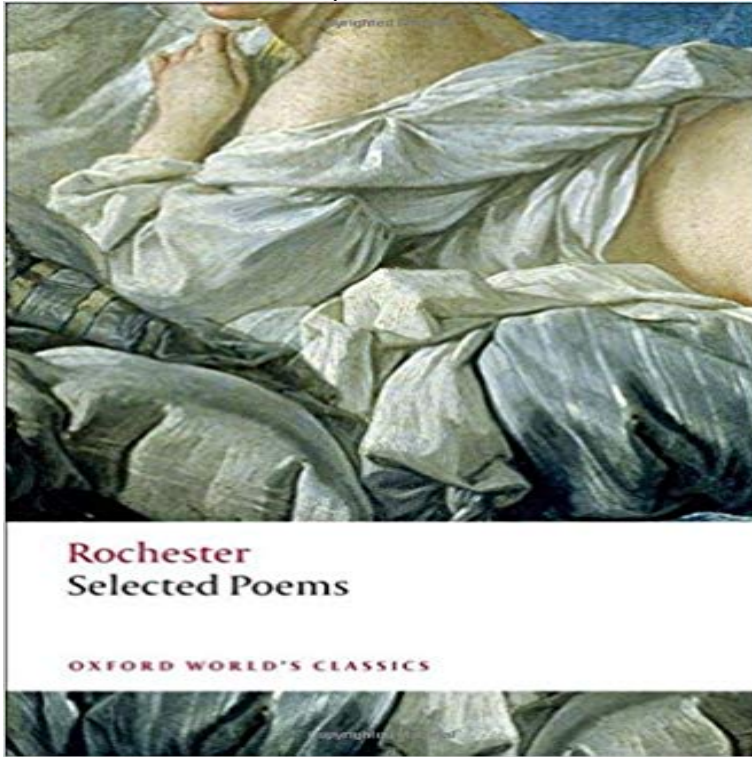


## Selected Poems (Oxford Worlds Classics)



If I by miracle can be  
This livelong minute  
true to thee  
Tis all that heavn allows.  
The Earl of Rochester was Englands first celebrity poet, a man who epitomized the theatricality, licentiousness, and skepticism of the Restoration age. But his scandalous reputation belies the variety and sophistication of his work: his love poems set new standards not only for sexual explicitness but also for psychological acuity and lyric grace, while his satires broke new ground as much by the refinement of their ironies as by 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. Paul Daviss superb Introduction places Rochester within the larger intellectual movement of libertinism, and his notes help readers unfamiliar with Restoration usage to catch the subtler connotations of words and phrases. Of particular interest, Davis includes in the notes the texts of the poems that Rochester translated and imitated, illuminating Rochesters creatively intricate involvement with the work of his ancient and modern counterparts, a crucial aspect of his poetic genius.

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