

The Anatomy of Melancholy (Volume I of III): 1

Robert Burton



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A labor of love taking much of Burton's life to write and revise, "The Anatomy of Melancholy" is an expansive, informative, and eccentric work of genius first published in 1621. Burton was an English churchman and a scholar, and his depth and breadth of knowledge is readily apparent in this inexhaustible book. Through the frame of a medical treatise, Burton begins with melancholy and slowly deals with various mental states, frequently digressing with commentary from a myriad of other fields, including history, literature, psychology, astronomy, and theology. Though he quotes medical experts from Hippocrates and Aristotle to many medieval authorities, Burton just as often includes Latin poetry in a manner bordering on a stream of consciousness. Through this plethora of references on the human condition, as well as Burton's alternately serious and satirical tone, "The Anatomy of Melancholy" eloquently portrays the whole of human knowledge up to its day in a charming and imaginative way that will allow this wor

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