

## *The Last Page*

### **The Vanity of This World**

Look anywhere you will, the Earth is empty show.  
What someone builds today, another soon tears down;  
Where now a city stands will be a grassy mound,  
A place that only shepherds grazing their flocks will know.

What blooms so fair at daybreak, by noon is trampled low;  
What bravely struts and strives soon turns to ash and bone;  
No substance lasts forever, no brass, no polished stone.  
One moment fortune smiles, the next brings bitter woe.

Tales of our mighty deeds like dreams must fade away.  
How then should Man – Time's plaything – ever hope to stay?  
Oh think, what are those objects we prize beyond compare,

Mere shadows, dust, and wind – all worthless, false and vain;  
Field flowers glimpsed in passing and never seen again!  
For that which is immortal, no man seems to care.

*Andreas Gryphius (1616–1664)*