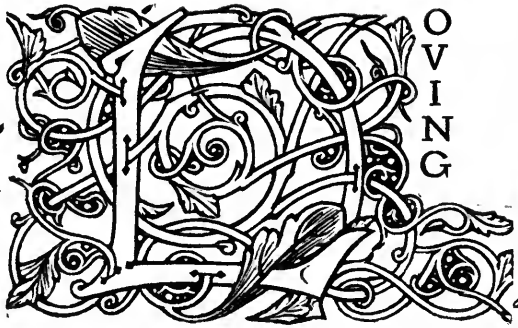
THE SONNETS OF SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

ASTROPHEL AND STELLA



LOVING IN TRUTH, AND FAINE IN VERSE MY LOVE TO SHOW,
THAT SHE (DEAR SHE) MIGHT TAKE SOM PLEASURE OF MY PAINe,
PLEASURE MIGHT CAUSE HER READE, READING MIGHT MAKE HER KNOW,
KNOWLEDGE MIGHT PITTIE WINNE, AND PITTIE GRACE OBTAIne,

I SOUGHT FIT WORDS TO PAINT THE BLACKEST FACE OF WOE,

Studying inventions fine her wits to entertaine,
Oft turning others' leaves to see if thence would flow
Some fresh & fruitfull showers upon my sun-burn'd brain;

But words came halting forth, wanting invention's stay,
Invention, Nature's childe, fled step-dame Studie's
blowes;
And others' feete still seem'd but strangers in my way.
Thus great with childe to speak, & helpless in my throwes,
Biting my trewand pen, beating my selfe for spite,
Foole, said my Muse to me, looke in the heart, & write!

2

Not at first sight, nor with a dribbed shot,
Love gave the wound, which while I breathe will bleed;
But knowne worth did in mine of time proceed,
Till by degrees it had full conquest got.

I saw and liked, I liked but loved not;
I loved, but straight did not what Love decreed;
At length to Love's decrees I, forc'd, agreed;
Yet with repining at so partiall lot.

Now even that footstep of lost libertie
Is gone; and now, like slave-borne Muscovite,
I call it praise to suffer Tyrannie;
And now employ the remnant of my wit
To make my selfe beleeve that all is well,
While, with a feeling skill, I paint my hell.

Let dainty wits crie on the Sisters nine,
That, bravely maskt, their fancies may be told;
Or, Pindar's Apes, flaunt they in phrases fine,
Enam'ling with pied flowers their thoughts of gold

Or else let them in statelier glorie shine,
Ennobling new-found Tropes with problemes old;
Or with strange similes enrich each line,
Of herbes or beasts which Inde or Afrike hold.

For me, in sooth, no Muse but one I know;
Phrases and problemes from my reach do grow;
And strange things cost too deare for my poore sprites.
How then? even thus: in Stella's face I reed
What Love and Beautie be; then all my deed
But Copying is, what in her Nature writes.

4

Vertue, alas! now let me take some rest;
Thou setst a bate betweene my will and wit;
If vaine love have my simple soule opprest,
Leave what thou lik'st not; deale not thou with it.

Thy scepter use in som old Cato's brest;
Churches or schooles are for thy seate more fit;
I do confesse, (pardon a fault confest!)
My mouth too tender is for thy hard bit.

But if that needes thou wilt usurping be
The little reason that is left in me,
And still th' effect of thy perswasions prove,
I sweare my heart such one shall shew to thee,
That shrines in flesh so true a Deitie,
That, Vertue, thou thy selfe shalt be in love!

It is most true that eyes are form'd to serve
The inward light; and that the heavenly part
Ought to be King, from whose rules who do swerve,
Rebels to Nature, strive for their owne smart.

It is most true what we call Cupid's dart
An image is, which for our selves we carve,
And, fooles! adore, in temple of our hart,
Till that good God make Church and church man starve.

True, that true Beautie Vertue is indeed,
Whereof this Beautie can be but a shade,
Which elements with mortall mixture breed;
True, that on earth we are but pilgrims made,
And should in soule up to our countrey move;
True, and yet true, that I must Stella love.

6

Some lovers speake, when they their Muses entertaine,
Of hopes begot by feare, of wot not what desires,
Of force of heav'nly beames infusing hellish paine,
Of living deaths, deare wounds, faire stormes & freesing fires.

Some one his song in Jove and Jove's strange tales attires,
Bordred with buls and swans, powdred with golden raine;
Another humbler wit to shepheard's pipe retires,
Yet hiding royall bloud full oft in rurall vaine.

To some a sweetest plaint a sweetest stile affords,
While teares poure out his inke, and sighes breathe out his words;
His paper pale despaire; and paine his pen doth move.
I can speake what I feele, and feele as much as they;
But thinke that all the Map of my state I display,
When trembling voyce brings forth that I do Stella love.

When Nature made her chiefe worke, Stella's eyes,
In colour blacke why wrapt she beames so bright?
Would she in beamy blacke, like Painter wise,
Frame daintiest lustre, mixt of shades and light?

Or did she else that sober hue devise,
In object best to knit and strength our sight,
Least, if no vaile these brave gleames did disguise,
They, sun-like, should more dazle then delight?

Or would she her miraculous power show,
That, whereas blacke seemes Beautie's contrary,
She, even in blacke, doth make all beauties flow?
Both so and thus she, minding love should be
Placed ever there, gave him this mourning weed,
To honor all their deaths who for her bleed.

8

Love, borne in Greece, of late fled from his native place,
Forct by a tedious proofe that Turkish hardned hart
Is no fit marke to pierce with his fine pointed dart;
And, pleasd with our soft peace, staid here his flying race.

But, finding these North clymes do coldly him embrace,
Not usde to frozen clips, he strave to finde som part
Wherewith most ease & warmth he might employ his art;
At length he perch'd himselfe in Stella's joyfull face.

Whose faire skin, beamy eyes, like morning sun on snow,
Deceiv'd the quaking boy, who thought from so pure light
Effects of lively heat must needs in nature grow.
But she most faire, most cold, made him thence take his flight
To my close heart, where, while some firebrands he did lay,
He burnt unwares his wings and cannot flie away.

9

Queene Vertue's Court, which some call Stella's face,
Prepar'd by Nature's choysest furniture,
Hath his front built of Alabaster pure;
Gold is the covering of that stately place.

The doore by which sometimes comes forth her Grace
Red Porphir is, which locke of pearle makes sure,
Whose porches rich (which name of cheekes endure)
Marble, mixt red and white, doe enterlace.

The windowes now, through which this heav'nly guest
Looks over the world and can finde nothing such
Which dare claime from those lights the name of best,
Of touch they are, that without touch doth touch,
Which Cupid's selfe from Beautie's mine did draw;
Of touch they are, and poore I am their straw.

10

Reason, in faith thou art well serv'd, that still
Wouldst brabbling be with Sense and Love in me.
I rather wisht thee clime the Muses' hill,
Or reach the fruit of Nature's choysest tree;

Or seeke heav'n's course or heav'n's inside to see.
Why shouldst thou toyle our thornie soile to till?
Leave Sense and those which Sense's objects be;
Deale thou with powers of thoughts, leave Love to Will.

But thou wouldst needs fight both with Love and Sence,
With sword of wit giving wounds of dispraise,
Till downe-right blowes did foyle thy cunning fence;
For soone as they strake thee with Stella's rayes,
Reason, thou kneel'dst, and offeredst straight to prove,
By reason good, good reason her to love.

Touch: marble; touch: tinder.

In truth, O Love, in what a boyish kind
Thou doest proceed in thy most serious wayes,
That, when the heav'n to thee his best displayes,
Yet of that best thou leav'st the best behinde!

For, like a childe that some faire booke doth find,
With gilded leaves or coloured Velume playes,
Or, at the most, on some fine picture stayes,
But never heeds the fruit of writer's mind;

So, when thou saw'st in Nature's cabinet
Stella, thou straight lookdst babies in her eyes,
In her cheeke's pit thou didst thy pitfould set,
And in her breast bo-peepe or couching lies,
Playing and shining in each outward part;
But, foole, seekst not to get into her heart.

12

Cupid, because thou shin'st in Stella's eyes,
That from her looks thy daynets none scapes free,
That those lips sweld so full of thee they be,
That her sweet breath makes oft thy flames to rise,

That in her breast thy pap well sugred lies,
That her Grace gracious makes thy wrongs, that she
What words so e'er she speake perswades for thee,
That her cleare voice lifts thy fame to the skies,

Thou countest Stella thine, like those whose powers
Having got up a breach by fighting well,
Crie: Victorie! this faire day all is ours!
O no! her heart is such a Cittadell,
So fortified with wit, stor'd with disdaine,
That to win it is all the skill and paine.

i.e. the miniature reflections of himself in them.
daynets: nets used, in connection with a mirror, to take larks.

Phœbus was Judge betweene Jove, Mars and Love,
Of those three gods whose armes the fairest were.
Jove's golden shield did Eagle sables beare,
Whose talons held young Ganimed above.

But in Vert field Mars bare a golden speare,
Which through a bleeding heart his point did shove.
Each had his creast: Mars caried Venus' glove;
Jove on his helme the thunderbolt did reare.

Cupid then smiles; for on his crest there lies
Stella's faire haire; her face he makes his shield;
Where roses gueuls are borne in silver field.
Phœbus drew wide the curtaines of the skies
To blaze these last, and sware devoutly then,
The first, thus matcht, were scantly Gentlemen.

14

Alas! have I not paine enough, my friend,
Vpon whose breast a fiercer Gripe doth tire
Then did on him who first stale downe the fire,
While Love on me doth all his quiver spend,

But with your Rubarb words ye must contend
To grieve me worse, in saying that Desire
Doth plunge my wel-form'd soule even in the mire
Of sinfull thoughts, which do in ruine end.

If that be sinne which doth the manners frame,
Well staid with truth in word and faith of deed,
Ready of wit and fearing nought but shame;
If that be sin which in fixt hearts doth breed
A loathing of all loose unchastitie,
Then Love is sin, and let me sinfull be.

15

You that do search for every purling spring
Which from the ribs of old Parnassus flowes,
And every flower, not sweet perhaps, which growes
Neare thereabouts, into your Poesie wring;

You that do Dictionaries' methode bring
Into your rimes, running in ratling rowes;
You that poore Petrarch's long deceased woes
With new-borne sighes and denisend wit do sing;

You take wrong wayes. Those far-fet helps be such
As do bewray a want of inward tuch;
And sure at length stolne goods do come to light.
But if (both for your love and skill) your name
You seeke to nurse at fullest breasts of Fame,
Stella behold; and then begin to endite.

16

In Nature apt to like, when I did see
Beauties which were of many Carrets fine,
My boiling sprites did thither soone incline;
And, Love, I thought that I was full of thee!

But finding not those restlesse flames in mee
Which others said did make their soules to pine,
I thought those babes of some pinne's hurt did whine,
By my soule judging what Love's paine might bee.

But, while I (fool!) thus with this Lyon plaid,
Mine eyes (shall I say curst or blest?) beheld
Stella. Now she is nam'd, neede more be said?
In her sight I a lesson new have speld:
I now have learn'd Love right, and learn'd even so
As who by being poisond doth poison know.

His mother deare Cupid offended late,
Because that Mars, growne slacker in her love,
With pricking shot he did not throughly move
To keepe the pace of their first loving state.

The boy refusde, for feare of Marses hate, ☙
Who threatned stripes if he his wrath did prove;
But she, in chafe, him from her lap did shove,
Brake bowe, brake shafts, while Cupid weeping sate;

Till that his grandame Nature pittying it,
Of Stella's browes made him two better bowes,
And in her eyes of arrowes infinit.
O how for joy he leapes! O how he crowes!
And straight therewith, like wags new got to play,
Fals to shrewd turnes; and I was in his way.

18

With what sharpe checkes I in my selfe am shent
When into Reason's audite I do go,
And by just counts my selfe a bankrout know
Of all those goods which heav'n to me hath lent;

Vnable quite to pay even Nature's rent,
Which unto it by birthright I do ow;
And, which is worse, no good excuse can show,
But that my wealth I have most idly spent!

My youth doth waste; my knowledge brings forth toyes;
My wit doth strive those passions to defend,
Which, for reward, spoile it with vaine annoyes.
I see my course to lose my selfe doth bend;
I see, and yet no greater sorrow take
Then that I lose no more for Stella's sake.

☙ Marses: Mars'.

On Cupid's bow how are my heart-strings bent,
That see my wracke, and yet embrace the same!
When most I glory then I feele most shame;
I willing run, yet while I run repent;

My best wits still their owne disgrace invent;
My very inke turnes straight to Stella's name;
And yet my words, as them my pen doth frame,
Avise themselves that they are vainely spent.

For though she passe all things, yet what is all
That unto me, who fare like him that both
Lookes to the skies and in a ditch doth fall?
O let me prop my mind, yet in his growth,
And not in Nature for best fruits unfit.
Scholler, saith Love, bend hitherward your wit!

20

Fly, fly, my friends; I have my death wound, fly!
See there that boy, that murthring boy, I say,
Who like a theefe hid in dark bushe doth ly,
Till bloudy bullet get him wrongfull pray.

So, Tyran, he no fitter place could spie
Nor so faire levell in so secret stay,
As that sweet black which vailes the heav'nly eye;
There himselfe with his shot he close doth lay.

Poore passenger, passe now thereby I did,
And staid, pleasd with the prospect of the place,
While that blacke hue from me the bad guest hid;
But straight I saw motions of lightning grace,
And then descried the glistring of his dart;
But, ere I could flee thence, it pierc'd my heart.

Your words, my friend, (right healthfull caustiks) blame
My young mind marde, whom Love doth windlas so;
That mine owne writings, like bad servants, show
My wits quicke in vaine thoughts, in vertue lame;

That Plato I read for nought but if he tame
Such coltish yeeres; that to my birth I owe
Nobler desires, least else that friendly foe,
Great expectation, weare a traine of shame;

For since mad March great promise made of me,
If now the May of my yeeres much decline,
What can be hoped my harvest time will be?
Sure you say well; your wisedome's golden mine
Dig deepe with learning's spade. Now tell me this:
Hath this world ought so faire as Stella is?

22

In highest way of heav'n the Sunne did ride,
Progressing then from faire twinnes' golden place,
Having no scarfe of clowds before his face,
But shining forth of heate in his chiefe pride;

When some faire ladies, by hard promise tied,
On horsebacke met him in his furious race;
Yet each prepar'd with fanne's wel-shading grace
From that foe's wounds their tender skinnes to hide.

Stella alone with face unarmed marcht,
Either to do like him which open shone,
Or carelesse of the wealth because her owne;
Yet were the hid and meaner beauties parcht;
Her daintiest bare went free; the cause was this:
The sunne, which others burnd, did her but kisse.

The curious wits, seeing dull pensivenesse
Bewray it selfe in my long settled eies,
Whence those same fumes of melancholly rise,
With idle paines and missing ayme do guesse.

Some, that know how my spring I did addresse,
Deeme that my Muse some fruit of knowledge plies;
Others, because the Prince my service tries,
Thinke that I thinke State errours to redresse.

But harder Judges judge ambition's rage,
Scourge of it selfe, still climing slipperie place,
Holds my young braine captiv'd in golden cage.
O fooles or over-wise! alas, the race
Of all my thoughts hath neither stop nor start,
But only Stella's eyes and Stella's hart.

24

Rich fooles there be, whose base and filthy heart
Lies hatching still the goods wherein they flow;
And, damning there owne selves to Tantal's smart,
Wealth breeding want, more blist, more wretched growe.

Yet to those fooles heav'n such wit doth impart,
As what their hands do hold their heads do know,
And, knowing, love and loving lay apart,
As sacred things, far from all danger's show.

But that rich foole who, by blind Fortune's lot,
The richest gemme of Love and life enjoyes,
And can with foule abuse such beauties blot,
Let him, depriv'd of sweet but unfelt joyes,
(Exil'd for aye from those high treasures which
He knowes not) grow in only folly rich!

The wisest scholler of the wight most wise,
By Phœbus' doome, with sugred sentence, sayes
That Vertue, if it once met with our eyes,
Strange flames of Love it in our souls would raise;

But for that man with paine this truth descries,
Whiles he each thing in sense's ballance wayes,
And so nor will nor can behold those skies
Which inward Sunne to Heroicke minde displaies,

Vertue of late, with vertuous care to ster
Love of her selfe, tooke Stella's shape, that she
To mortall eyes might sweetly shine in her.
It is most true; for, since I her did see,
Vertue's great beauty in that face I prove,
And find th' effect, for I do burne in love.

26

Though dustie wits dare scorn Astrologie,
And fooles can thinke those Lampes of purest light,
Whose number, waies, greatnesse, eternity,
Promising wonders, wonder do invite,

To have for no cause birthright in the sky,
But for to spangle the blacke weeds of night;
Or for some brawle which in that chamber hie
They should still daunce to please a gazer's sight.

For me, I do Nature unidle know,
And know great causes great effects procure,
And know those Bodies high raigne on the low;
And if these rules did faile, proofe makes me sure,
Who oft fore-judge my after-following race
By only those two starres in Stella's face.

Because I oft in darke abstracted guise
Seeme most alone in greatest company,
With dearth of words or answers quite awrie
To them that would make speech of speech arise,

They deeme, and of their doome the rumour flies,
That poison foule of bubbling pride doth lie
So in my swelling breast that only I
Fawne on my selfe, and others do despise.

Yet pride I thinke doth not my soule possesse,
Which looks too oft in his unflattering glasse;
But one worse fault, Ambition, I confesse,
That makes me oft my best friends overpasse
Vnseene, unheard, while thought to highest place
Bends all his powers, even unto Stella's grace.

28

You that with allegorie's curious frame
Of others' children changelings use to make,
With me those paines for God's sake do not take,
I list not dig so deepe for brasen fame.

When I say Stella, I doe meane the same
Princesse of Beauty for whose only sake
The raines of Love I love though never slake,
And joy therein though Nations count it shame.

I beg no subject to use eloquence,
Nor in hid wayes do guide Philosophie;
Looke at my hands for no such quintessence;
But know that I in pure simplicitie
Breathe out the flames which burne within my heart,
Love onely reading unto me this art.

Like some weak Lords neighbord by mighty kings,
To keep themselves and their chiefe cities free,
Do easly yeeld that all their coasts may be
Ready to store their campes of needfull things;

So Stella's heart, finding what power Love brings,
To keep it selfe in life and liberty,
Doth willing graunt that in the frontiers he
Vse all to helpe his other conquerings.

And thus her heart escapes, and thus her eyes
Serve him with shot, her lips his heralds are,
Her breasts his tents, legs his triumphall carre,
Her flesh his food, her skin his armour brave;
And I, but for because my prospect lies
Vpon that coast, am giv'n up for a slave.

30

Whether the Turkish new-moone minded be
To fill his hornes this yeare on Christian coast?
How Poles' right king meanes without leave of hoast
To warme with ill-made fire cold Moscovy?

If French can yet three parts in one agree?
What now the Dutch in their full diets boast?
How Holland hearts, now so good townes be lost,
Trust in the shade of pleasing Orange tree?

How Vlster likes of that same golden bit
Wherewith my father once made it halfe tame?
If in the Scotch Court be no weltring yet?
These questions busie wits to me do frame.
I, cumbred with good maners, answer do;
But know not how; for still I thinke of you.

31

With how sad steps, O Moone, thou climb'st the skies!
How silently, and with how wanne a face!
What! may it be that even in heav'nly place
That busie archer his sharpe arrowes tries?

Sure, if that long-with-Love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of Love, thou feel'st a Lover's case;
I reade it in thy lookes; thy languisht grace,
To me that feele the like, thy state descries.

Then, ev'n of fellowship, O Moone, tell me,
Is constant Love deem'd there but want of wit?
Are Beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be lov'd, and yet
Those Lovers scorne whom that Love doth possesse?
Do they call Vertue there ungratefulnesse?

32

Morpheus, the lively sonne of deadly sleepe,
Witnesse of life to them that living die,
A Prophet oft, and oft an historie,
A Poet eke, as humours fly or creepe,

Since thou in me so sure a power doest keepe
That never I with close up sense do lie
But by thy worke my Stella I descrie
Teaching blind eyes both how to smile and weepe,

Vouchsafe, of all acquaintance, this to tell,
Whence hast thou Ivorie, Rubies, pearle and gold,
To shew her skin, lips, teeth and head so well?
Foole! answers he, no Indes such treasures hold,
But from thy heart, while my sire charmeth thee,
Sweet Stella's image I do steale to mee.

I might, unhappie word! O me, I might,
And then would not, or could not, see my blisse;
Till now, wrapt in a most infernall night,
I find how heav'nly day, wretch! I did misse.

Hart rent thy selfe, thou doest thy selfe but right;
No lovely Paris made thy Hellen his;
No force, no fraud, robd thee of thy delight
Nor Fortune of thy fortune author is.

But to my selfe my selfe did give the blow;
While too much wit (forsooth) so troubled me,
That I respects for both our sakes must show,
And yet could not, by rising Morne foresee
How faire a day was neare; O punisht eyes,
That I had bene more foolish, or more wise!

34

Come, let me write. And to what end? To ease
A burthened hart. How can words ease, which are
The glasses of thy dayly vexing care?
Oft cruell fights, well pictured forth, do please.

Art not asham'd to publish thy disease?
Nay, that may breed my fame; it is so rare.
But will not wise men thinke thy words fond ware?
Then be they close, and so none shall displease.

What idler thing then speake and not be hard?
What harder thing then smart and not to speake?
Peace, foolish wit! with wit my wit is mard.
Thus write I while I doubt to write, and wreake
My harmes on Ink's poore losse. Perhaps some find
Stella's great powrs that so confuse my mind.

What may words say, or what may words not say,
Where truth it selfe must speak like flatterie;
Within what bounds can one his liking stay,
Where Nature doth with infinite agree?

What Nestor's counsell can my flames alay,
Since Reason self doth blow the coale in me?
And ah! what hope that hope should once see day,
When Cupid is sworne page to Chastity?

Honour is honour'd that thou doest possesse
Him as thy slave; and now long needy Fame
Doth even grow rich, meaning my Stella's name.
Wit learnes in thee perfection to expresse;
Not thou by praise, but praise in thee is raisde;
It is a praise to praise when thou art praisde.

36

Stella, whence doth this new assault arise,
A conquerd, yeelded, ransackt heart to winne?
Whereto long since, through my long battred eyes,
Whole armies of thy beauties entred in;

And there, long since, Love thy Lieutenant lies;
My forces razde, thy banners raisd within;
Of conquest doe not these effects suffice,
But wilt now warre upon thine owne begin?

With so sweet voyce, and by sweet Nature so
In sweetest strength, so sweetly skild withall
In all sweet stratagems sweete Arte can show,
That not my soule, which at thy foot did fall
Long since, forc'd by thy beames, but stone nor tree,
By Sense's priviledge, can scape from thee.

My mouth doth water and my breast doth swell,
My tongue doth itch, my thoughts in labour be;
Listen then, Lordings, with good eare to me,
For of my life I must a riddle tell:

Toward Aurora's Court a Nymph doth dwell,
Rich in all beauties which man's eye can see;
Beauties so farre from reach of words, that we
Abase her praise saying she doth excell;

Rich in the treasure of deserv'd renowne,
Rich in the riches of a royall hart,
Rich in those gifts which give th' eternall crowne;
Who, though most rich in these and every part
Which make the patents of true worldly blisse,
Hath no misfortune but that Rich she is.

38

This night, while sleepe begins with heavy wings
To hatch mine eyes, and that unbitted thought
Doth fall to stray, and my chiefe powres are brought
To bear the scepter of all subject things;

The first that straight my fancie's error brings
Vnto my mind is Stella's image, wrought
By Love's owne selfe, but with so curious drought ♪
That she, me thinks, not onely shines but sings.

I start, looke, hearke; but what in closde up sence
Was held, in opend sense it flies away,
Leaving me nought but wayling eloquence.
I, seeing better sights in sight's decay,
Cald it anew, and wooed sleepe againe;
But him, her host, that unkind guest had slaine.

♪ i.e. drawn so curiously.

Come, sleepe! O sleepe, the certaine knot of peace,
The baiting place of wit, the balme of woe,
The poore man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
Th' indifferent Judge betweene the high and low;

With shield of proofe shield me from out the prease
Of those fierce darts despaire at me doth throw;
O, make in me those civill warres to cease;
I will good tribute pay if thou do so.

Take thou of me smooth pillowes, sweetest bed,
A chamber deafe to noise and blind to light,
A rosie garland and a weary hed;
And if these things, as being thine by right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me
Livelier then else-where Stella's image see.

40

As good to write as for to lie and grone.
O Stella deare, how much thy power hath wrought!
Thou hast my mind, none of the basest, brought,
My still kept course, while others sleepe, to mone.

Alas if, from the height of Vertue's throne,
Thou canst vouchsafe the influence of a thought
Vpon a wretch that long thy grace hath sought,
Weigh then how I by thee am overthrowne;

And then thinke thus: although thy beautie be
Made manifest by such a victorie,
Yet noblest Conquerours do wreckes avoid.
Since then thou hast so farre subdued me,
That in my heart I offer still to thee,
O, do not let thy temple be destroyd.

41

Having this day my horse, my hand, my lance
Guided so well that I obtain'd the prize,
Both by the judgement of the English eyes
And of some sent from that sweet enemy Fraunce;

Horsemen my skill in horsemanship advance;
Towne-folkes my strength; a daintier Judge applies
His praise to sleight which from good use doth rise;
Some luckie wits impute it but to chance;

Others, because of both sides I doe take
My bloud from them who did excell in this,
Thinke Nature me a man of armes did make.
How farre they shot awrie! the true cause is:
Stella lookt on, and from her heav'nly face
Sent forth the beames which made so faire my race.

42

O eyes, which do the Spheares of beautie move;
Whose beames be joyes, whose joyes all vertues be;
Who, while they make Love conquer, conquer Love;
The Schooles where Venus hath learn'd Chastitie;

O eyes, where humble lookes most glorious prove;
Onely lov'd Tyrants, just in cruelty;
Do not, O do not from poore me remove;
Keep still my Zenith, ever shine on me.

For though I never see them, but straight wayes
My life forgets to nourish languisht sprites,
Yet still on me, O eyes, dart downe your rayes;
And if from Majestie of sacred lights
Oppressing mortall sense my death proceed,
Wrackes Triumphs bewhich Love (high set) doth breed.

Faire eyes, sweet lips, deare heart, that foolish I
Could hope, by Cupid's helpe, on you to pray!
Since to himselfe he doth your gifts apply,
As his maine force, choise sport and easefull stay.

For when he will see who dare him gain-say,
Then with those eyes he lookes; lo, by and by
Each soule doth at Love's feet his weapons lay,
Glad if for her he give them leave to die.

When he will play, then in her lips he is,
Where blushing red, that Love's selfe them doth love,
With either lip he doth the other kisse;
But when he will, for quiet's sake, remove
From all the world, her heart is then his rome,
Where well he knowes no man to him can come.

44

My words I know do well set forth my mind,
My mind bemones his sense of inward smart,
Such smart may pitie claime of any hart,
Her heart, sweet heart, is of no Tygre's kind;

And yet she heares, and yet no pitie I find;
But more I cry lesse grace she doth impart;
Alas! what cause is there so overthwart
That Noblenesse it selfe makes thus unkind?

I much do ghesse, yet finde no truth save this:
That when the breath of my complaints doth tuch
Those daintie dores unto the Court of blisse,
The heav'nly nature of that place is such
That, once come there, the sobs of mine annoyes
Are metamorphos'd straight to tunes of joyes.

45

Stella oft sees the very face of wo
Painted in my beclowded, stormie face,
But cannot skill to pitie my disgrace,
Not though thereof the cause her selfe she know;

Yet, hearing late a fable, which did show
Of Lovers never knowne a grievous case,
Pitie thereof gate in her breast such place
That, from that Sea deriv'd, teares' spring did flow.

Alas! if fancie, drawne by imag'd things,
Though false, yet with free scope, more grace doth breed
Then servants' wracke, where new doubts honor brings,
Then thinke, my deare, that you in me do reed
Of Lover's ruine some sad Tragedie.
I am not I; pitie the tale of me.

46

I curst thee oft; I pitie now thy case,
Blind-hitting boy, since she that thee and me
Rules with a becke so tyrannizeth thee,
That thou must want or food or dwelling place;

For she protests to banish thee her face;
Her face! O Love, a Rogue thou then shouldst be,
If Love learne not alone to love and see,
Without desire to feed of further grace.

Alas, poore wag! that now a scholler art
To such a schoole-mistresse, whose lessons new
Thou needs must misse, and so thou needs must smart;
Yet, Deare, let me his pardon get of you,
So long (though he from booke myche to desire)
Till without fewell you can make hot fire.

What! have I thus betrayed my libertie?
Can those blacke beames such burning markes engrave
In my free side? or am I borne a slave
Whose necke becomes such yoke of tyrannie?

Or want I sense to feele my miserie,
Or sprite, disdaine of such disdaine to have,
Who for long faith, tho daily helpe I crave,
May get no almes, but scorne of beggerie?

Vertue, awake! Beautie but beautie is;
I may, I must, I can, I will, I do,
Leave following that which it is gaine to misse.
Let her do! Soft, but here she comes! Go to!
Vnkind, I love you not! O me, that eye
Doth make my heart to give my tongue the lie!

48

Soule's joy, bend not those morning starres from me,
Where Vertue is made strong by Beautie's might,
Where Love is chastnesse, Paine doth learne delight,
And Humblenesse growes one with Majestie.

Whatever may ensue, O let me be
Copartner of the riches of that sight;
Let not mine eyes be hel-driv'n from that light;
O looke, O shine, O let me die, and see.

For though I oft my selfe of them bemone
That through my heart their beamie darts be gone,
Whose curelesse wounds even now most freshly bleed;
Yet since my death-wound is already got,
Deere Killer, spare not thy sweet-cruell shot;
A kinde of grace it is to slay with speed.

49

I on my horse and Love on me do try
Our horsmanships, while by strange worke I prove
A horsman to my horse, a horse to Love,
And now man's wrongs in me, poor beast! descrie.

The raine wherewith my Rider doth me tie
Are humbled thoughts, which bit of Reverence move,
Curb'd-in with feare, but with guilt bosse above
Of Hope, which makes it seeme faire to the eye.

The Wand is Will; thou, Fancie, Saddle art,
Girt fast by memorie; and, while I spurre
My horse, he spurres with sharpe desire my hart.
He sits me fast, however I do sturre;
And now hath made me to his hand so right
That in the Manage my selfe take delight. ♪

50

Stella, the fulnesse of my thoughts of thee
Cannot be staid within my panting breast,
But they do swell and struggle forth in me
Till that in words thy figure be exprest;

And yet, as soone as they so formed be,
According to my lord Love's owne behest,
With sad eies I their weake proportion see
To portrait that which in this world is best.

So that I cannot chuse but write my mind,
And cannot chuse but put out what I write,
While these poore babes their death in birth do find.
And now my pen these lines had dashed quite,
But that they stopt his furie from the same,
Because their fore-front bare sweet Stella's name.

♪ manage; manege.

51

Pardon mine eares, both I and they do pray,
So may your tongue still fluently proceed;
To them that do such entertainment need,
So may you still have somewhat new to say.

On silly me do not the burthen lay
Of all the grave conceits your braine doth breed;
But find some Hercules to beare, insteed
Of Atlas tyr'd, your wisedom's heav'nly sway.

For me, while you discourse of courtly tides,
Of cunning fishers in most troubled streames,
Of straying waies when valiant errour guides;
Mean while my heart confers with Stella's beames,
And is even irkt that so sweet Comedie
By such unsuted speech should hindred be.

52

A strife is growne between Vertue and Love,
While each pretends that Stella must be his;
Her eyes, her lips, her all, saith Love, do this,
Since they do weare his badge, most firmely prove.

But Vertue thus that title doth disprove,
That Stella, (O deare name!) that Stella is
That vertuous soule, sure heire of heav'nly blisse,
Not this faire outside, which our heart doth move;

And therefore, though her beautie and her grace
Be Love's indeed, in Stella's selfe he may
By no pretence claime any manner place.
Well, Love, since this demurre our sute doth stay,
Let Vertue have that Stella's selfe; yet thus,
That Vertue but that body graunt to us.

In Martiall sports I had my cunning tride,
And yet to breake more staves did me addresse,
While, with the people's shouts, I must confesse
Youth, lucke and praise even fild my veines with pride;

When Cupid, having me his slave descride
In Marses livery prauncing in the presse,
What now, sir foole! said he, I would no lesse;
Looke here, I say! I look'd and Stella spide,

Who hard by made a window send forth light.
My heart then quak'd, then dazled were mine eyes,
One hand forgat to rule, th' other to fight,
Nor trumpet's sound I heard, nor friendly cries.
My Foe came on, and beate the aire for me,
Till that her blush taught me my shame to see.

54

Because I breathe not love to every one,
Nor do not use set colours for to weare,
Nor nourish speciall locks of vowed haire,
Nor give each speech the full point of a grone,

The courtly Nymphes, acquainted with the mone
Of them who in their lips love's standerd beare,
What he! say they of me, now I dare sweare
He cannot love; no, no, let him alone.

And thinke so still, so Stella knowe my minde;
Professe indeed I do not Cupid's art,
But you, faire maides, at length this true shall finde:
That his right badge is but worne in the hart.
Dumbe Swannes, not chatring Pies, do Lovers prove;
They love indeed who quake to say they love.

55

Muses, I oft invoked your holy ayde,
With choisest flowers my speech to engarland, so
That it, despisde, in true but naked shew
Might winne some grace in your sweet grace arraid;

And oft whole troupes of saddest words I staid,
Striving abroad a-foraging to go,
Vntill by your inspiring I might know
How their blacke banner might be best displaid.

But now I meane no more your help to try,
Nor other sugring of my speech to prove,
But on her name incessantly to cry;
For let me but name her whom I do love,
So sweet sounds straight mine eare and heart do hit,
That I well finde no eloquence like it.

56

Fy, schoole of Patience; fy, your lesson is
Far, far too long to learne it without booke;
What, a whole weeke without one peece of looke,
And thinke I should not your large precepts misse!

When I might reade those letters faire of blisse
Which in her face teach vertue, I could brooke
Somwhat thy lead'n counsels, which I tooke
As of a friend that meant not much amisse.

But now that I, alas, doe want her sight,
What, dost thou thinke that I can ever take
In thy cold stuffe a flegmatike delight?
No, Patience; if thou wilt my good, then make
Her come and heare with patience my desire,
And then with patience bid me beare my fire.

57

Wo, having made with many fights his owne
Each sence of mine, each gift, each power of mind,
Growne now his slaves, he forct them out to find
The thorowest words fit for woe's selfe to grone;

Hoping that when they might finde Stella alone,
Before she could prepare to be unkind,
Her soule, arm'd but with such a dainty rind,
Should soone be pierc'd with sharpenesse of the mone.

She heard my plaints; and did not onely heare,
But them (so sweet is she) most sweetly sing,
With that faire breast making woe's darknesse cleare.
A pretie case; I hoped her to bring
To feele my griefes; and she, with face and voyce,
So sweets my paines that my paines me rejoyce.

58

Doubt there hath beene when with his golden chaine
The Orator so farre men's hearts doth bind
That no pace else their guided steps can find
But as he them more short or slacke doth raine,

Whether with wordes this soveraignty he gaine,
Cloth'd with fine tropes, with strongest reasons lin'd,
Or else pronouncing grace, wherewith his mind
Prints his owne lively forme in rudest braine.

Now judge by this: In piercing phrases late
The Anatomy of all my woes I wrate;
Stella's sweet breath the same to me did reed;
O voyce! O face! maugre my speeche's might
Which wooed wo, most ravishing delight
Even those sad words even in sad me did breed.

Deere, why make you more of a dog then me?
If he doe love, I burne, I burne in love;
If he waite well, I never thence would move;
If he be faire, yet but a dog can be;

Little he is, so little worth is he;
He barks, my songs thine owne voyce oft doth prove;
Bidden, perhaps he fetcheth thee a glove;
But I, unbid, fetch even my soule to thee.

Yet, while I languish, him that bosome clips;
That lap doth lap; nay lets, in spite of spite,
This sowre-breath'd mate taste of those sugred lips.
Alas, if you graunt onely such delight
To witlesse things, then Love, I hope (since wit
Becomes a clog) will soone ease me of it.

60

When my good Angell guides me to the place
Where all my good I do in Stella see,
That heav'n of joyes throwes onely downe on me
Thundred disdaines and lightnings of disgrace.

But when the ruggedst step of Fortune's race
Makes me fall from her sight, then sweetly she,
With words wherein the Muses' treasures be,
Shewes love and pitie to my absent case.

Now I, wit-beaten long by hardest fate,
So dull am, that I cannot looke into
The ground of this fierce Love and lovely hate;
Then, some goodbody, tell me how I do,
Whose presence absence, absence presence is,
Blist in my curse and cursed in my blisse.

Oft with true sighes, oft with uncalled teares,
Now with slow words, now with dumbe eloquence,
I Stella's eyes assaid, invade her eares;
But this, at last, is her sweet breath'd defence:

That who indeed infelt affection beares
So captives to his Saint both soule and sence
That, wholly hers, all selfenesse he forbeares;
Then his desires he learnes, his live's course thence.

Now, since her chast mind hates this love in me,
With chastned mind I straight must shew that she
Shall quickly me from what she hates remove.
O Doctor Cupid, thou for me reply,
Driv'n else to graunt, by Angel's sophistrie,
That I love not without I leave to love.

62

Late tyr'd with wo, even ready for to pine
With rage of Love, I cald my Love unkind;
She, in whose eyes Love though unfelt doth shine,
Sweet said that I true love in her should find.

I joyed; but straight thus watred was my wine:
That love she did, but loved a Love not blind;
Which would not let me whom shee loved decline
From nobler course fit for my birth and mind;

And therefore, by her Love's authority,
Wild me these tempests of vaine love to flie,
And anchor fast my selfe on Vertue's shore.
Alas, if this the only mettall be
Of love new-coind to helpe my beggery,
Deare, love me not, that ye may love me more.

63

O Grammer rules, O now your vertues show,
So children still reade you with awfull eyes,
As my young Dove may, in your precepts wise,
Her graunt to me by her owne vertue know;

For late, with heart most high, with eyes most low,
I crav'd the thing which ever she denies;
Shee, lightning Love, displaying Venus' skies,
Least once should not be heard, twise said: No, No.

Sing then, my Muse, now Io Pean sing;
Heav'ns, envy not at my high triumphing,
But Grammer's force with sweet successe confirme:
For Grammer sayes (O this, deare Stella, way)
For Grammer sayes (to Grammer who sayes nay?)
That in one speech two Negatives affirme.

64

No more, my deare, no more these counsels trie;
O, give my passions leave to run their race;
Let Fortune lay on me her worst disgrace;
Let folke o'ercharg'd with braine against me crie;

Let clouds bedimme my face, breake in mine eye;
Let me no steps but of lost labour trace;
Let all the earth with scorne recount my case;
But do not will me from my Love to flie.

I do not envy Aristotle's wit,
Nor do aspire to Cæsar's bleeding fame,
Nor ought do care though some above me sit,
Nor hope nor wish another course to frame
But that which once may win thy cruell hart;
Thou art my Wit, and thou my Vertue art.

Love, by sure proofe I may call thee unkind,
Thou giv'st no better eare to my just cries,
Thou whom to me such my good turnes should bind,
As I may well recount, but none can prize;

For when, nak'd Boy, thou could'st no harbour find
In this old world, growne now so too too wise,
I lodg'd thee in my heart, and, being blind
By Nature borne, I gave to thee mine eyes.

Mine eyes, my light, my heart, my life, alas!
If so great services may scorned be,
Yet let this thought thy Tygrish courage passe:
That I perhaps am somewhat kinne to thee;
Since in thine armes, if learnd fame truth hath spread,
Thou bear'st the arrow, I the arrow head.

66

And do I see some cause a hope to feede,
Or doth the tedious burden of long wo
In weakened minds quicke apprehending breed
Of everie image which may comfort show?

I cannot brag of word, much lesse of deed,
Fortune wheeles still with me in one sort slow;
My wealth no more, and no whit lesse my need;
Desire still on the stilts of Feare doth go.

And yet amid all feares a hope there is
Stolne to my heart since last faire night; nay, day;
Stella's eyes sent to me the beames of blisse,
Looking on me while I lookt other way;
But when mine eyes backe to their heav'n did move,
They fled with blush which guiltie seem'd of love.

67

Hope, art thou true, or doest thou flatter me?
Doth Stella now begin with pitious eye
The ruines of her conquest to espie?
Will she take time before all wracked be?

Her eyes-speech is translated thus by thee;
But failst thou not in phrase so heav'nly hie?
Looke on againe, the faire text better trie,
What blushing notes dost thou in margine see?

What sighes stolne out, or kild before full-borne?
Hast thou found such and such like arguments,
Or art thou else to comfort me forsworne?
Well, how-so thou interpret the contents,
I am resolv'd thy errour to maintaine,
Rather then by more truth to get more paine.

68

Stella, the onely planet of my light,
Light of my life and life of my desire,
Chiefe good whereto my hope doth only aspire,
World of my wealth and heav'n of my delight.

Why doest thou spend the treasures of thy sprite
With voice more fit to wed Amphion's lyre,
Seeking to quench in me the noble fire
Fed by thy worth and kindled by thy sight?

And all in vaine; for, while thy breath most sweet
With choisest words, thy words with reasons rare,
Thy reasons firmly set on Vertue's feet,
Labour to kill in me this killing care,
O, thinke I then what paradise of joy
It is, so faire a Vertue to enjoy!

O joy too high for my low stile to show!
O blisse fit for a nobler state then me!
Envie, put out thine eyes, least thou do see
What Oceans of delight in me do flow!

My friend, that oft saw through all maskes my wo,
Come, come, and let me powre my selfe on thee.
Gone is the winter of my miserie;
My Springe appeares; O, see what here doth grow;

For Stella hath, with words where faith doth shine
Of her high heart giv'n me the monarchie;
I, I, O I, may say that she is mine!
And though she give but thus conditionly
This realme of blisse where vertuous course I take,
No kings be crown'd but they some covenants make.

70

My Muse may well grudge at my heav'nly joy
If still I force her in sad rimes to creepe,
She oft hath drunk my teares, now hopes to enjoy
Nectar of Mirth, since I Jove's cup do keepe.

Sonets be not bound prentise to annoy;
Trebles sing high so well as bases deepe;
Griefe but Love's winter liverie is; the Boy
Hath cheekes to smile, so well as eyes to weepe.

Come then, my Muse, shew thou height of delight
In well raisde notes; my pen, the best it may,
Shall paint out joy though but in blacke and white.
Cease, eager Muse; cease, pen; for my sake stay;
I give you here my hand for truth of this:
Wise silence is best musicke unto blisse.

71

Who will in fairest booke of Nature know
How Vertue may best lodg'd in beautie be,
Let him but learne of Love to reade in thee,
Stella, those faire lines which true goodnesse show.

There shall he find all vice's overthrow,
Not by rude force, but sweetest soveraigntie
Of reason, from whose light those night-birds flie,
That inward sunne in thine eyes shineth so.

And, not content to be Perfection's heire
Thy selfe, doest strive all minds that way to move,
Who marke in thee what is in thee most faire;
So, while thy beautie drawes the heart to love,
As fast thy Vertue bends that love to good;
But ah, Desire still cries: Give me some food.

72

Desire, though thou my old companion art,
And oft so clingst to my pure Love that I
One from the other scarcely can descrie,
While each doth blowe the fier of my hart;

Now from thy fellowship I needs must part;
Venus is taught with Dian's wings to flie;
I must no more in thy sweet passions lie;
Vertue's gold now must head my Cupid's dart.

Service and Honour, wonder with delight,
Feare to offend, will worthie to appeare,
Care shining in mine eyes, faith in my sprite;
These things are left me by my only Deare;
But thou, Desire, because thou wouldst have all,
Now banisht art; but yet, alas, how shall!

73

Love still a boy and oft a wanton is;
School'd onely by his mother's tender eye,
What wonder then if he his lesson misse,
When for so soft a rodde deare play he trye?

And yet my Starre, because a sugred kisse
In sport I suckt while she asleepe did lie,
Doth lowre, nay chide, nay threat for only this.
Sweet, it was saucie Love, not humble I.

But no 'scuse serves; she makes her wrath appeare
In Beautie's Throne; see now, who dares come neare
Those scarlet Judges, threatning bloudie paine?
O heav'nly foole, thy most kisse-worthy face
Anger invests with such a lovely grace
That Anger selfe I needs must kisse againe.

74

I never dranke of Aganippe well,
Nor ever did in shade of Tempe sit,
And Muses scorne with vulgar brains to dwell,
Poore Layman I, for sacred rites unfit.

Some doe I heare of Poets' furie tell,
But (God wot) wot not what they meane by it;
And this I sweare by blackest brooke of hell;
I am no pick-purse of another's wit.

How falles it then, that with so smooth an ease
My thoughts I speake; and what I speak doth flow
In verse, and that my verse best wits doth please?
Ghesse we the cause. What, is it thus? Fie, no.
Or so? Much lesse. How then? Sure this it is:
My lips are sweet, inspired with Stella's kisse.

75

Of all the kings that ever here did raigne,
Edward, named fourth, as first in praise I name;
Not for his faire outside, nor well lined braine,
Although lesse gifts impe feathers oft on Fame;

Nor that he could, young-wise, wise-valiant, frame
His Sire's revenge, joyn'd with a Kingdome's gaine;
And, gain'd by Mars, could yet mad Mars so tame
That Balance weigh'd what sword did late obtaine;

Nor that he made the Floure-deluce so fraid,
Though strongly hedg'd, of bloudy lyon's pawes,
That wittie Lewis to him a tribute paid;
Nor this, nor that, nor any such small cause;
But only for this worthy Knight durst prove:
To lose his Crowne rather than faile his Love.

76

She comes, and streight therewith her shining twins do move
Their rayes to me, who in her tedious absence lay
Benighted in cold wo; but now appears my day,
The onely light of day, the only warmth of Love.

She comes with light and warmth which, like Aurora, prove
Of gentle force, so that mine eyes dare gladly play
With such a rosie morne, whose beames, most freshly gay,
Scorch not, but onely doe dark chilling sprites remove.

But lo! while I do speake it groweth noone with me:
Her flamie glistring lights increase with time and place.
My heart cries: ah, it burnes! mine eyes now dazled be;
No wind, no shade can coole; what helpe then in my case?
But with short breath, long looks, staid feet and walking hed,
Pray that my sunne goe downe with meeker beames to bed.

77

Those lookes whose beames be joy, whose motion
is delight;
That face, whose lecture shews what perfect beauty is;
That presence, which doth give darke hearts a living light;
That grace, which Venus weeps when she her selfe
doth misse;

That hand, which without touch holds more then Atlas'
might;
Those lips, which make death's pay a meane price for a kisse;
That skin, whose passe-praise hue scornes this poor
tearm of white;
Those words, which do sublime the quintessence of bliss;

That voyce, which makes the soule plant himselfe in
the eares;
That conversation sweet, where such high comforts be,
As, consterd in true speech, the name of heav'n it beares;
Makes me in my best thoughts and quietst judgement see
That in no more but these I might be fully blest;
Yet ah, my Mayden Muse doth blush to tell the best.

78

O how the pleasant ayres of true love be
Infected by those vapours which arise
From out that noysome gulfe which gaping lies
Betweene the jawes of hellish Jelousie!

A monster, others' harme, selfe-miserie,
Beautie's plague, Vertue's scourge, succour of lies,
Who his owne joy to his owne hurt applies,
And onely cherish doth with injurie;

Who, since he hath, by Nature's speciall grace,
So piercing pawes as spoyle when they embrace,
So nimble feet as stirre still though on thornes,
So many eyes ay seeking their owne woe,
So ample eares as never good newes know,
Is it not evill that such a Divell wants hornes?

79

Sweet kisse, thy sweets I faine would sweetly endite,
Which even of sweetnesse sweetest sweetner art;
Pleasingst consort, where each sence holds a part;
Which, coupling Doves, guides Venus' chariot right.

Best charge and bravst retrait in Cupid's fight;
A double key which opens to the heart;
Most rich when most his riches it impart;
Nest of young joyes, schoolmaster of delight;

Teaching the meane at once to take and give;
The friendly fray, where blowes both wound and heale;
The prettie death, while each in other live;
Poore hope's first wealth, ostage of promist weale;
Breakefast of Love. But lo, lo, where she is,
Cease we to praise; now pray we for a kisse.

80

Sweet swelling lip, well maist thou swell in pride,
Since best wits thinke it wit thee to admire;
Nature's praise, vertue's stall; Cupid's cold fire,
Whence words, not words but heav'nly graces, slide;

The new Pernassus, where the Muses bide;
Sweetner of musicke, wisedome's beautifier;
Breather of life and fastner of desire,
Where Beauty's blush in Honour's graine is dide.

Thus much my heart compeld my mouth to say;
But now, spite of my heart, my mouth will stay,
Loathing all lies, doubting this Flatterie is;
And no spurre can his resty race renewe,
Without how farre this praise is short of you,
Sweet lipp, you teach my mouth with one sweet kisse.

O kisse, which doest those ruddie gemmes impart,
Or gemmes, or fruit of new-found Paradise,
Breathing all blisse and sweetning to the heart,
Teaching dumbe lips a nobler exercise!

O kisse, which soules, even soules, together ties
By linkes of Love and only Nature's art,
How faine would I paint thee to all men's eyes,
Or of thy gifts at least shade out some part!

But she forbids; with blushing words she sayes
She builds her fame on higher seated praise.
But my heart burnes; I cannot silent be.
Then since (dear life) you faine would have me peace,
And I, mad with delight, want wit to cease,
Stop you my mouth with still still kissing me.

82

Nymph of the garden where all beauties be,
Beauties which do in excellency passe
His who till death lookt in a watrie glasse,
Or hers whom naked the Trojan boy did see;

Sweet garden-Nymph which keepes the Cherrie tree
Whose fruit doth farre th'Esperian tast surpasse,
Most sweet-faire, most faire-sweet, do not, alas!
From comming neare those Cherries banish mee.

For though, full of desire, empty of wit,
Admitted late by your best-graced grace,
I caught at one of them a hungry bit,
Pardon that fault; once more grant me the place;
And I do sweare, even by the same delight,
I will but kisse; I never more will bite.

83

Good brother Philip, I have borne you long;
I was content you should in favour creepe,
While craftily you seem'd your cut to keepe,
As though that faire soft hand did you great wrong;

I bare (with Envie), yet I bare your song
When in her necke you did Love ditties peepe;
Nay—more fool I—oft suffered you to sleepe
In Lillies' neast where Love's self lies along.

What, doth high place ambitious thoughts augment?
Is sawcinesse reward of curtesie?
Cannot such grace your sillie selfe content,
But you must needs with those lips billing be,
And through those lips drinke Nectar from that toong?
Leave that, sir Phip, least off your neck be wroong!

84

High way, since you my chief Pernassus be,
And that my Muse, to some eares not unsweet,
Tempers her words to trampling horses' feet
More oft then to a chamber melodie;

Now blessed you bear onward blessed me
To her, where I my heart safe left shall meet;
My Muse and I must you of dutie greet
With thankes and wishes, wishing thankfully.

Be you still faire, honourd by publicke heede;
By no encrochment wrongd, nor time forgot;
Nor blam'd for bloud, nor sham'd for sinfull deed;
And that you know I envy you no lot
Of highest wish, I wish you so much blisse:
Hundreds of yeares you Stella's feet may kisse.

I see the house—my heart, thy selfe containe!
Beware full sailes drowne not thy tottring barge,
Least joy, by Nature apt sprites to enlarge,
Thee to thy wracke beyond thy limits straine;

Nor do like Lords whose weake confused braine,
Not pointing to fit folkes each undercharge,
While everie office themselves will discharge,
With doing all leave nothing done but paine.

But give apt servants their due place; let eyes
See Beautie's totall summe summ'd in her face;
Let eares heare speech which wit to wonder ties;
Let breath sucke up those sweetes; let armes embrace
The globe of weale; lips Love's indentures make;
Thou but of all the kingly Tribute take.

86

Alas! whence came this change of lookes? If I
Have chang'd desert, let mine owne conscience be
A still felt plague to selfe condemning me;
Let woe gripe on my heart, shame loade mine eye.

But if all faith, like spotlesse Ermine, ly
Safe in my soule, which only doth to thee
(As his sole object of felicitie)
With wings of Love in aire of wonder flie,

O, ease your hand, treate not so hard your slave;
In justice paines come not till faults do call;
Or if I needs (sweet Judge) must torments have,
Use something else to chasten me withall
Then those blest eyes, where all my hopes do dwell;
No doome should make once heav'n become his hell.

87

When I was forst from Stella ever deere
—Stella, food of my thoughts, hart of my hart,
Stella, whose eyes make all my tempests cleere—
By iron lawes of duetie to depart,

Alas! I found that she with me did smart;
I saw that teares did in her eyes appeare;
I saw that sighes her sweetest lips did part,
And her sad words my sadded sense did heare.

For me, I wept to see pearles scattered so;
I sighd her sighs, and wailed for her wo.
Yet swam in joy, such love in her was seene.
Thus, while th' effect most bitter was to me,
And nothing then the cause more sweet could be,
I had bene vext if vext I had not beene.

88

Out, traytor absence, darest thou counsell me
From my deare Captainesse to run away,
Because in brave array heere marcheth she,
That, to win me, oft shewes a present pay?

Is faith so weak? or is such force in thee?
When Sun is hid, can starres such beames display?
Cannot heav'n's food, once felt, keepe stomakes free
From base desire on earthly cates to pray?

Tush, absence; while thy mistes eclipse that light,
My Orphan sense flies to the inward sight,
Where memory sets foorth the beames of love;
That, where before hart loved and eyes did see,
In hart both sight and love now coupled be;
United powers make each the stronger prove.

Now that of absence the most irksom night
With darkest shade doth overcome my day;
Since Stella's eyes, wont to give me my day,
Leaving my Hemisphere leave me in night;

Each day seemes long and longs for long-staid night;
The night as tedious wooes th' approch of day;
Tird with the dusty toiles of busie day,
Languisht with horrors of the silent night;

Suffering the evils both of the day and night
While no night is more darke then is my day,
Nor no day hath lesse quiet then my night,
With such bad mixture of my night and day,
That living thus in blackest winter night,
I feele the flames of hottest Sommer day.

90

Stella, thinke not that I by verse seeke fame,
Who seeke, who hope, who love, who live, but thee;
Thine eyes my pride, thy lips mine history;
If thou praise not, all other praise is shame.

Nor so ambitious am I as to frame
A nest for my young praise in Lawrell tree;
In truth I sweare I wish not there should be
Gravd in my Epitaph a Poet's name.

Ne, if I would, could I just title make,
That any laud to me thereof should growe,
Without my plumes from others' wings I take;
For nothing from my wit or will doth flow,
Since all my words thy beauty doth endite,
And love doth hold my hand and make me write.

91

Stella, while now, by honour's cruell might,
I am from you, light of my life, mis-led;
And that—faire you, my Sunne, thus overspred
With absence Vaile—I live in Sorrowe's night;

If this darke place yet shewe like candle light
Some beautie's peece, as amber colourd hed,
Milke hands, rose cheeks; or lips more sweet, more red;
Or seeing gets, blacke but in blacknesse bright; ✍

They please, I doe confesse they please mine eyes.
But why? because of you they models be;
Models such be wood-globes of glistring skies.
Deere, therefore be not jealous over me,
If you heare that they seeme my hart to move;
Not them, O no; but you in them I love.

92

Be your words made (good Sir) of Indian ware,
That you allow me them by so small rate?
Or do you cutted Spartanes imitate;
Or do you meane my tender eares to spare,

That to my questions you so totall are?
When I demaund of Phœnix Stella's state,
You say, forsooth, you left her well of late;
O God, thinke you that satisfies my care?

I would know whether she did sit or walke;
How cloth'd; how waited on; sighd she, or smilde;
Whereof, with whom; how often did she talke;
By what pastimes time's journey she beguilde;
If her lips daignd to sweeten my poore name;
Say all; and, all well sayd, still say the same.

✍ gets: jets (the mineral).

93

O fate, O fault, O curse, child of my blisse!
What sobs can give words grace my griefe to show?
What inke is blacke inough to paint my wo?
Through me, wretch me, even Stella vexed is.

Yet, truth (if Caitif's breath may call thee) this
Witnesse with me, that my foule stumbling so,
From carelesnesse did in no maner grow;
But wit, confus'd with too much care, did misse.

And do I then my selfe this vaine 'scuse give?
I have (live I and know this?) harmed thee;
Though worlds 'quite me, shall I my selfe forgive?
Only with paines my paines thus eased be,
That all my hurts in my hart's wracke I reede;
I cry thy sighs, my deere, thy teares I bleede.

94

Griefe, find the words, for thou hast made my braine
So darke with misty vapours, which arise
From out thy heavy mould, that inbent eyes
Can scarce discerne the shape of mine owne paine.

Do thou then, (for thou canst) do thou complaine
For my poore soule, which now that sicknesse tries,
Which even to sence sence of it selfe denies,
Though harbengers of death lodge there his traine.

Or if thy love of plaint yet mine forbeares,
As of a caitife worthy so to die,
Yet waile thy selfe, and waile with causefull teares,
That though in wretchedness thy life doth lie,
Yet growest more wretched then thy nature beares
By being placed in such a wretch as I.

95

Yet sighes, deere sighs, indeede true friends you are,
That do not leave your left friend at the wurst,
But, as you with my breast I oft have nurst,
So, gratefull now, you waite upon my care.

Faint coward joy no longer tarry dare,
Seeing hope yeeld when this wo strake him furst;
Delight protests he is not for the accurst,
Though oft himselfe my mate in arms he sware;

Nay, sorrow comes with such maine rage, that he
Kils his owne children, teares, finding that they
By love were made apt to consort with me.
Only, true sighs, you do not goe away;
Thanke may you have for such a thankfull part,
Thank-worthiest yet when you shall breake my hart.

96

Thought, with good cause thou likest so well the night,
Since kind or chance gives both one liverie,
Both sadly blacke, both blackly darkned be;
Night bard from Sun, thou from thy owne Sun light.

Silence in both displaies his sullen might;
Slow heavinesse in both holds one degree:
That full of doubts, thou of perplexitie;
Thy teares expresse night's native moisture right;

In both amazefull solitarinesse;
In night of sprites the gastly powers do stur;
In thee or sprites or sprited gastlinesse.
But, but (alas!) night's side the ods hath fur;
For that at length yet doth invite some rest;
Thou, though still tired, yet still doost it detest.

Dian, that faine would cheare her friend the Night,
Shewes her oft at the full her fairest face,
Bringing with her those starry Nymphs, whose chace
From heavenly standing hits each mortall wight.

But ah, poore Night, in love with Phœbus' light,
And endlesly despairing of his grace,
Her selfe (to shewe no other joy hath place)
Silent and sad, in mourning weedes doth dight.

Even so (alas!) a lady, Dian's peere,
With choise delights and rarest company,
Would faine drive cloudes from out my heavy cheere;
But, wo is me, though joy it selfe were she,
She could not shew my blind braine waies of joy,
While I despaire my Sunne's sight to enjoy.

98

Ah, bed, the field where joye's peace some do see,
The field where all my thoughts to warre be traind,
How is thy grace by my strange fortune staind!
How thy lee shores by my sighes stormed be!

With sweete soft shades thou oft invitest me
To steale some rest; but, wretch, I am constraind
(Spurd with love's spur, though gald, and shortly raind
With care's hard hand) to turne and tosse in thee;

While the blacke horrors of the silent night
Paint woe's blacke face so lively to my sight
That tedious leasure markes each wrinkled line.
But when Aurora leades out Phœbus' daunce,
Mine eyes then only winke; for spite, perchance,
That wormes should have their Sun, and I want mine.

99

When far spent night perswades each mortall eye
To whome nor art nor nature graunteth light,
To lay his then marke wanting shafts of sight,
Clos'd with their quivers in sleep's armory;

With windowes ope, then most my mind doth lie
Viewing the shape of darknesse, and delight
Takes in that sad hue which with th' inward night
Of his mazde powers keepes perfit harmony;

But when birds charme, and that sweete aire which is
Morne's messenger, with rose enameld skies
Cals each wight to salute the floure of blisse,
In tombe of lids then buried are mine eyes,
Forst by their Lord, who is asham'd to find
Such light in sence, with such a darkned mind.

100

O teares ! no teares, but raine, from beautie's skies,
Making those Lillies and those Roses grow
Which ay most faire, now more then most faire, show,
While gracefull pitty beautie beautifies.

O honied sighs! which from that breast do rise,
Whose pants do make unspilling creame to flow,
Wing'd with whose breath so pleasing zephires blow
As can refresh the hell where my soule fries.

O plaints, conserv'd in such a sugred phrase
That eloquence it selfe envies your praise,
While sobd out words a perfect Musike give.
Such teares, sighs, plaints, no sorrow is, but joy.
Or if such heavenly signes must prove annoy,
All mirth farewell; let me in sorrow live.

Stella is sicke, and in that sicke bed lies
Sweetnesse which breathes and pants as oft as she;
And grace, sicke too, such fine conclusions tries
That sickenesse brags it selfe best grace to be.

Beauty is sicke, but sicke is so faire guise
That in that palenesse beautie's white we see;
And joy, which is inseparate from those eyes,
Stella now learnes (strange case) to weepe in me.

Love moves thy paine, and, like a faithfull page,
As thy lookes sturre comes up and downe, to make
All folkes, prest at thy will, thy paine to asswage;
Nature with care sweates for her darling's sake,
Knowing worlds passe ere she enough can finde
Of such heaven stuffe to cloath so heavenly a mind.

102

Where be those Roses gone which sweetned so our eyes?
Where those red cheeks which oft, with faire encrease, did frame
The height of honour in the kindly badge of shame?
Who hath the crimson weeds stolne from my morning skies?

How doth the colour vade of those vermillion dies
Which Nature's selfe did make, and selfe ingraind the same?
I would know by what right this palenesse overcame
That hue whose force my hart still unto thraldome ties.

Galen's adoptive sonnes, who by a beaten way
Their judgements hackney on, the fault on sicknesse lay;
But feeling proofe makes me say they mistake it furre:
It is but love which makes his paper perfit white,
To write therein more fresh the story of delight,
While beauty's reddest inke Venus for him doth sturre.

103

O happie Tems, that didst my Stella beare,
I saw thyself with many a smiling line
Upon thy cheerefull face joy's liverie weare
While those faire planets on thy streames did shine.

The boate for joy could not to daunce forbear;
While wanton winds, with beauties so divine
Ravisht, staid not till in her golden haire
They did themselves (O sweetest prison!) twine.

And faine those Æol's youth there would their stay
Have made, but forst by Nature still to flie,
First did with puffing kisse those lockes display;
She, so discheveld, blusht; from window I
With sight thereof cride out: O faire disgrace!
Let honor selfe to thee grant highest place.

104

Envious wits, what hath bene mine offence,
That with such poysonous care my lookes you marke,
That to each word, nay sigh, of mine you harke,
As grudging me my sorrow's eloquence?

Ah, is it not enough that I am thence,
Thence, so farre thence, that scarcely any sparke
Of comfort dare come to this dungeon darke,
Where rigour's exile lockes up all my sense?

But if I by a happy window passe,
If I but stars uppon mine armour beare,
Sicke, thirsty, glad, (though but of empty glasse)
Your morall notes straight my hid meaning teare
From out my ribs, and puffing proves that I ☙
Do Stella love. Fooles, who doth it deny?

☙ proves: plural of proof.

Vnhappie sight, and hath she vanisht by
So neere, in so good time, so free a place?
Dead glasse, dost thou thy object so imbrace
As what my hart still sees thou canst not spie?

I sweare by her I love and lacke that I
Was not in fault who bent thy dazzling race
Onely unto the heav'n of Stella's face,
Counting but dust what in the way did lie.

But cease, mine eyes; your teares do witnesse well
That you, guiltlesse thereof, your Nectar mist.
Curst be the page from whom the bad torch fell;
Curst be the night which did your strife resist;
Curst be the coachman which did drive so fast
With no worse curse then absence makes me tast.

106

O absent presence! Stella is not here;
False flattering hope, that with so faire a face
Bare me in hand, that in this Orphane place,
Stella, I say my Stella, should appeare,

What saist thou now? where is that dainty cheere
Thou toldst mine eyes should helpe their famisht case?
But thou art gone, now that selfe felt disgrace
Doth make me most to wish thy comfort neere.

But heere I do store of faire Ladies meete,
Who may with charme of conversation sweete
Make in my heavy mould new thoughts to grow.
Sure they prevaile as much with me as he
That bad his friend but then new maim'd, to be
Mery with him and not thinke of his woe.

107

Stella, since thou so right a Princesse art
Of all the powers which life bestowes on me,
That ere by them ought undertaken be
They first resort unto that soveraigne part;

Sweete, for a while give respite to my hart,
Which pants as though it stil should leape to thee;
And on my thoughts give thy Lieftenancy
To this great cause, which needs both use and art.

And as a Queene who from her presence sends
Whom she imployes, dismisse from thee my wit,
Till it have wrought what thine owne will attends.
On servants' shame oft Maisters' blame doth sit.
O, let not fooles in me thy workes reprove,
And scorning say: See what it is to love!

108

When sorrow (using mine owne fier's might)
Melts downe his lead into my boyling brest,
Through that darke fornace to my hart opprest,
There shines a joy from thee my only light.

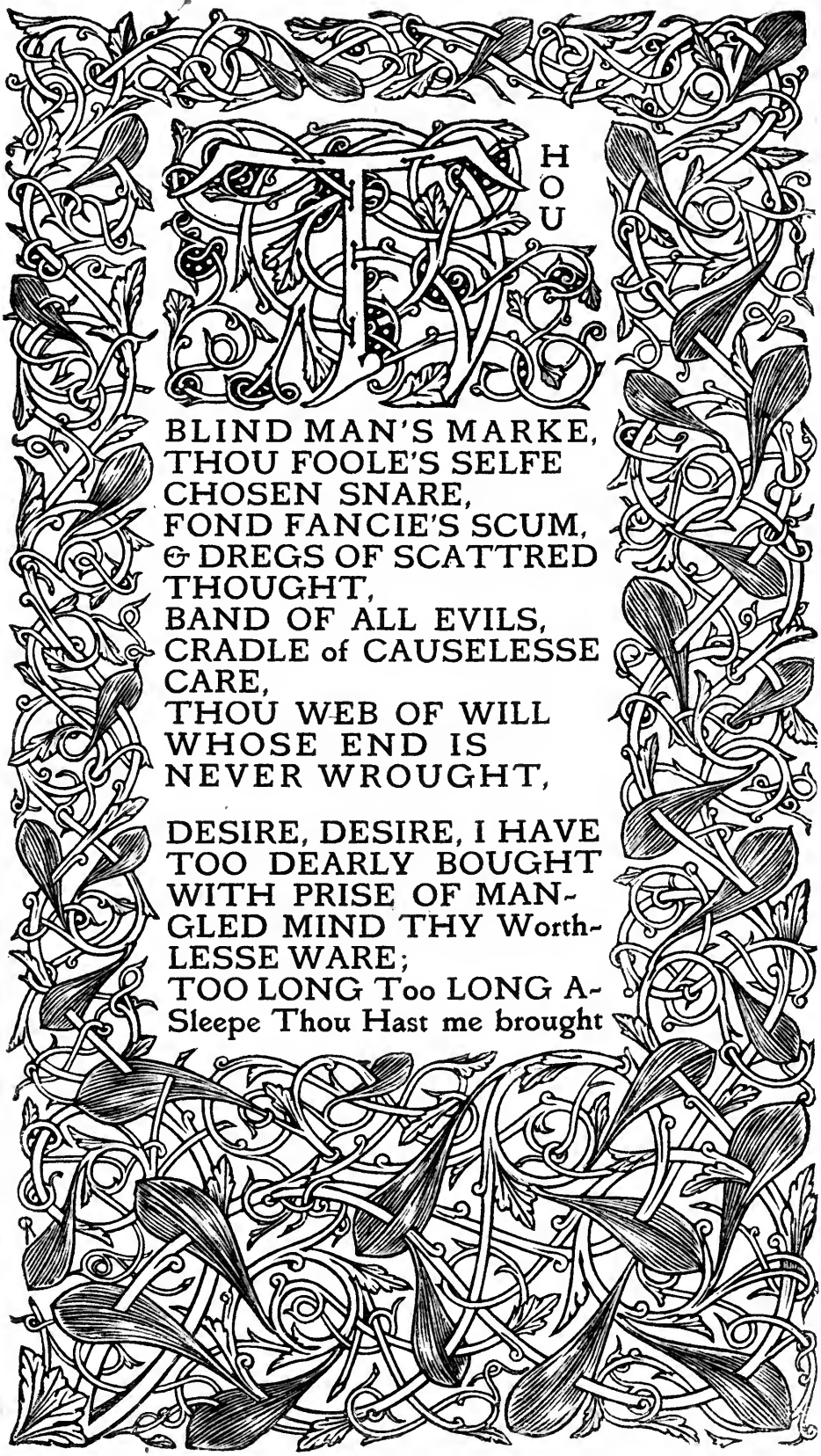
But soone as thought of thee breeds my delight,
And my yong soule flutters to thee his nest,
Most rude despaire, my daily unbidden guest,
Clips streight my wings, streight wraps me in his night;

And makes me then bow downe my head and say:
Ah, what doth Phœbus' gold that wretch availe
Whom iron doores do keepe from use of day?
So strangely (alas!) thy works in me prevaile
That in my woes for thee thou art my joy,
And in my joyes for thee my only annoy.

THE END OF ASTROPHEL & STELLA.

SONNETS.

P S



THOU
BLIND MAN'S MARKE,
THOU FOOLE'S SELFE
CHOSEN SNARE,
FOND FANCIE'S SCUM,
& DREGS OF SCATTRED
THOUGHT,
BAND OF ALL EVILS,
CRADLE of CAUSELESSE
CARE,
THOU WEB OF WILL
WHOSE END IS
NEVER WROUGHT,

DESIRE, DESIRE, I HAVE
TOO DEARLY BOUGHT
WITH PRISE OF MAN-
GLED MIND THY Worth-
LESSE WARE;
TOO LONG Too LONG A-
Sleepe Thou Hast me brought

Who should my mind to higher things prepare.

But yet in vaine thou hast my ruine wrought;
In vaine thou madest me to vaine things aspire,
In vaine thou kindlest all thy smokie fire;
For Vertue hath this better lesson taught:
Within my selfe to seeke my onelie hire,
Desiring nought but how to kill desire.

Leave me, O Love, which reachest but to dust;
And thou, my mind, aspire to higher things;
Grow rich in that which never taketh rust;
Whatever fades but fading pleasure brings.

Draw in thy beames and humble all thy might
To that sweet yoke where lasting freedomes be,
Which breakes the clowdes and opens forth the light,
That doth both shine and give us sight to see.

O take fast hold; let that light be thy guide
In this small course which birth drawes out to death,
And thinke how evill becommeth him to slide
Who seeketh heav'n and comes of heav'nly breath.

Then farewell, world; thy uttermost I see.
Eternall Love, maintaine thy life in me.

SPLENDIDIS LONGUM VALE
DICO NUGIS.

THESE FOURE FOLLOWING SONNETS WERE MADE WHEN HIS LADY HAD PAINE IN HER FACE.

The scourge of life, and death's extreame disgrace,
The smoke of hell, the monster called paine,
Long sham'd to be accurst in every place
By them who of his rude resort complaine,

Lyke crafty wretch by time and travell tought,
His ugly evill in others' good to hide,
Late harbours in her face whom nature wrought
As treasure house where her best gifts do bide.

And so by priviledge of sacred seate,
A seate where beauty shines and vertue raignes,
He hopes for some small praise, since she hath great,
Within her beames wrapping his cruell staines.

Ah, saucy paine, let not thy errour last;
More loving eyes she draws, more hate thou hast.

Wo, wo to me! on me returne the smart!
My burning tongue hath bred my mistresse paine;
For oft in paine to paine my painefull heart
With her due praise did of my state complaine.

I praisde her eyes whom never chance doth move;
Her breath, which makes a sower answer sweete;
Her milken breasts, the nurse of child-like love;
Her legges (O legges!), her ay well stepping feete.

Paine heard her praise; and, full of inward fire,
(First sealing up my heart as pray of his),
He flies to her and, boldned with desire,
Her face (this age's praise) the thiefe doth kisse.

O paine, I now recant the praise I gave,
And sweare she is not worthy thee to have.

Thou paine, the onely guest of loath'd constraint,
The child of curse, man's weaknesse' foster-child,
Brother to woe and father of complaint;
Thou Paine, thou hated paine, from heav'n exilde,

How holdst thou her whose eyes constraint doth feare,
Whom curst do blesse, whose weaknesse vertues arme,
Who others' woes and plaints can chastly beare,
In whose sweet heav'n Angels of high thoughts swarme?

What courage strange hath caught thy caitife hart?
Fear'st not a face that oft whole harts devowres?
Or art thou from above bid play this part,
And so no helpe gainst envy of those powers?

If thus, alas, yet while those parts have wo,
So stay her toung that she no more say: No!

And have I heard her say: O cruell paine!
And doth she know what mould her beautie beares?
Mournes she in truth, and thinkes that others faine?
Feares she to feel, and feeles not others' feares?

Or doth she thinke all paine the minde forbeares?
That heavie earth, not fierie sprites, may plaine?
That eyes weepe worse then hart in bloodie teares?
That sense feeles more then what doth sense containe?

No, no, she is too wise; she knowes her face
Hath not such paine as it makes others have;
She knows the sicknesse of that perfect place
Hath yet such health as it my life can save.

But this she thinkes: Our paine hye cause excuseth;
Where her, who should rule paine, false paine abuseth.

A FAREWELL.

Oft have I musde, but now at length I finde
Why those that die, men say they do depart.
Depart! a word so gentle to my minde,
Weakely did seeme to paint death's ougly dart.

But now the starres, with their strange course, do binde
Me one to leave with whom I leave my heart;
I heare a crye of spirits fainte and blinde,
That, parting thus, my chiefest part I part.

Part of my life, the loathed part to me,
Lives to impart my weary clay some breath;
But that good part wherein all comforts be,
Now dead, doth shew departure is a death.
Yea, worse then death; death parts both woe and joy;
From joy I part, still living in annoy.

Finding those beames which I must ever love
To marre my minde and with my hurt to please,
I deemd it best some absence for to prove,
If farther place might further me to ease.

My eyes, thence drawne where lived all their light,
Blinded forthwith, in darke despaire did lye,
Like to the Moule, with want of guiding sight,
Deep plung'd in earth, deprived of the skie.

In absence blind, and wearied with that woe,
To greater woes, by presence, I returne,
Even as the flye which to the flame doth go,
Pleased with the light that his small corse doth burne.

Faire choice I have: either to live or dye;
A blinded Moule, or else a burned flye.

In wonted walkes, since wonted fancies change,
Some cause there is which of strange cause doth rise;
For in each thing whereto mine eye doth range
Part of my paine me seemes engraved lyes.

The Rockes, which were of constant mind the marke,
In clyming steepe, now hard refusall show;
The shading woods seeme now my Sunne to darke;
And stately hilles disdaine to looke so low;

The restfull Caves now restlesse visions give;
In Dales I see each way a hard ascent;
Like late mowne meades late cut from joy I live;
Alas! sweete Brookes do in my teares augment.

Rockes, woods, hilles, caves, dales, meads, brookes,
answer me:
Infected mindes infect each thing they see.

Since shunning paine I ease can never find;
Since bashfull dread seekes where he knowes me harmd;
Since will is won and stopped eares are charmd;
Since force doth faint and sight doth make me blind;

Since loosing long the faster still I bind;
Since naked sence can conquer reason armd;
Since heart in chilling feare with yce is warmd;
In fine, since strife of thought but marres the mind;

I yeeld, O Love, unto thy loathed yoke,
By craving law of armes, whose rule doth teach
That, hardly usde, whoever prison broke,
In justice quit, of honour made no breach.
Whereas, if I a gratefull gardien have,
Thou art my Lord, and I thy vowed slave.

When Love, puft up with rage of hy disdaine,
Resolv'd to make me patterne of his might,
Like foe whose wits inclin'd to deadly spite,
Would often kill to breed more feeling paine.

He would not, arm'd with beautie, only raigne
On those affectes which easily yeeld to sight,
But vertue sets so high that reason's light
For all his strife can onlie bondage gaine.

So that I live to pay a mortall fee,
Dead palsie sick of all my chiefest parts,
Like those whom dreames make uglie monsters see,
And can crie helpe with nought but grones and starts;
Longing to have, having no wit to wish:
To starving minds such is god Cupid's dish.

A Satyre once did runne away from dread
With sound of horne which he himselfe did blow;
Fearing and feared thus from himselfe he fled,
Deeming strange evill in that he did not know.

Such causelesse feares which coward minds do take;
It makes them flie that which they faine would have;
As this poore beast which did his rest forsake,
Thinking not why, but how, himselfe to save.

Even thus might I from doubts which I conceave
Of mine owne wordes my owne good hap betray;
And thus might I, for feare of, may be, leave
The sweete pursute of my desired pray.

Better like I thy Satyre, deerest Dyer,
Who burnt his lips to kisse faire shining fire.

Like as the Dove which seeled up doth flie,
Is neither freed nor yet to service bound,
But hopes to gaine some helpe by mounting hie,
Till want of force do force her fall to ground;

Right so my minde, caught by his guiding eye
And thence cast off where his sweete hurt he found,
Hath never leave to live, nor doome to dye,
Nor held in evill, nor suffered to be sound,

But with his wings of fancies up he goes
To hie conceits, whose fruits are oft but small,
Till wounded, blinde and wearied spirite lose
Both force to flie and knowledge where to fall.
O happy Dove if she no bondage tried!
More happie I might I in bondage bide!

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