

Classic Poetry Series

Edmund Spenser
- poems -

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Edmund Spenser(1552 - 13 January 1599)

Edmund Spenser was an English poet best known for *The Faerie Queene*, an epic poem and fantastical allegory celebrating the Tudor dynasty and Elizabeth I. He is recognised as one of the premier craftsmen of Modern English verse in its infancy, and one of the greatest poets in the English language.

Life

Edmund Spenser was born in East Smithfield, London around the year 1552 though there is some ambiguity as to the exact date of his birth. As a young boy, he was educated in London at the Merchant Taylors' School and matriculated as a sizar at Pembroke College, Cambridge. While at Cambridge he became a friend of Gabriel Harvey, and later consulted him, despite their differing views on poetry.

In July 1580 Spenser went to Ireland, in the service of the newly appointed Lord Deputy, Arthur Grey, 14th Baron Grey de Wilton. Then he served with the English forces during the Second Desmond Rebellion. After the defeat of the native Irish he took lands in County Cork that had been confiscated in the Munster Plantation during the Elizabethan conquest of Ireland. Among his acquaintances in the area was Walter Raleigh, a fellow colonist.

Through his poetry Spenser hoped to secure a place at court, which he visited in Raleigh's company to deliver his most famous work, *The Faerie Queene*. However, he boldly antagonised the queen's principal secretary, Lord Burghley, and all he received in recognition of his work was a pension in 1591. When it was proposed that he receive payment of 100 pounds for his epic poem, Burghley remarked, "What, all this for a song!"

In 1596 Spenser wrote a prose pamphlet titled, *A View of the Present State of Ireland*. This piece remained in manuscript until its publication and print in the mid-seventeenth century. It is probable that it was kept out of print during the author's lifetime because of its inflammatory content. The pamphlet argued that Ireland would never be totally 'pacified' by the English until its indigenous language and customs had been destroyed, if necessary by violence. Spenser recommended scorched earth tactics, such as he had seen used in the Desmond Rebellions, to create famine. Although it has been highly regarded as a polemical piece of prose and valued as a historical source on 16th century Ireland, the *View* is seen today as genocidal in intent. Spenser did express some praise for the Gaelic poetic tradition, but also used much tendentious and bogus analysis to demonstrate that the Irish were descended from barbarian Scythian stock.

Two of Ireland's historians of the early modern period, Ciaran Brady and Nicholas Canny, have differed in their view of Spenser's *View of the State of Ireland*. Brady's essential proposition is that Spenser wished the English government to undertake the extermination of most of the Irish population. He writes that Spenser preferred to write in dialogue form so that the crudity of his proposals would be masked. Canny undermines Brady's conclusion that Spenser opted for "a holocaust or a "blood-bath", because despite Brady's claims Spenser did not choose the sword as his preferred instrument of policy. Canny argues that Spenser instead chose not the extermination of the Irish race but rather a policy of 'social reform pursued by drastic means'. Canny's ultimate assertion was that Brady was over-reacting and that Spenser did not propose a policy to exterminate the Irish race.

However, within one page he moves on to argue that no 'English writer of the early modern period ever proposed such a drastic programme in social engineering for England, and it was even more dramatic than Brady allows for because all elements of the Irish population including the Old English of the towns, whom Brady seems to think were exempt were subject to some element of this scheme of dispersal, reintegration and re-education'. Here, Canny argues that this policy was more 'dramatic than Brady allows', in that Brady's description was one of 'bloodshed', 'extermination' and 'holocaust' only of the native Irish but Canny's was one of dispersal, reintegration and re-education of both the native Irish and the settler English. Even though Canny writes that 'substantial loss of life, including loss of civilian life, was considered by Spenser', he considers that that falls short of Brady's conclusion.

Later on, during the Nine Years War in 1598, Spenser was driven from his home by the native Irish forces of Aodh Ó Néill. His castle at Kilcolman, near Doneraile in North Cork was burned, and it is thought one of his infant children died in the blaze – though local legend has it that his wife also died. He possessed a second holding to the south, at Rennie, on a rock overlooking the river Blackwater in North Cork. The ruins of it are still visible today. A short distance away grew a tree, locally known as "Spenser's Oak" until it was destroyed in a lightning strike in the 1960s. Local legend has it that he penned some or all of *The Faerie Queene* under this tree.

In the year after being driven from his home, Spenser travelled to London, where he died in distressed circumstances (according to legend), aged forty-six. It was arranged for his coffin to be carried by other poets, upon which they threw many pens and pieces of poetry into his grave with many tears.

 The Faerie Queene

Spenser's masterpiece is an extensive poem The Faerie Queene. The first three books of The Faerie Queene were published in 1590, and a second set of three books were published in 1596. This extended epic poem deals with the adventures of knights, dragons, ladies in distress, etc. yet it is also an extended allegory about the moral life and what makes for a life of virtue. Spenser originally indicated that he intended the poem to be twelve books long, hence there is some argument about whether the version we have is in any real sense complete.

Structure of the Spenserian Stanza and Sonnet

Spenser used a distinctive verse form, called the Spenserian stanza, in several works, including The Faerie Queene. The stanza's main meter is iambic pentameter with a final line in iambic hexameter (having six feet or stresses, known as an Alexandrine), and the rhyme scheme is ababbcbcc.

The Spenserian Sonnet is based on a fusion of elements of both the Petrarchan sonnet and the Shakespearean sonnet. It is similar to the Shakespearean sonnet in the sense that its set up is based more on the 3 quatrains and a couplet, a system set up by Shakespeare; however it is more like the Petrarchan tradition in the fact that the conclusion follows from the argument or issue set up in the earlier quatrains.

There is also a great use of the parody of the blason and the idealisation or praise of the mistress, a literary device used by many poets. It is a way to look at a woman through the appraisal of her features in comparison to other things. In this description, the mistress's body is described part by part, i.e., much more of a scientific way of seeing one. As William Johnson states in his article "Gender Fashioning and Dynamics of Mutuality in Spenser's Amoretti," the poet-love in the scenes of Spenser's sonnets in Amoretti, is able to see his lover in an objectified manner by moving her to another, or more clearly, an item. The purpose of Spenser doing this is to bring the woman from the "transcendental ideal" to a woman in everyday life. "Through his use of metonymy and metaphor, by describing the lady not as a whole being but as bodily parts, by alluding to centuries of topoi which remove her in time as well as space, the poet transforms the woman into a text, the living 'other' into an inanimate object" (503).

The opposite of this also occurs in The Faerie Queen. The counter-blason, or the opposition of appraisal, is used to describe Duessa. She is not objectified, but instead all of her flaws are highlighted. In this context it should be noted that in

Amoretti Spenser actually names his loved one as "Elizabeth" and that he puns humorously and often on her surname "Boyle". S

['Joy of my life, full oft for loving you']

Joy of my life, full oft for loving you

I bless my lot, that was so lucky placed:

But then the more your own mishap I rue,

That are so much by so mean love embased.

For had the equal heavens so much you graced

In this as in the rest, ye might invent

Some heavenly wit, whose verse could have enchased

Your glorious name in golden monument.

But since ye deign'd so goodly to relent

To me your thrall, in whom is little worth,

That little that I am shall all be spent

In setting your immortal praises forth;

Whose lofty argument uplifting me

Shall lift you up unto an high degree.

Edmund Spenser

 To fyll the fourth place,
And reigne with the rest in heaven.

Bring hether the Pincke and purple Cullambine,
 With Gelliflowres;
Bring Coronations, and Sops-in-wine
 Worne of Paramoures:
Strowe me the ground with Daffadowndillies,
And Cowslips, and Kingcups, and loved Lillies:
 The pretie Pawnce,
 And the Chevisaunce,
Shall match with the fayre flowre Delice.

Now ryse up, Elisa, decked as thou art
 In royall aray;
And now ye daintie Damsells may depart
 Eche one her way.
I feare I have troubled your troupes to longe:
Let dame Elisa thanke you for her song:
 And if you come hether
 When Damsines I gether,
I will part them all you among.

Edmund Spenser

A Hymn In Honour Of Beauty

Ah whither, Love, wilt thou now carry me?
What wontless fury dost thou now inspire
Into my feeble breast, too full of thee?
Whilst seeking to aslake thy raging fire,
Thou in me kindlest much more great desire,
And up aloft above my strength dost raise
The wondrous matter of my fire to praise.

That as I erst in praise of thine own name,
So now in honour of thy mother dear,
An honourable hymn I eke should frame,
And with the brightness of her beauty clear,
The ravish'd hearts of gazeful men might rear
To admiration of that heavenly light,
From whence proceeds such soul-enchancing might.

Thereto do thou, great goddess, queen of beauty,
Mother of love, and of all world's delight,
Without whose sovereign grace and kindly duty
Nothing on earth seems fair to fleshly sight,
Do thou vouchsafe with thy love-kindling light
T' illuminate my dim and dulled eyne,
And beautify this sacred hymn of thine:

That both to thee, to whom I mean it most,
And eke to her, whose fair immortal beam
Hath darted fire into my feeble ghost,
That now it wasted is with woes extreme,
It may so please, that she at length will stream
Some dew of grace into my withered heart,
After long sorrow and consuming smart.

WHAT time this world's great Workmaster did cast
To make all things such as we now behold,
It seems that he before his eyes had plac'd
A goodly pattern, to whose perfect mould
He fashion'd them as comely as he could;
That now so fair and seemly they appear,
As nought may be amended anywhere.

That wondrous pattern, wheresoe'er it be,
Whether in earth laid up in secret store,
Or else in heaven, that no man may it see
With sinful eyes, for fear it to deflore,
Is perfect Beauty, which all men adore;
Whose face and feature doth so much excel
All mortal sense, that none the same may tell.

Thereof as every earthly thing partakes
Or more or less, by influence divine,
So it more fair accordingly it makes,
And the gross matter of this earthly mine,
Which clotheth it, thereafter doth refine,
Doing away the dross which dims the light
Of that fair beam which therein is empight.

For, through infusion of celestial power,
The duller earth it quick'neth with delight,
And lifeful spirits privily doth pour
Through all the parts, that to the looker's sight
They seem to please. That is thy sovereign might,
O Cyprian queen, which flowing from the beam
Of thy bright star, thou into them dost stream.

That is the thing which giveth pleasant grace
To all things fair, that kindleth lively fire,
Light of thy lamp, which, shining in the face,
Thence to the soul darts amorous desire,
And robs the hearts of those which it admire;
Therewith thou pointest thy son's poison'd arrow,
That wounds the life, and wastes the inmost marrow.

How vainly then do idle wits invent,
That beauty is nought else but mixture made
Of colours fair, and goodly temp'rament
Of pure complexions, that shall quickly fade
And pass away, like to a summer's shade;
Or that it is but comely composition
Of parts well measur'd, with meet disposition.

Hath white and red in it such wondrous power,

That it can pierce through th' eyes unto the heart,
And therein stir such rage and restless stour,
As nought but death can stint his dolour's smart?
Or can proportion of the outward part
Move such affection in the inward mind,
That it can rob both sense and reason blind?

Why do not then the blossoms of the field,
Which are array'd with much more orient hue,
And to the sense most dainty odours yield,
Work like impression in the looker's view?
Or why do not fair pictures like power shew,
In which oft-times we nature see of art
Excell'd, in perfect limning every part?

But ah, believe me, there is more than so,
That works such wonders in the minds of men;
I, that have often prov'd, too well it know,
And whoso list the like assays to ken,
Shall find by trial, and confess it then,
That beauty is not, as fond men misdeem,
An outward shew of things, that only seem.

For that same goodly hue of white and red,
With which the cheeks are sprinkled, shall decay,
And those sweet rosy leaves, so fairly spread
Upon the lips, shall fade and fall away
To that they were, even to corrupted clay;
That golden wire, those sparkling stars so bright,
Shall turn to dust; and lose their goodly light.

But that fair lamp, from whose celestial ray
That light proceeds, which kindleth lovers' fire,
Shall never be extinguish'd nor decay;
But when the vital spirits do expire,
Unto her native planet shall retire;
For it is heavenly born and cannot die,
Being a parcel of the purest sky.

For when the soul, the which derived was,
At first, out of that great immortal Spright,
By whom all live to love, whilom did pass

Down from the top of purest heaven's height
To be embodied here, it then took light
And lively spirits from that fairest star,
Which lights the world forth from his fiery car.

Which power retaining still or more or less,
When she in fleshly seed is eft enraced,
Through every part she doth the same impress,
According as the heavens have her graced,
And frames her house, in which she will be placed,
Fit for herself, adorning it with spoil
Of th' heavenly riches which she robb'd erewhile.

Thereof it comes that these fair souls, which have
The most resemblance of that heavenly light,
Frame to themselves most beautiful and brave
Their fleshly bower, most fit for their delight,
And the gross matter by a sovereign might
Tempers so trim, that it may well be seen
A palace fit for such a virgin queen.

So every spirit, as it is most pure,
And hath in it the more of heavenly light,
So it the fairer body doth procure
To habit in, and it more fairly dight
With cheerful grace and amiable sight.
For of the soul the body form doth take:
For soul is form, and doth the body make.

Therefore wherever that thou dost behold
A comely corpse, with beauty fair endued,
Know this for certain, that the same doth hold
A beauteous soul, with fair conditions thewed,
Fit to receive the seed of virtue strewed.
For all that fair is, is by nature good;
That is a sign to know the gentle blood.

Yet oft it falls that many a gentle mind
Dwells in deformed tabernacle drown'd,
Either by chance, against the course of kind,
Or through unaptness in the substance found,
Which it assumed of some stubborn ground,

That will not yield unto her form's direction,
But is deform'd with some foul imperfection.

And oft it falls, (ay me, the more to rue)
That goodly beauty, albe heavenly born,
Is foul abus'd, and that celestial hue,
Which doth the world with her delight adorn,
Made but the bait of sin, and sinners' scorn,
Whilst every one doth seek and sue to have it,
But every one doth seek but to deprave it.

Yet nathemore is that fair beauty's blame,
But theirs that do abuse it unto ill:
Nothing so good, but that through guilty shame
May be corrupt, and wrested unto will:
Natheless the soul is fair and beauteous still,
However flesh's fault it filthy make;
For things immortal no corruption take.

But ye fair dames, the world's dear ornaments
And lively images of heaven's light,
Let not your beams with such disparagements
Be dimm'd, and your bright glory dark'ned quite;
But mindful still of your first country's sight,
Do still preserve your first informed grace,
Whose shadow yet shines in your beauteous face.

Loathe that foul blot, that hellish firebrand,
Disloyal lust, fair beauty's foulest blame,
That base affections, which your ears would bland,
Commend to you by love's abused name,
But is indeed the bondslave of defame;
Which will the garland of your glory mar,
And quench the light of your bright shining star.

But gentle Love, that loyal is and true,
Will more illumine your resplendent ray,
And add more brightness to your goodly hue,
From light of his pure fire; which, by like way
Kindled of yours, your likeness doth display;
Like as two mirrors, by oppos'd reflection,
Do both express the face's first impression.

Therefore, to make your beauty more appear,
It you behoves to love, and forth to lay
That heavenly riches which in you ye bear,
That men the more admire their fountain may;
For else what booteth that celestial ray,
If it in darkness be enshrined ever,
That it of loving eyes be viewed never?

But, in your choice of loves, this well advise,
That likest to yourselves ye them select,
The which your forms' first source may sympathize,
And with like beauty's parts be inly deckt;
For, if you loosely love without respect,
It is no love, but a discordant war,
Whose unlike parts amongst themselves do jar.

For love is a celestial harmony
Of likely hearts compos'd of stars' concert,
Which join together in sweet sympathy,
To work each other's joy and true content,
Which they have harbour'd since their first descent
Out of their heavenly bowers, where they did see
And know each other here belov'd to be.

Then wrong it were that any other twain
Should in love's gentle band combined be
But those whom Heaven did at first ordain,
And made out of one mould the more t' agree;
For all that like the beauty which they see,
Straight do not love; for love is not so light
As straight to burn at first beholder's sight.

But they, which love indeed, look otherwise,
With pure regard and spotless true intent,
Drawing out of the object of their eyes
A more refined form, which they present
Unto their mind, void of all blemishment;
Which it reducing to her first perfection,
Beholdeth free from flesh's frail infection.

And then conforming it unto the light,

Which in itself it hath remaining still,
Of that first Sun, yet sparkling in his sight,
Thereof he fashions in his higher skill
An heavenly beauty to his fancy's will;
And it embracing in his mind entire,
The mirror of his own thought doth admire.

Which seeing now so inly fair to be,
As outward it appeareth to the eye,
And with his spirit's proportion to agree,
He thereon fixeth all his fantasy,
And fully setteth his felicity;
Counting it fairer than it is indeed,
And yet indeed her fairness doth exceed.

For lovers' eyes more sharply sighted be
Than other men's, and in dear love's delight
See more than any other eyes can see,
Through mutual receipt of beam's bright,
Which carry privy message to the spright,
And to their eyes that inmost fair display,
As plain as light discovers dawning day.

Therein they see, through amorous eye-glances,
Armies of loves still flying to and fro,
Which dart at them their little fiery lances;
Whom having wounded, back again they go,
Carrying compassion to their lovely foe;
Who, seeing her fair eyes' so sharp effect,
Cures all their sorrows with one sweet aspect.

In which how many wonders do they rede
To their conceit, that others never see,
Now of her smiles, with which their souls they feed,
Like gods with nectar in their banquets free;
Now of her looks, which like to cordials be;
But when her words' embassage forth she sends,
Lord, how sweet music that unto them lends.

Sometimes upon her forehead they behold
A thousand graces masking in delight;
Sometimes within her eyelids they unfold

Ten thousand sweet belgards, which to their sight
Do seem like twinkling stars in frosty night;
But on her lips, like rosy buds in May,
So many millions of chaste pleasures play.

All those, O Cytherea, and thousands more
Thy handmaids be, which do on thee attend,
To deck thy beauty with their dainties' store,
That may it more to mortal eyes commend,
And make it more admir'd of foe and friend:
That in men's hearts thou may'st thy throne install,
And spread thy lovely kingdom over all.

Then Iö, triumph! O great Beauty's Queen,
Advance the banner of thy conquest high,
That all this world, the which thy vassals bene,
May draw to thee, and with due fealty
Adore the power of thy great majesty,
Singing this hymn in honour of thy name,
Compil'd by me, which thy poor liegeman am.

In lieu whereof grant, O great sovereign,
That she whose conquering beauty doth captive
My trembling heart in her eternal chain,
One drop of grace at length will to me give,
That I her bounden thrall by her may live,
And this same life, which first fro me she reaved,
May owe to her, of whom I it received.

And you, fair Venus' darling, my dear dread,
Fresh flower of grace, great goddess of my life,
When your fair eyes these fearful lines shall read,
Deign to let fall one drop of due relief,
That may recure my heart's long pining grief,
And shew what wondrous power your beauty hath,
That can restore a damned wight from death.

Edmund Spenser

A Hymn Of Heavenly Beauty

Rapt with the rage of mine own ravish'd thought,
Through contemplation of those goodly sights,
And glorious images in heaven wrought,
Whose wondrous beauty, breathing sweet delights
Do kindle love in high-conceited sprights;
I fain to tell the things that I behold,
But feel my wits to fail, and tongue to fold.

Vouchsafe then, O thou most Almighty Spright,
From whom all gifts of wit and knowledge flow,
To shed into my breast some sparkling light
Of thine eternal truth, that I may show
Some little beams to mortal eyes below
Of that immortal beauty, there with thee,
Which in my weak distraughted mind I see;

That with the glory of so goodly sight
The hearts of men, which fondly here admire
Fair seeming shews, and feed on vain delight,
Transported with celestial desire
Of those fair forms, may lift themselves up higher,
And learn to love, with zealous humble duty,
Th' eternal fountain of that heavenly beauty.

Beginning then below, with th' easy view
Of this base world, subject to fleshly eye,
From thence to mount aloft, by order due,
To contemplation of th' immortal sky;
Of the soare falcon so I learn to fly,
That flags awhile her fluttering wings beneath,
Till she herself for stronger flight can breathe.

Then look, who list thy gazeful eyes to feed
With sight of that is fair, look on the frame
Of this wide universe, and therein reed
The endless kinds of creatures which by name
Thou canst not count, much less their natures aim;
All which are made with wondrous wise respect,
And all with admirable beauty deckt.

First th' earth, on adamantine pillars founded,
Amid the sea engirt with brazen bands;
Then th' air still flitting, but yet firmly bounded
On every side, with piles of flaming brands,
Never consum'd, nor quench'd with mortal hands;
And last, that mighty shining crystal wall,
Wherewith he hath encompassed this All.

By view whereof it plainly may appear,
That still as every thing doth upward tend,
And further is from earth, so still more clear
And fair it grows, till to his perfect end
Of purest beauty it at last ascend;
Air more than water, fire much more than air,
And heaven than fire, appears more pure and fair.

Look thou no further, but affix thine eye
On that bright, shiny, round, still moving mass,
The house of blessed gods, which men call sky,
All sow'd with glist'ring stars more thick than grass,
Whereof each other doth in brightness pass,
But those two most, which ruling night and day,
As king and queen, the heavens' empire sway;

And tell me then, what hast thou ever seen
That to their beauty may compared be,
Or can the sight that is most sharp and keen
Endure their captain's flaming head to see?
How much less those, much higher in degree,
And so much fairer, and much more than these,
As these are fairer than the land and seas?

For far above these heavens, which here we see,
Be others far exceeding these in light,
Not bounded, not corrupt, as these same be,
But infinite in largeness and in height,
Unmoving, uncorrupt, and spotless bright,
That need no sun t' illuminate their spheres,
But their own native light far passing theirs.

And as these heavens still by degrees arise,

Until they come to their first Mover's bound,
That in his mighty compass doth comprise,
And carry all the rest with him around;
So those likewise do by degrees redound,
And rise more fair; till they at last arrive
To the most fair, whereto they all do strive.

Fair is the heaven where happy souls have place,
In full enjoyment of felicity,
Whence they do still behold the glorious face
Of the divine eternal Majesty;
More fair is that, where those Ideas on high
Enranged be, which Plato so admired,
And pure Intelligences from God inspired.

Yet fairer is that heaven, in which do reign
The sovereign Powers and mighty Potentates,
Which in their high protections do contain
All mortal princes and imperial states;
And fairer yet, whereas the royal Seats
And heavenly Dominations are set,
From whom all earthly governance is fet.

Yet far more fair be those bright Cherubins,
Which all with golden wings are overdight,
And those eternal burning Seraphins,
Which from their faces dart out fiery light;
Yet fairer than they both, and much more bright,
Be th' Angels and Archangels, which attend
On God's own person, without rest or end.

These thus in fair each other far excelling,
As to the highest they approach more near,
Yet is that highest far beyond all telling,
Fairer than all the rest which there appear,
Though all their beauties join'd together were;
How then can mortal tongue hope to express
The image of such endless perfectness?

Cease then, my tongue, and lend unto my mind
Leave to bethink how great that beauty is,
Whose utmost parts so beautiful I find;

How much more those essential parts of his,
His truth, his love, his wisdom, and his bliss,
His grace, his doom, his mercy, and his might,
By which he lends us of himself a sight.

Those unto all he daily doth display,
And shew himself in th' image of his grace,
As in a looking-glass, through which he may
Be seen of all his creatures vile and base,
That are unable else to see his face,
His glorious face which glistereth else so bright,
That th' Angels selves cannot endure his sight.

But we, frail wights, whose sight cannot sustain
The sun's bright beams when he on us doth shine,
But that their points rebutted back again
Are dull'd, how can we see with feeble eyne
The glory of that Majesty Divine,
In sight of whom both sun and moon are dark,
Compared to his least resplendent spark?

The means, therefore, which unto us is lent
Him to behold, is on his works to look,
Which he hath made in beauty excellent,
And in the same, as in a brazen book,
To read enregister'd in every nook
His goodness, which his beauty doth declare;
For all that's good is beautiful and fair.

Thence gathering plumes of perfect speculation,
To imp the wings of thy high-flying mind,
Mount up aloft through heavenly contemplation,
From this dark world, whose damps the soul so blind,
And, like the native brood of eagles' kind,
On that bright Sun of Glory fix thine eyes,
Clear'd from gross mists of frail infirmities.

Humbled with fear and awful reverence,
Before the footstool of his majesty
Throw thyself down, with trembling innocence,
Ne dare look up with corruptible eye
On the dread face of that great Deity,

For fear, lest if he chance to look on thee,
Thou turn to nought, and quite confounded be.

But lowly fall before his mercy seat,
Close covered with the Lamb's integrity
From the just wrath of his avengeful threat
That sits upon the righteous throne on high;
His throne is built upon eternity,
More firm and durable than steel or brass,
Or the hard diamond, which them both doth pass.

His sceptre is the rod of righteousness,
With which he bruiseeth all his foes to dust,
And the great Dragon strongly doth repress,
Under the rigour of his judgement just;
His seat is truth, to which the faithful trust,
From whence proceed her beams so pure and bright
That all about him sheddeth glorious light:

Light far exceeding that bright blazing spark
Which darted is from Titan's flaming head,
That with his beams enlumineth the dark
And dampish air, whereby all things are read;
Whose nature yet so much is marvelled
Of mortal wits, that it doth much amaze
The greatest wizards which thereon do gaze.

But that immortal light, which there doth shine,
Is many thousand times more bright, more clear,
More excellent, more glorious, more divine,
Through which to God all mortal actions here,
And even the thoughts of men, do plain appear;
For from th' eternal truth it doth proceed,
Through heavenly virtue which her beams do breed.

With the great glory of that wondrous light
His throne is all encompassed around,
And hid in his own brightness from the sight
Of all that look thereon with eyes unsound;
And underneath his feet are to be found
Thunder and lightning and tempestuous fire,
The instruments of his avenging ire.

There in his bosom Sapience doth sit,
The sovereign darling of the Deity,
Clad like a queen in royal robes, most fit
For so great power and peerless majesty,
And all with gems and jewels gorgeously
Adorn'd, that brighter than the stars appear,
And make her native brightness seem more clear.

And on her head a crown of purest gold
Is set, in sign of highest sovereignty;
And in her hand a sceptre she doth hold,
With which she rules the house of God on high,
And manageth the ever-moving sky,
And in the same these lower creatures all
Subjected to her power imperial.

Both heaven and earth obey unto her will,
And all the creatures which they both contain;
For of her fullness which the world doth fill
They all partake, and do in state remain
As their great Maker did at first ordain,
Through observation of her high behest,
By which they first were made, and still increast.

The fairness of her face no tongue can tell;
For she the daughters of all women's race,
And angels eke, in beauty doth excel,
Sparkled on her from God's own glorious face,
And more increas'd by her own goodly grace,
That it doth far exceed all human thought,
Ne can on earth compared be to aught.

Ne could that painter (had he lived yet)
Which pictured Venus with so curious quill,
That all posterity admired it,
Have portray'd this, for all his mast'ring skill;
Ne she herself, had she remained still,
And were as fair as fabling wits do feign,
Could once come near this beauty sovereign.

But had those wits, the wonders of their days,

Or that sweet Teian poet, which did spend
His plenteous vein in setting forth her praise,
Seen but a glimpse of this which I pretend,
How wondrously would he her face commend,
Above that idol of his feigning thought,
That all the world should with his rhymes be fraught.

How then dare I, the novice of his art,
Presume to picture so divine a wight,
Or hope t' express her least perfection's part,
Whose beauty fills the heavens with her light,
And darks the earth with shadow of her sight?
Ah, gentle Muse, thou art too weak and faint
The portrait of so heavenly hue to paint.

Let angels, which her goodly face behold
And see at will, her sovereign praises sing,
And those most sacred mysteries unfold
Of that fair love of mighty heaven's King;
Enough is me t' admire so heavenly thing,
And being thus with her huge love possest,
In th' only wonder of herself to rest.

But whoso may, thrice happy man him hold,
Of all on earth whom God so much doth grace
And lets his own beloved to behold;
For in the view of her celestial face
All joy, all bliss, all happiness, have place;
Ne aught on earth can want unto the wight
Who of herself can win the wishful sight.

For she, out of her secret treasury,
Plenty of riches forth on him will pour,
Even heavenly riches, which there hidden lie
Within the closet of her chastest bower,
Th' eternal portion of her precious dower,
Which mighty God hath given to her free,
And to all those which thereof worthy be.

None thereof worthy be, but those whom she
Vouchsafeth to her presence to receive,
And letteth them her lovely face to see,

Whereof such wondrous pleasures they conceive,
And sweet contentment, that it doth bereave
Their soul of sense, through infinite delight,
And them transport from flesh into the spright.

In which they see such admirable things,
As carries them into an ecstasy,
And hear such heavenly notes, and carollings
Of God's high praise, that fills the brazen sky;
And feel such joy and pleasure inwardly,
That maketh them all worldly cares forget,
And only think on that before them set.

Ne from thenceforth doth any fleshly sense,
Or idle thought of earthly things, remain;
But all that erst seem'd sweet seems now offence,
And all that pleased erst now seems to pain;
Their joy, their comfort, their desire, their gain,
Is fixed all on that which now they see;
All other sights but feigned shadows be.

And that fair lamp, which useth to inflame
The hearts of men with self-consuming fire
Thenceforth seems foul, and full of sinful blame;
And all that pomp to which proud minds aspire
By name of honour, and so much desire,
Seems to them baseness, and all riches dross,
And all mirth sadness, and all lucre loss.

So full their eyes are of that glorious sight,
And senses fraught with such satiety,
That in nought else on earth they can delight,
But in th' aspect of that felicity,
Which they have written in their inward eye;
On which they feed, and in their fastened mind
All happy joy and full contentment find.

Ah, then, my hungry soul, which long hast fed
On idle fancies of thy foolish thought,
And, with false beauty's flatt'ring bait misled,
Hast after vain deceitful shadows sought,
Which all are fled, and now have left thee nought

But late repentance through thy follies prief;
Ah cease to gaze on matter of thy grief:

And look at last up to that sovereign light,
From whose pure beams all perfect beauty springs,
That kindleth love in every godly sprite,
Even the love of God, which loathing brings
Of this vile world and these gay-seeming things;
With whose sweet pleasures being so possest,
Thy straying thoughts henceforth for ever rest.

Edmund Spenser

Amoretti I: Happy ye leaves when as those lilly hands

Happy ye leaves when as those lilly hands,
Which hold my life in their dead doing might
Shall handle you and hold in loves soft bands,
Lyke captives trembling at the victors sight.
And happy lines, on which with starry light,
Those laming eyes will deigne sometimes to look
And reade the sorrowes of my dying spright,
Written with teares in harts close bleeding book.
And happy rymes bath'd in the sacred brooke,
Of Helicon whence she derived is,
When ye behold that Angels bless'd looke,
My soules long lacked foode, my heavens blis,
Leaves, lines, and rymes, seeke her to please alone,
Whom if ye please, I care for other none.

Edmund Spenser

Amoretti Iii: The Sovereign Beauty

The sovereign beauty which I do admire,
Witness the world how worthy to be praised:
The light whereof hath kindled heavenly fire
In my frail spirit, by her from baseness raised;
That being now with her huge brightness dazed,
Base thing I can no more endure to view;
But looking still on her, I stand amazed
At wondrous sight of so celestial hue.
So when my tongue would speak her praises due,
It stopped is with thought's astonishment:
And when my pen would write her titles true,
It ravish'd is with fancy's wonderment:
Yet in my heart I then both speak and write
The wonder that my wit cannot endite.

Edmund Spenser

Amoretti Lxvii: Like As A Huntsman

Like as a huntsman after weary chase,
Seeing the game from him escap'd away,
Sits down to rest him in some shady place,
With panting hounds beguiled of their prey:
So after long pursuit and vain assay,
When I all weary had the chase forsook,
The gentle deer return'd the self-same way,
Thinking to quench her thirst at the next brook.
There she beholding me with milder look,
Sought not to fly, but fearless still did bide:
Till I in hand her yet half trembling took,
And with her own goodwill her firmly tied.
Strange thing, me seem'd, to see a beast so wild,
So goodly won, with her own will beguil'd.

Edmund Spenser

Amoretti Lxviii: Most Glorious Lord Of Life

Most glorious Lord of life, that on this day,
Didst make thy triumph over death and sin:
And having harrow'd hell, didst bring away
Captivity thence captive, us to win:
This joyous day, dear Lord, with joy begin,
And grant that we for whom thou diddest die,
Being with thy dear blood clean wash'd from sin,
May live for ever in felicity.
And that thy love we weighing worthily,
May likewise love thee for the same again:
And for thy sake, that all like dear didst buy,
With love may one another entertain.
So let us love, dear love, like as we ought,
Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.

Edmund Spenser

Amoretti Lxxiv: Most Happy Letters

Most happy letters, fram'd by skilful trade,
With which that happy name was first design'd:
The which three times thrice happy hath me made,
With gifts of body, fortune, and of mind.
The first my being to me gave by kind,
From mother's womb deriv'd by due descent,
The second is my sovereign Queen most kind,
That honour and large riches to me lent.
The third my love, my life's last ornament,
By whom my spirit out of dust was raised:
To speak her praise and glory excellent,
Of all alive most worthy to be praised.
Ye three Elizabeths for ever live,
That three such graces did unto me give.

Edmund Spenser

Amoretti Lxxix: Men Call You Fair

Men call you fair, and you do credit it,
For that your self ye daily such do see:
But the true fair, that is the gentle wit,
And vertuous mind, is much more prais'd of me.
For all the rest, how ever fair it be,
Shall turn to naught and lose that glorious hue:
But only that is permanent and free
From frail corruption, that doth flesh ensue.
That is true beauty: that doth argue you
To be divine, and born of heavenly seed:
Deriv'd from that fair Spirit, from whom all true
And perfect beauty did at first proceed.
He only fair, and what he fair hath made,
All other fair, like flowers untimely fade.

Edmund Spenser

Amoretti Lxxv: One Day I Wrote Her Name

One day I wrote her name upon the strand,
But came the waves and washed it away:
Again I wrote it with a second hand,
But came the tide, and made my pains his prey.
"Vain man," said she, "that dost in vain assay,
A mortal thing so to immortalize;
For I myself shall like to this decay,
And eke my name be wiped out likewise."
"Not so," (quod I) "let baser things devise
To die in dust, but you shall live by fame:
My verse your vertues rare shall eternize,
And in the heavens write your glorious name:
Where whenas death shall all the world subdue,
Our love shall live, and later life renew."

Edmund Spenser

Amoretti LXXXI: Fayre Is My Love, When Her Fayre Golden Heares

Fayre is my love, when her fayre golden heares,
With the loose wynd ye waving chance to marke:
Fayre when the rose in her red cheekes appears,
Or in her eyes the fyre of love does sparke.
Fayre when her brest lyke a rich laden barke,
With pretious merchandize she forth doth lay:
Fayre when that cloud of pryde which oft doth dark
Her goodly light with smiles she drives away,
But fayrest she, when so she doth display
The gate with pearles and rubyes richly dight:
Throgh which her words so wise do make their way
To beare the message of her gentle spright.
The rest be works of natures wonderment,
But this the worke of harts astonishment.

Edmund Spenser

Amoretti Xxii: This Holy Season

This holy season, fit to fast and pray,
Men to devotion ought to be inclin'd:
Therefore I likewise on so holy day,
For my sweet saint some service fit will find.
Her temple fair is built within my mind,
In which her glorious image placed is,
On which my thoughts do day and night attend,
Like sacred priests that never think amiss.
There I to her as th' author of my bliss,
Will build an altar to appease her ire:
And on the same my heart will sacrifice,
Burning in flames of pure and chaste desire:
The which vouchsafe, O goddess, to accept,
Amongst thy dearest relics to be kept.

Edmund Spenser

Amoretti XXX: My Love Is Like To Ice, And I To Fire

My Love is like to ice, and I to fire:
How comes it then that this her cold so great
Is not dissolved through my so hot desire,
But harder grows the more I her entreat?
Or how comes it that my exceeding heat
Is not allayed by her heart-frozen cold,
But that I burn much more in boiling sweat,
And feel my flames augmented manifold?
What more miraculous thing may be told,
That fire, which all things melts, should harden ice,
And ice, which is congeal'd with senseless cold,
Should kindle fire by wonderful device?
Such is the power of love in gentle mind,
That it can alter all the course of kind.

Edmund Spenser

An Hymn In Honour Of Beauty

AH whither, Love, wilt thou now carry me?
What wontless fury dost thou now inspire
Into my feeble breast, too full of thee?
Whilst seeking to aslake thy raging fire,
Thou in me kindlest much more great desire,
And up aloft above my strength dost raise
The wondrous matter of my fire to praise.

That as I erst in praise of thine own name,
So now in honour of thy mother dear,
An honourable hymn I eke should frame,
And with the brightness of her beauty clear,
The ravish'd hearts of gazeful men might rear
To admiration of that heavenly light,
From whence proceeds such soul-enchancing might.

Thereto do thou, great goddess, queen of beauty,
Mother of love, and of all world's delight,
Without whose sovereign grace and kindly duty
Nothing on earth seems fair to fleshly sight,
Do thou vouchsafe with thy love-kindling light
T' illuminate my dim and dulled eyne,
And beautify this sacred hymn of thine:

That both to thee, to whom I mean it most,
And eke to her, whose fair immortal beam
Hath darted fire into my feeble ghost,
That now it wasted is with woes extreme,
It may so please, that she at length will stream
Some dew of grace into my withered heart,
After long sorrow and consuming smart.

WHAT time this world's great Workmaster did cast
To make all things such as we now behold,
It seems that he before his eyes had plac'd
A goodly pattern, to whose perfect mould
He fashion'd them as comely as he could;
That now so fair and seemly they appear,
As nought may be amended anywhere.

That wondrous pattern, wheresoe'er it be,
Whether in earth laid up in secret store,
Or else in heaven, that no man may it see
With sinful eyes, for fear it to deflore,
Is perfect Beauty, which all men adore;
Whose face and feature doth so much excel
All mortal sense, that none the same may tell.

Thereof as every earthly thing partakes
Or more or less, by influence divine,
So it more fair accordingly it makes,
And the gross matter of this earthly mine,
Which clotheth it, thereafter doth refine,
Doing away the dross which dims the light
Of that fair beam which therein is empight.

For, through infusion of celestial power,
The duller earth it quick'neth with delight,
And lifeful spirits privily doth pour
Through all the parts, that to the looker's sight
They seem to please. That is thy sovereign might,
O Cyprian queen, which flowing from the beam
Of thy bright star, thou into them dost stream.

That is the thing which giveth pleasant grace
To all things fair, that kindleth lively fire,
Light of thy lamp, which, shining in the face,
Thence to the soul darts amorous desire,
And robs the hearts of those which it admire;
Therewith thou pointest thy son's poison'd arrow,
That wounds the life, and wastes the inmost marrow.

How vainly then do idle wits invent,
That beauty is nought else but mixture made
Of colours fair, and goodly temp'rament
Of pure complexions, that shall quickly fade
And pass away, like to a summer's shade;
Or that it is but comely composition
Of parts well measur'd, with meet disposition.

Hath white and red in it such wondrous power,

That it can pierce through th' eyes unto the heart,
And therein stir such rage and restless stour,
As nought but death can stint his dolour's smart?
Or can proportion of the outward part
Move such affection in the inward mind,
That it can rob both sense and reason blind?

Why do not then the blossoms of the field,
Which are array'd with much more orient hue,
And to the sense most dainty odours yield,
Work like impression in the looker's view?
Or why do not fair pictures like power shew,
In which oft-times we nature see of art
Excell'd, in perfect limning every part?

But ah, believe me, there is more than so,
That works such wonders in the minds of men;
I, that have often prov'd, too well it know,
And whoso list the like assays to ken,
Shall find by trial, and confess it then,
That beauty is not, as fond men misdeem,
An outward shew of things, that only seem.

For that same goodly hue of white and red,
With which the cheeks are sprinkled, shall decay,
And those sweet rosy leaves, so fairly spread
Upon the lips, shall fade and fall away
To that they were, even to corrupted clay;
That golden wire, those sparkling stars so bright,
Shall turn to dust; and lose their goodly light.

But that fair lamp, from whose celestial ray
That light proceeds, which kindleth lovers' fire,
Shall never be extinguish'd nor decay;
But when the vital spirits do expire,
Unto her native planet shall retire;
For it is heavenly born and cannot die,
Being a parcel of the purest sky.

For when the soul, the which derived was,
At first, out of that great immortal Spright,
By whom all live to love, whilom did pass

Down from the top of purest heaven's height
To be embodied here, it then took light
And lively spirits from that fairest star,
Which lights the world forth from his fiery car.

Which power retaining still or more or less,
When she in fleshly seed is eft enraced,
Through every part she doth the same impress,
According as the heavens have her graced,
And frames her house, in which she will be placed,
Fit for herself, adorning it with spoil
Of th' heavenly riches which she robb'd erewhile.

Thereof it comes that these fair souls, which have
The most resemblance of that heavenly light,
Frame to themselves most beautiful and brave
Their fleshly bower, most fit for their delight,
And the gross matter by a sovereign might
Tempers so trim, that it may well be seen
A palace fit for such a virgin queen.

So every spirit, as it is most pure,
And hath in it the more of heavenly light,
So it the fairer body doth procure
To habit in, and it more fairly dight
With cheerful grace and amiable sight.
For of the soul the body form doth take:
For soul is form, and doth the body make.

Therefore wherever that thou dost behold
A comely corpse, with beauty fair endued,
Know this for certain, that the same doth hold
A beauteous soul, with fair conditions thewed,
Fit to receive the seed of virtue strewed.
For all that fair is, is by nature good;
That is a sign to know the gentle blood.

Yet oft it falls that many a gentle mind
Dwells in deformed tabernacle drown'd,
Either by chance, against the course of kind,
Or through unaptness in the substance found,
Which it assumed of some stubborn ground,

That will not yield unto her form's direction,
But is deform'd with some foul imperfection.

And oft it falls, (ay me, the more to rue)
That goodly beauty, albe heavenly born,
Is foul abus'd, and that celestial hue,
Which doth the world with her delight adorn,
Made but the bait of sin, and sinners' scorn,
Whilst every one doth seek and sue to have it,
But every one doth seek but to deprave it.

Yet nathëmore is that fair beauty's blame,
But theirs that do abuse it unto ill:
Nothing so good, but that through guilty shame
May be corrupt, and wrested unto will:
Natheless the soul is fair and beauteous still,
However flesh{"e}s fault it filthy make;
For things immortal no corruption take.

But ye fair dames, the world's dear ornaments
And lively images of heaven's light,
Let not your beams with such disparagements
Be dimm'd, and your bright glory dark'ned quite;
But mindful still of your first country's sight,
Do still preserve your first informed grace,
Whose shadow yet shines in your beauteous face.

Loathe that foul blot, that hellish firebrand,
Disloyal lust, fair beauty's foulest blame,
That base affections, which your ears would bland,
Commend to you by love's abused name,
But is indeed the bondslave of defame;
Which will the garland of your glory mar,
And quench the light of your bright shining star.

But gentle Love, that loyal is and true,
Will more illumine your resplendent ray,
And add more brightness to your goodly hue,
From light of his pure fire; which, by like way
Kindled of yours, your likeness doth display;
Like as two mirrors, by oppos'd reflection,
Do both express the face's first impression.

Therefore, to make your beauty more appear,
It you behoves to love, and forth to lay
That heavenly riches which in you ye bear,
That men the more admire their fountain may;
For else what booteth that celestial ray,
If it in darkness be enshrined ever,
That it of loving eyes be viewed never?

But, in your choice of loves, this well advise,
That likest to yourselves ye them select,
The which your forms' first source may sympathize,
And with like beauty's parts be inly deckt;
For, if you loosely love without respect,
It is no love, but a discordant war,
Whose unlike parts amongst themselves do jar.

For love is a celestial harmony
Of likely hearts compos'd of stars' concert,
Which join together in sweet sympathy,
To work each other's joy and true content,
Which they have harbour'd since their first descent
Out of their heavenly bowers, where they did see
And know each other here belov'd to be.

Then wrong it were that any other twain
Should in love's gentle band combined be
But those whom Heaven did at first ordain,
And made out of one mould the more t' agree;
For all that like the beauty which they see,
Straight do not love; for love is not so light
As straight to burn at first beholder's sight.

But they, which love indeed, look otherwise,
With pure regard and spotless true intent,
Drawing out of the object of their eyes
A more refined form, which they present
Unto their mind, void of all blemishment;
Which it reducing to her first perfection,
Beholdeth free from flesh's frail infection.

And then conforming it unto the light,

Which in itself it hath remaining still,
Of that first Sun, yet sparkling in his sight,
Thereof he fashions in his higher skill
An heavenly beauty to his fancy's will;
And it embracing in his mind entire,
The mirror of his own thought doth admire.

Which seeing now so inly fair to be,
As outward it appeareth to the eye,
And with his spirit's proportion to agree,
He thereon fixeth all his fantasy,
And fully setteth his felicity;
Counting it fairer than it is indeed,
And yet indeed her fairness doth exceed.

For lovers' eyes more sharply sighted be
Than other men's, and in dear love's delight
See more than any other eyes can see,
Through mutual receipt of beam{"e}s bright,
Which carry privy message to the spright,
And to their eyes that inmost fair display,
As plain as light discovers dawning day.

Therein they see, through amorous eye-glances,
Armies of loves still flying to and fro,
Which dart at them their little fiery lances;
Whom having wounded, back again they go,
Carrying compassion to their lovely foe;
Who, seeing her fair eyes' so sharp effect,
Cures all their sorrows with one sweet aspect.

In which how many wonders do they rede
To their conceit, that others never see,
Now of her smiles, with which their souls they feed,
Like gods with nectar in their banquets free;
Now of her looks, which like to cordials be;
But when her words' emb´ssade forth she sends,
Lord, how sweet music that unto them lends.

Sometimes upon her forehead they behold
A thousand graces masking in delight;
Sometimes within her eyelids they unfold

Ten thousand sweet belgards, which to their sight
Do seem like twinkling stars in frosty night;
But on her lips, like rosy buds in May,
So many millions of chaste pleasures play.

All those, O Cytherea, and thousands more
Thy handmaids be, which do on thee attend,
To deck thy beauty with their dainties' store,
That may it more to mortal eyes commend,
And make it more admir'd of foe and friend:
That in men's hearts thou may'st thy throne install,
And spread thy lovely kingdom over all.

Then Iö; triumph! O great Beauty's Queen,
Advance the banner of thy conquest high,
That all this world, the which thy vassals bene,
May draw to thee, and with due fealty
Adore the power of thy great majesty,
Singing this hymn in honour of thy name,
Compil'd by me, which thy poor liegeman am.

In lieu whereof grant, O great sovereign,
That she whose conquering beauty doth captive
My trembling heart in her eternal chain,
One drop of grace at length will to me give,
That I her bounden thrall by her may live,
And this same life, which first fro me she reaved,
May owe to her, of whom I it received.

And you, fair Venus' darling, my dear dread,
Fresh flower of grace, great goddess of my life,
When your fair eyes these fearful lines shall read,
Deign to let fall one drop of due relief,
That may recure my heart's long pining grief,
And shew what wondrous power your beauty hath,
That can restore a damned wight from death.

Edmund Spenser

An Hymn Of Heavenly Beauty

Rapt with the rage of mine own ravish'd thought,
Through contemplation of those goodly sights,
And glorious images in heaven wrought,
Whose wondrous beauty, breathing sweet delights
Do kindle love in high-conceited sprights;
I fain to tell the things that I behold,
But feel my wits to fail, and tongue to fold.

Vouchsafe then, O thou most Almighty Spright,
From whom all gifts of wit and knowledge flow,
To shed into my breast some sparkling light
Of thine eternal truth, that I may show
Some little beams to mortal eyes below
Of that immortal beauty, there with thee,
Which in my weak distraughted mind I see;

That with the glory of so goodly sight
The hearts of men, which fondly here admire
Fair seeming shews, and feed on vain delight,
Transported with celestial desire
Of those fair forms, may lift themselves up higher,
And learn to love, with zealous humble duty,
Th' eternal fountain of that heavenly beauty.

Beginning then below, with th' easy view
Of this base world, subject to fleshly eye,
From thence to mount aloft, by order due,
To contemplation of th' immortal sky;
Of the soare falcon so I learn to fly,
That flags awhile her fluttering wings beneath,
Till she herself for stronger flight can breathe.

Then look, who list thy gazeful eyes to feed
With sight of that is fair, look on the frame
Of this wide universe, and therein reed
The endless kinds of creatures which by name
Thou canst not count, much less their natures aim;
All which are made with wondrous wise respect,
And all with admirable beauty deckt.

First th' earth, on adamantine pillars founded,
Amid the sea engirt with brazen bands;
Then th' air still flitting, but yet firmly bounded
On every side, with piles of flaming brands,
Never consum'd, nor quench'd with mortal hands;
And last, that mighty shining crystal wall,
Wherewith he hath encompassed this All.

By view whereof it plainly may appear,
That still as every thing doth upward tend,
And further is from earth, so still more clear
And fair it grows, till to his perfect end
Of purest beauty it at last ascend;
Air more than water, fire much more than air,
And heaven than fire, appears more pure and fair.

Look thou no further, but affix thine eye
On that bright, shiny, round, still moving mass,
The house of blessed gods, which men call sky,
All sow'd with glist'ring stars more thick than grass,
Whereof each other doth in brightness pass,
But those two most, which ruling night and day,
As king and queen, the heavens' empire sway;

And tell me then, what hast thou ever seen
That to their beauty may compared be,
Or can the sight that is most sharp and keen
Endure their captain's flaming head to see?
How much less those, much higher in degree,
And so much fairer, and much more than these,
As these are fairer than the land and seas?

For far above these heavens, which here we see,
Be others far exceeding these in light,
Not bounded, not corrupt, as these same be,
But infinite in largeness and in height,
Unmoving, uncorrupt, and spotless bright,
That need no sun t' illuminate their spheres,
But their own native light far passing theirs.

And as these heavens still by degrees arise,

Until they come to their first Mover's bound,
That in his mighty compass doth comprise,
And carry all the rest with him around;
So those likewise do by degrees redound,
And rise more fair; till they at last arrive
To the most fair, whereto they all do strive.

Fair is the heaven where happy souls have place,
In full enjoyment of felicity,
Whence they do still behold the glorious face
Of the divine eternal Majesty;
More fair is that, where those Ideas on high
Enranged be, which Plato so admired,
And pure Intelligences from God inspired.

Yet fairer is that heaven, in which do reign
The sovereign Powers and mighty Potentates,
Which in their high protections do contain
All mortal princes and imperial states;
And fairer yet, whereas the royal Seats
And heavenly Dominations are set,
From whom all earthly governance is fet.

Yet far more fair be those bright Cherubins,
Which all with golden wings are oversight,
And those eternal burning Seraphins,
Which from their faces dart out fiery light;
Yet fairer than they both, and much more bright,
Be th' Angels and Archangels, which attend
On God's own person, without rest or end.

These thus in fair each other far excelling,
As to the highest they approach more near,
Yet is that highest far beyond all telling,
Fairer than all the rest which there appear,
Though all their beauties join'd together were;
How then can mortal tongue hope to express
The image of such endless perfectness?

Cease then, my tongue, and lend unto my mind
Leave to bethink how great that beauty is,
Whose utmost parts so beautiful I find;

How much more those essential parts of his,
His truth, his love, his wisdom, and his bliss,
His grace, his doom, his mercy, and his might,
By which he lends us of himself a sight.

Those unto all he daily doth display,
And shew himself in th' image of his grace,
As in a looking-glass, through which he may
Be seen of all his creatures vile and base,
That are unable else to see his face,
His glorious face which glistereth else so bright,
That th' Angels selves cannot endure his sight.

But we, frail wights, whose sight cannot sustain
The sun's bright beams when he on us doth shine,
But that their points rebutted back again
Are dull'd, how can we see with feeble eyne
The glory of that Majesty Divine,
In sight of whom both sun and moon are dark,
Compared to his least resplendent spark?

The means, therefore, which unto us is lent
Him to behold, is on his works to look,
Which he hath made in beauty excellent,
And in the same, as in a brazen book,
To read enregister'd in every nook
His goodness, which his beauty doth declare;
For all that's good is beautiful and fair.

Thence gathering plumes of perfect speculation,
To imp the wings of thy high-flying mind,
Mount up aloft through heavenly contemplation,
From this dark world, whose damps the soul so blind,
And, like the native brood of eagles' kind,
On that bright Sun of Glory fix thine eyes,
Clear'd from gross mists of frail infirmities.

Humbled with fear and awful reverence,
Before the footstool of his majesty
Throw thyself down, with trembling innocence,
Ne dare look up with corruptible eye
On the dread face of that great Deity,

For fear, lest if he chance to look on thee,
Thou turn to nought, and quite confounded be.

But lowly fall before his mercy seat,
Close covered with the Lamb's integrity
From the just wrath of his avengeful threat
That sits upon the righteous throne on high;
His throne is built upon eternity,
More firm and durable than steel or brass,
Or the hard diamond, which them both doth pass.

His sceptre is the rod of righteousness,
With which he bruiseeth all his foes to dust,
And the great Dragon strongly doth repress,
Under the rigour of his judgement just;
His seat is truth, to which the faithful trust,
From whence proceed her beams so pure and bright
That all about him sheddeth glorious light:

Light far exceeding that bright blazing spark
Which darted is from Titan's flaming head,
That with his beams enlumineth the dark
And dampish air, whereby all things are read;
Whose nature yet so much is marvelled
Of mortal wits, that it doth much amaze
The greatest wizards which thereon do gaze.

But that immortal light, which there doth shine,
Is many thousand times more bright, more clear,
More excellent, more glorious, more divine,
Through which to God all mortal actions here,
And even the thoughts of men, do plain appear;
For from th' eternal truth it doth proceed,
Through heavenly virtue which her beams do breed.

With the great glory of that wondrous light
His throne is all encompassed around,
And hid in his own brightness from the sight
Of all that look thereon with eyes unsound;
And underneath his feet are to be found
Thunder and lightning and tempestuous fire,
The instruments of his avenging ire.

There in his bosom Sapience doth sit,
The sovereign darling of the Deity,
Clad like a queen in royal robes, most fit
For so great power and peerless majesty,
And all with gems and jewels gorgeously
Adorn'd, that brighter than the stars appear,
And make her native brightness seem more clear.

And on her head a crown of purest gold
Is set, in sign of highest sovereignty;
And in her hand a sceptre she doth hold,
With which she rules the house of God on high,
And manageth the ever-moving sky,
And in the same these lower creatures all
Subjected to her power imperial.

Both heaven and earth obey unto her will,
And all the creatures which they both contain;
For of her fullness which the world doth fill
They all partake, and do in state remain
As their great Maker did at first ordain,
Through observation of her high behest,
By which they first were made, and still increast.

The fairness of her face no tongue can tell;
For she the daughters of all women's race,
And angels eke, in beauty doth excel,
Sparkled on her from God's own glorious face,
And more increas'd by her own goodly grace,
That it doth far exceed all human thought,
Ne can on earth compared be to aught.

Ne could that painter (had he lived yet)
Which pictured Venus with so curious quill,
That all posterity admired it,
Have portray'd this, for all his mast'ring skill;
Ne she herself, had she remained still,
And were as fair as fabling wits do feign,
Could once come near this beauty sovereign.

But had those wits, the wonders of their days,

Or that sweet Teian poet, which did spend
His plenteous vein in setting forth her praise,
Seen but a glimpse of this which I pretend,
How wondrously would he her face commend,
Above that idol of his feigning thought,
That all the world should with his rhymes be fraught.

How then dare I, the novice of his art,
Presume to picture so divine a wight,
Or hope t' express her least perfection's part,
Whose beauty fills the heavens with her light,
And darks the earth with shadow of her sight?
Ah, gentle Muse, thou art too weak and faint
The portrait of so heavenly hue to paint.

Let angels, which her goodly face behold
And see at will, her sovereign praises sing,
And those most sacred mysteries unfold
Of that fair love of mighty heaven's King;
Enough is me t' admire so heavenly thing,
And being thus with her huge love possest,
In th' only wonder of herself to rest.

But whoso may, thrice happy man him hold,
Of all on earth whom God so much doth grace
And lets his own beloved to behold;
For in the view of her celestial face
All joy, all bliss, all happiness, have place;
Ne aught on earth can want unto the wight
Who of herself can win the wishful sight.

For she, out of her secret treasury,
Plenty of riches forth on him will pour,
Even heavenly riches, which there hidden lie
Within the closet of her chastest bower,
Th' eternal portion of her precious dower,
Which mighty God hath given to her free,
And to all those which thereof worthy be.

None thereof worthy be, but those whom she
Vouchsafeth to her presence to receive,
And letteth them her lovely face to see,

Whereof such wondrous pleasures they conceive,
And sweet contentment, that it doth bereave
Their soul of sense, through infinite delight,
And them transport from flesh into the spright.

In which they see such admirable things,
As carries them into an ecstasy,
And hear such heavenly notes, and carollings
Of God's high praise, that fills the brazen sky;
And feel such joy and pleasure inwardly,
That maketh them all worldly cares forget,
And only think on that before them set.

Ne from thenceforth doth any fleshly sense,
Or idle thought of earthly things, remain;
But all that erst seem'd sweet seems now offence,
And all that pleased erst now seems to pain;
Their joy, their comfort, their desire, their gain,
Is fixed all on that which now they see;
All other sights but feigned shadows be.

And that fair lamp, which useth to inflame
The hearts of men with self-consuming fire
Thenceforth seems foul, and full of sinful blame;
And all that pomp to which proud minds aspire
By name of honour, and so much desire,
Seems to them baseness, and all riches dross,
And all mirth sadness, and all lucre loss.

So full their eyes are of that glorious sight,
And senses fraught with such satiety,
That in nought else on earth they can delight,
But in th' aspect of that felicity,
Which they have written in their inward eye;
On which they feed, and in their fastened mind
All happy joy and full contentment find.

Ah, then, my hungry soul, which long hast fed
On idle fancies of thy foolish thought,
And, with false beauty's flatt'ring bait misled,
Hast after vain deceitful shadows sought,
Which all are fled, and now have left thee nought

But late repentance through thy follies prief;
Ah cease to gaze on matter of thy grief:

And look at last up to that sovereign light,
From whose pure beams all perfect beauty springs,
That kindleth love in every godly sprite,
Even the love of God, which loathing brings
Of this vile world and these gay-seeming things;
With whose sweet pleasures being so possest,
Thy straying thoughts henceforth for ever rest.

Edmund Spenser

An Hymne In Honour Of Love

Love, that long since hast to thy mighty powre
Perforce subdude my poor captived hart,
And raging now therein with restlesse stowre,
Doest tyrannize in everie weaker part,
Faine would I seeke to ease my bitter smart
By any service I might do to thee,
Or ought that else might to thee pleasing bee.

And now t'asswage the force of this new flame,
And make thee more propitious in my need,
I meane to sing the praises of thy name,
And thy victorious conquests to areed,
By which thou madest many harts to bleed
Of mighty victors, with wide wounds embrewed,
And by thy cruell darts to thee subdewed.

Onely I fear my wits, enfeebled late
Through the sharp sorrowes which thou hast me bred,
Should faint, and words should faile me to relate
The wondrous triumphs of thy great god-hed:
But, if thou wouldst vouchsafe to overspred
Me with the shadow of thy gentle wing,
I should enabled be thy actes to sing.

Come, then, O come, thou mightie God of Love!
Out of thy silver bowres and secret blisse,
Where thou dost sit in Venus lap above,
Bathing thy wings in her ambrosial kisse, 25
That sweeter farre than any nectar is,
Come softly, and my feeble breast inspire
With gentle furie, kindled of thy fire.

And ye, sweet Muses! which have often proved
The piercing points of his avengefull darts,
And ye, fair Nimphs! which oftentimes have loved
The cruel worker of your kindly smarts,
Prepare yourselves, and open wide your harts
For to receive the triumph of your glorie,
That made you merie oft when ye were sorrie.

And ye, faire blossoms of youths wanton breed!
Which in the conquests of your beautie bost,
Wherewith your lovers feeble eyes you feed,
But sterve their harts, that needeth nourture most,
Prepare your selves to march amongst his host,
And all the way this sacred hymne do sing,
Made in the honor of your soveraigne king.

Great God of Might, that reignest in the mynd,
And all the bodie to thy hest doest frame,
Victor of gods, subduer of mankynd,
That doest the lions and fell tigers tame,
Making their cruell rage thy scornfull game,
And in their roring taking great delight,
Who can expresse the glorie of thy might?

Or who alive can perfectly declare
The wondrous cradle of thine infancie,
When thy great mother Venus first thee bare,
Begot of Plenty and of Penurie,
Though elder then thine own nativitie,
And yet a chyld, renewing still thy yeares,
And yet the eldest of the heavenly peares?

For ere this worlds still moving mightie masse
Out of great Chaos ugly prison crept,
In which his goodly face long hidden was
From heavens view, and in deep darknesse kept,
Love, that had now long time securely slept
In Venus lap, unarmed then and naked,
Gan reare his head, by Clotho being waked:

And taking to him wings of his own heat,
Kindled at first from heavens life-giving fyre,
He gan to move out of his idle seat;
Weakly at first, but after with desyre
Lifted aloft, he gan to mount up hyre,
And, like fresh eagle, made his hardy flight
Thro all that great wide wast, yet wanting light.

Yet wanting light to guide his wandring way,

His own faire mother, for all creatures sake,
Did lend him light from her owne goodly ray;
Then through the world his way he gan to take,
The world, that was not till he did it make,
Whose sundrie parts he from themselves did sever.
The which before had lyen confused ever.

The earth, the ayre, the water, and the fyre,
Then gan to raunge themselves in huge array,
And with contrary forces to conspyre
Each against other by all meanes they may,
Threatning their owne confusion and decay:
Ayre hated earth, and water hated fyre,
Till Love relented their rebellious yre.

He then them tooke, and, tempering goodly well
Their contrary dislikes with loved meanes,
Did place them all in order, and compell
To keepe themselves within their sundrie raines,
Together linkt with adamantine chaines;
Yet so as that in every living wight
They mix themselves, and shew their kindly might.

So ever since they firmly have remained,
And duly well observed his beheast;
Through which now all these things that are contained
Within this goodly cope, both most and least,
Their being have, and daily are increast
Through secret sparks of his infused fyre,
Which in the barraine cold he doth inspyre.

Thereby they all do live, and moved are
To multiply the likenesse of their kynd,
Whilst they seeke onely, without further care,
To quench the flame which they in burning fynd;
But man, that breathes a more immortall mynd,
Not for lusts sake, but for eternitie,
Seekes to enlarge his lasting progenie.

For having yet in his deducted spright
Some sparks remaining of that heavenly fyre,
He is enlumind with that goodly light,

Unto like goodly semblant to aspyre;
Therefore in choice of love he doth desyre
That seemes on earth most heavenly to embrace,
That same is Beautie, borne of heavenly race.

For sure, of all that in this mortall frame
Contained is, nought more divine doth seeme,
Or that resembleth more th'immortall flame
Of heavenly light, than Beauties glorious beam.
What wonder then, if with such rage extreme
Frail men, whose eyes seek heavenly things to see,
At sight thereof so much enravisht bee?

Which well perceiving, that imperious boy
Doth therewith tip his sharp empoisoned darts,
Which glancing thro the eyes with countenance coy
Kest not till they have pierst the trembling harts,
And kindled flame in all their inner parts,
Which suckes the blood, and drinketh up the lyfe,
Of carefull wretches with consuming grieve.

Thenceforth they playne, and make full piteous mone
Unto the author of their balefull bane:
The daies they waste, the nights they grieve and grone,
Their lives they loath, and heavens light disdaine;
No light but that whose lampe doth yet remaine
Fresh burning in the image of their eye,
They deigne to see, and seeing it still dye.

The whylst thou, tyrant Love, doest laugh and scorne
At their complaints, making their paine thy play;
Whylest they lye languishing like thrals forlorne,
The whyles thou doest triumph in their decay;
And otherwhyles, their dying to delay,
Thou doest emmarble the proud hart of her
Whose love before their life they doe prefer.

So hast thou often done (ay me the more!)
To me thy vassall, whose yet bleeding hart
With thousand wounds thou mangled hast so sore,
That whole remaines scarce any little part;
Yet to augment the anguish of my smart,

Thou hast enfrosen her disdainfull brest,
That no one drop of pitie there doth rest.

Why then do I this honor unto thee,
Thus to ennoble thy victorious name,
Sith thou doest shew no favour unto mee,
Ne once move ruth in that rebellious dame,

Somewhat to slacke the rigour of my flame?
Certes small glory doest thou winne hereby,
To let her live thus free, and me to dy.

But if thou be indeede, as men thee call,
The worlds great parent, the most kind preserver
Of living wights, the souveraine lord of all,
How falles it then that with thy furious fervour
Thou doest afflict as well the not-deserver,
As him that doeth thy lovely heasts despize,
And on thy subiects most doth tyrannize?

Yet herein eke thy glory seemeth more,
By so hard handling those which best thee serve,
That, ere thou doest them unto grace restore,
Thou mayest well trie if they will ever swerve,
And mayest them make it better to deserve,
And, having got it, may it more esteeme;
For things hard gotten men more dearely deeme.

So hard those heavenly beauties be enfyred,
As things divine least passions doe impresse;
The more of stedfast myndes to be admyred,
The more they stayed be on stedfastnesse;
But baseborne minds such lamps regard the lesse,
Which at first blowing take not hastie fyre;
Such fancies feele no love, but loose desyre.

For Love is lord of truth and loialtie,
Lifting himself out of the lowly dust
On golden plumes up to the purest skie,
Above the reach of loathly sinfull lust,
Whose base affect, through cowardly distrust
Of his weake wings, dare not to heaven fly,

But like a moldwarpe in the earth doth ly.

His dunghill thoughts, which do themselves enure
To dirtie drosse, no higher dare aspyre;
Ne can his feeble earthly eyes endure
The flaming light of that celestiall fyre
Which kindleth love in generous desyre,
And makes him mount above the native might
Of heavie earth, up to the heavens hight.

Such is the powre of that sweet passion,
That it all sordid basenesse doth expell,
And the refyned mynd doth newly fashion
Unto a fairer forme, which now doth dwell
In his high thought, that would it selfe excell;
Which he beholding still with constant sight,
Admires the mirrour of so heavenly light.

Whose image printing in his deepest wit,
He thereon feeds his hungrie fantasy,
Still full, yet never satisfyde with it;
Like Tantale, that in store doth sterved ly,
So doth he pine in most satiety;
For nought may quench his infinite desyre,
Once kindled through that first conceived fyre.

Thereon his mynd affixed wholly is,
Ne thinks on ought but how it to attaine;
His care, his ioy, his hope, is all on this,
That seemes in it all blisses to containe,
In sight whereof all other blisse seemes vaine:
Thrice happie man, might he the same possesse,
He faines himselfe, and doth his fortune blesse.

And though he do not win his wish to end,
Yet thus farre happie he himselfe doth weene,
That heavens such happie grace did to him lend
As thing on earth so heavenly to have seene,
His harts enshrined saint, his heavens queene,
Fairer then fairest in his fayning eye,
Whose sole aspect he counts felicitye.

Then forth he casts in his unquiet thought,
What he may do her favour to obtaine;
What brave exploit, what perill hardly wrought,
What puissant conquest, what adventurous paine,
May please her best, and grace unto him gaine;
He dreads no danger, nor misfortune feares,
His faith, his fortune, in his breast he beares.

Thou art his god, thou art his mightie guyde,
Thou, being blind, letst him not see his feares,
But carriest him to that which he had eyde,
Through seas, through flames, through thousand swords and speares;
Ne ought so strong that may his force withstand,
With which thou armest his resistlesse hand.

Witnesse Leander in the Euxine waves,
And stout Aeneas in the Troiane fyre,
Achilles preassing through the Phrygian glaives,
And Orpheus, daring to provoke the yre
Of damned fiends, to get his love retyre;
For both through heaven and hell thou makest way,
To win them worship which to thee obey.

And if by all these perils and these paynes
He may but purchase lyking in her eye,
What heavens of ioy then to himselfe he faynes!
Eftsoones he wypes quite out of memory
Whatever ill before he did aby:
Had it beene death, yet would he die againe,
To live thus happie as her grace to gaine.

Yet when he hath found favour to his will,
He nathemore can so contented rest,
But forceth further on, and striveth still
T'approch more neare, till in her inmost brest
He may embosomd bee and loved best;
And yet not best, but to be lov'd alone;
For love cannot endure a paragone.

The fear whereof, O how doth it torment
His troubled mynd with more then hellish paine!
And to his fayning fansie represent

Sights never seene, and thousand shadowes vaine,
To breake his sleepe and waste his ydle braine:
Thou that hast never lov'd canst not beleeve
Least part of th'evils which poore lovers greeve.

The gnawing envie, the hart-fretting feare,
The vaine surmizes, the distrustfull showes,
The false reports that flying tales doe beare,
The doubts, the daungers, the delayes, the woes,
The fayned friends, the unassured foes,
With thousands more then any tongue can tell,
Doe make a lovers life a wretches hell.

Yet is there one more cursed then they all,
That cancker-worme, that monster, Gelosie,
Which eats the heart and feedes upon the gall,
Turning all Loves delight to miserie,
Through feare of losing his felicitie.
Ah, gods! that ever ye that monster placed
In gentle Love, that all his ioyes defaced!

By these, O Love! thou doest thy entrance make
Unto thy heaven, and doest the more endeere
Thy pleasures unto those which them partake,
As after stormes, when clouds begin to cleare,
The sunne more bright and glorious doth appeare;
So thou thy folke, through paines of Purgatorie,
Dost beare unto thy blisse, and heavens glorie.

There thou them placest in a paradize
Of all delight and ioyous happy rest,
Where they doe feede on nectar heavenly-wize,
With Hercules and Hebe, and the rest
Of Venus dearlings, through her bountie blest;
And lie like gods in yvory beds arayd,
With rose and lillies over them displayd.

There with thy daughter Pleasure they doe play
Their hurtlesse sports, without rebuke or blame,
And in her snowy bosome boldly lay
Their quiet heads, devoyd of guilty shame,
After full ioyance of their gentle game;

Then her they crowne their goddesse and their queene,
And decke with floures thy altars well beseene.

Ay me! deare Lord, that ever I might hope,
For all the paines and woes that I endure,
To come at length unto the wished scope
Of my desire, or might myselfe assure
That happie port for ever to recure!
Then would I thinke these paines no paines at all,
And all my woes to be but penance small.

Then would I sing of thine immortal praise
An heavenly hymne such as the angels sing,
And thy triumphant name then would I raise
Bove all the gods, thee only honoring;
My guide, my god, my victor, and my king:
Till then, drad Lord! vouchsafe to take of me
This simple song, thus fram'd in praise of thee.

Edmund Spenser

An Hymne Of Heavenly Love

Love, lift me up upon thy golden wings
From this base world unto thy heavens hight,
Where I may see those admirable things
Which there thou workest by thy sovaine might,
Farre above feeble reach of earthly sight,
That I thereof an heavenly hymne may sing
Unto the God of Love, high heavens king.

Many lewd layes (ah! woe is me the more!)
In praise of that mad fit which fooles call Love,
I have in th'heat of youth made heretofore,
That in light wits did loose affection move;
But all those follies now I do reprove,
And turned have the tenor of my string,
The heavenly prayes of true Love to sing.

And ye that wont with greedy vaine desire
To reade my fault, and, wondring at my flame,
To warme your selves at my wide sparckling fire,
Sith now that heat is quenched, quench my blame,
And in her ashes shrowd my dying shame;
For who my passed follies now pursewes,
Beginnes his owne, and my old fault renewes.

BEFORE THIS WORLDS GREAT FRAME, in which al things
Are now containd, found any being-place,
Ere flitting Time could wag his eyas wings
About that mightie bound which doth embrace
The rolling spheres, and parts their houres by space,
That high eternall Powre, which now doth move
In all these things, mov'd in it selfe by love.

It lov'd it selfe, because it selfe was faire;
(For fair is lov'd); and of it self begot
Like to it selfe his eldest Sonne and Heire,
Eternall, pure, and voide of sinfull blot,
The firstling of his ioy, in whom no iot
Of loves dislike or pride was to be found,
Whom he therefore with equall honour crownd.

With him he raigned, before all time prescribed,
In endlessse glorie and immortall might,
Together with that Third from them derived,
Most wise, most holy, most almightie Spright!
Whose kingdomes throne no thoughts of earthly wight
Can comprehend, much lesse my trembling verse
With equall words can hope it to rehearse.

Yet, O most blessed Spirit! pure lampe of light,
Eternall spring of grace and wisdom trew,
Vouchsafe to shed into my barren spright
Some little drop of thy celestiaall dew,
That may my rymes with sweet infuse embrew,
And give me words equall unto my thought,
To tell the marveiles by thy mercie wrought.

Yet being pregnant still with powrefull grace,
And full of fruitfull Love, that loves to get
Things like himselve and to enlarge his race,
His second brood, though not of powre so great,
Yet full of beautie, next he did beget,
An infinite increase of angels bright,
All glistring glorious in their Makers light.

To them the heavens illimitable hight
(Not this round heaven which we from hence behold,
Adornd with thousand lamps of burning light,
And with ten thousand gemmes of shyning gold)
He gave as their inheritance to hold,
That they might serve him in eternall blis,
And be partakers of those ioyes of his.

There they in their trinall triplicities
About him wait, and on his will depend,
Either with nimble wings to cut the skies,
When he them on his messages doth send,
Or on his owne dread presence to attend,
Where they behold the glorie of his light,
And caroll hymnes of love both day and night.

Both day and night is unto them all one;

For he his beames doth unto them extend,
That darknesse there appeareth never none;
Ne hath their day, ne hath their blisse, an end,
But there their termelesse time in pleasure spend;
Ne ever should their happinesse decay,
Had not they dar'd their Lord to disobay.

But pride, impatient of long resting peace,
Did puffed them up with greedy bold ambition,
That they gan cast their state how to increase
Above the fortune of their first condition,
And sit in Gods own seat without commission:
The brightest angel, even the Child of Light,
Drew millions more against their God to fight.

Th'Almighty, seeing their so bold assay,
Kindled the flame of his consuming yre,
And with his onely breath them blew away
From heavens hight, to which they did aspyre,
To deepest hell, and lake of damned fyre,
Where they in darknesse and dread horror dwell,
Hating the happie light from which they fell.

So that next off-spring of the Makers love,
Next to himselfe in glorious degree,
Degendering to hate, fell from above
Through pride; (for pride and love may ill agree);
And now of sinne to all ensample bee:
How then can sinfull flesh it selfe assure,
Sith purest angels fell to be impure?

But that Eternall Fount of love and grace,
Still flowing forth his goodnesse unto all,
Now seeing left a waste and emptie place
In his wyde pallace through those angels fall,
Cast to supply the same, and to enstall
A new unknowen colony therein,
Whose root from earths base groundworke should begin.

Therefore of clay, base, vile, and nest to nought,
Yet form'd by wondrous skill, and by his might
According to an heavenly patterne wrought,

Which he had fashiond in his wise foresight,
He man did make, and breathd a living spright
Into his face, most beautifull and fayre,
Endewd with wisdomes riches, heavenly, rare.

Such he him made, that he resemble might
Himselfe, as mortall thing immortall could;
Him to be lord of every living wight
He made by love out of his owne like mould,
In whom he might his mightie selfe behould;
For Love doth love the thing belov'd to see,
That like it selfe in lovely shape may bee.

But man, forgetfull of his Makers grace
No lesse than angels, whom he did ensew,
Fell from the hope of promist heavenly place,
Into the mouth of Death, to sinners dew,
And all his off-spring into thraldome threw,
Where they for ever should in bonds remaine
Of never-dead, yet ever-dying paine;

Till that great Lord of Love, which him at first
Made of meere love, and after liked well,
Seeing him lie like creature long accurst
In that deep horror of despeyred hell,
Him, wretch, in doole would let no lenger dwell,
But cast out of that bondage to redeeme,
And pay the price, all@ were his debt extreeme.

Out of the bosome of eternall blisse,
In which he reigned with his glorious Syre,
He downe descended, like a most demisse
And abiect thrall, in fleshes fraile attyre,
That he for him might pay sinnes deadly hyre,
And him restore unto that happie state
In which he stood before his haplesse fate.

In flesh at first the guilt committed was,
Therefore in flesh it must be satisfyde;
Nor spirit, nor angel, though they man surpas,
Could make amends to God for mans misguyde,
But onely man himselfe, who selfe did slyde:

So, taking flesh of sacred virgins wombe,
For mans deare sake he did a man become.

And that most blessed bodie, which was borne
Without all blemish or reprochfull blame,
He freely gave to be both rent and torne
Of cruell hands, who with despightfull shame
Revyling him, (that them most vile became,)
At length him nayled on a gallow-tree,
And slew the iust by most uniust decree.

O huge and most unspeakeable impression
Of Loves deep wound, that pierst the piteous hart
Of that deare Lord with so entyre affection,
And, sharply launcing every inner part,
Dolours of death into his soule did dart,
Doing him die that never it deserved,
To free his foes, that from his heast had swerved!

What hart can feel least touch of so sore launch,
Or thought can think the depth of so deare wound?
Whose bleeding sourse their streames yet never staunch,
But stil do flow, and freshly still redownd,
To heale the sores of sinfull soules unsound,
And clense the guilt of that infected cryme,
Which was enrooted in all fleshly slyme.

O blessed Well of Love! O Floure of Grace!
O glorious Morning-Starre! O Lampe of Light!
Most lively image of thy Fathers face,
Eternal King of Glorie, Lord of Might,
Meeke Lambe of God, before all worlds behight,
How can we thee requite for all this good?
Or what can prize** that thy most precious blood?

Yet nought thou ask'st in lieu of all this love
But love of us, for guerdon of thy paine:
Ay me! what can us lesse than that behove?
Had he required life for us againe,
Had it beene wrong to ask his owne with game?
He gave us life, he it restored lost;
Then life were least, that us so little cost.

But he our life hath left unto us free,
Free that was thrall, and blessed that was band;
Ne ought demaunds but that we loving bee,
As he himselfe hath lov'd us afore-hand,
And bound therto with an eternall band;
Him first to love that was so dearely bought,
And next our brethren, to his image wrought.

Him first to love great right and reason is,
Who first to us our life and being gave,
And after, when we fared had amisse,
Us wretches from the second death did save;
And last, the food of life, which now we have,
Even he himselfe, in his dear sacrament,
To feede our hungry soules, unto us lent.

Then next, to love our brethren, that were made
Of that selfe* mould and that self Maker's hand
That we, and to the same againe shall fade,
Where they shall have like heritage of land,
However here on higher steps we stand,
Which also were with selfe-same price redeemed
That we, however of us light esteemed.

And were they not, yet since that loving Lord
Commaunded us to love them for his sake,
Even for his sake, and for his sacred word
Which in his last bequest he to us spake,
We should them love, and with their needs partake;
Knowing that whatsoere to them we give
We give to him by whom we all doe live.

Such mercy he by his most holy reede
Unto us taught, and, to approve it trew,
Ensampled it by his most righteous deede,
Shewing us mercie, miserable crew!
That we the like should to the wretches shew,
And love our brethren; thereby to approve
How much himselfe that loved us we love.

Then rouze thy selfe, O Earth! out of thy soyle,

In which thou wallowest like to filthy swyne,
And doest thy mynd in durty pleasures moyle,
Unmindfull of that dearest Lord of thyne;
Lift up to him thy heavie clouded eyne,
That thou this souveraine bountie mayst behold,
And read, through love, his mercies manifold.

Beginne from first, where he encradled was
In simple cratch*, wrapt in a wad of hay,
Betweene the toylfull oxe and humble asse,
And in what rags, and in how base aray,
The glory of our heavenly riches lay,
When him the silly shepheards came to see,
Whom greatest princes sought on lowest knee.

From thence reade on the storie of his life,
His humble carriage, his unfaulty wayes,
His cancred foes, his fights, his toyle, his strife,
His paines, his povertie, his sharpe assayes,
Through which he past his miserable dayes,
Offending none, and doing good to all,
Yet being malist both by great and small.

And look at last, how of most wretched wights
He taken was, betrayd, and false accused;
How with most scornfull taunts and fell despights,
He was revyld, disgrast, and foule abused;
How scourgd, how crownd, how buffeted, how brused;
And, lastly, how twixt robbers crucifyde,
With bitter wounds through hands, through feet, and syde!

Then let thy flinty hart, that feeles no paine,
Empierced he with pittifull remorse,
And let thy bowels bleede in every vaine,
At sight of his most sacred heavenly corse,
So torne and mangled with malicious forse;
And let thy soule, whose sins his sorrows wrought,
Melt into teares, and grone in grieved thought.

With sence whereof whilest so thy softened spirit
Is inly toucht, and humbled with meeke zeale
Through meditation of his endlesse merit,

Lift up thy mind to th'author of thy weale,
And to his souveraine mercie doe appeale;
Learne him to love that loved thee so deare,
And in thy brest his blessed image beare.

With all thy hart, with all thy soule and mind,
Thou must him love, and his beheasts embrace;
All other loves, with which the world doth blind
Weake fancies, and stirre up affections base,
Thou must renounce and utterly displace,
And give thy self unto him full and free,
That full and freely gave himselfe to thee.

Then shalt thou feele thy spirit so possest,
And ravisht with devouring great desire
Of his dear selfe, that shall thy feeble brest
Inflame with love, and set thee all on fire
With burning zeale, through every part entire,
That in no earthly thing thou shalt delight,
But in his sweet and amiable sight.

Thenceforth all worlds desire will in thee dye,
And all earthes glorie, on which men do gaze,
Seeme durt and drosse in thy pure-sighted eye,
Compar'd to that celestiall beauties blaze,
Whose glorious beames all fleshly sense doth daze
With admiration of their passing light,
Blinding the eyes, and lumining the spright.

Then shall thy ravisht soul inspired bee
With heavenly thoughts, farre above humane skil,
And thy bright radiant eyes shall plainely see
Th'idee of his pure glorie present still
Before thy face, that all thy spirits shall fill
With sweete enragement of celestiall love,
Kindled through sight of those faire things above.

Edmund Spenser

And Is There Care In Heaven, And Is There Love

And is there care in heaven, and is there love
In heavenly spirits to us creatures base,
That may compassion of our evils move?
There is : else much more wretched were the case
Of men than beasts: but oh! the exceeding grace
Of highest God, that loves his creatures so,
And all his works with mercy doth embrace;
That blessed angels He sends to and fro,
To serve even wicked men, to serve his wicked foe.

How oft do they their silver bowers leave,
And come to succour us that succour want!
How oft do they with golden pinions cleave
The flitting skies, like flying pursuivant,
Against foul fiends to aid us militant!
They for us fight; they watch and duly ward,
And their bright squadrons round about us plant;
And all for love, and nothing for reward:
Oh! why should heavenly God to men have such regard!

Edmund Spenser

Astrophel

A Pastorall Elegie vpon the death of the most Noble and valorous Knight, Sir Philip Sidney.

Dedicated To the most beautifull and vertuous Ladie, the Countesse of Essex.

Shepherds that wont on pipes of oaten reed,
Oft times to plaint your loues concealed smart:
And with your piteous layes haue learnd to breed
Compassion in a countrey lasses hart.
Hearken ye gentle shepherds to my song,
And place my dolefull plaint your plaints emong.
To you alone I sing this mournfull verse,
The mournfulst verse that euer man heard tell:
To you whose softened hearts it may empierse,
VVith dolours dart for death of Astrophel.
To you I sing and to none other wight,
For well I wot my rymes bene rudely dight.

Yet as they been, if any nycer wit
Shall hap to heare, or couet them to read:
Thinke he, that such are for such ones most fit,
Made not to please the liuing but the dead.
And if in him found pity euer place,
Let him be moou'd to pity such a case.

A Gentle Shepherd borne in Arcady,
Of gentlest race that euer shepherd bore:
About the grassie bancks of Hæmony,
Did keepe his sheep, his litle stock and store.
Full carefully he kept them day and night,
In fairest fields, and Astrophel he hight.

Young Astrophel the pride of shepherds praise,
Young Astrophel the rusticke lasses loue:
Far passing all the pastors of his daies,
In all that seemly shepherd might behoue.
In one thing onely fayling of the best,
That he was not so happie as the rest.

For from the time that first the Nymph his mother
Him forth did bring, and taught her lambs to feed:
A slender swaine excelling far each other,
In comely shape, like her that did him breed.
He grew vp fast in goodnesse and in grace,
And doubly faire wox both in mynd and face.

Which daily more and more he did augment,
With gentle vsage and demeanure myld:
That all mens hearts with secret rauishment
He stole away, and weetingly beguyld.
Ne spight it selfe that all good things doth spill,
Found ought in him, that she could say was ill.

His sports were faire, his ioyance innocent,
Sweet without sowre, and honny without gall:
And he himselfe seemd made for meriment,
Merily masking both in bowre and hall.
There was no pleasure nor delightfull play,
When Astrophel so euer was away.

For he could pipe and daunce, and caroll sweet,
Emongst the shepherds in their shearing feast:
As Somers larke that with her song doth greet,
The dawning day forth comming from the East.
And layes of loue he also could compose,
Thrise happie she, whom he to praise did chose.

Full many Maydens often did him woo,
Them to vouchsafe emongst his rimes to name,
Or make for them as he was wont to doo,
For her that did his heart with loue inflame.
For which they promised to dight for him,
Gay chapelets of flowers and gyrlonds trim.

And many a Nymph both of the wood and brooke,
Soone as his oaten pipe began to shrill:
Both christall wells and shadie groues forsooke,
To heare the charmes of his enchanting skill.
And brought him presents, flowers if it were prime,
Or mellow fruit if it were haruest time.

But he for none of them did care a whit,
Yet wood Gods for them oft[en] sighed sore:
Ne for their gifts vnworthie of his wit,
Yet not vnworthie of the countries store.
For one alone he cared, for one he sight,
His lifes desire, and his deare loues delight.

Stella the faire, the fairest star in skie,
As faire as Venus or the fairest faire:
A fairer star saw neuer liuing eie,
[S]hot her sharp pointed beames through purest aire.
Her he did loue, her he alone did honor,
His thoughts, his rimes, his songs were all vpõ her.

To her he vovd the seruice of his daies,
On her he spent the riches of his wit:
For her he made hymnes of immortall praise,
Of onely her he sung, he thought, he writ.
Her, and but her of loue he deemed,
For all the rest but little he esteemed.

Ne her with ydle words alone he wowed,
And verses vaine (yet verses are not vaine)
But with braue deeds to her sole seruice vowed,
And bold achievements her did entertaine.
For both in deeds and words he nourtred was,
Both wise and hardie (too hardie alas).

In wrestling nimble, and in renning swift,
In shooting steddie, and in swimming strong:
Well made to strike, to throw, to leape, to lift,
And all the sports that shepherds are emong.
In euery one he vanquisht euery one,
He vanquist all, and vanquisht was of none.

Besides, in hunting such felicitie,
Or rather infelicitie he found:
That euery field and forest far away,
He sought, where saluage beasts do most abound.
No beast so saluage but he could it kill,
No chace so hard, but he therein had skill.

Such skill matcht with such courage as he had,
Did prick him fourth with proud desire of praise:
To seek abroad, of daunger nought y'drad,
His mistresse name, and his owne fame to raise.
What need[eth] perill to be sought abroad,
Since round about vs, it doth make abroad?

It fortun'd as he, that perlous game
In forreine soyle pursued far away:
Into a forest wide, and waste he came
Where store he heard to be of saluage pray.
So wide a forest and so waste as this,
Nor famous Ardeyn, nor fowle Arlo is.

There his welwouen toyles and subtil traines,
He laid the brutish nation to enwrap:
So well he wrought with practise and with paines,
That he of them great troups did soone entrap.
Full happie man (misweening much) was hee,
So rich a spoile within his power to see.

Eftsoones all heedlesse of his dearest hale,
Full greedily into the heard he thrust:
To slaughter them, and work their finall bale,
Least that his tolye should of their troups be Brust.
Wide wounds emongst them many a one he made,
Now with his sharp borespeare, now with his blade.

His care was all how he them all might kill,
That none might scape (so partiall vnto none)
Ill mynd so much to mynd anothers ill,
As to become vnmyndfull of his owne.
But pardon that vnto the cruell skies,
That from himselfe to them withdrew his eies.

So as he rag'd emongst that beastly rout,
A cruell beast of most accursed brood:
Vpon him turnd (despeyre makes cowards stout)
And with fell tooth accustomed to blood,
Launched his thigh with so mischieuous might,
That it both bone and muscles ryued quight.

So deadly was the dint and deep the wound,
And so huge streames of blood thereout did flow:
That he endured not the direfull stound,
But on the cold deare earth himselfe did throw.
The whiles the captiue heard his nets did rend,
And hauing none to let, to wood did wend.

Ah where were ye this while his shepheard peares,
To whom aliue was nought so deare as hee:
And ye faire Mayds the matches of his yeares,
Which in his grace did boast you most to bee?
Ah where were ye, when he of you had need,
To stop his wound that wondrously did bleed?

Ah wretched boy the shape of dreryhead,
And sad ensample of mans suddein end:
Full litle faileth but thou shalt be dead,
Vnpitied, vnplaynd, of foe or frend.
Whilest none is nigh, thine eylids vp to close,
And kisse thy lips like faded leaues of rose.

A sort of shepherds sewing of the chace,
As they the forest raunged on a day:
By fate or fortune came vnto the place,
Where as the lucklesse boy yet bleeding lay.
Yet bleeding lay, and yet would still haue bled,
Had not good hap those shepherds thether led.

They stopt his wound (too late to stop it was)
And in their armes they softly did him reare:
Tho (as he wild) vnto his loued lasse,
His dearest loue him dolefully did beare.
The dolefulst beare that euer man did see,
Was Astrophel, but dearest vnto mee.

She when she saw her loue in such a plight,
With crudled blood and filthie gore deformed:
That wont to be with flowers and gyrlonds dight,
And her deare faouours dearly well adorned
Her face, the fairest face that eye mote see,
She likewise did deforme like him to bee.

Her yellow locks that shone so bright and long,
As Sunny beames in fairest somers day:
She fiersly tore, and with outragious wrong
From her red cheeks the roses rent away.
And her faire brest the treasury of ioy,
She spoyle therof, and filled with annoy.

His palled face impictured with death,
She bathed oft with teares and dried oft:
And with sweet kisses suckt the wasting breath,
Out of his lips like lillies pale and soft.
And oft she cald to him, who answerd nought,
But onely by his lookes did tell his thought.

The rest of her impatient regret,
And piteous mone the which she for him made:
No toong can tell, nor any forth can set,
But he whose heart like sorrow did inuade.
At last when paine his vitall powres had spent,
His wasted life her weary lodge forwent.

Which when she saw, she staid not a whit,
But after him did make vntimely haste:
Forth with her ghost out of her corpse did flit,
And followed her make like Turtle chaste.
To proue that death their hearts cannot diuide,
Which liuing were in loue so firmly tide.

The Gods which all things see, this same beheld,
And pittying this paire of louers trew:
Transformed them there lying on the field,
Into one flowre that is both red and blew.
It first growes red, and then to blew doth fade,
Like Astrophel, which thereinto was made.

And in the midst thereof a star appeares,
As fairly formd as any star in skyes:
Resembling Stella in her freshest yeares,
Forth darting beames of beautie from her eyes,
And all the day it standeth full of deow,
Which is the teares, that from her eyes did flow.

That hearbe of some, Starlight is cald by name,
Of others Penthia, though not so well:
But thou where euer thou dost finde the same,
From this day forth do call it Astrophel.
And when so euer thou it vp doest take,
Do pluck it softly for that shepherds sake.

Hereof when tydings far abroad did passe,
The shepherds all which loued him full deare:
And sure full deare of all he loued was,
Did thether flock to see what they did heare.
And when that pitteous spectacle they vewed,
The same with bitter teares they all bedewed.

And euery one did make exceeding mone,
With inward anguish and great grieffe opprest:
And euery one did weep and waile and mone,
And meanes deuiz'd to shew his sorrow best.
That from that houre since first on grassie greene,
Shepherds kept sheep, was not like mourning seen..

Edmund Spenser

Colin Clouts Come Home Againe

Colin Clouts Come Home Againe

The shepherds boy (best known by that name)
That after Tityrus first sung his lay,
Laies of sweet loue, without rebuke or blame,
Sate (as his custome was) vpon a day,
Charming his oaten pipe vnto his peres,
The shepheard swaines, that did about him play:
Who all the while with greedie listfull eares,
Did stand astonisht at his curious skill,
Like hartlesse deare, dismayed with thunders sound.
At last when as he piped had his fill,
He rested him: and sitting then around,
One of those groomes (a iolly groome was he,
As euer piped on an oaten reed,
And lou'd this shepheard dearest in degree,
Hight Hobbinol) gan thus to him areed.
Colin my liefte, my life, how great a losse
Had all the shepherds nation by thy lacke?
And I poore swaine of many greatest crosse:
That sith thy Muse first since thy turning backe
Was heard to sound as she was wont on hye,
Hast made vs all so blessed and so blythe.
Whilest thou wast hence, all dead in dole did lye:
The woods were heard to waile full many a sythe,
And all their birds with silence to complaine:
The fields with faded flowers did seem to mourne,
And all their flocks from feeding to refraine:
The running waters wept for thy returne,
And all their fish with langour did lament:
But now both woods and fields, and floods reuiue,
Sith thou art come, their cause of meriment,
That vs late dead, hast made againe aliue:
But were it not too painfull to repeat
The passed fortunes, which to thee befell
In thy late voyage, we thee would entreat,
Now at thy leisure them to vs to tell.
To whom the shepheard gently answered thus,
Hobbin thou temptest me to that I couet:
For of good passed newly to discus,

By dubble vsurie doth twice renew it.
And since I saw that Angels blessed eie,
Her worlds bright sun, her heauens fairest light,
My mind full of my thoughts satietie,
Doth feed on sweet contentment of that sight:
Since that same day in nought I take delight,
Ne feeling haue in any earthly pleasure,
But in remembrance of that glorious bright,
My lifes sole blisse, my hearts eternall threasure.
Wake then my pipe, my sleepeie Muse awake,
Till I haue told her praises lasting long:
Hobbin desires, thou maist it not forsake,
Harke then ye iolly shepherds to my song.
With that they all gan throng about him neare,
With hungrie eares to heare his harmonie:
The whiles their flocks deuoyd of dangers feare,
Did round about them feed at libertie.
One day (quoth he) I sat, (as was my trade)
Vnder the foot of Mole that mountaine hore,
Keeping my sheepe amongst the cooly shade,
Of the greene alders by the Mullaes shore:
There a straunge shepherd chaunst to find me out,
Whether allured with my pipes delight,
Whose pleasing sound yshrilled far about,
Or thither led by chance, I know not right:
VVhom when I asked from what place he came,
And how he hight, himselfe he did ycleepe,
The shepheard of the Ocean by name,
And said he came far from the main-sea deepe.
He sitting me beside in that same shade,
Prouoked me to plaie some pleasant fit,
And when he heard the musicke which I made,
He found himselfe full greatly pleased at it:
Yet æmuling my pipe, he tooke in hond
My pipe before that æmuled of many,
And plaid thereon; (for well that skill he cond)
Himselfe as skilfull in that art as any.
He pip'd, I sung; and when he sung, I piped,
By change of turnes, each making other mery,
Neither enuying other, nor enuied,
So piped we, vntill we both were weary,
There interrupting him, a bonie swaine,

That Cuddy hight, him thus atweene bespake:
 And should it not thy ready course restraine,
 I would request thee Colin, for my sake,
 To tell what thou didst sing, when he did plaie.
 For well I weene it worth recounting was,
 VVhether it were some hymne, or morall laie,
 Or carol made to praise thy loued lasse.
 Nor of my loue, nor of my losse (quoth he)
 I then did sing, as then occasion fell:
 For loue had me forlorne, forlorne of me,
 That made me in that desart chose to dwell.
 But of my riuier Bregogs loue I soong,
 VVhich to the shiny Mulla he did beare,
 And yet doth beare, and euer will, so long
 As water doth within his bancks appeare.
 Of fellowship (said then that bony Boy)
 Record to vs that louely lay againe:
 The staie whereof, shall nought these eares annoy,
 VVho all that Colin makes, do couet faine.
 Heare then (quoth he) the tenor of my tale,
 In sort as I it to that shepheard told:
 No leasing new, nor Grandams fable stale,
 But auncient truth confirm'd with credence old.
 Old father Mole, (Mole hight that mountain gray
 That walls the Northside of Armulla dale)
 He had a daughter fresh as floure of May,
 VVhich gaue that name vnto that pleasant vale;
 Mulla the daughter of oldMole, so hight
 The Nimph, which of that water course has charge,
 That springing out of Mole, doth run downe right
 to Butteuant where spreading forth at large,
 It giueth name vnto that auncient Cittie,
 VVhich Kilnemullah cleped is of old:
 VVhose ragged ruines breed great ruth and pittie,
 To travailers, which it from far behold.
 Full faine she lou'd, and was belou'd full faine,
 Of her owne brother riuier, Bregog hight,
 So hight because of this deceitfull traine,
 VVhich he with Mulla wrought to win delight.
 But her old sire more carefull of her good,
 And meaning her much better to preferre,
 Did thinke to match her with the neighbour flood,

VVhich Allo hight, Broad water called farre:
And wrought so well with his continuall paine,
That he that riuer for his daughter wonne:
The dowre agreed, the day assigned plaine,
The place appointed where it should be doone.
Nath lesse the Nymph her former liking held;
For loue will not be drawne, but must be ledde,
And Bregog did so well her fancie weld,
That her good will he got her first to wedde.
But for her father sitting still on hie,
Did warily still watch which way she went,
And eke from far obseru'd with iealous eie,
VVhich way his course the wanton Bregog bent,
Him to deceiue for all his watchfull ward,
The wily louer did devise this slight:
First into many parts his streame he shar'd,
That whilst the one was watcht, the other might
Passe vnespide to meete her by the way;
And then besides, those little streames so broken
He vnder ground so closely did conuay,
That of their passage doth appeare no token,
Till they into the Mullaes water slide.
So secretly did he his loue enioy:
Yet not so secret, but it was descried,
And told her father by a shepherds boy.
Who wondrous wroth for that so foule despight,
In great auenge did roll downe from his hill
Huge mightie stones, the which encomber might
His passage, and his water-courses spill.
So of a Riuer, which he was of old,
He none was made, but scattred all to nought,
And lost emong those rocks into him rold,
Did lose his name: so deare his loue he bought.
Which hauing said, him Thestylis bespake,
Now by my life this was a mery lay:
Worthie of Colin selfe, that did it make.
But read now eke of friendship I thee pray,
What dittie did that other shepherd sing?
For I do couet most the same to heare,
As men vse most to couet forreine thing
That shall I eke (quoth he) to you declare.
His song was all a lamentable lay,

Of great vnkindnesse, and of vsage hard,
 Of Cynthia the Ladie of the sea,
 Which from her presence faultlesse him debard.
 And euer and anon with singults rife,
 He cryed out, to make his vndersong
 Ah my loues queene, and goddesse of my life,
 Who shall me pittie, when thou doest me wrong?
 Then gan a gentle bonylasse to speake,
 That Marin hight, Right well he sure did plaine:
 That could great Cynthiaes sore displeasure breake,
 And moue to take him to her grace againe.
 But tell on further Colin, as befell
 Twixt him and thee, that thee did hence dissuade.
 When thus our pipes we both had wearied well,
 (Quoth he) and each an end of singing made,
 He gan to cast great lyking to my lore,
 And great dislyking to my lucklesse lot:
 That banisht had my selfe, like wight forlore,
 Into that waste, where I was quite forgot.
 The which to leaue, thenceforth he counseld mee,
 Vnmeet for man, in whom was ought regardfull,
 And wend with him, his Cynthia to see:
 Whose grace was great, & bounty most rewardful.
 Besides her peerlesse skill in making well
 And all the ornaments of wondrous wit,
 Such as all womankynd did far excell:
 Such as the world admyr'd and praised it:
 So what with hope of good, and hate of ill,
 He me perswaded forth with him to fare.
 Nought tooke I with me, but mine oaten quill:
 Small needments else need shepheard to prepare.
 So to the sea we came; the sea? that is
 A world of waters heaped vp on hie,
 Rolling like mountaines in wide wilderness,
 Horrible, hideous, roaring with hoarse crie.
 And is the sea (quoth Coridon) so fearfull?
 Fearful much more (quoth he) the[n] hart can fear:
 Thousand wyld beasts with deep mouthes gaping direfull
 Therein stil wait poore passengers to teare.
 Who life doth loath, and longs death to behold,
 Before he die, alreadie dead with feare,
 And yet would liue with heart halfe stonie cold,

Let him to sea, and he shall see it there.
Before he die, alreadie dead with feare:
And yet as ghastly dreadfull, as it seemes,
Bold men presuming life for gaine to sell,
Dare tempt that gulf, and in those wandring stremes
Seek waies vnknowne, waies leading down to hell.
For as we stood there waiting on the strond,
Behold an huge great vessell to vs came,
Dauncing vpon the waters back to lond,
As if it scornd the daunger of the same;
Yet it was but a wooden frame and fraile,
Glewed together with some subtile matter,
Yet had it armes and wings, and head and taile,
And life to moue it selfe vpon the water.
Strange thing, how bold & swift the monster was,
That neither car'd for wynd, nor haile, nor raine,
Nor swelling waues, but thorough them did passe
So proudly, that she made them roare againe.
The same aboard vs gently did receaue,
And without harme vs farre away did beare,
So farre that land our mother vs did leaue,
And nought but sea and heauen to vs appeare.
Then hartlesse quite and full of inward feare,
That shepheard I besought to me to tell,
Vnder what skie, or in what world we were,
In which I saw no liuing people dwell,
Who me recomforting all that he might,
Told me that that same was the Regiment
Of a great shepheardesse, that Cynthia hight,
His leige his Ladie, and his lifes Regient.
If then (quoth I) a shepheardesse she bee,
Where be the flockes and heards, which she doth keep?
And where may I the hills and pastures see,
On which she vseth for to feede her sheepe?
These be the hills (quoth he) the surges hie,
On which faire Cynthia her heards doth feed:
Her heards be thousand fishes with their frie,
Which in the bosome of the billowes breed.
Of them the shepheard which hath charge in chief,
Is Triton blowing loud his wreathed horne:
At sound whereof, they all for their relief
Wend too and fro at euening and at morne.

And Proteus eke with him does driue his heard
 Of stinking Seales and Porcpisces together,
 With hoary head and deawy dropping beard,
 Compelling them which way he list, and whether.
 And I among the rest of many least,
 Haue in the Ocean charge to me assigned:
 Where I will liue or die at her beheast,
 And serue and honour her with faithfull mind.
 Besides an hundred Nymphs all heauenly borne,
 And of immortall race, doo still attend
 To wash faire Cynthiaes sheep whe[n] they be shorne,
 And fold them vp, when they haue made an end.
 Those be the shepherds which my Cynthia serue,
 At sea, beside a thousand moe at land:
 Froe land and sea my Cynthia doth deserue
 To haue in her commandement at hand.
 Thereat I wondred much, till wondring more
 And more, at length we land far off descryde:
 Which sight much gladded me; for much afore
 I feard, least land we neuer should haue eyde:
 Thereto our ship her course directly bent,
 As if the way she perfectly had knowne.
 We Lunday passe; by that same name is ment
 An Island, which the first to west was showne.
 From thence another world of land we kend,
 Floting amid the sea in ieopardie,
 And round about with mightie white rocks hemd,
 Against the seas encroaching crueltie.
 Those same the shepheard told me, were the fields
 In which dame Cynthia her landheards fed:
 Faire goodly fields, then which Armulla yields
 None fairer, nor more fruitfull to be red.
 The first to which we nigh approched, was
 An high headland thrust far into the sea,
 Like to an horne, whereof the neame it has,
 Yet seemd to be a goodly pleasant lea:
 There did a loftie mount at first vs greet,
 Which did a stately heape of stones vpreare,
 That seemd amid the surges for to fleet,
 Much greater then that frame, which vs did beare:
 There did our ship her fruitfull womb vnlade,
 And put vs all ashore on Cynthias land.

What land is that thou meanst (then Cuddy sayd)
 And is there other, then whereon we stand?
 Ah Cuddy (then quoth Colin) thous a fon,
 That hast not seene least part of natures work:
 Much more there is vnkend, then thou doest kon,
 And much more that does from mens knowledge lurke.
 For that same land much larger is then this,
 And other men and beasts and birds doth feed:
 There fruitfull corne, faire trees, fresh herbage is
 And all things else that liuing creatures need.
 Besides most goodly riuers there appeare,
 No whit inferiour to thy Funchins praise,
 Or vnto Allo or to Mulla cleare:
 Nought hast thou foolish boy seene in thy daies,
 But if that land be there (quoth he) as here,
 And is theyr heauen likewise there all one?
 And if like heauen, be heauenly graces there,
 Like as in this same world where we do wone?
 Both heauen and heauenly graces do much more
 (Quoth he) abound in that same land, then this.
 For there all happie peace and plenteous store
 Conspire in one to make contented bliss:
 No wayling there nor wretchednesse is heard,
 No bloodie issues nor no leprosies,
 No griesly famine, nor no raging sweward,
 No nightly bo[r]drags, nor no hue and cries;
 The shepherds there abroad may safely lie,
 On hills and downes, withouten dread or daunger:
 No rauenous wolues the good mans hope destroy,
 Nor outlawes fell affray the forest raunger.
 There learned arts do florish in great honor,
 And Poets wits are had in peerlesse price:
 Religion hath lay powre to rest vpon her,
 Aduancing vertue and suppressing vice.
 For end, all good, all grace it gratefully to vse:
 For God his gifts there plenteously bestowes,
 But gracelesse men them greatly do abuse.
 But say on further, then said Corylas,
 The rest of thine aduentures, that betyded.
 Foorth on our voyage we by land did passe,
 (Quoth he) as that same shepheard still vs guyded,
 Vntill that we to Cynthiaes presence came:

Whose glorie greater then my simple thought,
 I found much greater then the former fame;
 Such greatnes I cannot compare to ought:
 But if I her like ought on earth might read,
 I would her lyken to a crowne of lillies,
 Vpon a virgin brydes adorned head,
 With Roses dight and Goolds and Daffadillies;
 Or like the circlet of a Turtle true,
 In which all colours of the rainbow bee;
 Or like faire Phebes garlond shining new,
 In which all pure perfection one may see.
 But vaine it is to thinke by paragone
 Of earthly things, to iudge of things diuine:
 Her power, her mercy, and her wisdom, none
 Can deeme, but who the Godhead can define.
 Why then do I base shepheard bold and blind,
 Presume the things so sacred to prophane?
 More fit it is t'adore with humble mind,
 The image of the heauens in shape humane.
 With that Alexis broke his tale asunder,
 Saying, By wondring at thy Cynthiaes praise:
 Colin, thy selfe thou mak'st vs more to wonder,
 And her vpraising, Doest thy selfe vpraise.
 But let vs heare what grace she shewed thee,
 And how that shepheard strange, thy cause advanced?
 The shepheard of the Ocean (quoth he)
 Vnto that Goddess grace me first enhanced,
 And to mine oaten pipe enclin'd her eare,
 That she thenceforth therein gan take delight,
 And it desir'd at timely houres to heare,
 All were my notes but rude and roughly dight;
 For not by measure of her owne great mynd,
 And wondrous worth she mott my simple song,
 But ioyd that country shepheard ought could fynd
 Worth harkening to, emongst the learned throng.
 Why? (said Alexis then) what needeth shee
 That is so great a shepherdesse her selfe,
 And hath so many shepherds in her fee,
 To heare thee sing, a simple silly Elfe?
 Or be the shepherdes which do serue her laesie,
 That they list not their mery pipes applie?
 Or be their pipes vntunable and craesie,

That they cannot her honour worthy lie?
 Ah nay (said Colin) neither so, nor so:
 For better shepherds be not vnder skie,
 Nor better hable, when they list to blow,
 Their pipes aloud, her name to glorifie.
 There is good Harpalus now woxen aged,
 In faithfull seruice of faire Cynthia:
 And there is Corydon, though meanly waged,
 Yet hablest wit of most I know this day.
 And there is sad Alcyon bent to mourne,
 Though fit to frame an euerlasting dittie,
 Whose gentle spright for Daphnes death doth tourn
 Sweet layes of loue to endlesse plaints of pittie.
 Ah pensiue boy pursue that braue conceipt,
 In thy sweet Eglantine of Meriflure,
 Lift vp thy notes vnto their wonted height,
 That may thy Muse and mates to mirth allure.
 There eke is Palin worthie of great praise,
 Albe he envie at my rustick quill:
 And there is pleasing Alcon, could he raise
 His tunes from laies to matter of more skill.
 And there is old Palemon free from spight,
 Whose carefull pipe may make the hearer rew:
 Yet he himselfe may rewed be more right,
 That sung so long vntill quite hoarse he grew.
 And there is Alabaster throughly taught,
 In all this skill, though knowen yet to few,
 Yet were he knowne to Cynthia as he ought,
 His Eliseïs would be redde anew.
 Who liues that can match that heroick song,
 Which he hath of that mightie Princesse made?
 O dreaded Dread, do not thy selfe that wrong,
 To let thy fame lie so in hidden shade:
 But call it forth, O call him forth to thee,
 To ende thy glorie which he hath begun:
 That when he finisht hath as it should be,
 No brauer Poeme can be vnder Sun.
 Nor Po nor Tyburs swans so much renowned,
 Nor all the brood of Greece so highly praised,
 Can match that Muse whe[n] it with bayes is crowned,
 And to the pitch of her perfection raised.
 And there is a new shepherd late vp sprong,

The which doth all afore him far surpass:
Appearing well in that well tuned song,
Which late he sung vnto a scornefull lasse.
Yet doth his trembling Muse but lowly flie,
As daring not too rashly mount on hight,
And doth her tender plumes as yet but trie,
In loues soft lais and looser thoughts delight.
Then rouze thy feathers quickly Daniell,
And to what course thou please thy selfe aduance:
But most me seemes, thy accent will excell,
In Tragick plaints and passionate mischance.
And there that shepheard of the Ocean is,
That spends his wit in loues consuming smart:
Full sweetly tempred is that Muse of his
That can empierce a Princes mightie hart.
There also is (ah no, he is not now)
But since I said he is, he is quite gone,
Amyntas quite is gone, and lies full low,
Hauing his Amaryllis left to mone.
Helpe, O ye shepheards helpe ye all in this,
Helpe Amaryllis this her losse to mourne:
Her losse is yours, your losse Amyntas is,
Amyntas floure of Shepheards pride forlorne:
He whilst he liued was the noblest swaine,
That euer piped in an oaten quill:
Both did he other, which could pipe, maintaine,
And eke could pipe himselfe with passing skill.
And there though last not least is Aetion,
A gentler shepheard may no where be found:
Whose Muse full of high thoughts inuention,
Doth like himselfe Heroically sound.
All these, and many others mo remaine,
Now after Astrofell is dead and gone:
But while as Astrofell did liue and raine,
Amongst all these was none his Paragone.
All these do flourish in their sundry kynd,
And do their Cynthia immortall make:
Yet found I lyking in her royall mynd,
Not for my skill, but for that shepheards sake.
Then spake a louely lasse, hight Lucida,
Shepheard, enough of shepheards thou hast told,
Which fauour thee, and honour Cynthia:

But of so many Nymphs which she doth hold
 In her retinew, thou hast nothing sayd;
 That seems with none of the[m] thou fauor foundest,
 Or art ingratefull to each gentle mayd,
 That none of all their due deserts resoundest.
 Ah far be it (quoth Colin Clout) fro me,
 That I of gentle Mayds should ill deserue:
 For that my selfe I do professe to be
 Vassall to one, whom all my dayes I serue;
 The beame of beautie sparkled from aboue,
 The floure of vertue and pure chastitie,
 The blossome of sweet ioy and perfect loue,
 The pearle of peerlesse grace and modestie:
 To her my thoughts I daily dedicate,
 To her my heart I nightly martyrize:
 To her my loue I lowly do prostrate,
 To her my life I wholly sacrifice:
 My thoughts, my heart, my loue, my life is shee,
 And I hers euer onely, euer one:
 One euer I all vowed hers to bee,
 One euer I, and others neuer none.
 Then thus Melissa said; Thrice happie Mayd,
 Whom thou doest so enforce to deify:
 That woods, and hills, and valleyes thou hast made
 Her name to eccho vnto heauen hie.
 But say, who else vouchsafed thee of grace?
 They all (quoth he) me graced goodly well,
 That all I praise, but in the highest place,
 Vrania, sister vnto Astrofell,
 In whose braue mynd as in a golden cofer,
 All heauenly gifts and riches locked are,
 More rich then pearles of Ynde, or gold of Opher,
 And in her sex more wonderfull and rare.
 Ne lesse praise worthie I Theana read,
 Whose goodly beames though they be ouer dight
 With mourning stole of carefull widowhead,
 Yet through that darksome vale do glister bright;
 She is the well of bountie and braue mynd,
 Excelling most in glorie and great light:
 She is the ornament of womankynd,
 And Courts chief garlond with all vertues dight.
 Therefore great Cynthia her in chiefest grace

Doth hold, and next vnto her selfe aduaunce,
 Well worthie of so honourable place,
 For her great worth and noble gouernance.
 Ne lesse praise worthie is her sister deare,
 Faire Marian, the Muses onely darling:
 Whose beautie shyneth as the morning cleare,
 With siluer dew vpon the roses pearling.
 Ne lesse praise worthie is Mansilia,
 Best knowne by bearing vp great Cynthiaes traine:
 That same is she to whom Daphnaida
 Vpon her neeces death I did complaine.
 She is the paterne of true womanhead,
 And onely mirrhor of feminitie:
 Worthie next after Cynthia to tread,
 As she is next her in nobilitie.
 Ne lesse praise worthie Galathea seemes,
 Then best of all that honourable crew,
 Faire Galathea with bright shining beames,
 Inflaming feeble eyes that do her view.
 She there then waited vpon Cynthia,
 Yet there is not her won, but here with vs
 About the borders of our rich Coshma,
 Now made of Maa the nymph delitious.
 Ne lesse praiseworthy faire Neæra is,
 Neæra ours, not theirs, though there she be,
 For of the famous Shure, the Nymph she is,
 For high desert, aduaunst to that degree.
 She is the blosome of grace and curtesie,
 Adorned with all honourable parts:
 She is the braunch of true nobilitie,
 Belou'd of high and low with faithfull harts.
 Ne lesse praiseworthy Stella do I read,
 Though nought my praises of her needed arre,
 Whom verse of noblest shepheard lately dead
 Hath prais'd and rais'd aboue each other starre.
 Ne lesse praiseworthy are the sister three,
 The honor of the noble familie:
 Of which I meanest boast my selfe to be,
 And most that vnto them I am so nie.
 Phyllis, Charyllis, and sweet Amaryllis:
 Phyllis the faire, is eldest of the three:
 The next to her, is bountifull Charyllis:

But th'youngest is the highest in degree.
Phyllis the floure of rare perfection,
Faire spreading forth her leaues with fresh delight,
That with their beauties amorous reflexion,
Bereaue of sence each rash beholders sight.
But sweet Charyllis is the Paragone
Of peerlesse price, and ornament of praise,
Admyr'd of all, yet envied of none,
Through the myld temperance of her goodly raies
Thrise happie do I hold thee noble swaine,
The which art of so rich a spoile possest,
And it embracing deare without disdaine,
Hast sole possession in so chaste a brest:
Of all the shepherds daughters which there bee,
And yet there be the fairest vnder skie,
Or that elsewhere I euer yet did see.
A fairer Nymph yet neuer saw mine eie:
She is the pride and primrose of the rest,
Made by the maker selfe to be admired:
And like a goodly beacon high adrest,
That is with sparks of heauenle beautie fired.
But Amaryllis, whether fortunate,
Or else vnfortunate may I aread.
That freed is from Cupids yoke by fate,
Since which she doth new bands aduenture dread.
Shepherd what euer thou hast heard to be
In this or that praysd diuersly apart,
In her thou maist them all assembled see,
And seald vp in the threasure of her hart.
Ne thee lesse worthie gentle Flauia,
For thy chaste life and vertue I esteeme:
Ne thee lesse worthie curteous Candida,
For thy true loue and loyaltie I deeme.
Besides yet many mo that Cynthia serue,
Right noble Nymphs, and high to be commended:
But if I all should praise as they deserue,
This sun would faile me ere I halfe had ended.
Therefore in closure of a thankfull mynd,
I deeme it best to hold eternally,
Their bounteous deeds and noble fauours shrynd,
Then by discourse them to indignifie.
So hauing said, Aglaura him bespake:

Colin, well worthie were those goodly fauours
 Bestowd on thee, that so of them doest make,
 And them requitest with thy thankful labours.
 But of great Cynthiaes goodnesse and high grace,
 Finish the storie which thou hast begunne.
 More eath (quoth he) it is in such a case
 How to begin, then know how to haue donne.
 For euerie gift and euerie goodly meed
 Which she on me bestowd, demaunds a day;
 And euerie day, in which she did a deed,
 Demaunds a yeare it duly to display.
 Her words were like a streame of honnyfleeting,
 The which doth softly trickle from the hiue:
 Hable to melt the hearers heart vnweeting,
 And eke to make the dead againe aliue.
 Her deeds were like great clusters of ripe grapes,
 Which load the b[ra]unches of the fruitfull vine:
 Offring to fall into each mouth that gapes,
 And fill the same with store of timely wine.
 Her lookes were like beames of the morning Sun,
 Forth looking through the windowes of the East:
 When first the fleecie cattell haue begun
 Vpon the perled grasse to make their feast.
 Her thoughts are like the fume of Franckincence,
 Which from a golden Censer forth doth rise:
 And throwing forth sweet odours mou[n]ts fro the[n]ce
 In rolling globes vp to the vaulted skies.
 There she beholds with high aspiring thought,
 The cradle of her owne creation:
 Emongst the seats of Angels heauenly wrought,
 Much like an Angell in all forme and fashion.
 Colin (said Cuddy then) thou hast forgot
 Thy selfe, me seemes, too much, to mount so hie:
 Such loftie flight, base shepheard seemeth not,
 From flocks and fields, to Angels and to skie.
 True (answered he) but her great excellence,
 Lifts me aboue the measure of my might:
 That being fild with furious insolence,
 I feele my selfe like one yrap't in spright.
 For when I thinke of her, as oft I ought,
 Then want I words to speake it fitly forth:
 And when I speake of her what I haue thought,

I cannot thinke according to her worth.
 Yet will I thinke of her, yet will I speake,
 So long as life my limbs doth hold together,
 And when as death these vitall bands shall breake,
 Her name recorded I will leaue for euer.
 Her name in euery tree I will endosse,
 That as the trees do grow, her name may grow.
 And in the ground each where will it engrosse,
 And fill with stones, that all men may it know.
 The speaking woods and murmuring waters fall,
 Her name Ile teach in knowen termes to frame:
 And eke my lambs when for their dams they call,
 Ile teach to call for Cynthia by name.
 And long while after I am dead and rotten:
 Amõgst the shepheards daughters dancing rownd,
 My layes made of her shall not be forgotten,
 But sung by them with flowry gyrlonds crownd.
 And ye, who so ye be, that shall suruiue:
 When as ye heare her memory renewed,
 Be wnesse of her bounty here aliue,
 Which she to Colin her poore shepheard shewed.
 Much was the whole assembly of those heards,
 Moou'd at his speech, so feelingly he spake:
 And stood awhile astonisht at his words,
 Till Thestylis at last their silence brake,
 Saying, Why Colin, since thou foundst such grace
 With Cynthia and all her noble crew:
 Why didst thou euer leaue that happie place,
 In which such wealth might vnto thee accrew?
 And back returnedst to this barrein soyle,
 Where cold and care and penury do dwell:
 Here to keepe sheepe, with hunger and with toyle,
 Most wretched he, that is and cannot tell.
 Happie indeed (said Colin) I him hold,
 That may that blessed presence still enioy,
 Of fortune and of enuy vncomptrold,
 Which still are wont most happie states t'annoy:
 But I by that which little while I prooued:
 Some part of those enormities did see,
 The which in Court continually hooued,
 And followd those which happie seemd to bee.
 Therefore I silly man, whose former dayes

Had in rude fields bene altogether spent,
Durst not aduventure such vnknown wayes,
Nor trust the guile of fortunes blandishment,
But rather chose back to my sheep to tourne,
Whose vtmost hardnesse I before had tryde,
Then hauing learnd repentance late, to mourne
Emongst those wretches which I there descryde.
Shepherd (said Thestylis) it seems of spight
Thou speakest thus gainst their felicitie,
Which thou enuiest, rather then of right
That ought in them blameworthy thou dost spie.
Cause haue I none (quoth he) of cancred will
To quite them ill, that me demeand so well:
But selfe-regard of priuate good or ill,
Moues me of each, so as I found, to tell
And eke to warne yong shepherds wandring wit,
Which through report of that liues painted blisse,
Abandon quiet home, to seeke for it,
And leaue their lambes to losse misled amisse.
For sooth to say, it is no sort of life,
For shepherd fit to lead in that same place,
Where each one seeks with malice and with strife,
To thrust downe other into foule disgrace,
Himselfe to raise: and he doth soonest rise
That best can handle his deceitfull wit,
In subtil shifts, and finest sleights deuise,
Either by slaundring his well deemed name,
Through leasings lewd, and fained forgerie:
Or else by breeding him some blot of blame,
By creeping close into his secrecie;
To which him needs, a guilefull hollow hart,
Masked with faire dissembling curtesie,
A filed tounge furnisht with tearmes of art,
No art of schoole, but Courtiers schoolery.
For arts of schoole haue there small countenance,
Counted but toyes to busie idle braines,
And there professours find small maintenance,
But to be instruments of others gaines.
Ne is there place for any gentle wit,
Vnlesse to please, it selfe it can applie:
But shouldred is, or out of doore quite shit,
As base, or blunt, vnmeet for melodie.

For each mans worth is measured by his weed,
As harts by hornes, or asses by their eares:
Yet asses been not all whose eares exceed,
Nor yet all harts, that hornes the highest beares.
For highest lookes haue not the highest mynd,
Nor haughtie words most full of highest thoughts:
But are like bladders blowen vp with wynd,
That being prickt do vanish into noughts.
Euen such is all their vaunted vanitie,
Nought else but smoke, that fumeth soone away,
Such is their glorie that in simple eie
Seeme greatest, when their garments are most gay.
So they themselues for praise of fooles do sell,
And all their wealth for painting on a wall;
With price whereof, they buy a golden bell,
And purchase highest rowmes in bowre and hall:
Whiles single Truth and simple honestie
Do wander vp and downe despys'd of all;
Their plaine attire such glorious gallantry
Disdaines so much, that none them in doth call.
Ah Colin (then said Hobbinol) the blame
Which thou imputest, is too generall,
As if not any gentle wit of name,
Nor honest mynd might there be found at all.
For well I wot, sith I my selfe was there,
To wait on Lobbin (Lobbin well thow knewest)
Full many worrhie ones then waiting were,
As euer elfe in Princes Court thou vewest.
Of which, among you many yet remaine,
Whose names I cannot readily now ghesse:
Those that poore Sutors papers do retaine,
And those that skill of medicine professe.
And those that do to Cynthia expound,
The ledden of straunge languages in charge:
For Cynthia doth in sciences abound,
And giues to their professors stipend large.
Therefore vniustly thou doest wyte them all,
For that which thou mislikedst in a few.
Blame is (quoth he) more blamelesse generall,
Then that which priuate errorrs doth pursew:
For well I wot, that there amongst them bee
Full many persons of right worthie parts,

Both for report of spotlesse honestie,
And for profession of all learned arts,
Whose praise hereby no whit impaired is,
Though blame do light on those that faultie bee,
For all the rest do most-what far[e] amis,
And yet their owne misfaring will not see:
For either they be puffed vp with pride,
Or fraught with enuie that their galls do swell,
Or they their dayes to ydlennesse diuide,
Or drowned lie in pleasures wastefull well,
In which like Moldwarps noursling still they lurke,
Vnmyndfull of chiefe parts of manlinesse,
And do themselues for want of other worke,
Vaine votaries of laesie loue professe,
Whose seruice high so basely they ensew,
That Cupid selfe of them ashamed is,
And mustring all his men in Venus vew,
Denies them quite for seruitors of his.
And is loue then (said Corylas once knowne
In Court, and his sweet lore professed there?
I weened sure he was our God alone,
And only woond in feilds and forests here.
Not so (quoth he) loue most aboundeth there.
For all the walls and windows there are writ,
All full of loue, and loue, and loue my deare,
And all their talke and studie is of it.
Ne any there doth braue or valiant seeme,
Vnlesse that some gay Mistresse badge he beares:
Ne any one himselfe doth ought esteeme,
Vnlesse he swim in loue up to the eares.
But they of loue and of his sacred lere,
(As it should be) all otherwise deuse,
Then we poore shepherds are accustomed here,
And him do sue and serue all otherwise.
For with lewd speeches and licentious deeds,
His mightie mysteries they do prophane,
And vse his ydle name to other needs,
But as a complement for courting vaine.
So him they do not serue as they professe,
But make him serue to them for sordid vses.
Ah my dread Lord, that doest liege hearts possese;
Auenge thy selfe on them for their abuses.

But we poore shepherds whether rightly so,
Or through our rudenesse into errour led:
Do make religion how we rashly go,
To serue that God, that is so greatly dred;
For him the greatest of the Gods we deeme,
Borne without Syre or couples of one kynd,
For Venus selfe doth soly couples seeme,
Both male and female though commixture ioynd.
So pure and spotlesse Cupid forth she brought,
And in the gardens of Adonis nurst:
Where growing he, his owne perfection wrought,
And shortly was of all the Gods the first.
Then got he bow and shafts of gold and lead,
In which so fell and puissant he grew,
That Ioue himselfe his powre began to dread,
And taking him vp to heauen, him godded new.
From thence he shootes his arrowes euery where
Into the world, at randon as he will,
On vs fraile men, his wretched vassals here,
Like as himselfe vs pleaseth, saue or spill.
So we him worship, so we him adore
With humble hearts to heauen vplifted hie,
That to true loues he may vs euermore
Preferre, and of their grace vs dignifie:
Ne is there shepheard, ne yet shepherds swaine,
What euer feeds in forest or in field,
That dare with euil deed or leasing vaine
BlaspHEME his powre, or termes vnworthie yield.
Shepheard it seemes that some celestiall rage
Of loue (quoth Cuddy) is breath'd into thy brest,
That powreth forth these oracles so sage,
Of that high powre, wherewith thou art possest.
But neuer wist I till this present day
Albe of loue I alwayes humbly deemed,
That he was such an one, as thou doest say,
And so religiously to be esteemed.
Well may it seeme by this thy deep insight,
That of that God the Priest thou shouldest bee:
So well thou wot'st the mysterie of his might,
As if his godhead thou didst present see.
Of loues perfection perfectly to speake,
Or of his nature rightly to define,

Indeed (said Colin) passeth reasons reach,
And needs his priest t'expresse his powre diuine.
For long before the world he was y'bore
And bred aboue in Venus bosome deare:
For by his powre the world was made of yore,
And all that therein wondrous doth appeare.
For how should else things so far from attone
And so great enemies as of them bee,
Be euer drawne together into one,
And taught in such accordance to agree.
Through him the cold began to couet heat,
And water fire; the light to mount on hie,
And th'heauie down to peize; the hungry t'eat,
And voydnesse to seeke full satietie,
So being former foes, they wexed friends,
And gan by litle learne to loue each other:
So being knit, they brought forth other kynds
Out of the fruitfull wombe of their great mother.
Then first gan heauen out of darknesse dread
For to appeare, and brought forth chearfull day:
Next gan the earth to shew her naked head,
Out of deep waters which her drownd alway.
And shortly after euerie liuing wight,
Crept forth like wormes out of her slimy nature.
Soone as on them the Suns life-giuing light,
had powred kindly heat and formall feature,
Thenceforth they gan each one his like to loue,
And like himselfe desire for to beget:
The Lyon chose his mate the Turtle doue
Her deare, the Dolphin his owne Dolphinet,
But man that had the sparke of reasons might,
More then the rest to rule his passion:
Chose for his loue the fairest in his sight,
Like as himselfe was fairest by creation.
For beautie is the bayt which with delight
Doth man allure, for to enlarge his kynd,
Beautie the burning lamp of heauens light,
Darting her beames into each feeble mynd:
Against whose powre, nor God nor man can fynd,
Defence, ne ward the daunger of the wound,
But being hurt, seeke to be medicynd
Of her that first did stir that mortall stownd.

Then do they cry and call to loue apace,
 With praiers lowd importuning the skie,
 Whence he them heares, & whe[n] he list shew grace,
 Does graunt them grace that otherwise would die.
 So loue is Lord of all the world by right,
 And rules their creatures by his powfull saw:
 All being made the vassalls of his might,
 Through secret sence which therto doth the[m] draw.
 Thus ought all louers of their lord to deeme:
 And with chaste heart to honor him alway:
 But who so else doth otherwise esteeme,
 Are outlawes, and his lore do disobay.
 For their desire is base, and doth not merit,
 The name of loue, but of disloyall lust:
 Ne mongst true louers they shall place inherit,
 But as Exuls out of his court be thrust.
 So hauing said, Melissa spake at will,
 Colin, thou now full deeply hast diuynd:
 Of loue and beautie and with wondrous skill,
 Hast Cupid selfe depainted in his kynd.
 To thee are all true louers greatly bound,
 That doest their cause so mightily defend:
 But most, all wemen are thy debtors found,
 That doest their bountie still so much commend.
 That ill (said Hobbinol) they him requite,
 For hauing loued euer one most deare:
 He is repayd with scorne and foule despite,
 That yrkes each gentle heart which it doth heare.
 Indeed (said Lucid) I haue often heard
 Faire Rosalind of diuers fowly blamed:
 For being to that swaine too cruell hard,
 That her bright glorie else hath much defamed.
 But who can tell what cause had that faire Mayd
 To vse him so that vsed her so well:
 Or who with blame can iustly her vpbrayd,
 For louing not? for who can loue compell.
 And sooth to say, it is foolhardie thing,
 Rashly to wyten creatures so diuine,
 For demigods they be, and first did spring
 From heauen, though graft in frailnesse feminine.
 And well I wote, that oft I heard it spoken,
 How one that fairest Helene did reuile:

Through iudgement of the Gods to been ywroken
Lost both his eyes and so remaynd long while,
Till he recanted had his wicked rimes,
And made amends to her with treble praise:
Beware therefore, ye groomes, I read betimes,
How rashly blame of Rosalind ye raise.
Ah shepherds (then said Colin) ye ne weet
How great a guilt vpon your heads ye draw:
To make so bold a doome with words vnmeet,
Of thing celestiall which ye neuer saw.
For she is not like as the other crew
Of shepherds daughters which emongst you bee,
But of diuine regard and heauenly hew,
Excelling all that euer ye did see.
Not then to her that scorned thing so base,
But to my selfe the blame that lookt so hie:
So hie her thoughts as she her selfe haue place,
And loath each lowly thing with loftie eie.
Yet so much grace let her vouchsafe to grant
To simple swaine, sith her I may not loue:
Yet that I may her honour parauant,
And praise her worth, though far my wit aboue
Such grace shall be some guerdon for the grieffe,
And long affliction which I haue endured:
Such grace sometimes shall giue me some reliefe,
And ease of paine which cannot be recured.
And ye my fellow shepherds which do see
And heare the langours of my too long dying,
Vnto the world for euer witnesse bee,
That hers I die, nought to the world denying,
This simple trophe of her great conquest.
So hauing ended, he from ground did rise,
And after him vprose eke all the rest:
All loth to part, but that the glooming skies,
Warnd them to draw their bleating flocks to rest.

Edmund Spenser

Easter

MOST glorious Lord of Lyfe! that, on this day,
Didst make Thy triumph over death and sin;
And, having harrowd hell, didst bring away
Captivity thence captive, us to win:
This joyous day, deare Lord, with joy begin;
And grant that we, for whom thou diddest dye,
Being with Thy deare blood clene washt from sin,
May live for ever in felicity!

And that Thy love we weighing worthily,
May likewise love Thee for the same againe;
And for Thy sake, that all lyke deare didst buy,
With love may one another entertayne!
 So let us love, deare Love, lyke as we ought,
 --Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.

Edmund Spenser

Epithalamion

YE learned sisters, which have oftentimes
Beene to me ayding, others to adorne,
Whom ye thought worthy of your gracefull rymes,
That even the greatest did not greatly scorne
To heare theyr names sung in your simple layes,
But joyed in theyr praise;
And when ye list your owne mishaps to mourne,
Which death, or love, or fortunes wreck did rayse,
Your string could soone to sadder tenor turne,
And teach the woods and waters to lament
Your dolefull dreriment:
Now lay those sorrowfull complaints aside;
And, having all your heads with girlands crownd,
Helpe me mine owne loves prayses to resound;
Ne let the same of any be envide:
So Orpheus did for his owne bride!
So I unto my selfe alone will sing;
The woods shall to me answer, and my Eccho ring.

Early, before the worlds light-giving lampe
His golden beame upon the hils doth spred,
Having disperst the nights unchearefull dampe,
Doe ye awake; and, with fresh lusty-hed,
Go to the bowre of my beloved love,
My truest turtle dove;
Bid her awake; for Hymen is awake,
And long since ready forth his maske to move,
With his bright Tead that flames with many a flake,
And many a bachelor to waite on him,
In theyr fresh garments trim.
Bid her awake therefore, and soone her dight,
For lo! the wished day is come at last,
That shall, for all the paynes and sorrowes past,
Pay to her usury of long delight:
And, whylest she doth her dight,
Doe ye to her of joy and solace sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.

Bring with you all the Nymphes that you can heare

Both of the rivers and the forrests greene,
And of the sea that neighbours to her neare:
Al with gay girlands goodly wel beseene.
And let them also with them bring in hand
Another gay girland
For my fayre love, of lillyes and of roses,
Bound truelove wize, with a blew silke riband.
And let them make great store of bridale poses,
And let them eeke bring store of other flowers,
To deck the bridale bowers.
And let the ground whereas her foot shall tread,
For feare the stones her tender foot should wrong,
Be strewed with fragrant flowers all along,
And diapred lyke the discolored mead.
Which done, doe at her chamber dore awayt,
For she will waken strayt;
The whiles doe ye this song unto her sing,
The woods shall to you answer, and your Eccho ring.

Ye Nymphes of Mulla, which with carefull heed
The silver scaly trouts doe tend full well,
And greedy pikes which use therein to feed;
(Those trouts and pikes all others doo excell;)
And ye likewise, which keepe the rushy lake,
Where none doo fishes take;
Bynd up the locks the which hang scatterd light,
And in his waters, which your mirror make,
Behold your faces as the christall bright,
That when you come whereas my love doth lie,
No blemish she may spie.
And eke, ye lightfoot mayds, which keepe the deere,
That on the hoary mountayne used to towre;
And the wylde wolves, which seeke them to devoure,
With your steele darts doo chace from comming neer;
Be also present heere,
To helpe to decke her, and to help to sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.

Wake now, my love, awake! for it is time;
The Rosy Morne long since left Tithones bed,
All ready to her silver coche to clyme;
And Phoebus gins to shew his glorious hed.

Hark! how the cheerefull birds do chaunt theyr laies
And carroll of Loves praise.
The merry Larke hir mattins sings aloft;
The Thrush replies; the Mavis descant playes;
The Ouzell shrills; the Ruddock warbles soft;
So goodly all agree, with sweet consent,
To this dayes merriment.
Ah! my deere love, why doe ye sleepe thus long?
When meeter were that ye should now awake,
T' awayt the comming of your joyous make,
And hearken to the birds love-learned song,
The deawy leaves among!
Nor they of joy and pleasance to you sing,
That all the woods them answer, and theyr eccho ring.

My love is now awake out of her dreames,
And her fayre eyes, like stars that dimmed were
With darksome cloud, now shew theyr goodly beams
More bright then Hesperus his head doth rere.
Come now, ye damzels, daughters of delight,
Helpe quickly her to dight:
But first come ye fayre houres, which were begot
In Joves sweet paradice of Day and Night;
Which doe the seasons of the yeare allot,
And al, that ever in this world is fayre,
Doe make and still repayre:
And ye three handmayds of the Cyprian Queene,
The which doe still adorne her beauties pride,
Helpe to addorne my beautifullest bride:
And, as ye her array, still throw betweene
Some graces to be seene;
And, as ye use to Venus, to her sing,
The whiles the woods shal answer, and your eccho ring.

Now is my love all ready forth to come:
Let all the virgins therefore well awayt:
And ye fresh boyes, that tend upon her groome,
Prepare your selves; for he is comming strayt.
Set all your things in seemely good aray,
Fit for so joyfull day:
The joyfulst day that ever sunne did see.
Faire Sun! shew forth thy favourable ray,

And let thy lifull heat not fervent be,
For feare of burning her sunshyny face,
Her beauty to disgrace.
O fayrest Phoebus! father of the Muse!
If ever I did honour thee aright,
Or sing the thing that mote thy mind delight,
Doe not thy servants simple boone refuse;
But let this day, let this one day, be myne;
Let all the rest be thine.
Then I thy soverayne prayses loud wil sing,
That all the woods shal answer, and theyr eccho ring.

Harke! how the Minstrils gin to shrill aloud
Their merry Musick that resounds from far,
The pipe, the tabor, and the trembling Croud,
That well agree withouten breach or jar.
But, most of all, the Damzels doe delite
When they their tymbrels smyte,
And thereunto doe daunce and carrol sweet,
That all the sences they doe ravish quite;
The whyles the boyes run up and downe the street,
Crying aloud with strong confused noyce,
As if it were one voyce,
Hymen, iö Hymen, Hymen, they do shout;
That even to the heavens theyr shouting shrill
Doth reach, and all the firmament doth fill;
To which the people standing all about,
As in approvance, doe thereto applaud,
And loud advaunce her laud;
And evermore they Hymen, Hymen sing,
That al the woods them answer, and theyr eccho ring.

Loe! where she comes along with portly pace,
Lyke Phoebe, from her chamber of the East,
Arysing forth to run her mighty race,
Clad all in white, that seemes a virgin best.
So well it her beseemes, that ye would weene
Some angell she had beene.
Her long loose yellow locks lyke golden wyre,
Sprinckled with perle, and perling flowres atweene,
Doe lyke a golden mantle her attyre;
And, being crowned with a girland greene,

Seeme lyke some mayden Queene.
Her modest eyes, abashed to behold
So many gazers as on her do stare,
Upon the lowly ground affixed are;
Ne dare lift up her countenance too bold,
But blush to heare her prayses sung so loud,
So farre from being proud.
Nathlesse doe ye still loud her prayses sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.

Tell me, ye merchants daughters, did ye see
So fayre a creature in your towne before;
So sweet, so lovely, and so mild as she,
Adornd with beautyes grace and vertues store?
Her goodly eyes lyke Saphyres shining bright,
Her forehead yvory white,
Her cheekes lyke apples which the sun hath rudded,
Her lips lyke cherryes charming men to byte,
Her brest like to a bowle of creame uncrudded,
Her paps lyke lillies budded,
Her snowie necke lyke to a marble towre;
And all her body like a pallace fayre,
Ascending up, with many a stately stayre,
To honors seat and chastities sweet bowre.
Why stand ye still ye virgins in amaze,
Upon her so to gaze,
Whiles ye forget your former lay to sing,
To which the woods did answer, and your eccho ring?

But if ye saw that which no eyes can see,
The inward beauty of her lively spright,
Garnisht with heavenly guifts of high degree,
Much more then would ye wonder at that sight,
And stand astonisht lyke to those which red
Medusaes mazeful hed.
There dwels sweet love, and constant chastity,
Unspotted fayth, and comely womanhood,
Regard of honour, and mild modesty;
There vertue raynes as Queene in royal throne,
And giveth lawes alone,
The which the base affections doe obay,
And yeeld theyr services unto her will;

Ne thought of thing uncomely ever may
Thereto approach to tempt her mind to ill.
Had ye once seene these her celestial treasures,
And unrevealed pleasures,
Then would ye wonder, and her prayses sing,
That al the woods should answer, and your echo ring.

Open the temple gates unto my love,
Open them wide that she may enter in,
And all the postes adorne as doth behove,
And all the pillours deck with girlands trim,
For to receyve this Saynt with honour dew,
That commeth in to you.
With trembling steps, and humble reverence,
She commeth in, before th' Almightyes view;
Of her ye virgins learne obedience,
When so ye come into those holy places,
To humble your proud faces:
Bring her up to th' high altar, that she may
The sacred ceremonies there partake,
The which do endlesse matrimony make;
And let the roring Organs loudly play
The praises of the Lord in lively notes;
The whiles, with hollow throates,
The Choristers the joyous Antheme sing,
That al the woods may answeare, and their eccho ring.

Behold, whiles she before the altar stands,
Hearing the holy priest that to her speakes,
And blesseth her with his two happy hands,
How the red roses flush up in her cheekes,
And the pure snow, with goodly vermill stayne
Like crimsin dyde in grayne:
That even th' Angels, which continually
About the sacred Altare doe remaine,
Forget their service and about her fly,
Ofte peeping in her face, that seems more fayre,
The more they on it stare.
But her sad eyes, still fastened on the ground,
Are governed with goodly modesty,
That suffers not one looke to glaunce awry,
Which may let in a little thought unsownd.

Why blush ye, love, to give to me your hand,
The pledge of all our band!
Sing, ye sweet Angels, Alleluya sing,
That all the woods may answere, and your eccho ring.

Now al is done: bring home the bride againe;
Bring home the triumph of our victory:
Bring home with you the glory of her gaine;
With joyance bring her and with jollity.
Never had man more joyfull day then this,
Whom heaven would heape with blis,
Make feast therefore now all this live-long day;
This day for ever to me holy is.
Poure out the wine without restraint or stay,
Poure not by cups, but by the belly full,
Poure out to all that wull,
And sprinkle all the postes and wals with wine,
That they may sweat, and drunken be withall.
Crowne ye God Bacchus with a coronall,
And Hymen also crowne with wreathes of vine;
And let the Graces daunce unto the rest,
For they can doo it best:
The whiles the maydens doe theyr carroll sing,
To which the woods shall answer, and theyr eccho ring.

Ring ye the bells, ye yong men of the towne,
And leave your wonted labors for this day:
This day is holy; doe ye write it downe,
That ye for ever it remember may.
This day the sunne is in his chiefest hight,
With Barnaby the bright,
From whence declining daily by degrees,
He somewhat loseth of his heat and light,
When once the Crab behind his back he sees.
But for this time it ill ordained was,
To chose the longest day in all the yeare,
And shortest night, when longest fitter weare:
Yet never day so long, but late would passe.
Ring ye the bells, to make it weare away,
And bonefiers make all day;
And daunce about them, and about them sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.

Ah! when will this long weary day have end,
And lende me leave to come unto my love?
How slowly do the houres theyr numbers spend?
How slowly does sad Time his feathers move?
Hast thee, O fayrest Planet, to thy home,
Within the Westerne fome:
Thy tyred steedes long since have need of rest.
Long though it be, at last I see it gloome,
And the bright evening-star with golden creast
Appeare out of the East.
Fayre childe of beauty! glorious lampe of love!
That all the host of heaven in rankes doost lead,
And guydest lovers through the nights sad dread,
How chearefully thou lookest from above,
And seemst to laugh atweene thy twinkling light,
As joying in the sight
Of these glad many, which for joy doe sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring!

Now ceasse, ye damsels, your delights fore-past;
Enough it is that all the day was youres:
Now day is doen, and night is nighing fast,
Now bring the Bryde into the brydall boures.
The night is come, now soon her disaray,
And in her bed her lay;
Lay her in lillies and in violets,
And silken courteins over her display,
And odour'd sheetes, and Arras coverlets.
Behold how goodly my faire love does ly,
In proud humility!
Like unto Maia, when as Jove her took
In Tempe, lying on the flowry gras,
Twixt sleepe and wake, after she weary was,
With bathing in the Acidalian brooke.
Now it is night, ye damsels may be gon,
And leave my love alone,
And leave likewise your former lay to sing:
The woods no more shall answere, nor your echo ring.

Now welcome, night! thou night so long expected,
That long daies labour doest at last defray,

And all my cares, which cruell Love collected,
Hast sumd in one, and cancelled for aye:
Spread thy broad wing over my love and me,
That no man may us see;
And in thy sable mantle us enwrap,
From feare of perrill and foule horror free.
Let no false treason seeke us to entrap,
Nor any dread disquiet once annoy
The safety of our joy;
But let the night be calme, and quiet some,
Without tempestuous storms or sad afray:
Lyke as when Jove with fayre Alcmena lay,
When he begot the great Tirynthian groome:
Or lyke as when he with thy selfe did lie
And begot Majesty.
And let the mayds and yong men cease to sing;
Ne let the woods them answer nor theyr eccho ring.

Let no lamenting cryes, nor dolefull teares,
Be heard all night within, nor yet without:
Ne let false whispers, breeding hidden feares,
Breake gentle sleepe with misconceived dout.
Let no deluding dreames, nor dreadfull sights,
Make sudden sad affrights;
Ne let house-fyres, nor lightnings helpelesse harmes,
Ne let the Pouke, nor other evill sprights,
Ne let mischivous witches with theyr charmes,
Ne let hob Goblins, names whose sence we see not,
Fray us with things that be not:
Let not the shriech Oule nor the Storke be heard,
Nor the night Raven, that still deadly yels;
Nor damned ghosts, cald up with mighty spels,
Nor griesly vultures, make us once affeard:
Ne let th' unpleasant Quayre of Frogs still croking
Make us to wish theyr choking.
Let none of these theyr drery accents sing;
Ne let the woods them answer, nor theyr eccho ring.

But let stil Silence trew night-watches keepe,
That sacred Peace may in assurance rayne,
And tymely Sleep, when it is tyme to sleepe,
May poure his limbs forth on your pleasant playne;

The whiles an hundred little winged loves,
Like divers-fethered doves,
Shall fly and flutter round about your bed,
And in the secret darke, that none reproves,
Their prety stealthes shal worke, and snares shal spread
To filch away sweet snatches of delight,
Conceald through covert night.

Ye sonnes of Venus, play your sports at will!
For greedy pleasure, carelesse of your toyes,
Thinks more upon her paradise of joyes,
Then what ye do, albe it good or ill.
All night therefore attend your merry play,
For it will soone be day:
Now none doth hinder you, that say or sing;
Ne will the woods now answer, nor your Eccho ring.

Who is the same, which at my window peepes?
Or whose is that faire face that shines so bright?
Is it not Cinthia, she that never sleepes,
But walkes about high heaven al the night?
O! fayrest goddesse, do thou not envy
My love with me to spy:
For thou likewise didst love, though now unthought,
And for a fleece of wooll, which privily
The Latmian shepherd once unto thee brought,
His pleasures with thee wrought.
Therefore to us be favorable now;
And sith of wemens labours thou hast charge,
And generation goodly dost enlarge,
Encline thy will t'effect our wishfull vow,
And the chast wombe informe with timely seed
That may our comfort breed:
Till which we cease our hopefull hap to sing;
Ne let the woods us answeare, nor our Eccho ring.

And thou, great Juno! which with awful might
The lawes of wedlock still dost patronize;
And the religion of the faith first plight
With sacred rites hast taught to solemnize;
And eeke for comfort often called art
Of women in their smart;
Eternally bind thou this lovely band,

And all thy blessings unto us impart.
And thou, glad Genius! in whose gentle hand
The bridale bowre and geniall bed remaine,
Without blemish or staine;
And the sweet pleasures of theyr loves delight
With secret ayde doest succour and supply,
Till they bring forth the fruitfull progeny;
Send us the timely fruit of this same night.
And thou, fayre Hebe! and thou, Hymen free!
Grant that it may so be.
Til which we cease your further prayse to sing;
Ne any woods shall answer, nor your Eccho ring.

And ye high heavens, the temple of the gods,
In which a thousand torches flaming bright
Doe burne, that to us wretched earthly clods
In dreadful darknesse lend desired light
And all ye powers which in the same remayne,
More then we men can fayne!
Poure out your blessing on us plentiously,
And happy influence upon us raine,
That we may raise a large posterity,
Which from the earth, which they may long possesse
With lasting happinesse,
Up to your haughty pallaces may mount;
And, for the guerdon of theyr glorious merit,
May heavenly tabernacles there inherit,
Of blessed Saints for to increase the count.
So let us rest, sweet love, in hope of this,
And cease till then our tymely joyes to sing:
The woods no more us answer, nor our eccho ring!

Song! made in lieu of many ornaments,
With which my love should duly have been dect,
Which cutting off through hasty accidents,
Ye would not stay your dew time to expect,
But promist both to recompens;
Be unto her a goodly ornament,
And for short time an endlesse moniment.

Edmund Spenser

From 'Daphnaida'

SHE fell away in her first ages spring,
Whil'st yet her leafe was greene, and fresh her rinde,
And whil'st her braunch faire blossomes foorth did bring,
She fell away against all course of kinde.
For age to dye is right, but youth is wrong;
She fel away like fruit blowne downe with winde.
Weepe, Shepheard! weepe, to make my undersong.

Yet fell she not as one enforst to dye,
Ne dyde with dread and grudging discontent,
But as one toylde with travaile downe doth lye,
So lay she downe, as if to sleepe she went,
And closde her eyes with carelesse quietnesse;
The whiles soft death away her spirit hent,
And soule assoyld from sinfull fleshlinesse.

How happie was I when I saw her leade
The Shepheards daughters dauncing in a rownd!
How trimly would she trace and softly tread
The tender grasse, with rosie garland crownd!
And when she list advance her heavenly voyce,
Both Nymphes and Muses nigh she made astownd,
And flocks and shepheards caused to rejoyce.

But now, ye Shepheard lasses! who shall lead
Your wandring troupes, or sing your virelayes?
Or who shall dight your bowres, sith she is dead
That was the Lady of your holy-dayes?
Let now your blisse be turned into bale,
And into plaints convert your joyous playes,
And with the same fill every hill and dale.

For I will walke this wandring pilgrimage,
Throughout the world from one to other end,
And in affliction wast my better age:
My bread shall be the anguish of my mind,
My drink the teares which fro mine eyed do raine,
My bed the ground that hardest I may finde;
So will I wilfully increase my paine.

Ne sleepe (the harbenger of wearie wights)
Shall ever lodge upon mine ey-lids more;
Ne shall with rest refresh my fainting sprights,
Nor failing force to former strength restore:
But I will wake and sorrow all the night
With Philumene, my fortune to deplore;
With Philumene, the partner of my plight.

And ever as I see the starres to fall,
And under ground to goe to give them light
Which dwell in darknes, I to minde will call
How my fair Starre (that shinde on me so bright)
Fell sodainly and faded under ground;
Since whose departure, day is turnd to night,
And night without a Venus starre is found.

And she, my love that was, my Saint that is,
When she beholds from her celestiaall throne
(In which shee joyeth in eternall blis)
My bitter penance, will my case bemone,
And pitie me that living thus doo die;
For heavenly spirits have compassion
On mortall men, and rue their miserie.

So when I have with sorowe satisfide
Th' importune fates, which vengeance on me seeke,
And th' heavens with long languor pacifide,
She, for pure pitie of my sufferance meeke,
Will send for me; for which I daylie long:
And will till then my painful penance eeke.
Weep, Shepheard! weep, to make my undersong!

Edmund Spenser

Iambicum Trimetrum

Unhappy verse, the witness of my unhappy state,
Make thy self flutt'ring wings of thy fast flying
Thought, and fly forth unto my love, wheresoever she be:
Whether lying restless in heavy bed, or else
Sitting so cheerless at the cheerful board, or else
Playing alone careless on her heavenly virginals.
If in bed, tell her, that my eyes can take no rest:
If at board, tell her, that my mouth can eat no meat:
If at her virginals, tell her, I can hear no mirth.
Asked why? say: waking love suffereth no sleep:
Say that raging love doth appal the weak stomach:
Say, that lamenting love marreth the musical.
Tell her, that her pleasures were wont to lull me asleep:
Tell her, that her beauty was wont to feed mine eyes:
Tell her, that her sweet tongue was wont to make me mirth.
Now do I nightly waste, wanting my kindly rest:
Now do I daily starve, wanting my lively food:
Now do I always die, wanting thy timely mirth.
And if I waste, who will bewail my heavy chance?
And if I starve, who will record my cursed end?
And if I die, who will say: "This was Immerito"?

Edmund Spenser

Ice And Fire

My love is like to ice, and I to fire:
How comes it then that this her cold so great
Is not dissolved through my so hot desire,
But harder grows the more I her entreat?
Or how comes it that my exceeding heat
Is not allayed by her heart-frozen cold,
But that I burn much more in boiling sweat,
And feel my flames augmented manifold?
What more miraculous thing may be told,
That fire, which all things melts, should harden ice,
And ice, which is congeal'd with senseless cold,
Should kindle fire by wonderful device?
Such is the power of love in gentle mind,
That it can alter all the course of kind.

Edmund Spenser

Muiopotmos, Or The Fate Of The Butterflie

I SING of deadly dolorous debate,
Stir'd vp through wrathfull Nemesis despight,
Betwixt two mightie ones of great estate,
Drawne into armes, and prooffe of mortall fight,
Through proud ambition, and hartswelling hate,
Whilest neither could the others greater might
And sdeignfull scorne endure; that from small iarre
Their wraths at length broke into open warre.

The rote whereof and tragicall effect,
Vouchsafe, O thou the mournfulst Muse of nyne,
That wontst the tragick stage for to direct,
In funerall complaints and wayfull tyne,
Reueale to me, and all the meanes detect,
Through which sad Clarion did at last declyne
To lowest wretchednes; And is there then
Such rancor in the harts of mightie men?

Of all the race of siluer-winged Flies
Which doo possesse the Empire of the aire,
Betwixt the centred earth, and azure skies,
Was none more fauourable, nor more faire,
Whilst heauen did fauour his felicities,
Then Clarion, the eldest sonne and haire
Of Muscaroll, and in his fathers sight
Of all aliue did seeme the fairest wight.

With fruitfull hope his aged breast he fed
Of future good, which his young toward yeares,
Full of braue courage and bold hardyhed,
Aboue th' ensample of his equall peares,
Did largely promise, and to him forered,
(Whilst oft his heart did melt in tender teares)
That he in time would sure proue such an one,
As should be worthie of his fathers throne.

The fresh young flie, in whom the kindly fire
Of lustfull yong[th] began to kindle fast,
Did much disdain to subject his desire

To loathsome sloth, or houres in ease to wast,
But ioy'd to range abroad in fresh attire;
Through the wide compas of the ayrie coast,
And with vnwearied wings each part t'inquire
Of the wide rule of his renowned sire.

For he so swift and nimble was of flight,
That from this lower tract he dar'd to stie
Vp to the clowdes, and thence with pineons light,
To mount aloft vnto the Christall skie,
To vew the workmanship of heauens hight:
Whence downe descending he along would flie
Vpon the streaming riuers, sport to finde;
And oft would dare to tempt the troublous winde.
So on a Summers day, when season milde

With gentle calme the world had quieted,
And high in heauen Hyperionsfierie childe
Ascending, did his beames abroad dispred,
Whiles all the heauens on lower creatures smilde;
Yong Clarion with vaunted lustie head,
After his guize did cast abroad to fare;
And theretoo gan his furnitures prepare.
His breastplate first, that was of substance pure,
Before his noble heart he firmly bound,
That mought his life from yron death assure,

And ward his gentle corpes from cruell wound:
For it by arte was framed to endure
The bit of balefull steele and bitter stownd,
No lesse then that, which Vulcane made to sheild
Achilles life from fate of Troyan field.
And then about his shoulders broad he threw
An hairie hide of some wild beast, whom hee
In saluage forrest by aduenture slew,
And rest the spoyle his ornament to bee:
Which spredding all his backe with dreadfull vew,

Made all that him so horrible did see,
Thinke him Alcides with the Lyons skin,
When the Næmean Conquest he did win.
Vpon his head his glistering Burganet,

The which was wrought by wonderous deuce,
And curiously engrauen, he did set:
The mettall was of rare and passing price;
Not Bilbo steele, nor brasse from Corinth fet,
Nor costly Oricalche from strange Phoenice;
But such as could both Phoebus arrowes ward,

And th' hayling darts of heauen beating hard.
Therein two deadly weapons fixt he bore,
Strongly outlaunced towards either side,
Like two sharpe speares, his enemies to gore:
Like as a warlike Brigandine, applyde
To fight, layes forth her threatfull pikes afore,
The engines which in them sad death doo hyde:
So did this flie outstretch his fearefull hornes,
Yet so as him their terrour more adornes.

Lastly his shinie wings as siluer bright,
Painted with thousand colours, passing farre
All Painters skill, he did about him dight:
Not halfe so manie sundrie colours arre
In Iris bowe, ne heauen doth shine so bright,
Distinguished with manie a twinckling starre,
Nor Iunoes Bird in her ey-spotted traine
So many goodly colours doth containe.

Ne (may it be withouten perill spoken)
The Archer God, the son of Cytheree,
That ioyes on wretched louers to be wroken,
And heaped spoyles of bleeding harts to see,
Beares in his wings so manie a changefull token.
Ah my liege Lord, forgiue it vnto mee,
If ought against thine honour I haue tolde;
Yet sure those wings were fairer manifolde.

Full manie a Ladie faire, in Court full oft
Beholding them, him secretly enuide,
And wisht that two such fannes, so silken soft,
And golden faire, her Loue would her prouide;
Or that when them the gorgeous Flie had doft,
Some one that would with grace be gratifide,
From him would steale them priuily away,

And bring to her so precious a pray.

Report is that dame Venus on a day
In spring when flowres doo clothe the fruitfull ground,
Walking abroad with all her Nymphes to play,
Bad her faire damzels flocking her arownd,
To gather flowres, her forehead to array:
Emongst the rest a gentle Nymph was found,
Hight Astery, excelling all the crewe
In curteous vsage, and vnstained hewe

Who beeing nimbler ioynted than the rest,
And more industrious, gathered more store
Of the fields honour, than the others best;
Which they in secret harts enuying sore,
Tolde Venus, when her as the worthiest
She praisd, that Cupide (as they heard before)
Did lend her secret aide, in gathering
Into her lap the children of the spring.
Wherof the Goddessse gathering iealous feare,

Not yet vnmindfull how not long agoe
Her sonne to Psyche secrete loue did beare,
And long it close conceal'd, till mickle woe
Thereof arose, and manie a ruffull teare;
Reason with sudden rage did ouergoe,
And giuing hastie credit to th'accuser,
Was led away of them that did abuse her.
Eftsoones that Damzell by her heauenly might,
She turn'd into a winged Butterflie,
In the wide aire to make her wandring flight;

And all those flowres, with which so plenteouslie
Her lap she filled had, that bred her spright,
She placed in her wings, for memorie
Of her pretended crime, though crime none were:
Since which that flie them in her wings doth beare.
Thus the fresh Clarion being readie dight,
Vnto his iourney did himselfe addresse,
And with good speed began to take his flight:
Ouer the fields in his franke lustinesse,

And all the countrey wide he did possesse,
Feeding vpon their pleasures bounteouslie,
That none gainsaid, nor none him did enuie.
The woods, the riuers, and the meadowes green,
With his aire-cutting wings he measur'd wide,
Ne did he leaue the mountaines bare vnseene,
Nor the ranke grassie fennes delights vntride.
But none of these, how euer sweete they beene,
Mote please his fancie, nor him cause t'abide:
His choicefull sense with euerie change doth flit.

No common things may please a wauering wit.
To the gay gardins his vnstaid desire
Him wholly caried, to refresh his sprights:
There lauish Nature in her best attire,
Powres forth sweete odors, and alluring sights;
And Arte with her contending, doth aspire
T'excell the naturall, with made delights:
And all that faire or pleasant may be found,
In riotous excesse doth there abound.

There he arriuing, round about doth flie,
From bed to bed, from one to other border,
And takes suruey with curious busie eye,
Of euerie flowre and herbe there set in order;
Now this, now that he tasteth tenderly,
Yet none of them he rudely doth disorder,
Ne with his feete their silken leaues deface;
But pastures on the pleasures of each place.

And euermore with most varietie,
And change of sweetnesse (for all change is sweete)
He casts his glutton sense to satisfie,
Now sucking of the sap of herbe most meete,
Or of the deaw, which yet on them does lie,
Now in the same bathing his tender feete:
And then he pearcheth on some braunch thereby,
To weather him, and his moyst wings to dry.

And then againe he turneth to his play,
To spoyle the pleasure of that Paradise:
The wholesome Saluge, and Lauender still gray,

Ranke smelling Rue, and Cummin good for eyes,
The Roses rainging in the pride of May,
Sharpe Isope, good for greene wounds remedies,
Faire Marigoldes, and Bees alluring Thime,
Sweet Marioram, and Daysies decking prime.

Coole Violets, and Orpine growing still,
Embathed Balme, and chearfull Galingale,
Fresh Costmarie, and breathfull Camomill,
Red Poppie, and drink-quickning Setuale,
Veyne-healing Veruen, and hed-purging Dill,
Sound Sauorie, and Bazil hartie-hale,
Fat Colworts and comforting Perseline,
Colde Lettuce, and refreshing Rosmarine.

And whatso else of virtue good or ill
Grewe in the Gardin, fetcht from farre away,
Of euerie one he takes, and tastes at will,
And on their pleasures greedily doth pray.
Then when he hath both plaid, and fed his fill,
In the warme Sunne he doth himselfe embay,
And there him rests in riotous siffisaunce
Of all his gladfulness, and kingly ioyauunce.
What more felicitie can fall to creature

Than to enioy delight with libertie,
And to be Lord of all the workes of Nature,
To raine in th' aire from th' earth to highest skie,
To feed on flowres, and weeds of glorious feature,
To take what euer thing doth please the eie?
Who rests not pleased with such happines,
Well worthie he to taste of wretchednes.
But what on earth can long abide in state?
Or who can him assure of happie day;
Sith morning faire may bring fowle euening late,

And least mishap the most blisse alter may?
For thousand perills lie in close awaite
About vs daylie, to worke our decay;
That none, except a God, or God him guide,
May them auoyde, or remedie prouide.
And whatso heuens in their secrete doome

Ordained haue, how can fraile fleshly wight
Forecast, but it must needs to issue come?
The sea, the aire, the fire, the day, the night,
And th' armies of their creatures all and some

Do serue to them, and with importune might
Warre against vs the vassals of their will.
Who then can saue, what they dispose to spill?
Not thou, O Clarion, though fairest thou
Of all thy kinde, vnhappye happye Flie,
Whose cruell fate is wouen euen now
Of Ioues owne hand, to worke thy miserie:
Ne may thee helpe the manie hartie vow,
Which thy olde Sire with sacred pietie
Hath powred forth for thee, and th' altars spent:

Nought may thee saue from heauens auengement.
It fortun'd (as heauens had behight)
That in this gardin, where yong Clarion
Was wont to solace him, a wicked wight,
The foe of faire things, th' author of confusion,
The shame of Nature, the bondslaue of spight,
Had lately built his hatefull mansion;
And, lurking closely, in awayte now lay
How he might anie in his trap betray.

But when he spide the ioyous Butterflie
In this faire plot displacing too and fro,
Fearles of foes and hidden ieopardie,
Lord how he gan for to bestirre him tho,
And to his wicked worke each part applie:
His heate did earne against his hated foe,
And bowels so with ranckling poyson swelde,
That scarce the skin the strong contagion helde.

The cause why he this Flie so maliced,
Was (as in stories it is written found)
For that his mother which him bore and bred,
The most fine-fingred workwoman on ground,
Arachne, by his meanes was vanquished
Of Pallas, and in her owne skill confound,
When she with her for excellence contended,

That wrought her shame, and sorrow neuer ended.

For the Tritonian goddesse, hauing hard
Her blazed fame, which all the world had fil'd,
Came downe to proue the truth, and due reward
For her prais-worthie workmanship to yeild
But the presumptuous Damzel rashly dar'd
The Goddess selfe to challenge to the field,
And to compare with her in curious skill
Of workes with loome, with needle, and with quill.

Minerua did the challenge not refuse,
But deign'd with her the paragon to make:
So to their worke they sit, and each doth chuse
What storie she will for her tapet take.
Arachne figur'd how Ioue did abuse
Europa like a Bull, and on his backe
Her through the sea did beare; so liuely seene,
That it true Sea, and true Bull ye would weene.

Shee seem'd still backe vnto the land to looke,
And her play-fellowes aide to call, and feare
The dashing of the waues, that vp she tooke
Her daintie feete, and garments gathered neare:
But (Lord) how she in euerie member shooke,
When as the land she saw no more appeare,
But a wilde wildernes of waters deepe:
Then gan she greatly to lament and weepe.

Before the Bull she pictur'd winged Loue,
With his yong brother Sport, light fluttering
Vpon the waues, as each had beene a Doue;
The one his bowe and shafts, the other Spring.
A burning Teade about his head did moue,
As in their Syres new loue both triumphing:
And manie Nymphes about them flocking round,
And manie Tritons, which did their hornes sound.

And round about, her worke she did empale
With a faire border wrought of sundrie flowres,
Enwouen with an Yuie winding trayle:
A goodly worke, full fit for Kingly bowres,

Such as Dame Pallas, such as Enuie pale,
That al good things with venemous tooth deuowres,
Could not accuse. Then gan the Goddesse bright
Her selfe likewise vnto her worke to dight.

She made the storie of the old debate
Which she with Neptune did for Athens trie:
Twelue Gods doo sit around in royall state,
And Ioue in midst with awfull Maiestie,
To iudge the strife betweene them stirred late:
Each of the Gods by his like visnomie
Eathe to be knowen; but Ioue aboue them all,
By his great lookes and power Imperiall.

Before them stands the God of Seas in place,
Clayming that sea-coast Citie as his right,
And strikes the rockes with his three-forked mace;
Whenceforth issues a warlike steed in sight,
The signe by which he chalengeth the place,
That all the Gods, which saw his wondrous might
Did surely deeme the victorie his due:
But seldome seene, foriudgement proueth true.

Then to her selfe she giues her Aegide shield,
And steelhed speare, and morion on her hedd,
Such as she oft is seene in warlicke field:
Then sets she forth, how with her weapon dredd
She smote the ground, the which streight foorth did yield
A fruitfull Olyue tree, with berries spredd,
That all the Gods admir'd; then all the storie
She compast with a wreathe of Olyues hoarie.

Emongst these leaues she made a Butterflie,
With excellent deuce and wondrous flight,
Fluttring among the Oliues wantonly,
That seem'd to liue, so like it was in sight:
The veluet nap which on his wings doth lie,
The siken downe with which his backe is dight,
His broad outstretched hornes, his [h]ayrie thies,
His glorious colours, and his glittering eies.

Which when Arachne saw, as ouerlaid

And mastered with workmanship so rare,
She stood astonied long, ne ought gainesaid,
And with fast fixed eyes on her did stare,
And by her silence, signe of one dismaid,
The victorie did yeeld her as her share:
Yet she did inly fret, and felly burne,
And all her blood to poysonous rancor turne:

That shortly from the shape of womanhed,
Such as she was, when Pallas she attempted
, She grew to hideous shape of dryrihed,
Pined with grieffe of folly late repented:
Eftsoones her white streight legs were altered
To crooked crawling shankes, of marrowe emptied,
And her faire face to fowle and loathsome hewe
And her fine corpses to a bag of venim grewe.

This cursed creature, mindfull of that olde
Enfested grudge, the which his mother felt,
So soone as Clarion he did beholde,
His heart with vengefull malice inly swelt;
And weauing straight a net with manie a folde
About the caue, in which he lurking dwelt,
With fine small cords about it stretched wide,
So finely sponne, that scarce they could be spide.

Not anie damzell, which her vaunteth most
In skilfull knitting of soft silken twyne;
Nor anie skil'd in workmanship embost;
Nor anie skil'd in loupes of fingring fine,
Might in their diuers cunning euer dare,
With this so curious networke to compare.
Ne doo I thinke, that that same subtil gin,

The which the Lemnian God framde craftilie,
Mars sleeping with his wife to compasse in,
That all the Gods with common mockerie
Might laugh at them, and scorne their shamefull sin,
Was like to this. This same he did applie
For to entrap the careles Clarion,
That ran'gd each where without suspition.
Suspition of friend, nor feare of foe,

That hazarded his health, had he at all,
But walkt at will, and wandred too and fro,

In the pride of his freedome principall:
Litle wist he his fatall future woe,
But was secure, the liker he to fall.
He likest is to fall into mischaunce,
That is regardles of his gouernaunce.
Yet still Aragnoll (so his foe was hight)
Lay lurking couertly him to surprise,
And all his gins that him entangle might,
Drest in good order as he could devise.
At length the foolish Flie without foresight,

As he that did all danger quite despise,
Toward those parts came flying careleslie
, Where hidden was his hatefull enemie.
Who, seeing him, with secrete ioy therefore
Did tickle inwardly in euerie vaine,
And his false hart fraught with all treasons store,
Was fil'd with hope, his purpose to obtaine:
Himselfe he close vpgathered more and more
Into his den, that his deceiptfull traine
By his there being might not be bewraid,

Ne anie noyse, ne anie motion made.
Like as a wily Foxe, that hauing spide,
Where on a sunnie banke the Lambes doo play,
Full closely creeping by the hinder side,
Lyes in ambushment of his hoped pray,
Ne stirreth limbe, till seeing readie tide,
He rusheth forth, and snatcheth quite away
One of the little yonglings vnawares:
So to his worke Aragnoll him prepares.

Who now shall giue vnto my heauie eyes
A well of teares, that all may ouerflow?
Or where shall I finde lamentable cryes,
And mournfull tunes enough my grieffe to show?
Helpe O thou Tragick Muse, me to devise
Notes sad enough t'expresse this bitter throw:
For loe, the drerie stownd is now arriued,

That of all happines hath vs depriued.

The luckles Clarion, whether cruell Fate,
Or wicked Fortune faultles him misled,
Or some vngracious blast out of the gate
Of Aeoles raine perforce him droue on hed,
Was (O sad hap and howre vnfortunate)
With violent swift flight forth caried
Into the cursed cobweb, which his foe
Had framed for his finall ouerthroe.

There the fond Flie entangled, struggled long,
Himselfe to free thereout; but all in vaine.
For striuing more, the more in laces strong
Himselfe he tide, and wrapt his winges twine
In lymie snares the subtill loupes among;
That in the ende he breathlesse did remaine,
And all his yougthly forces idly spent,
Him to the mercie of th' auenger lent.

Which when the greisly tyrant did espie,
Like a grimme Lyon rushing with fierce might
Out of his den, he seized greedilie
On the resistles pray, and with fell spight,
Vnder the left wing stroke his weapon slie
Into his heart, that his deepe groning spright
In bloodie streames foorth fled into the aire,
His bodie left the spectacle of care.

Edmund Spenser

Mutability

When I bethink me on that speech whilere,
Of Mutability, and well it weigh:
Me seems, that though she all unworthy were
Of the Heav'ns Rule; yet very sooth to say,
In all things else she bears the greatest sway.
Which makes me loathe this state of life so tickle,
And love of things so vain to cast away;
Whose flow'ring pride, so fading and so fickle,
Short Time shall soon cut down with his consuming sickle.

Then gin I think on that which Nature said.
Of that same time when no more Change shall be,
But steadfast rest of all things firmly stayed
Upon the pillars of Eternity,
That is contrare to Mutability:
For, all that moveth, doth in Change delight:
But thence-forth all shall rest eternally
With Him that is the God of Sabbaoth hight:
O that great Sabbaoth God, grant me that Sabbaoth's sight.

Edmund Spenser

My Love Is Like To Ice

My love is like to ice, and I to fire:
How comes it then that this her cold so great
Is not dissolved through my so hot desire,
But harder grows the more I her entreat?
Or how comes it that my exceeding heat
Is not allayed by her heart-frozen cold,
But that I burn much more in boiling sweat,
And feel my flames augmented manifold?
What more miraculous thing may be told,
That fire, which all things melts, should harden ice,
And ice, which is congeal's with senseless cold,
Should kindle fire by wonderful device?
Such is the power of love in gentle mind,
That it can alter all the course of kind.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 1

YE learned sisters which haue oftentimes
beene to me ayding, others to adorne:
Whom ye thought worthy of your gracefull rymes,
That euen the greatest did not greatly scorne
To heare theyr names sung in your simply layes,
But ioyed in theyr prayse.

And when ye lift your owne mishaps to mourne,
Which death, or loue, or fortunes wreck did rayse,
Your string could soone to sadder tenor turne,
And teach the woods and waters to lament
Your dolefull dreriment.

Now lay those sorrowfull complaints aside,
And hauing all your heads with girland crownd,
Helpe me mine owne loues prayses to resound,
Ne let the same of any be enuide,
So Orpheus did for his owne bride,
So I vnto my selfe alone will sing,
The woods shall to me answer and my Eccho ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 10

TEll me ye merchants daughters did ye see
So fayre a creature in your towne before,
So sweet, so louely, and so mild as she,
Adornd with beautyes grace and vertues store,
Her goodly eyes lyke Saphyres shining bright,
Her forehead yuory white,
Her cheekes lyke apples which the sun hath rudded,
Her lips lyke cherryes charming men to byte,
Her brest like to a bowle of creame vncrudded,
Her paps lyke lyllies budded,
Her snowie necke lyke to a marble towre,
And allher body like a pallace fayre,
Ascending vppe with many a stately stayre,
To honors seat and chastities sweet bowre.
Why stand ye still ye virgins in amaze,
Vpon her so to gaze,
Whiles ye forget your former lay to sing,
To which the woods did answer and your eccho ring

Edmund Spenser

Poem 11

BVt if ye saw that which no eyes can see,
The inward beauty of her liuely spright,
Garnisht with heauenly guifts of high degree,
Much more then would ye wonder at that sight,
And stand astonisht lyke to those which red
Medusaes mazeful hed.
There dwels sweet loue and constant chastity,
Vnspotted fayth and comely womanhood,
Regard of honour and mild modesty,
There vertue raynes as Queene in royal throne,
And giueth lawes alone.
The which the base affections doe obey,
And yeeld theyr seruices vnto her will
Ne thought of thing vncomely euer may
Thereto approach to tempt her mind to ill.
Had ye once seene these her celestial treasures,
And vnreuealed pleasures,
Then would ye wonder and her prayses sing,
That al the woods should answer and your echo ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 12

OPen the temple gates vnto my loue,
Open them wide that she may enter in,
And all the postes adorne as doth behoue,
And all the pillours deck with girlands trim,
For to recyue this Saynt with honour dew,
That commeth in to you,
With trembling steps and humble reuerence,
She commeth in, before th'almighties vew,
Of her ye virgins learne obedience,
When so ye come into those holy places,
To humble your proud faces
Bring her vp to th'high altar that she may,
The sacred ceremonies there partake,
The which do endlesse matrimony make,
And let the roring Organs loudly play;
The praises of the Lord in liuely notes,
The whiles with hollow throates.
The Choristers the ioyous Antheme sing,
That al the woods may answere and their eccho ring

Edmund Spenser

Poem 13

Behold whiles she before the altar stands
Hearing the holy priest that to her speakes
And blesseth her with his two happy hands,
How the red roses flush vp in her cheekes,
And the pure snow with goodly vermill stayne,
Like crimsin dyde in grayne,
That euen th'Angels which continually,
About the sacred Altare doe remaine,
Forget their seruice and about her fly,
Ofte peeping in her face that seemes more fayre,
The more they on it stare.
But her sad eyes still fastened on the ground,
Are gouerned with goodly modesty,
That suffers not one looke to glaunce awry,
Which may let in a little thought vnsownd,
Why blush ye loue to giue to me your hand,
The pledge of all our band,
Sing ye sweet Angels Alleluya sing,
That all the woods may answere and your eccho ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 14

NOw al is done; bring home the bride againe,
bring home the triumph of our victory,
Bring home with you the glory of her gaine,
With ioyance bring her and with iollity.
Neuer had man more ioyfull day then this,
Whom heauen would heape with blis.
Make feast therefore now all this liue long day,
This day for euer to me holy is,
Poure out the wine without restraint or stay,
Poure not by cups, but by the belly full,
Poure out to all that wull,
And sprinkle all the postes and wals with wine,
That they may sweat, and drunken be withall.
Crowne ye God Bacchus with a coronall,
And Hymen also crowne with wreathes of vine,
And let the Graces daunce vnto the rest;
For they can doo it best:
The whiles the maydens doe theyr carroll sing,
To which the woods shal answer & theyr eccho ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 15

RIng ye the bells, ye yong men of the towne,
And leaue your wonted labors for this day:
This day is holy; doe ye write it dovvne,
that ye for euer it remember may.
This day the sunne is in his chiefest hight,
With Barnaby the bright,
>From whence declining daily by degrees,
He somewhat loseth of his heat and light,
When once the Crab behind his back he sees.
But for this time it ill ordained was,
To chose the longest day in all the yeare,
And shortest night, when longest fitter weare.
Yet neuer day so long, but late would passe.
Ring ye the bells, to make it weare away,
And bonefiers make all day,
And daunce about them, and about them sing:
that all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 16

AH when will this long vveary day haue end,
and lende me leaue to come vnto my loue?
Hovv slowvly do the houres theyr numbers spend?
How slowly does sad Time his feathers moue?
Hast thee O fayrest Planet to thy home
Within the Westerne some:
Thy tyred steedes long since haue need of rest.
Long though it be, at last I see it gloome,
And the bright euening star with golden creast
Appeare out of the East.
Fayre childe of beauty, glorious lampe of loue
That all the host of heauen in rankes doost lead,
And guydest louers through the nights dread,
How chearefully thou lookest from aboue,
And seemst to laugh atweene thy twinkling light
As ioying in the sight
Of these glad many which for ioy doe sing,
That all the woods them answer and their echo ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 17

Now ceasse ye damsels your delights forepast,
Enough is it, that all the day was youres:
Now day is doen, and night is nighing fast:
Now bring the Bryde into the brydall boures.
Now night is come, now soone her disaray,
And in her bed her lay;
Lay her in lillies and in violets,
And silken courteins ouer her display,
And odour sheetes, and Arras couerlets,
Behold how goodly my faire loue does ly
In proud humility;
Like vnto Maia, when as Ioue her tooke,
In Tempe, lying on the flowry gras,
Twixt sleepe and wake, after she weary was,
With bathing in the Acidalian brooke
Now it is night, ye damsels may be gon,
And leaue my loue alone,
And leaue likewise your former lay to sing:
The woods no more shal answere, nor your echo ring

Edmund Spenser

Poem 18

NOw welcome night, thou night so long expected,
that long daies labour doest at last defray,
And all my cares, which cruell loue collected,
Hast sumd in one, and cancelled for aye:
Spread thy broad wing ouer my loue and me,
that no man may vs see,
And in thy sable mantle vs enwrap,
>From feare of perrill and foule horror free.
Let no false treason seeke vs to entrap,
Nor any dread disquiet once annoy
the safety of our ioy:
But let the night be calme and quietsome,
Without tempestuous storms or sad afray:
Lyke as when Ioue with fayre Alcmena lay,
When he begot the great Tirynthian groome:
Or lyke as when he with thy selfe did lie,
And begot Maiesty.
And let the mayds and yongmen cease to sing:
Ne let the woods them answer, nor theyr eccho ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 19

LEt no lamenting cryes, nor dolefull teares,
Be heard all night within nor yet without:
Ne let false whispers breeding hidden feares,
Breake gentle sleepe with misconceiued dout.
Let no deluding dreames, nor dreadful sights
Make sudden sad affrights;
Ne let housefyres, nor lightnings helpelesse harmes,
Ne led the Ponke, nor other euill sprights,
Ne let mischiuous witches with theyr charmes,
Ne let hob Goblins, names whose sence we see not,
Fray vs with things that be not.
Let not the shriech Oule, nor the Storke be heard:
Nor the night Rauen that still deadly yels,
Nor damned ghosts cald vp with mighty spels,
Nor grievly vultures make vs once affeard:
Ne let th'unpleasant Quayre of Frogs still croking
Make vs to wish theyr choking.
Let none of these theyr drery accents sing;
Ne let the woods them answer, nor theyr eccho ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 2

EARly before the worlds light giuing lampe,
His golden beame vpon the hills doth spred,
Hauing disperst the nights vnchearefull dampe,
Doe ye awake and with fresh lusty hed,
Go to the bowre of my beloued loue,
My truest turtle doue
Bid her awake; for Hymen is awake,
And long since ready forth his maske to moue,
With his bright Tead that flames with many a flake,
And many a bachelor to waite on him,
In theyr fresh garments trim.
Bid her awake therefore and soone her dight,
For lo the wished day is come at last,
That shall for al the paynes and sorrowes past,
Pay to her vsury of long delight,
And whylest she doth her dight,
Doe ye to her of ioy and solace sing,
That all the woods may answer and your eccho ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 20

BVt let stil Silence trew night watches keepe,
That sacred peace may in assurance rayne,
And tymely sleep, when it is tyme to sleepe,
May poure his limbs forth on your pleasant playne,
The whiles an hundred little winged loues,
Like diuers fethered doues,
Shall fly and flutter round about your bed,
And in the secret darke, that none reprocues,
Their prey stealthes shal worke, & snares shal spread
To filch away sweet snatches of delight,
Conceald through couert night.
Ye sonnes of Venus, play your sports at will,
For greedy pleasure, carelesse of your toys,
Thinks more vpon her paradise of ioyes,
Then what ye do, albe it good or ill.
All night therefore attend your merry play,
For it will soone be day:
Now none doth hinder you, that say or sing,
Ne will the woods now answer, nor your Eccho ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 21

Who is the same, which at my window peepes?
Or whose is that faire face, that shines so bright,
Is it not Cinthia, she that neuer sleepes,
But walkes about high heauen al the night?
O fayrest goddesse, do thou not enuy
My loue with me to spy:
For thou likewise didst loue, though now vnthought,
And for a fleece of woll, which priuily,
The Latmian shephard once vnto thee brought,
His pleasures with thee wrought,
Therefore to vs be fauorable now;
And sith of wemens labours thou hast charge,
And generation goodly dost enlarge,
Encline they will t'effect our wishfull vow,
And the chast wombe informe with timely seed,
That may our comfort breed:
Till which we cease our hopefull hap to sing,
Ne let the woods vs answeere, nor our Eccho ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 22

ANd thou great Iuno, which with awful might
the lawes of wedlock still dost patronize,
And the religion of the faith first plight
With sacred rites hast taught to solemnize:
and eeke for comfort often called art
Of women in their smart,
Eternally bind thou this louely band,
And all thy blessings vnto vs impart.
And thou glad Genius, in whose gentle hand,
The bridale bowre and geniall bed remaine,
Without blemish or staine.
And the sweet pleasures of theyr loues delight
With secret ayde doest succour and supply,
Till they bring forth the fruitfull progeny,
Send vs the timely fruit of this same night.
And thou fayre Hebe, and thou Hymen free,
Grant that it may so be.
Til which we cease your further prayse to sing,
Ne any woods shal answer, nor your Eccho ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 23

And ye high heuens, the temple of the gods,
In which a thousand torches flaming bright
Doe burne, that to vs wretched earthly clods:
In dreadful darknesse lend desired light;
And all ye powers which in the same remayne,
More then we men can fayne,
Poure out your blessing on vs plentiously,
And happy influence vpon vs raine,
That we may raise a large posterity,
Which from the earth, which they may long possesse,
With lasting happinesse,
Vp to your haughty pallaces may mount,
And for the guerdon of theyr glorious merit
May heauenly tabernacles there inherit,
Of blessed Saints for to increase the count.
So let vs rest, sweet loue, in hope of this,
And cease till then our tymely ioyes to sing,
The woods no more vs answer, nor our eccho ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 24

SOnge made in lieu of many ornaments,
With which my loue should duly haue bene dect,
Which cutting off through hasty accidents,
Ye would not stay your dew time to expect,
But promist both to recompens,
Be vnto her a goodly ornament,
And for short time an endlesse monument.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 3

BRing with you all the Nymphes that you can heare
both of the riuers and the forrests greene:
And of the sea that neighbours to her neare,
Al with gay girlands goodly wel beseene.
And let them also with them bring in hand,
Another gay girland
For my fayre loue of lillyes and of roses,
Bound trueloue wize with a blew silke riband.
And let them make great store of bridale poses,
And let them eeke bring store of other flowers
To deck the bridale bowers.
And let the ground whereas her foot shall tread,
For feare the stones her tender foot should wrong
Be strewed with fragrant flowers all along,
And diapred lyke the discolored mead.
Which done, doe at her chamber dore awayt,
For she will waken strayt,
The while doe ye this song vnto her sing,
The woods shall to you answer and your Eccho ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 4

YE Nymphes of Mulla which with carefull heed,
The siluer scaly trouts doe tend full well,
and greedy pikes which vse therein to feed,
(Those trouts and pikes all others doo excell)
And ye likewise which keepe the rushy lake,
Where none doo fishes take.
Bynd vp the locks the which hang scatterd light,
And in his waters which your mirror make,
Behold your faces as the christall bright,
That when you come whereas my loue doth lie,
No blemish she may spie.
And eke ye lightfoot mayds which keepe the dore,
That on the hoary mountayne vie to towre,
And the wylde wolues which seeke them to deuoure,
With your steele darts doo chace fro[m] comming neer
Be also present heere,
To helpe to decke her and to help to sing,
That all the woods may answer and your eccho ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 5

WAKE now my loue, awake; for it is time,
The Rosy Morne long since left Tithones bed,
All ready to her siluer coche to clyme,
And Phoebus gins to shew his glorious hed.
Hark how the cheerefull birds do chaunt theyr laies
And carroll of loues praise.
The merry Larke hir mattins sings aloft,
The thrush replies, the Mauis descant playes,
The Ouzell shrills, the Ruddock warbles soft,
So goodly all agree with sweet content,
To this dayes merriment.
Ah my deere loue why doe ye sleepe thus long,
When meeter were that ye should now awake,
T'awayt the comming of your ioyous make,
And hearken to the birds louelearned song,
The deawy leaues among.
For they of ioy and pleasance to you sing,
That all the woods them answer & theyr eccho ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 6

My loue is now awake out of her dreame,
and her fayre eyes like stars that dimmed were
With darksome cloud, now shew theyr goodly beams
More bright then Hesperus his head doth rere.
Come now ye damzels, daughters of delight,
Helpe quickly her to dight,
But first come ye fayre houres which were begot
In loues sweet paradice, of Day and Night,
Which doe the seasons of the yeare allot,
And al that euer in this world is fayre
Doe make and still repayre.
And ye three handmayds of the Cyprian Queene,
The which doe still adorne her beauties pride,
Helpe to addorne my beautifullest bride
And as ye her array, still throw betweene
Some graces to be seene,
And as ye vse to Venus, to her sing,
The whiles the woods shal answer & your eccho ring

Edmund Spenser

Poem 7

NOw is my loue all ready forth to come,
Let all the virgins therefore well awayt,
And ye fresh boyes that tend vpon her groome
Prepare your selues; for he is comming strayt.
Set all your things in seemely good aray
Fit for so ioyfull day,
The ioyfullst day that euer sunne did see
Faire Sun, shew forth thy faourable ray,
And let thy lifull heat not feruent be
For feare of burning her sunshyny face,
Her beauty to disgrace.
O fayrest Phoebus, father of the Muse,
If euer I did honour thee aright,
Or sing the thing, that mote thy mind delight,
Doe not thy seruants simple boone refuse,
But let this day let this one day be myne,
Let all the rest be thine.
Then I thy souerayne prayses loud wil sing,
That all the woods shal answer and theyr eccho ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 8

HArke how the Minstrels gin to shrill aloud,
Their merry Musick that resounds from far,
The pipe, the tabor, and the trembling Croud,
That well agree withouten breach or iar.
But most of all the Damzels doe delite,
When they their tymbrels smyte,
And thereunto doe daunce and carrol sweet,
That all the sences they doe rauish quite,
The whyles the boyes run vp and downe the street,
Crying aloud with strong confused noyce,
As if it were one voyce.
Hymen io Hymen, Hymen they do shout,
That euen to the heauens theyr shouting shrill
Doth reach, and all the firmament doth fill,
To which the people standing all about,
As in approuance doe thereto applaud
And loud aduance her laud,
And euermore they Hymen Hymen sing,
that al the woods them answer and theyr eccho ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 9

LOe where she comes along with portly pace,
Lyke Phoebe from her chamber of the East,
Arysing forth to run her mighty race,
Clad all in white, that seemes a virgin best.
So well it her beseemes that ye would weene
Some angell she had beene.
Her long loose yellow locks lyke golden wyre,
Sprinckled with perle, and perling flowres a tweene,
Doe lyke a golden mantle her attyre,
And being crowned with a girland greene,
Seeme lyke some mayden Queene,
Her modest eyes abashed to behold
So many gazers, as on her do stare,
Vpon the lowly ground affixed are.
Ne dare lift vp her countenance too bold,
But blush to heare her prayses sung so loud,
So farre from being proud.
Nathlesse doe ye still loud her prayses sing,
That all the woods may answer and your eccho ring.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 90

IN youth before I waxed old.
The blynd boy Venus baby,
For want of cunning made me bold,
In bitter byue to grope for honny.
But when he saw me stung and cry,
He tooke his wings and away did fly.
As Diane hunted on a day,
She chaunst to come where Cupid lay,
his quiuer by his head:
One of his shafts she stole away,
And one of hers did close conuay,
into the others stead:
With that loue wounded my loues hart,
but Diane beasts with Cupids dart.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 91

I Saw in secret to my Dame,
How little Cupid humbly came:
and sayd to her All hayle my mother.
But when he saw me laugh, for shame:
His face with bashfull blood did flame,
not knowing Venus from the other,
Then neuer blush Cupid (quoth I)
for many haue err'd in this beauty.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 92

Vpon a day as loue lay sweetly slumbring,
all in his mothers lap:

A gentle Bee with his loud trumpet murm'ring,
about him flew by hap.

Whereof when he was wakened with the noyse,
and saw the beast so small:

Whats this (quoth he) that giues so great a voyce,
that wakens men withall.

In angry wize he flyes about,
and threatens all with corage stout.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 93

TO whom his mother closely smiling sayd,
twixt earnest and twixt game:
See thou thy selfe likewise art lyttle made,
if thou regard the same.
And yet thou suffrest neyther gods in sky,
nor men in earth to rest:
But when thou art disposed cruelly,
theyr sleepe thou doost molest.
Then eyther change thy cruelty,
or giue lyke leaue vnto the fly.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 94

Nathlesse the cruell boy not so content,
would needs the fly pursue:
And in his hand with heedlesse hardiment,
him caught for to subdue.
But when on it he hasty hand did lay,
the Bee him stung therefore:
Now out alas (he cryde) and welaway,
I wounded am full sore:
The fly that I so much did scorne,
hath hurt me with his little horne.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 95

VNto his mother straight he weeping came,
and of his griefe complayned:
Who could not chose but laugh at his fond game,
though sad to see him pained.
Think now (quod she) my sonne how great the smart
of those whom thou dost wound:
Full many thou hast pricked to the hart,
that pittie neuer found:
Therefore henceforth some pittie take,
when thou doest spoyle of louers make.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 96

She tooke him streight full pitiously lamenting,
and wrapt him in her smock:

She wrapt him softly, all the while repenting,
that he the fly did mock.

She drest his wound and it embaulmed wel
with salue of soueraigne might:

And then she bath'd him in a dainty well
the well of deare delight.

Who would not oft be stung as this,
to be so bath'd in Venus blis.

Edmund Spenser

Poem 97

The wanton boy was shortly well recured,
of that his malady:
But he soone after fresh againe enured,
his former cruelty.
And since that time he wounded hath my selfe
with his sharpe dart of loue:
And now forgets the cruell carelesse elfe,
his mothers heast to proue.
So now I languish till he please,
my pining anguish to appease.

Edmund Spenser

Prosopopoeia: Or Mother Hubbard's Tale

By that he ended had his ghostly sermon,
The fox was well induc'd to be a parson,
And of the priest eftsoons gan to inquire,
How to a benefice he might aspire.
"Marry, there" (said the priest) "is art indeed:
Much good deep learning one thereout may read;
For that the ground-work is, and end of all,
How to obtain a beneficial.

First, therefore, when ye have in handsome wise
Yourself attired, as you can devise,
Then to some nobleman yourself apply,
Or other great one in the world's eye,
That hath a zealous disposition
To God, and so to his religion.
There must thou fashion eke a godly zeal,
Such as no carpers may contrare reveal;
For each thing feigned ought more wary be.
There thou must walk in sober gravity,
And seem as saint-like as Saint Radegund:
Fast much, pray oft, look lowly on the ground,
And unto every one do courtesy meek:
These looks (nought saying) do a benefice seek,
But be thou sure one not to lack or long.
And if thee list unto the court to throng,
And there to hunt after the hoped prey,
Then must thou thee dispose another way:
For there thou needs must learn to laugh, to lie,
To face, to forge, to scoff, to company,
To crouch, to please, to be a beetle-stock
Of thy great master's will, to scorn, or mock.
So may'st thou chance mock out a benefice,
Unless thou canst one conjure by device,
Or cast a figure for a bishopric;
And if one could, it were but a school trick.
These be the ways by which without reward
Livings in court be gotten, though full hard;
For nothing there is done without a fee:
The courtier needs must recompensed be
With a benevolence, or have in gage

The primitias of your parsonage:
Scarce can a bishopric forpass them by,
But that it must be gelt in privity.
Do not thou therefore seek a living there,
But of more private persons seek elsewhere,
Whereas thou may'st compound a better penny,
Ne let thy learning question'd be of any.
For some good gentleman, that hath the right
Unto his church for to present a wight,
Will cope with thee in reasonable wise;
That if the living yearly do arise
To forty pound, that then his youngest son
Shall twenty have, and twenty thou hast won:
Thou hast it won, for it is of frank gift,
And he will care for all the rest to shift,
Both that the bishop may admit of thee,
And that therein thou may'st maintained be.
This is the way for one that is unlearn'd
Living to get, and not to be discern'd.
But they that are great clerks, have nearer ways,
For learning sake to living them to raise;
Yet many eke of them (God wot) are driven
T' accept a benefice in pieces riven.
How say'st thou (friend), have I not well discourst
Upon this common-place (though plain, not worst)?
Better a short tale than a bad long shriving.
Needs any more to learn to get a living?"

"Now sure, and by my halidom," (quoth he)
"Ye a great master are in your degree:
Great thanks I yield you for your discipline,
And do not doubt but duly to incline
My wits thereto, as ye shall shortly hear."
The priest him wish'd good speed, and well to fare:
So parted they, as either's way them led.
But th' ape and fox ere long so well them sped,
Through the priest's wholesome counsel lately taught,
And through their own fair handling wisely wrought,
That they a benefice 'twixt them obtained;
And crafty Reynold was a priest ordained,
And th' ape his parish clerk procur'd to be.
Then made they revel rout and goodly glee;

But, ere long time had passed, they so ill
Did order their affairs, that th' evil will
Of all their parish'ners they had constrain'd;
Who to the Ordinary of them complain'd,
How foully they their offices abus'd,
And them of crimes and heresies accus'd,
That pursuivants he often for them sent;
But they neglected his commandment.
So long persisted obstinate and bold,
Till at the length he published to hold
A visitation, and them cited thether:
Then was high time their wits about to geather.
What did they then, but made a composition
With their next neighbour priest, for light condition,
To whom their living they resigned quite
For a few pence, and ran away by night.

Edmund Spenser

Prothalamion

Calm was the day, and through the trembling air
Sweet-breathing Zephyrus did softly play
A gentle spirit, that lightly did delay
Hot Titan's beams, which then did glister fair;
When I (whom sullen care,
Through discontent of my long fruitless stay
In prince's court, and expectation vain
Of idle hopes, which still do fly away
Like empty shadows, did afflict my brain),
Walk'd forth to ease my pain
Along the shore of silver-streaming Thames;
Whose ruddy bank, the which his river hems,
Was painted all with variable flowers,
And all the meads adorn'd with dainty gems
Fit to deck maidens' bowers,
And crown their paramours,
Against the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames run softly, till I end my song.

There, in a meadow, by the river's side,
A flock of nymphs I chanced to espy,
All lovely daughters of the flood thereby,
With goodly greenish locks, all loose untied,
As each had been a bride;
And each one had a little wicker basket,
Made of fine twigs, entrail'd curiously,
In which they gathered flowers to fill their flasket,
And with fine fingers cropt full feateously
The tender stalks on high.
Of every sort, which in that meadow grew,
They gathered some; the violet, pallid blue,
The little daisy, that at evening closes,
The virgin lily, and the primrose true,
With store of vermeil roses,
To deck their bridegrooms' posies
Against the bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames run softly, till I end my song.

With that I saw two swans of goodly hue

Come softly swimming down along the Lee;
Two fairer birds I yet did never see;
The snow which doth the top of Pindus strew,
Did never whiter shew,
Nor Jove himself, when he a swan would be,
For love of Leda, whiter did appear;
Yet Leda was (they say) as white as he,
Yet not so white as these, nor nothing near;
So purely white they were,
That even the gentle stream, the which them bare,
Seem'd foul to them, and bad his billows spare
To wet their silken feathers, lest they might
Soil their fair plumes with water not so fair,
And mar their beauties bright,
That shone as heaven's light,
Against their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames run softly, till I end my song.

Eftsoons the nymphs, which now had flowers their fill,
Ran all in haste to see that silver brood,
As they came floating on the crystal flood;
Whom when they saw, they stood amazed still,
Their wond'ring eyes to fill;
Them seem'd they never saw a sight so fair,
Of fowls so lovely, that they sure did deem
Them heavenly born, or to be that same pair
Which through the sky draw Venus' silver team;
For sure they did not seem
To be begot of any earthly seed,
But rather angels, or of angels' breed;
Yet were they bred of Somers-heat, they say,
In sweetest season, when each flower and weed
The earth did fresh array;
So fresh they seem'd as day,
Even as their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames run softly, till I end my song.

Then forth they all out of their baskets drew
Great store of flowers, the honour of the field,
That to the sense did fragrant odours yield,
All which upon those goodly birds they threw
And all the waves did strew,

That like old Peneus' waters they did seem,
When down along by pleasant Tempe's shore,
Scatt'ed with flowers, through Thessaly they stream,
That they appear through lilies' plenteous store,
Like a bride's chamber floor.

Two of those nymphs, meanwhile, two garlands bound
Of freshest flowers which in that mead they found,
The which presenting all in trim array,
Their snowy foreheads therewithal they crown'd,
Whilst one did sing this lay,
Prepar'd against that day,
Against their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames run softly, till I end my song.

"Ye gentle birds, the world's fair ornament
And heaven's glory, whom this happy hour
Doth lead unto your lovers' blissful bower,
Joy may you have, and gentle heart's content
Of your love's complement;
And let fair Venus, that is Queen of Love,
With her heart-quelling son upon you smile,
Whose smile, they say, hath virtue to remove
All love's dislike, and friendship's faulty guile
For ever to assoil.

Let endless Peace your steadfast hearts accord,
And blessed Plenty wait upon your board:
And let your bed with pleasures chaste abound,
That fruitful issue may to you afford,
Which may your foes confound,
And make your joys redound
Upon your bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames run softly, till I end my song."

So ended she; and all the rest around
To her redoubled that her undersong,
Which said their bridal day should not be long;
And gentle Echo from the neighbour ground
Their accents did resound.
So forth those joyous birds did pass along,
Adown the Lee, that to them murmur'd low,
As he would speak, but that he lack'd a tongue,
Yet did by signs his glad affection show,

Making his stream run slow.
And all the fowl which in his flood did dwell
Gan flock about these twain, that did excel
The rest, so far as Cynthia doth shend
The lesser stars. So they, enranged well,
Did on those two attend,
And their best service lend
Against their wedding day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames run softly, till I end my song.

At length they all to merry London came,
To merry London, my most kindly nurse,
That to me gave this life's first native source,
Though from another place I take my name,
An house of ancient fame.
There when they came, whereas those bricky towers
The which on Thames' broad aged back do ride,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whilom wont the Templar Knights to bide,
Till they decay'd through pride:
Next whereunto there stands a stately place,
Where oft I gained gifts and goodly grace
Of that great lord, which therein wont to dwell,
Whose want too well now feels my friendless case:
But ah! here fits not well
Old woes, but joys, to tell
Against the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames run softly, till I end my song.

Yet therein now doth lodge a noble peer,
Great England's glory, and the world's wide wonder,
Whose dreadful name late through all Spain did thunder,
And Hercules' two pillars standing near
Did make to quake and fear:
Fair branch of honour, flower of chivalry,
That fillest England with thy triumph's fame,
Joy have thou of thy noble victory,
And endless happiness of thine own name
That promiseth the same;
That through thy prowess, and victorious arms,
Thy country may be freed from foreign harms;
And great Eliza's glorious name may ring

Through all the world, fill'd with thy wide alarms,
Which some brave Muse may sing
To ages following,
Upon the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames run softly, till I end my song.

From those high towers this noble lord issuing,
Like radiant Hesper, when his golden hair
In th' ocean billows he hath bathed fair,
Descended to the river's open viewing,
With a great train ensuing.
Above the rest were goodly to be seen
Two gentle knights of lovely face and feature,
Beseeming well the bower of any queen,
With gifts of wit, and ornaments of nature,
Fit for so goodly stature,
That like the twins of Jove they seem'd in sight,
Which deck the baldric of the heavens bright;
They two, forth pacing to the river's side,
Receiv'd those two fair brides, their love's delight;
Which, at th' appointed tide,
Each one did make his bride
Against their bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames run softly, till I end my song.

Edmund Spenser

Ruins Of Rome, By Bellay

1

Ye heavenly spirits, whose ashy cinders lie
Under deep ruins, with huge walls opprest,
But not your praise, the which shall never die
Through your fair verses, ne in ashes rest;
If so be shrilling voice of wight alive
May reach from hence to depth of darkest hell,
Then let those deep Abysses open rive,
That ye may understand my shreiking yell.
Thrice having seen under the heavens' veil
Your tomb's devoted compass over all,
Thrice unto you with loud voice I appeal,
And for your antique fury here do call,
The whiles that I with sacred horror sing,
Your glory, fairest of all earthly thing.

2

Great Babylon her haughty walls will praise,
And sharpèd steeples high shot up in air;
Greece will the old Ephesian buildings blaze;
And Nylus' nurslings their Pyramids fair;
The same yet vaunting Greece will tell the story
Of Jove's great image in Olympus placed,
Mausolus' work will be the Carian's glory,
And Crete will boast the Labybrinth, now 'rased;
The antique Rhodian will likewise set forth
The great Colosse, erect to Memory;
And what else in the world is of like worth,
Some greater learnèd wit will magnify.
But I will sing above all monuments
Seven Roman Hills, the world's seven wonderments.

3

Thou stranger, which for Rome in Rome here seekest,

And nought of Rome in Rome perceiv'st at all,
These same old walls, old arches, which thou seest,
Old Palaces, is that which Rome men call.
Behold what wreck, what ruin, and what waste,
And how that she, which with her mighty power
Tam'd all the world, hath tam'd herself at last,
The prey of time, which all things doth devour.
Rome now of Rome is th' only funeral,
And only Rome of Rome hath victory;
Ne ought save Tyber hastening to his fall
Remains of all: O world's inconstancy.
That which is firm doth flit and fall away,
And that is flitting, doth abide and stay.

4

She, whose high top above the stars did soar,
One foot on Thetis, th' other on the Morning,
One hand on Scythia, th' other on the Moor,
Both heaven and earth in roundness compassing,
Jove fearing, lest if she should greater grow,
The old Giants should once again arise,
Her whelm'd with hills, these seven hills, which be now
Tombs of her greatness, which did threat the skies:
Upon her head he heaped Mount Saturnal,
Upon her belly th' antique Palatine,
Upon her stomach laid Mount Quirinal,
On her left hand the noisome Esquiline,
And Cælian on the right; but both her feet
Mount Viminall and Aventine do meet.

5

Who lists to see, what ever nature, art,
And heaven could do, O Rome, thee let him see,
In case thy greatness he can guess in heart,
By that which but the picture is of thee.
Rome is no more: but if the shade of Rome
May of the body yield a seeming sight,
It's like a corse drawn forth out of the tomb

By Magick skill out of eternal night:
The corpse of Rome in ashes is entombed,
And her great sprite rejoined to the sprite
Of this great mass, is in the same enwombed;
But her brave writings, which her famous merit
In spite of time, out of the dust doth rear,
Do make her idol through the world appear.

6

Such as the Berecynthian Goddess bright
In her swift chariot with high turrets crowned,
Proud that so many Gods she brought to light;
Such was this City in her good days found:
This city, more than the great Phrygian mother
Renowned for fruit of famous progeny,
Whose greatness by the greatness of none other,
But by herself her equal match could see:
Rome only might to Rome comparèd be,
And only Rome could make great Rome to tremble:
So did the Gods by heavenly doom decree,
That other deathly power should not resemble
Her that did match the whole earth's puissance,
And did her courage to the heavens advance.

7

Ye sacred ruins, and ye tragic sights,
Which only do the name of Rome retain,
Old monuments, which of so famous sprites
The honour yet in ashes do maintain:
Triumphant arcs, spires neighbors to the sky,
That you to see doth th' heaven itself appall,
Alas, by little ye to nothing fly,
The people's fable, and the spoil of all:
And though your frames do for a time make war
'Gainst time, yet time in time shall ruinate
Your works and names, and your last relics mar.
My sad desires, rest therefore moderate:
For if that time make ends of things so sure,

It also will end the pain, which I endure.

8

Through arms and vassals Rome the world subdued,
That one would ween, that one sole City's strength
Both land and sea in roundness had surview'd,
To be the measure of her breadth and length:
This people's virtue yet so fruitful was
Of virtuous nephews that posterity
Striving in power their grandfathers to pass,
The lowest earth join'd to the heaven high;
To th' end that having all parts in their power
Nought from the Roman Empire might be 'quite,
And that though time doth Commonwealths devour,
Yet no time should so low embase their height,
That her head earth'd in her foundations deep,
Should not her name and endless honour keep.

9

Ye cruel stars, and eke ye Gods unkind,
Heaven envious, and bitter stepdame Nature,
Be it by fortune, or by course of kind
That ye do weld th' affairs of earthly creature:
Why have your hands long sithence troubled
To frame this world, that doth endure so long?
Or why were not these Roman palaces
Made of some matter no less firm and strong?
I say not, as the common voice doth say,
That all things which beneath the moon have being
Are temporal, and subject to decay:
But I say rather, though not all agreeing
With some, that ween the contrary in thought:
That all this whole shall one day come to nought.

10

As that brave son of Aeson, which by charms

Achieved the golden fleece in Colchid land,
Out of the earth engendered men of arms
Of Dragons' teetch, sown in the sacred sand;
So this brave town, that in her youthly days
An Hydra was of warriors glorious,
Did fill with her renownéd nurslings praise
The firey sun's both one and other house:
But they at last, there being then not living
An Hercules, so rank seed to repress,;
Amongst themselves with cruel fury striving,
Mow'd down themselves with slaughter merciless;
Renewing in themselves that rage unkind,
Which whilom did those searhborn brethren blind.

11

Mars shaming to have given so great head
To his off-spring, that mortal puissance
Puffed up with pride of Roman hardy head,
Seem'd above heaven's power itself to advance;
Cooling again his former kindled heat,
With which he had those Roman spirits filled;
Did blow new fire, and with enflaméd breath,
Into the Gothic cold hot rage instill'd:
Then 'gan that Nation, th' earth's new Giant brood,
To dart abroad the thunder bolts of war,
And beating down these walls with furious mood
Into her mother's bosom, all did mar;
To th' end that none, all were if Jove his sire
Should boast himself of the Roman Empire.

12

Like as whilome the children of the earth
Heaped hills on hills, to scale the starry sky,
And fight against the Gods of heavenly birth,
Whilst Jove at them his thunderbolts let fly;
All suddenly with lightning overthrown,
The furious squadrons down the ground did fall,
That th' earth under her children's weight did groan,

And th' heavens in glory triumphed over all:
So did that haughty front which heapéd was
On these seven Roman hills, itself uprear
Over the world, and lift her lofty face
Against the heaven, that 'gan her force to fear.
But now these scorned fields bemoan her fall,
And Gods secure fear not her force at all.

13

Nor the swift fury of the flames aspiring,
Nor the deep wounds of victor's raging blade,
Nor ruthless spoil of soldiers blood-desiring,
The which so oft thee, Rome, their conquest made;
Ne stroke on stroke of fortune variable,
Ne rust of age hating continuance,
Nor wrath of Gods, nor spite of men unstable,
Nor thou oppos'd against thine own puissance;
Nor th' horrible uproar of winds high blowing,
Nor swelling streams of that God snaky-paced,
Which hath so often with his overflowing
Thee drenched, have thy pride so much abased;
But that this nothing, which they have thee left,
Makes the world wonder, what they from thee reft.

14

As men in summer fearless pass the ford,
Which is in winter lord of all the plain,
And with his tumbling streams doth bear aboard
The plowman's hope, and shepherd's labor vain;
And as the coward beasts use to despise
The noble lion after his life's end
Whetting their teeth, and with vain foolhardise
Daring the foe, that cannot him defend:
And as at Troy most dastards of the Greeks
Did brave about the corpse of Hector cold;
So those which whilome wont with pallid cheeks
The Roman triumphs glory to behold,
Now on these ashy tombs show boldness vain,

And conquer'd dare the Conqueror disdain.

15

Ye pallid spirits, and ye ashy ghosts,
Which joying in the brightness of your day,
Brought forth those signs of your premtuous boasts
Which now their dusty relics do bewray;
Tell me ye spirits (sith the darksome river
Of Styx not passable to souls returning,
Enclosing you in thrice three wards forever,
Do not restrain your images still mourning)
Tell me then (for perhaps some one of you
Yet here above him secretly doth hide)
Do ye not feel your torments to accrue,
When ye sometimes behold the ruin'd pride
Of these old Roman works built with your hands,
Now to become nought else, but heaped sands?

16

Like as ye see the wrathful sea from far,
In a great mountain heap'd with hideous noise,
Eftsoons of thousand bilows shouldered narre,
Against a rock to break with dreadful poise;
Like as ye see fell Boreas with sharp blast,
Tossing huge tempests through the troubled sky,
Eftsoons having his wide wings spent in vast,
To stop his wearie carrier suddenly;
And as ye see huge flames spread diversly,
Gathered in one up to the heavens to spire,
Eftsoons consum'd to fall down feebily:
So whilom did this Monarchy aspire
As waves, as wind, as fire spread over all,
Till it by fatal doom adown did fall.

17

So long as Jove's great bird did make his flight,

Bearing the fire with which heaven doth us fray,
Heaven had not fear of that presumptuous might,
With which the Giants did the Gods assay.
But all so soon, as scorching Sun had brent
His wings, which wont to the earth to overspread,
The earth out of her massy womb forth sent
That antique horror, which made heaven adread.
Then was the German raven in disguise
That Roman eagle seen to cleave asunder,
And towards heaven freshly to arise
Out of these mountains, not consum'd to powder.
In which the fowl that serves to bear the lightning,
Is now no more seen flying, nor alighting.

18

These heaps of stones, these old walls which ye see,
Were first enclosures but of savage soil;
And these brave palaces which mastered be
Of time, were shepherds cottages sometime.
Then took the shepherd kingly ornaments
And the stout hynde arm'd his right hand with steel:
Eftsoones their rule of yearly presidents
Grew great, and six months greater a great deal;
Which made perpetual, rose to so great might,
That thence th' imperial Eagle rooting took,
Till th' heaven itself opposing 'gainst her might,
Her power to Peter's successor betook;
Who shepherdlike, (as fates the same foreseeing)
Doth show, that all things turn to their first being.

19

All that is perfect, which th' heaven beautifies;
All that's imperfect, born below the moon;
All that doth feed our spirits and our eyes;
And all that doth consume our pleasures soon;
All the mishap, the which our days outwears,
All the good hap of th' oldest times afore,
Rome in the time of her great ancesters,

Like a Pandora, locked long in store.
But destiny this huge Chaos turmoiling,
In which all good and evil was enclosed,
Their heavenly virtues from these woes absolving,
Carried to heaven, from sinful bondage loosed:
But their great sins, the causers of their pain,
Under these antique ruins yet remain.

20

No otherwise than rainy cloud, first fed
With earthly vapors gathered in the air,
Eftsoones in compass arch'd, to steep his head,
Doth plunge himself in Tethys' bosom fair;
And mounting up again, from whence he came,
With his great belly spreads the dimmed world,
Till at last the last dissolving his moist frame,
In rain, or snow, or hail he forth is hurl'd;
This City, which was first but shepherds' shade,
Uprising by degrees, grew to such height,
That queen of land and sea herself she made.
At last not able to bear so great weight.
Her power dispers'd, through all the world did vade;
To show that all in th' end to nought shall fade.

21

The same which Pyrrhus, and the puissance
Of Afric could not tame, that same brave city,
Which with stout courage arm'd against mischance,
Sustain'd the shock of common enmity;
Long as her ship tossed with so many freaks,
Had all the world in arms against her bent,
Was never seen, that any fortune's wrecks
Could break her course begun with brave intent.
But when the object of her virtue failed,
Her power itself agains itself did arm;
As he that having long in tempest sailed,
Fain would arrive, but cannot for the storm,
If too great wind against the port him drive,

Doth in the port itself his vessel rive.

22

When that brave honour of the Latin name,
Which bound her rule with Africa, and Byze,
With Thames' inhabitants of noble fame,
And they which see the dawning day arise;
Her nurslings did with mutinous uproar
Hearten against herself, her conquer'd spoil,
Which she had won from all the world afore,
Of all the world was spoil'd within a while.
So when the compass'd course of the universe
In six and thirty thousand years is run,
The bands of th' elements shall back reverse
To their first discord, and be quite undone:
The seeds, of which all things at first were bred,
Shall in great Chaos' womb again be hid.

23

O wary wisdom of the man, that would
That Carthage towers from spoil should be forborn,
To th' end that his victorious people should
With cankering leisure not be overworn;
He well foresaw, how that the Roman courage,
Impatient of pleasure's faint desires,
Through idleness would turn to civil rage,
And be herself the matter of her fires.
For in a people given all to ease,
Ambition is engend'red easily;
As in a vicious body, gross disease
Soon grows through humours' superfluity.
That came to pass, when swoll'n with plentious pride,
Nor prince, nor peer, nor kin they would abide.

24

If the blind fury, which wars breedeth oft,

Wonts not t' enrage the hearts of equal beasts,
Whether they fare on foot, or fly aloft,
Or arméd be with claws, or scaly crests;
What fell Erynnis with hot burning tongs,
Did grip your hearts, with noisome rage imbew'd,
That each to other working cruel wrongs,
You blades in your own bowels you embrew'd?
Was this (ye Romans) your hard destiny?
Or some old sin, whose unappeased guilt
Power'd vengeance forth on you eternally?
Or brother's blood, the which at first was spilt
Upon your walls, that God might not endure,
Upon the same to set foundation sure?

25

O that I had the Thracian Poet's harp,
For to awake out of th' infernal shade
Those antique Cæsars, sleeping long in dark,
The which this ancient City whilome made:
Or that I had Amphion's instrument,
To quicken with his vital note's accord,
The stony joints of these old walls now rent,
By which th' Ausonian light might be restor'd:
Or that at least I could with pencil fine,
Fashion the portraits of these palaces,
By pattern of great Virgil's spirit divine;
I would assay with that which in me is,
To build with level of my lofty style,
That which no hands can evermore compile.

26

Who list the Roman greatness forth to figure,
Him needeth not to seek for usage right
Of line, or lead, or rule, or square, to measure
Her length, her breadth, her deepness, or her height:
But him behooves to view in compass round
All that the ocean grasps in his long arms;
Be it where the yearly star doth scorch the ground,

Or where cold Boreas blows his bitter storms.
Rome was th' whole world, and all the world was Rome,
And if things nam'd their names do equalize,
When land and sea ye name, then name ye Rome;
And naming Rome ye land and sea comprise:
For th' ancient plot of Rome displayéd plain,
The map of all the wide world doth contain.

27

Thou that at Rome astonish'd dost behold
The antique pride, which menaced the sky,
These haughty heaps, these palaces of old,
These walls, these arcs, these baths, these temples hie;
Judge by these ample ruins' view, the rest
The which injurious time hath quite outworne,
Since of all workmen held in reck'ning best,
Yet these old fragments are for patterns born:
Then also mark, how Rome from day to day,
Repairing her decayéd fashion,
Renews herself with buildings rich and gay;
That one would judge, that the Roman dæmon
Doth yet himself with fatal hand enforce,
Again on foot to rear her pouldred corse.

28

He that hath seen a great oak dry and dead,
Yet clad with relics of some trophies old,
Lifting to heaven her agéd hoary head,
Whose foot in ground hath left but feeble hold;
But half disbowel'd lies above the ground,
Showing her wreathéd roots, and naked arms,
And on her trunk all rotten and unsound
Only supports herself for meat of worms;
And though she owe her fall to the first wind,
Yet of the devout people is ador'd,
And many young plants spring out of her rind;
Who such an oak hath seen let him record
That such this city's honor was of yore,

And 'mongst all cities flourishéd much more.

29

All that which Egypt whilome did devise,
All that which Greece their temples to embrace,
After th' Ionic, Attic, Doric guise,
Or Corinth skill'd in curious works to 'grave;
All that Lysippus' practick art could form,
Appeles' wit, or Phidias his skill,
Was wont this ancient city to adorn,
And the heaven itself with her wide wonders fill;
All that which Athens ever brought forth wise,
All that which Africa ever brought forth strange,
All that which Asia ever had of prize,
Was here to see. O marvelous great change:
Rome living, was the world's sole ornament,
And dead, is now the world's sole monument.

30

Like as the seeded field green grass first shows,
Then from green grass into a stalk doth spring,
And from a stalk into an ear forth grows,
Which ear the fruitfull grain doth shortly bring;
And as in season due the husband mows
The waving locks of those fair yellow hairs,
Which bound in sheaves, and laid in comely rows,
Upon the naked fields in stacks he rears:
So grew the Roman Empire by degree,
Till that barbarian hands it quite did spill,
And left of it but these old marks to see,
Of which all passersby do somewhat pill:
As they which glean, the relics use to gather,
Which th' husbandman behind him chanced to scatter.

31

That same is now nought but a campion wide,

Where all this world's pride once was situate.
No blame to thee, whosoever dost abide
By Nile, or Ganges, or Tigris, or Euphrate,
Ne Africa thereof guilty is, nor Spain,
Nor the bold people by the Thame's brinks,
Nor the brave, warlike brood of Alemagne,
Nor the born soldier which Rhine running drinks;
Thou only cause, O civil fury, art
Which sowing in the Aemathian fields thy spite,
Didst arm thy hand against thy proper heart;
To th' end that when thou wast in greatest height
To greatness grown, through long prosperity,
Thou then adown might'st fall more horribly.

32

Hope ye, my verses, that posterity
Of age ensuing shall you ever read?
Hope ye that ever immortality
So mean harp's work may challenge for her mead?
If under heaven any endurance were,
These monuments, which not in paper writ,
Put in porphyry and marble do appear,
Might well have hop'd to have obtained it.
Na th' less my lute, whom Phoebus deigned to give,
Cease not to sound these old antiquities:
For if that time do let thy glory live,
Well mayst thou boast, how ever base thou be,
That thou art first, which of thy Nation sung
Th' old nonor of the people gowné long.

L' Envoi

Bellay, first garland of free Poesy
That France brought forth, though fruitful of brave wits,
Well worthy thou of immortality,
That long hast travail'd by thy learned writs,
Old Rome out of her ashes to revive,
And give a second life to dead decays:
Needs must he all eternity survive,

That can to other give eternal days.
Thy days therefore are endless, and thy praise
Excelling all, that ever went before;
And after thee, 'gins Bartas high to raise
His heavenly Muse, th' Almighty to adore.
Live, happy spirits, th' honour of your name,
And fill the world with never dying fame.

Edmund Spenser

So Let Us Love

Most glorious Lord of life! that on this day
Didst make thy triumph over death and sin,
And having harrowed hell, didst bring away
Captivity thence captive, us to win:
This joyous day, dear Lord, with joy begin;
And grant that we, for whom Thou diddest die,
Being, with thy dear blood, clean washed from sin,
May live for ever in felicity;
And that thy love we weighing worthily,
May likewise love Thee for the same again;
And for thy sake, that all like dear didst buy,
With love may one another entertain.
So let us love, dear Love, like as we ought:
Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet 54

Of this worlds theatre in which we stay,
My love like the spectator ydly sits
Beholding me that all the pageants play,
Disguysing diversly my troubled wits.
Sometimes I joy when glad occasion fits,
And mask in myrth lyke to a comedy:
Soone after when my joy to sorrow flits,
I waile and make my woes a tragedy.
Yet she, beholding me with constant eye,
Delights not in my merth nor rues my smart:
But when I laugh she mocks, and when I cry
She laughs and hardens evermore her heart.
What then can move her? if nor merth nor mone,
She is no woman, but a senceless stone.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet 75

One day I wrote her name upon the strand,
But came the waves and washed it away:
Agayne I wrote it with a second hand,
But came the tyde, and made my paynes his pray.
"Vayne man," sayd she, "that doest in vaine assay.
A mortall thing so to immortalize,
For I my selve shall lyke to this decay,
and eek my name bee wyped out lykewize."
"Not so," quod I, "let baser things devize,
To dy in dust, but you shall live by fame:
My verse your vertues rare shall eternize,
And in the heavens wryte your glorious name.
Where whenas death shall all the world subdew,
Our love shall live, and later life renew."

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet I

HAppy ye leaues when as those lilly hands,
which hold my life in their dead doing might
shall handle you and hold in loues soft bands,
lyke captiues trembling at the victors sight.
And happy lines, on which with starry light,
those lamping eyes will deigne sometimes to look
and reade the sorrowes of my dying spright,
written with teares in harts close bleeding book.
And happy rymes bath'd in the sacred brooke,
of Helicon whence she deriued is,
when ye behold that Angels blessed looke,
my soules long lacked foode, my heauens blis.
Leaues, lines, and rymes, seeke her to please alone,
whom if ye please, I care for other none.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet II

Unquiet thought, whom at the first I bred,
Of th'inward bale of my loue pined hart:
and sithens haue with sighes and sorrowes fed,
till greater then my wombe thou woxen art.
Breake forth at length out of the inner part,
in which thou lurkest lyke to vipers brood:
and seeke some succour both to ease my smart
and also to sustayne thy selfe with food.
But if in presence of that fayrest proud
thou chance to come, fall lowly at her feet:
and with meeke humblesse and afflicted mood,
pardon for thee, and grace for me intreat.
Which if she graunt, then liue and my loue cherish,
if not, die soone, and I with thee will perish.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Iii

The souerayne beauty which I doo admyre,
witness the world how worthy to be prayzed:
the light wherof hath kindled heauenly iyre,
in my fraile spirit by her from basenesse raysed.
That being now with her huge brightnesse dazed,
base thing I can no more endure to view:
but looking still on her I stand amazed,
at wondrous sight of so celestiall hew.
So when my tounge would speak her praises dew,
it stopped is with thoughts astonishment:
and when my pen would write her titles true,
it rauisht is with fancies wonderment:
Yet in my hart I then both speake and write,
the wonder that my wit cannot endite.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Iiii

NEw yeare forth looking out of Ianus gate,
Doth seeme to promise hope of new delight:
and bidding th'old Adieu, his passed date
bids all old thoughts to die in dumpish spright.
And calling forth out of sad Winters night,
fresh loue, that long hath slept in cheerlesse bower:
wils him awake, and soone about him dight
his wanton wings and darts of deadly power.
For lusty spring now in his timely howre,
is ready to come forth him to receiue:
and warnes the Earth with diuers colord flowre,
to decke hir selfe, and her faire mantle weaue.
Then you faire flowre, in who[m] fresh youth doth raine,
prepare your selfe new loue to entertaine.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet IX

Long-while I sought to what I might compare
those powrefull eies, which lighte[n] my dark spright,
yet find I nought on earth to which I dare
resemble th'ymage of their goodly light.

Not to the Sun: for they doo shine by night;
nor to the Moone: for they are changed neuer;
nor to the Starres: for they haue purer sight;
nor to the fire: for they consume not euer;
Nor to the lightning: for they still persuer;
nor to the Diamond: for they are more tender;
nor vnto Christall: for nought may them seuer;
nor vnto glasse: such basenesse mought offend her;
Then to the Maker selfe they likest be,
whose light doth lighten all that here we see.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet L

L
Ong languishing in double malady,
of my harts wound and of my bodies greife:
there came to me a leach that would apply
fit medicines for my bodies best reliefe.
Vayne man (quod I) that hast but little priefe:
in deep discouery of the mynds disease,
is not the hart of all the body chiefe?
and rules the members as it selfe doth please.
Then with some cordialls seeke first to appease,
the inward languour of my wounded hart,
and then my body shall haue shortly ease:
but such sweet cordialls passe Physitions art.
Then my lyfes Leach doe you your skill reueale,
and with one salue both hart and body heale.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Li

DOe I not see that fayrest yimages
Of hardest Marble are of purpose made?
for that they should endure through many ages,
ne let theyr famous moniments to fade.
Why then doe I, vntrainde in louers trade,
her hardnes blame which I should more co[m]mend?
sith neuer ought was excellent assayde,
which was not hard t'atchiue and bring to end.
Ne ought so hard, but he that would attend,
mote soften it and to his will allure:
so doe I hope her stubborne hart to bend,
and that it then more stedfast will endure.
Onely my paines wil be the more to get her,
but hauing her, my ioy wil be the greater.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lii

SO oft as homeward I from her depart,
I goe lyke one that hauing lost the field:
is prisoner led away with heauy hart,
despoyld of warlike armes and knowen shield.
So doe I now my selfe a prisoner yeeld,
to sorrow and to solitary paine:
from presence of my dearest deare exylde,
longwhile alone in languor to remaine.
There let no thought of ioy or pleasure vaine,
dare to approch, that may my solace breed:
but sudden dumps and drery sad disdayne,
of all worlds gladnesse more my torment feed.
So I her absens will my penaunce make,
that of her presens I my meed may take.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Liii

The Panther knowing that his spotted hyde,
Doth please all beasts but that his looks the[m] fray:
within a bush his dreadfull head doth hide,
to let them gaze whylest he on them may pray.
Right so my cruell fayre with me doth play,
for with the goodly semblant of her hew:
she doth allure me to mine owne decay,
and then no mercy will vnto me shew.
Great shame it is, thing so diuine in view,
made for to be the worlds most ornament:
to make the bayte her gazers to embrew,
good shames to be so ill an instrument.
But mercy doth with beautie best agree,
as in theyr maker ye them best may see.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Liiii

OF this worlds Theatre in which we stay,
My loue lyke the Spectator ydly sits
beholding me that all the pageants play,
disguysing diuersly my troubled wits.
Sometimes I ioy when glad occasion sits,
and mask in myrth lyke to a Comedy:
soone after when my ioy to sorrow flits,
I waile and make my woes a Tragedy.
Yet she beholding me with constant eye,
delights not in my merth nor rues my smart:
but when I laugh she mocks, and when I cry
she laughes, and hardens euermore her hart.
What then can moue her? if nor merth nor mone,
she is no woman, but a sencelesse stone.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lix

Thrise happie she, that is so well assured
Vnto her selfe and setled so in hart:
that nether will for better be allured,
ne feard with worse to any chaunce to start,
But like a steddy ship doth strongly part
the raging waues and keepes her course aright:
ne ought for tempest doth from it depart,
ne ought for fayrer weathers false delight.
Such selfe assurance need not feare the spight,
of grudging foes, ne fauour seek of friends:
but in the stay of her owne stedfast might,
nether to one her selfe nor other bends.
Most happy she that most assured doth rest,
but he most happy who such one loues best.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lv

SO oft as I her beauty doe behold,
And therewith doe her cruelty compare:
I maruaile of what substance was the mould
the which her made attonce so cruell faire.
Not earth; for her high thoghts more heauenly are,
not water; for her loue doth burne like fyre:
not ayre; for she is not so light or rare,
not fyre; for she doth friese with faint desire.
Then needs another Element inquire
whereof she mote be made; that is the skye.
for to the heauen her haughty lookes aspire:
and eke her mind is pure immortall hye.
Then sith to heauen ye lykened are the best,
be lyke in mercy as in all the rest:

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lvi

FAYre ye be sure, but cruell and vnkind,
As is a Tygre that with greedinesse
hunts after bloud, when he by chance doth find
a feeble beast, doth felly him oppresse.
Fayre be ye sure but proud and pittillesse,
as is a storme, that all things doth prostrate:
finding a tree alone all comfortlesse,
beats on it strongly it to ruinate.
Fayre be ye sure, but hard and obstinate,
as is a rocke amidst the raging floods:
gaynst which a ship of succour desolate,
doth suffer wreck both of her selfe and goods.
That ship, that tree, and that same beast am I,
whom ye doe wreck, doe ruine, and destroy.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lvii

SWEET warrior when shall I haue peace with you?
High time it is, this warre now ended were:
which I no lenger can endure to sue,
ne your incessant battry more to beare:
So weake my powres, so sore my wounds appeare,
that wonder is how I should liue a iot,
seeing my hart through launched euery where
with thousand arrowes, which your eies haue shot:
Yet shoot ye sharpely still, and spare me not,
but glory thinke to make these cruel stoures,
ye cruell one, what glory can be got,
in slaying him that would liue gladly yours?
Make peace therefore, and graunt me timely grace.
that al my wounds will heale in little space.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lviii By Her That Is Most Assured To Her Selfe

WEake is th'assurance that weake flesh reposeseth,
In her owne powre and scorneth others ayde:
that soonest fals when as she most supposeth,
her selfe assurd, and is of nought affrayd.
All flesh is frayle, and all her strength vnstayd,
like a vaine bubble blowen vp with ayre:
deuouring tyme & changeful chance haue prayd,
her glories pride that none may it repayre.
Ne none so rich or wise, so strong or fayre,
but fayleth trusting on his owne assurance:
and he that standeth on the hyghest stayre
fals lowest: for on earth nought hath endurance.
Why then doe ye proud fayre, misdeeme so farre,
that to your selfe ye most assured arre.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lx

THEY that in course of heauenly spheares are skild,
To euery planet point his sundry yeare:
in which her circles voyage is fulfilled,
as Mars in three score yeares doth run his spheare
So since the winged God his planet cleare,
began in me to moue, one yeare is spent:
the which doth longer vnto me appeare,
then al those forty which my life outwent.
Then by that count, which louers books inuent,
the spheare of Cupid forty yeares containes:
which I haue wasted in long languishment,
that seemd the longer for my greater paines.
But let me loues fayre Planet short her wayes
this yeare ensuing, or else short my dayes.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxi

The glorious image of the makers beautie,
My souerayne faynt, the Idoll of my thought,
dare not henceforth aboue the bounds of dewtie,
t'accuse of pride, or rashly blame for ought.
For being as she is diuinely wrought,
and of the brood of Angels heuenly borne:
and with the crew of blessed Saynts vpbrought,
each of which did her with theyr guifts adorne;
The bud of ioy, the blossome of the morne,
the beame of light, whom mortal eyes admyre:
what reason is it then but she should scorne,
base things that to her loue too bold aspire?
Such heauenly formes ought rather worshipt be,
then dare be lou'd by men of meane degree.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxii

The weary yeare his race now hauing run,
The new begins his compast course anew:
with shew of morning mylde he hath begun,
betokening peace and plenty to ensew,
So let vs, which this chaunge of weather vew,
chaunge eeke our mynds and former liues amend
the old yeares sinnes forepast let vs eschew,
and fly the faults with which we did offend.
Then shall the new yeares ioy forth freshly send,
into the glooming world his gladsome ray:
and all these stormes which now his beauty blend,
shall turne to caulmes and tymely cleare away.
So likewise loue cheare you your heauy spright,
and chaunge old yeares annoy to new delight.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxiii

AFTER long stormes and tempests sad assay,
Which hardly I endured heretofore:
in dread of death and daungerous dismay,
with which my silly barke was tossed sore.
I doe at length descry the happy shore,
in which I hope ere long for to arryue,
fayre soyle it seemes from far & fraught with store
of all that deare and daynty is alyue.
Most happy he that can at last atchyue,
the ioyous safety of so sweet a rest:
whose least delight sufficeth to depriue,
remembrance of all paines which him opprest.
All paines are nothing in respect of this,
all sorrowes short that gaine eternall blisse.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxiii

COMming to kisse her lyps, (such grace I found)
Me seemd I smelt a gardin of sweet flowres:
that dainty odours from them threw around
for damzels fit to decke their louers bowres.
Her lips did smell lyke vnto Gillyflowers,
her ruddy cheekes lyke vnto Roses red:
her snowy browes lyke budded Bellamoures,
her louely eyes lyke Pincks but newly spred,
Her goodly bosome lyke a Strawberry bed,
her neck lyke to a bounch of Cullambynes:
her brest lyke lillyes, ere theyr leaues be shed,
her nipples lyke yong blossomd Iessemynes,
Such fragrant flowres doe giue most odorous smell,
but her sweet odour did them all excell.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxix

The famous warriors of the anticke world,
Vsed Trophees to erect in stately wize:
in which they would the records haue enrold,
of theyr great deeds and valarous emprize.
What trophee then shall I most fit deuize,
in which I may record the memory
of my loues conquest, peerelesse beauties prise,
adorn'd with honour, loue, and chastity.
Euen this verse vovd to eternity,
shall be thereof immortall moniment:
and tell her prayse to all posterity,
that may admire such worlds rare wonderment.
The happy purchase of my glorious spoile,
gotten at last with labour and long toyle.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxv

The doubt which ye misdeeme, fayre loue, is vaine
That fondly feare to loose your liberty,
when loosing one, two liberties ye gayne,
and make him bond that bondage earst dyd fly.
Sweet be the bands, the which true loue doth tye,
without constraunt or dread of any ill:
the gentle birde feeles no captiuity
within her cage, but singes and feeds her fill.
There pride dare not approach, nor discord spill
the league twixt them, that loyal loue hath bound:
but simple truth and mutuall good will,
seekes with sweet peace to salue each others wou[n]d
There fayth doth fearlesse dwell in brasen towre,
and spotlesse pleasure builds her sacred bowre.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxvi

TO all those happy blessings which ye haue,
with plenteous hand by heauen vpon you thrown:
this one disparagement they to you gaue,
that ye your loue lent to so meane a one.
Yee whose high worths surpassing paragon,
could not on earth haue found one fit for mate,
ne but in heauen matchable to none,
why did ye stoup vnto so lowly state.
But ye thereby much greater glory gate,
then had ye sorted with a princes pere:
for now your light doth more it selfe dilate,
and in my darknesse greater doth appeare.
Yet since your light hath once enlumind me,
with my reflex yours shall encreased be.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxvii

Lyke as a huntsman after weary chace,
Seeing the game from him escapt away:
sits downe to rest him in some shady place,
with panting hounds beguiled of their pray.
So after long pursuit and vaine assay,
when I all weary had the chace forsooke,
the gentle deare returnd the selfe-same way,
thinking to quench her thirst at the next brooke.
There she beholding me with mylder looke,
sought not to fly, but fearelesse still did bide:
till I in hand her yet halfe trembling tooke,
and with her owne goodwill hir fymely tyde.
Strange thing me seemed to see a beast so wyld,
so goodly wonne with her owne will beguyld.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxviii

MOst glorious Lord of lyfe that on this day,
Didst make thy triumph ouer death and sin:
and hauing harrowd hell didst bring away,
captiuity thence captiue vs to win.

This ioyous day, deare Lord, with ioy begin,
and grant that we for whom thou didest dye
being with thy deare blood clene washt from sin,
may liue for euer in felicity.

And that thy loue we weighing worthily,
may likewise loue thee for the same againe:
and for thy sake that all lyke deare didst buy,
with loue may one another entertayne.

So let vs loue, deare loue, lyke as we ought,
loue is the lesson which the Lord vs taught.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxx

FResh spring the herald of loues mighty king,
In whose cote armour richly are displayd,
all sorts of flowers the which on earth do spring
in goodly colours gloriously arrayd.
Goe to my loue, where she is carelesse layd,
yet in her winters bowre not well awake:
tell her the ioyous time wil not be staid
vnlesse she doe him by the forelock take.
Bid her therefore her selfe soone ready make,
to wayt on loue amongst his louely crew:
where euery one that misseth then her make,
shall be by him amearst with penance dew.
Make hast therefore sweet loue, whilst it is prime,
for none can call againe the passed time.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxxi

I Ioy to see how in your drawen work,
Your selfe vnto the Bee ye doe compare;
and me vnto the Spyder that doth lurke,
in close awayt to catch her vnaware.
Right so to your selfe were caught in cunning snare
of a deare foe, and thralled to his loue:
in whose streight bands ye now captiued are
so firmly, that ye neuer may remoue.
But as your worke is wouen all about,
with woodbynd flowers and fragrant Eglantine:
so sweet your prison you in time shall proue,
with many deare delights bedecked fyne.
And all thensforth eternall peace shall see.
betweene the Spyder and the gentle Bee.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxxii

Oft when my spirit doth spread her bolder wings,
In mind to mount up to the purest sky:
it down is weighed with thought of earthly things:
and clogged with burden of mortality,
Where when that sovereign beauty it doth spy,
resembling heavens glory in her light:
drawn with sweet pleasures bayt, it back doth fly,
and unto heaven forgets her former flight.
There my frail fancy fed with full delight,
doth bask in bliss and mantleth most at ease:
ne thinks of other heaven, but how it might
her hearts desire with most contentment please,
Heart need not with none other happiness,
but here on earth to have such heavens bliss.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxxiii

BEing my selfe captuyed here in care,
My hart, whom none with seruile bands can tye:
but the fayre tresses of your golden hayre,
breaking his prison forth to you doth fly.
Lyke as a byrd that in ones hand doth spy
desired food, to it doth make his flight:
euen so my hart, that wont on your fayre eye
to feed his fill, flyes backe vnto your sight.
Doe you him take, and in your bosome bright,
gently encage, that he may be your thrall:
perhaps he there may learne with rare delight,
to sing your name and prayses ouer all.
That it hereafter may you not repent,
him lodging in your bosome to haue lent.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxxiiii

MOst happy letters fram'd by skilfull trade,
with which that happy name was first defynd:
the which three times thrise happy hath me made,
with guifts of body, fortune and of mind.
The first my being to me gaue by kind,
from mothers womb deriu'd by dew descent,
the second is my souereigne Queene most kind,
that honour and large richesse to me lent.
The third my loue, my liues last ornament,
by whom my spirit out of dust was raysed:
to speake her prayse and glory excellent,
of all aliue most worthy to be prayed.
Ye three Elizabeths for euer liue,
that three such graces did vnto me giue.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxxix

MEn call you fayre, and you doe credit it,
For that your selfe ye dayly such doe see:
but the trew fayre, that is the gentle wit,
and vertuous mind is much more praysd of me.
For all the rest, how euer fayre it be,
shall turne to nought and loose that glorious hew:
but onely that is permanent and free
from frayle corruption, that doth flesh ensew.
That is true beautie: that doth argue you
to be diuine and borne of heauenly seed:
deriu'd from that fayre Spirit, from whom al true
and perfect beauty did at first proceed.
He only fayre, and what he fayre hath made,
all other fayre lyke flowres vntymely fade.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxxvi

FAYre bosome fraught with vertues richest tresure,
The neast of loue, the lodging of delight:
the bowre of blisse, the paradice of pleasure,
the sacred harbour of that heuenly spright.
How was I rauisht with your louely sight,
and my frayle thoughts too rashly led astray?
whiles diuing deepe through amorous insight,
on the sweet spoyle of beautie they did pray.
And twixt her paps like early fruit in May,
whose haruest seemd to hasten now apace:
they loosely did theyr wanton winges display,
and there to rest themselues did boldly place.
Sweet thoughts I enuy your so happy rest,
which oft I wisht, yet neuer was so blest.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxxvii

Was it a dreame, or did I see it playne,
a goodly table of pure yvory:
all spred with iuncats, fit to entertayne,
the greatest Prince with pompous roialty.
Mongst which there in a siluer dish did ly,
twoo golden apples of vnualewd price:
far passing those which Hercules came by,
or those which Atalanta did entice.
Exceeding sweet, yet voyd of sinfull vice,
That many sought yet none could euer taste,
sweet fruit of pleasure brought from paradice:
By loue himselfe and in his garden plaste.
Her brest that table was so richly spredd,
my thoughts the guests, which would thereon haue fedd.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxxx

AFTER so long a race as I haue run
Through Faery land, which those six books co[m]pile
giue leaue to rest me being halfe fordonne,
and gather to my selfe new breath awhile.
Then as a steed refreshed after toyle,
out of my prison I will breake anew:
and stoutly will that second worke assoyle,
with strong endeouour and attention dew.
Till then giue leaue to me in pleasant mew,
to sport my muse and sing my loues sweet praise:
the contemplation of whose heauenly hew,
my spirit to an higher pitch will rayse.
But let her prayyses yet be low and meane,
fit for the handmayd of the Faery Queene.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxxxi

Fayre is my loue, when her fayre golden heares,
with the loose wynd ye wauing chance to marke:
fayre when the rose in her red cheekes appears,
or in her eyes the fyre of loue does sparke.
Fayre when her brest lyke a rich laden barke,
with pretious merchandize she forth doth lay:
fayre whe[n] that cloud of pryde, which oft doth dark
her goodly light with smiles she driues away.
But fayrest she, when so she doth display,
the gate with pearles and rubyes richly dight:
throg[h] which her words so wise do make their way
to beare the message of her gentle spright,
The rest be works of natures wonderment,
but this the worke of harts astonishment.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxxxii

Ioy of my life, full oft for louing you
I blesse my lot, that was so lucky placed:
but then the more your owne mishap I rew,
that are so much by so meane loue embased.
For had the equall heuens so much you graced
in this as in the rest, ye mote inuent
som heuenly wit, whose verse could haue enchased
your glorious name in golden monument.
But since ye deignd so goodly to relent
to me your thrall, in whom is little worth,
that little that I am, shall all be spent,
in setting your immortall prayses forth.
Whose lofty argument vplifting me,
shall lift you vp vnto an high degree.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxxxiii

MY hungry eyes, through greedy couetize,
Still to behold the object of theyr payne:
with no contentment can themselues suffize,
but hauing pine, and hauing not complayne
For lacking it, they cannot lyfe sustayne,
and seeing it, they gaze on it the more:
in theyr amazement lyke Marcissus vayne
whose eyes him staru'd: so plenty makes me pore.
Yet are myne eyes so filled with the store
of that fayre sight, that nothing else they brooke:
but loath the things which they did like before,
and can no more endure on them to looke.
All this worlds glory seemeth vayne to me,
and all theyr shewes but shadowes sauing she.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxxxiiii

LEt not one sparke of filthy lustfull fyre
breake out, that may her sacred peace molest:
ne one light glance of sensuall desyre:
Attempt to work her gentle mindes vnrest.
But pure affections bred in spotlesse brest,
& modest thoughts breathd fro[m] wel te[m]pred sprites
goe visit her in her bowre of rest,
accompanyde with angelick delightes.
There fill your selfe with those most ioyous sights,
the which my selfe could neuer yet attayne:
but speake no word to her of these sad plights,
which her too constant stiffenesse doth constrayn.
Onely behold her rare perfection,
and blesse your fortunes fayre election.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxxxix

LYke as the Culuer on the bared bough,
Sits mourning for the absence of her mate;
and in her songs sends many a wishfull vew,
for his returne that seemes to linger late.
So I alone now left disconsolate,
mourne to my selfe the absence of my loue:
and wandring here and there all desolate,
seek with my playnts to match that mournful doue
Ne ioy of ought that vnder heauen doth houe,
can comfort me, but her owne ioyous sight:
whose sweet aspect both God and man can moue,
in her vnspotted pleasauns to delight.
Dark is my day, whyles her fayre light I mis,
and dead my life that wants such liuely blis.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxxxv

The world that cannot deeme of worthy things,
when I doe praise her, say I doe but flatter:
so does the Cuckow, when the Mauis sings,
begin his witlesse note apace to clatter.
But they that skill not of so heauenly matter,
all that they know not, enuy or admyre,
rather then enuy let them wonder at her,
but not to deeme of her desert aspyre.
Deepe in the closet of my parts entyre,
her worth is written with a golden quill:
that me with heauenly fury doth inspire,
and my glad mouth with her sweet prayses fill.
Which when as fame in her shrill trump shal thunder
let the world chose to enuy or to wonder.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxxxvi

VEnemous tounge tipt with vile adders sting,
Of that selfe kynd with which the Furies tell
theyr snaky heads doe combe, from which a spring
of poysoned words and spitefull speeches well.
Let all the plagues and horrid paines of hell,
vpon thee fall for thine accursed hyre:
that with false forged lyes, which thou didst tel,
in my true loue did stirre vp coles of yre,
The sparkes whereof let kindle thine own fyre,
and catching hold on thine owne wicked hed
consume thee quite, that didst with guile conspire
in my sweet peace such breaches to haue bred.
Shame be thy meed, and mischief thy reward.
dew to thy selfe that it for me prepard.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxxxvii

Since I did leaue the presence of my loue,
Many long weary dayes I haue outworne:
and many nights, that slowly seemd to moue,
theyr sad protract from euening vntill morne.
For when as day the heauen doth adorne,
I wish that night the noyous day would end:
and when as night hath vs of light forlorne,
I wish that day would shortly reascend.
Thus I the time with expectation spend,
and faine my grieffe with chaunges to beguile,
that further seemes his terme still to extend,
and maketh euery minute seeme a myle.
So sorrow still doth seeme too long to last,
but ioyous houres doo fly away too fast.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Lxxxviii

Since I haue lackt the comfort of that light,
The which was wont to lead my thoughts astray:
I wander as in darknesse of the night,
affrayd of euery dangers least dismay.
Ne ought I see, though in the clearest day,
when others gaze vpon theyr shadowes vayne:
but th'onely image of that heauenly ray,
whereof some glance doth in mine eie remayne.
Of which beholding th'Idaea playne,
through contemplation of my purest part:
with light thereof I doe my selfe sustayne,
and thereon feed my loue-affamisht hart.
But with such brightnesse whylest I fill my mind,
I starue my body and mine eyes doe blynd.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet V

RVdely thou wrongest my deare harts desire,
In finding fault with her too portly pride:
the thing which I doo most in her admire,
is of the world vnworthy most enuide.
For in those lofty lookes is close implide,
scorn of base things, & sdeigne of soule dishonor:
thretning rash eies which gaze on her so wide,
that loosely they ne dare to looke vpon her.
Such pride is praise, such portlinesse is honor,
that boldned innocence beares in her eies:
and her faire countenance like a goodly banner,
spreds in defiaunce of all enemies.
Was neuer in this world ought worthy tride,
without some spark of such self-pleasing pride.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Vi

BE nought dismayd that her vnmoued mind,
doth still persist in her rebellious pride:
such loue not lyke to lusts of baser kynd,
the harder wonne, the firmer will abide.
The durefull Oake, whose sap is not yet dride,
is long ere it conceiue the kindling fyre:
but when it once doth burne, it doth diuide
great heat, and makes his flames to heauen aspire.
So hard it is to kindle new desire,
in gentle brest that shall endure for euer:
deepe is the wound, that dints the parts entire
with chast affects, that naught but death can seuer.
Then thinke not long in taking litle paine,
to knit the knot, that euer shall remaine.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Vii

Fayre eyes, the myrroure of my mazed hart,
what wondrous vertue is contaynd in you
the which both lyfe and death forth fro[m] you dart
into the obiect of your mighty view?

For when ye mildly looke with louely hew,
then is my soule with life and loue inspired:
but when ye lowre, or looke on me askew
then doe I die, as one with lightning fyred.
But since that lyfe is more then death desyred,
looke euer louely, as becomes you best,
that your bright beams of my weak eies admyred,
may kindle liuing fire within my brest.
Such life should be the honor of your light,
such death the sad ensample of your might.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Viii

MORE then most faire, full of the liuing fire,
Kindled aboue vnto the maker neere:
no eies buy ioyes, in which al powers conspire,
that to the world naught else be counted deare.
Through your bright beams doth not ye blinded guest,
shoot out his darts to base affections wound:
but Angels come to lead fraile mindes to rest
in chast desires on heauenly beauty bound.
You frame my thoughts and fashion me within,
you stop my tounge, and teach my hart to speake,
you calme the storme that passion did begin,
stro[n]g through your cause, but by your vertue weak.
Dark is the world, where your light shined neuer;
well is he borne, that may behold you euer.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet X

VNrighteous Lord of loue what law is this,
That me thou makest thus tormented be:
the whiles she lordeth in licentious blisse
of her freewill, scorning both thee and me.
See how the Tyrannesse doth ioy to see
the huge massacres which her eyes do make:
and humbled harts brings captiues vnto thee,
that thou of them mayst mightie vengeance take.
But her proud hart doe thou a little shake
and that high look, with which she doth comptroll
all this worlds pride bow to a baser make,
and al her faults in thy black booke enroll.
That I may laugh at her in equall sort,
as she doth laugh at me & makes my pain her sport.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xi

DAyly when I do seeke and sew for peace,
And hostages doe offer for my truth:
she cruell Warriour doth her selfe addresse,
to battell, and the weary war renew'th.
Ne wilbe moou'd with reason or with rewth,
to graunt small respite to my restlesse toile:
but greedily her fell intent pursuewth,
Of my poore life to make vnpitteid spoile.
Yet my poore life, all sorrowes to assoyle,
I would her yield, her wrath to pacify:
but then she seekes with torment and turmoyle,
to force me liue and will not let me dy.
All paine hath end and euery war hath peace,
but mine no price nor prayer may surcease.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xii

ONE day I sought with her hart-thrilling eies,
to make a truce and termes to entertaine:
all fearlesse then of so false enimies,
which sought me to entrap in treasons traine.
So as I then disarmed did remaine,
a wicked ambush which lay hidden long
in the close couert of her guilefull eyen,
thence breaking forth did thicke about me throng,
Too feeble I t'abide the brunt so strong,
was forst to yeeld my selfe into their hands:
who me captiuing streight with rigorous wrong,
haue euer since me kept in cruell bands.
So Ladie now to you I doo complaine,
against your eies that iustice I may gaine.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xiii

IN that proud port, which her so goodly graceth,
whiles her faire face she reares vp to the skie:
and to the ground her eie lids low embaseth,
most goodly temperature ye may descry,
Myld humblesse mixt with awfull maiesty,
for looking on the earth whence she was borne:
her minde remembreth her mortalitie,
what so is fayrest shall to earth returne.
But that same lofty countenance seemes to scorne
base thing, & thinke how she to heauen may clime:
treading downe earth as lothsome and forlorne,
that hinders heauenly thoughts with drossy slime.
Yet lowly still vouchsafe to looke on me,
such lowlinesse shall make you lofty be.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xiiii

REtourne agayne my forces late dismayd,
Vnto the siege by you abandon'd quite,
great shame it is to leaue like one afrayd,
so fayre a peece for one repulse so light.
Gaynst such strong castles needeth greater might,
then those small forts which ye were wont belay,
such haughty myndes enur'd to hardy fight,
disdayne to yield vnto the first assay.
Bring therefore all the forces that ye may,
and lay incessant battery to her heart,
playnts, prayers, vowes, ruth, sorrow, and dismay,
those engins can the proudest loue conuert.
And if those fayle fall downe and dy before her,
so dying liue, and liuing do adore her.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xix

The merry Cuckow, messenger of Spring,
His trompet shrill hath thrise already sounded:
that warnes al louers wayt vpon their king,
who now is comming forth with girland crowned.
With noyse whereof the quyre of Byrds resounded
their anthemes sweet devized of loues prayse,
that all the woods they ecchoes back rebounded,
as if they knew the meaning of their layes.
But mongst them all, which did Loues honor rayse
no word was heard of her that most it ought,
but she his precept proudly disobayes,
and doth his ydle message set at nought.
Therefore O loue, vnlesse she turne to thee
ere Cuckow end, let her a rebell be.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet XI

MArk when she smiles with amiable cheare,
And tell me whereto can ye lyken it:
when on each eyelid sweetly doe appeare,
an hundred Graces as in shade to sit.
Lykest it seemeth in my simple wit
vnto the fayre sunshine in somers day:
that when a dreadfull storme away is flit,
through the broad world doth spred his goodly ray
At sight whereof each bird that sits on spray,
and euery beast that to his den was fled:
comes forth afresh out of their late dismay,
and to the light lift vp theyr drouping hed.
So my storme beaten hart likewise is cheared,
with that sunshine when cloudy looks are cleared.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xlii

THE loue which me so cruelly tormenteth,
So pleasing is in my extreamest paine:
that all the more my sorrow it augmenteth,
the more I loue and doe embrace my bane.
Ne doe I wish (for wishing were but vaine)
to be acquit fro my continuall smart:
but ioy her thrall for euer to remayne,
and yield for pledge my poore captuyed hart
The which that it from her may neuer start,
let her, yf please her, bynd with adamant chayne:
and from all wandring loues which mote peruart,
his safe assurance strongly it restrayne.
Onely let her abstaine from cruelty,
and doe me not before my time to dy.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xliii

SHall I then silent be or shall I speake?
And if I speake, her wrath renew I shall:
and if I silent be, my hart will breake,
or choked be with ouerflowing gall.
What tyranny is this both my hart to thrall,
and eke my tounge with proud restraint to tie?
that nether I may speake nor thinke at all,
but like a stupid stock in silence die.
Yet I my hart with silence secretly
will teach to speak, and my iust cause to plead:
and eke mine eies with meeke humility,
loue learned letters to her eyes to read.
Which her deep wit, that true harts thought can spel,
wil soone conceiue, and learne to construe well.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xliiii

When those renowned noble Peres of Greece,
through stubborn pride amongst the[m]selues did iar
forgetfull of the famous golden fleece,
then Orpheus with his harp theyr strife did bar.
But this continuall cruell ciuill warre,
the which my selfe against my selfe doe make:
whilest my weak powres of passions warreid arre.
no skill can stint nor reason can aslake.
But when in hand my tunelesse harp I take,
then doe I more augment my foes despight:
and grieffe renew, and passions doe awake,
to battaile fresh against my selfe to fight.
Mongst whome the more I seeke to settle peace,
the more I fynd their malice to increace.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xlv

LEaue lady, in your glasse of christall clene,
Your goodly selfe for euermore to vew:
and in my selfe, my inward selfe I meane,
most liuely lyke behold your semblant trew.
Within my hart, though hardly it can shew,
thing so diuine to vew of earthly eye:
the fayre Idea of your celestiall hew,
and euery part remaines immortally:
And were it not that through your cruelty,
with sorrow dimmed and deformd it were:
the goodly ymage of your visnomy,
clearer then christall would therein appere.
But if your selfe in me ye playne will see,
remoue the cause by which your fayre beames darkned be.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xlvi

WHen my abodes prefixed time is spent,
My cruell fayre streight bids me wend my way:
but then fro[m] heauen most hideous stormes are sent
as willing me against her will to stay.

Whom then shall I or heauen or her obey,
the heauens know best what is the best for me:
but as she will, whose will my life doth sway,
my lower heauen, so it perforce must bee.

But ye high heuens, that all this sorowe see,
sith all your tempests cannot hold me backe:
aswage your stormes, or else both you and she,
will both together me too sorely wrack.

Enough it is for one man to sustaine,
the stormes, which she alone on me doth raine.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xlvii

TRust not the treason of those smyling lookes,
vntill ye haue theyr guylefull traynes well tryde:
for they are lyke but vnto golden hookes,
that from the foolish fish theyr bayts doe hyde:
So she with flattring smyles weake harts doth guyde,
vnto her loue and tempte to theyr decay,
whome being caught she kills with cruell pryde,
and feeds at pleasure on the wretched pray:
Yet euen whylst her bloody hands them slay,
her eyes looke louely and vpon them smyle:
that they take pleasure in her cruell play,
and dying doe them selues of payne beguyle.
O mighty charm which makes men loue theyr bane,
and thinck they dy with pleasure, liue with payne.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xlviii

INnocent paper whom too cruell hand,
Did make the matter to auenge her yre:
and ere she could thy cause wel vnderstand,
did sacrificize vnto the greedy fyre.
Well worthy thou to haue found better hyre,
then so bad end for hereticks ordayned:
yet heresy nor treason didst conspire,
but plead thy maisters cause vniustly payned.
Whom all the carelesse of his grieffe constrayned
to vtter forth th'anguish of his hart:
and would not heare, when he to her complayned,
the piteous passion of his dying smart.
Yet liue for euer, though against her will,
and speake her good, though she requite it ill.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xv

YE tradefull Merchants that with weary toyle,
do seeke most pretious things to make your gain:
and both the Indias of their treasures spoile,
what needeth you to seeke so farre in vaine?
For loe my loue doth in her selfe containe
all this worlds riches that may farre be found,
if Saphyres, loe her eies be Saphyres plaine,
if Rubies, loe hir lips be Rubies found:
If Pearles, hir teeth be pearles both pure and round;
if Yuorie, her forehead yuory weene;
if Gold, her locks are finest gold on ground;
if siluer, her faire hands are siluer sheene,
But that which fairest is, but few behold,
her mind adornd with vertues manifold.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xvi

ONE day as I vnwarily did gaze
on those fayre eyes my loues immortall light:
the whiles my stonisht hart stood in amaze,
through sweet illusion of her lookes delight.
I mote perceiue how in her glauncing sight,
legions of loues with little wings did fly:
darting their deadly arrowes fyry bright
at euery rash beholder passing by.
One of those archers closely I did spy,
ayming his arrow at my very hart:
when suddenly with twinkle of her eye,
the Damzell broke his misintended dart.
Had she not so doon, sure I had bene slayne,
yet as it was, I hardly scap't with paine.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xvii

The glorious portraict of that Angels face,
Made to amaze weake mens confused skil:
and this worlds worthlesse glory to embase,
what pen, what pencill can expresse her fill?
For though he colours could deuize at will,
and eke his learned hand at pleasure guide:
least trembling it his wormanship should spill,
yet many wondrous things there are beside.
The sweet eye-glaunces, that like arrowes glide,
the charming smiles, that rob sence from the hart:
the louely pleasance and the lofty pride,
cannot expressed be by any art.
A greater craftsmans hand thereto doth neede,
that can expresse the life of things indeed.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xviii

The rolling wheele that runneth often round,
The hardest steele in tract of time doth teare:
and drizling drops that often doe redound,
the firmest flint doth in continuance weare.
Yet cannot I with many a dropping teare,
and long intreaty soften her hard hart:
that she will once vouchsafe my plaint to heare,
or looke with pittie on my payneful smart.
But when I pleade, she bids me play my part,
and when I weep, she sayes teares are but water:
and when I sigh, she sayes I know the art,
and when I waile she turnes hir selfe to laughter.
So doe I weepe, and wayle, and pleade in vaine,
whiles she as steele and flint doth still remayne.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xx

IN vaine I seeke and sew to her for grace,
and doe myne humbled hart before her poure:
the whiles her foot she in my necke doth place,
and tread my life downe in the lowly floure.
And yet the Lyon that is Lord of power,
and reigneth ouer euery beast in field:
in his most pride disdeigneth to deuoure
the silly lambe that to his might doth yield.
But she more cruell and more saluage wylde,
then either Lyon or the Lyonesse:
shames not to be with guiltlesse bloud defylde,
but taketh glory in her cruelnesse.
Fayrer then fayrest let none euer say,
that ye were blooded in a yeelded pray.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxi

WAs it the worke of nature or of Art?
which tempred so the feature of her face:
that pride and meeknesse mixt by equall part,
doe both appeare t'adorne her beauties grace.
For with mild pleasance, which doth pride displace,
she to her loues doth lookers eyes allure:
& with sterne countenance back again doth chace
their looser lookes that stir vp lustes impure,
With such strange termes her eyes she doth inure,
that with one looke she doth my life dismay:
and with another doth it streight recure,
her smile me drawes, her frowne me driues away.
Thus doth she traine and teach me with her lookes,
such art of eyes I neuer read in bookes.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxii

THis holy season fit to fast and pray,
Men to deuotion ought to be inclynd:
therefore, I lykewise on so holy day,
for my sweet Saynt some seruice fit will find.
Her temple fayre is built within my mind,
in which her glorious ymage placed is,
on which my thoughts doo day and night attend
lyke sacred priests that neuer thinke amisse.
There I to her as th'author of my blisse,
will builde an altar to appease her yre:
and on the same my hart will sacrificise,
burning in flames of pure and chast desyre:
The which vouchsafe O goddessse to accept,
amongst thy deerest relicks to be kept.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxiii

Penelope for her Vlisses sake,
Deuiz'd a Web her wooers to deceaue:
in which the worke that she all day did make
the same at night she did againe vnreaue,
Such subtile craft my Damzell doth conceaue,
th'importune suit of my desire to shonne:
for all that I in many dayes doo weaue,
in one short houre I find by her vndonne.
So when I thinke to end that I begonne,
I must begin and neuer bring to end:
for with one looke she spils that long I sponne,
& with one word my whole years work doth rend.
Such labour like the Spyderys web I fynd,
whose fruitlesse worke is broken with least wynd.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxiii

WHen I behold that beauties wonderment,
And rare perfection of each goodly part;
of natures skill the only complement,
I honor and admire the makers art.
But when I feele the bitter balefull smart,
which her fayre eyes vnwares doe worke in mee:
that death out of theyr shiny beames doe dart,
I thinke that I a new Pandora see.
Whom all the Gods in councell did agree,
into this sinfull world from heauen to send:
that she to wicked men a scourge should bee,
for all their faults with which they did offend,
But since ye are my scourge I will intreat,
that for my faults ye will me gently beat.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxix

See how the stubborne damzell doth depraue
my simple meaning with disdaynfull scorne:
and by the bay which I vnto her gaue,
accoumpts my selfe her captiue quite forlorne.
The bay (quoth she) is of the victours borne,
yielded them by the vanquisht as theyr meeds,
and they therewith doe poetes heads adorne,
to sing the glory of their famous deedes.
But sith she will the conquest challeng needs,
let her accept me as her faithfull thrall,
that her great triumph which my skill exceeds,
I may in trump of fame blaze ouer all.
Then would I decke her head with glorious bayes,
and fill the world with her victorious prayse.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxv

HOw long shall this lyke dying lyfe endure,
And know no end of her owne mysery:
but wast and weare away in termes vnsure,
twixt feare and hope depending doubtfully.
Yet better were attonce to let me die,
and shew the last ensample of your pride:
then to torment me thus with cruelty,
to proue your powre, which I too wel haue tride.
But yet if in your hardned brest ye hide,
a close intent at last to shew me grace:
then all the woes and wrecks which I abide,
as meanes of blisse I gladly wil embrace.
And wish that more and greater they might be,
that greater meede at last may turne to mee.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxvi

Sweet is the Rose, but growes vpon a brere;
Sweet is the Iunipere, but sharpe his bough;
sweet is the Eglantine, but pricketh nere;
sweet is the firbloome, but his braunches rough.
Sweet is the Cypresse, but his rynd is tough,
sweet is the nut, but bitter is his pill;
sweet is the broome-flowre, but yet sowre enough;
and sweet is Moly, but his root is ill.
So euery sweet with soure is tempred still,
that maketh it be coueted the more:
for easie things that may be got at will,
most sorts of men doe set but little store.
Why then should I accoupt of little paine,
that endlesse pleasure shall vnto me gaine.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxvii

FAire proud now tell me why should faire be proud;
Sith all worlds glorie is but drosse vncleane:
and in the shade of death it selfe shall shroud,
how euer now thereof ye little weene.
That goodly Idoll now so gay beseene,
shall doffe her fleshes borowd fayre attyre:
and be forgot as it had neuer beene,
that many now much worship and admire.
Ne any then shall after it inquire,
ne any mention shall thereof remaine:
but what this verse, that neuer shall expyre,
shall to you purchas with her thankles paine.
Faire be no lenger proud of that shall perish,
but that which shal you make immortall, cherish.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxviii

The laurell leafe, which you this day doe weare,
guies me great hope of your relenting mynd:
for since it is the badg which I doe beare,
ye bearing it doe seeme to me inclind:
The powre thereof, which ofte in me I find,
let it lykewise your gentle brest inspire
with sweet infusion, and put you in mind
of that proud mayd, whom now those leaues attyre
Proud Daphne scorning Phaebus louely fyre,
on the Thessalian shore from him did flie:
for which the gods in theyr reuengefull yre
did her transforme into a laurell tree.
Then fly no more fayre loue from Phebus chace,
but in your brest his leafe and loue embrace.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxx

MY loue is lyke to yse, and I to fyre;
how comes it then that this her cold so great
is not dissolu'd through my so hot desyre,
but harder growes the more I her intreat?
Or how comes it that my exceeding heat
is not delayd by her hart frosen cold:
but that I burne much more in boyling sweat,
and feel my flames augmented manifold?
What more miraculous thing may be told
that fire which all things melts, should harden yse:
and yse which is congeald with sencelesse cold,
should kindle fyre by wonderfull deuyse.
Such is the powre of loue in gentle mind,
that it can alter all the course of kynd.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxxi

Ah why hath nature to so hard a hart,
giuen so goodly giftes of beauties grace?
whose pryde depraues each other better part,
and all those pretious ornaments deface.
Sith to all other beastes of bloody race,
a dreadfull countenance she giuen hath:
that with theyr terrour al the rest may chace,
and warne to shun the daunger of theyr wrath.
But my proud one doth worke the greater scath,
through sweet allurement of her louely hew:
that she the better may in bloody bath,
of such poore thralls her cruell hands embrew.
But did she know how ill these two accord,
such cruelty she would haue soone abhord.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxxii

The paynefull smith with force of feruent heat,
the hardest yron soone doth mollify:
that with his heauy sledge he can it beat,
and fashion to what he it list apply.
Yet cannot all these flames in which I fry,
her hart more harde then yron soft awhit;
ne all the playnts and prayers with which I
doe beat on th'anduyle of her stubberne wit:
But still the more she feruent sees my fit:
the more she frieseth in her wilfull pryde:
and harder growes the harder she is smit,
with all the playnts which to her be applyde.
What then remaines but I to ashes burne,
and she to stones at length all frosen turne?

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxxiii

Great wrong I doe, I can it not deny,
to that most sacred Empresse my dear dred,
not finishing her Queene of faery,
that mote enlarge her liuing prayses dead:
But lodwick, this of grace to me aread:
doe ye not thinck th'accomplishment of it,
sufficient worke for one mans simple head,
all were it as the rest but rudely writ.
How then should I without another wit:
thinck euer to endure so taedious toyle,
sins that this one is tost with troublous fit,
of a proud loue, that doth my spirite spoyle.
Ceasse then, till she vouchsafe to grawnt me rest,
or lend you me another liuing brest.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxxiiii

Lyke as a ship that through the Ocean wyde,
by conduct of some star doth make her way.
whenas a storme hath dimd her trusty guyde.
out of her course doth wander far astray:
So I whose star, that wont with her bright ray,
me to direct, with cloudes is ouercast,
doe wander now in darknesse and dismay,
through hidden perils round about me plast.
Yet hope I well, that when this storme is past
My Helice the lodestar of my lyfe
will shine again, and looke on me at last,
with louely light to cleare my cloudy grief,
Till then I wander carefull comfortlesse,
in secret sorow and sad pensiuenesse.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxxix

Sweet smile, the daughter of the Queene of loue,
Expressing all thy mothers powrefull art:
with which she wonts to temper angry loue,
when all the gods he threats with thundring dart.
Sweet is thy vertue as thy selfe sweet art,
for when on me thou shinedst late in sadnesse:
a melting pleasance ran through euery part,
and me reuiued with hart robbing gladnesse.
Whylest rapt with ioy resembling heauenly madnes,
my soule was raiisht quite as in a traunce:
and feeling thence no more her sorowes sadnesse,
fed on the fulnesse of that chearefull glaunce.
More sweet than Nectar or Ambrosiall meat,
seemd euery bit, which thenceforth I did eat.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxxv

MY hungry eyes through greedy couetize,
still to behold the object of their paine:
with no contentment can themselves suffize,
but having paine and having not complaine.
For lacking it they cannot life sustayne,
and having it they gaze on it the more:
in their amazement like Narcissus vaine
whose eyes him staru'd: so plenty makes me poore
Yet are mine eyes so filled with the store
of that faire sight, that nothing else they brooke,
but lothe the things which they did like before,
and can no more endure on them to looke.
All this worlds glory seemeth vayne to me,
and all their shewes but shadowes sauing she.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxxvi

TEll me when shall these wearie woes haue end,
Or shall their ruthlesse torment neuer cease:
but al my dayes in pining languor spend,
without hope of aswagement or release.
Is there no meanes for me to purchace peace,
or make agreement with her thrilling eyes:
but that their cruelty doth still increace,
and dayly more augment my miseryes.
But when ye haue shewed all extremityes,
then thinke how litle glory ye haue gayned:
by slaying him, whose lyfe though ye despyse,
mote haue your life in honour long maintayned.
But by his death which some perhaps will mone,
ye shall condemned be of many a one.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxxvii

WHat guyle is this, that those her golden tresses,
She doth attyre vnder a net of gold:
and with sly skill so cunningly them dresses,
that which is gold or heare, may scarce be told?
Is it that mens frayle eyes, which gaze too bold,
she may entangle in that golden snare:
and being caught may craftily enfold,
theyr weaker harts, which are not wel aware?
Take heed therefore, myne eyes, how ye doe stare
henceforth too rashly on that guilefull net,
in which is euer ye entrapped are,
out of her bands ye by no meanes shall get.
Fondnesse it were for any being free,
to couet fetters, though they golden bee.

Edmund Spenser

Sonnet Xxxviii

ARion, when through tempests cruel wracke,
He forth was thrown into the greedy seas:
through the sweet musick which his harp did make
allu'rd a Dolphin him from death to ease.
But my rude musick, which was wont to please
some dainty eares, cannot with any skill,
the dreadfull tempest of her wrath appease,
nor moue the Dolphin from her stubborne will,
But in her pride she dooth perseuer still,
all carelesse how my life for her decayse:
yet with one word she can it saue or spill,
to spill were pittie, but to saue were prayse.
Chose rather to be praysd for dooing good,
then to be blam'd for spilling guiltlesse blood.

Edmund Spenser

The Faerie Queene (Dedicatory Sonnets)

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON, LORD HIGH
CHAUNCELOR OF ENGLAND, &C.

THOSE prudent heads, that with their counsels wise
Whylom the pillours of th' earth did sustaine,
And taught ambitious Rome to Tyrannise,
And in the neck of all the world to rayne,
Oft from those grave affaires were wont abstaine,
With the sweet, Lady Muses for to play:
So Ennius the elder Africane,
So Maro oft did Cæsars cares allay.
So you, great Lord, that with your counsell sway
The burdeine of this kingdom mightily,
With like delightes sometimes may eke delay
The rugged brow of carefull Policy;
And to these ydle rymes lend litle space,
Which for their titles sake may find more grace.

TO THE MOST HONOURABLE AND EXCELLENT LORD THE EARLE OF ESSEX.
GREAT MAISTER OF THE HORSE TO HER HIGHNESSE, AND KNIGHT OF THE
NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER, &C.

MAGNIFICKE Lord, whose vertues excellent
Doe merit a most famous poets witt,
To be thy living praises instrument,
Yet doe not sdeigne to let thy name be writt
In this base poeme, for thee far unfitt:
Nought is thy worth disparaged thereby.
But when my Muse, whose fethers, nothing flitt,
Doe yet but flagg, and lowly learne to fly,
With bolder wing shall dare alofte to sty
To the last praises of this Faery Queene,
Then shall it make more famous memory
Of thine heroicke parts, such as they beene.
Till then vouchsafe thy noble countenance,
To these first labours needed furtheraunce.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARLE OF OXFORD, LORD HIGH
CHAMBERLAYNE OF ENGLAND, &C.

RECEIVE, most noble Lord, in gentle gree□
The unripe fruit of an unready wit,□
Which by thy countenance doth crave to bee□
Defended from foule Envies poisonous bit:□
Which so to doe may thee right well befit,□
Sith th' antique glory of thine auncestry□
Under a shady vele is therein writ,□
And eke thine owne long living memory,□
Succeeding them in true nobility;□
And also for the love which thou doest beare□
To th' Heliconian ymps, and they to thee,□
They unto thee, and thou to them, most deare.□
Deare as thou art unto thy selfe, so love□
That loves and honours thee, as doth behove.□

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARLE OF NORTHUMBERLAND

THE SACRED Muses have made alwaies clame□
To be the nurses of nobility,□
And registres of everlasting fame,□
To all that armes professe and chevalry.□
Then, by like right, the noble progeny,□
Which them succeed in fame and worth, are tyde□
T'embrace the service of sweete poetry,□
By whose endeavours they are glorifide;□
And eke from all of whom it is envide□
To patronize the authour of their praise,□
Which gives them life, that els would soone have dide,□
And crownes their ashes with immortall baies.□
To thee, therefore, right noble Lord, I send□
This present of my paines, it to defend.□

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARLE OF ORMOND AND OSSORY

RECEIVE, most noble Lord, a simple taste□
Of the wilde fruit which salvage soyl hath bred,□
Which, being through long wars left almost waste,□
With brutish barbarisme is overspredd:□
And in so faire a land as may be redd,□
Not one Parnassus nor one Helicone□
Left for sweete Muses to be harboured,□
But where thy selfe hast thy brave mansione:□
There in deede dwel faire Graces many one,□
And gentle nymphes, delights of learned wits,□
And in thy person without paragone□
All goodly bountie and true honour sits.□
Such, therefore, as that wasted soyl doth yield,□
Receive, dear Lord, in worth, the fruit of barren field.□

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD CH. HOWARD, LORD HIGH ADMIRAL OF ENGLAND, KNIGHT OF THE NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER, AND ONE OF HER MAJESTIES PRIVIE COUNSEL, &C.

AND ye, brave Lord, whose goodly person age□
And noble deeds, each other garnishing,□
Make you ensample to the present age□
Of th' old heroes, whose famous ofspring□
The antique poets wont so much to sing,□
In this same pageaunt have a worthy place,□
Sith those huge castles of Castilian king,□
That vainly threatned kingdomes to displace,□
Like flying doves ye did before you chace,□
And that proud people, woxen insolent□
Through many victories, didst first deface:□
Thy praises everlasting monument□
Is in this verse engraven semblably,□
That it may live to all posterity.□

TO THE MOST RENOWMED AND VALIANT LORD, THE LORD GREY OF WILTON, KNIGHT OF THE NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER, &C.

MOST noble Lord, the pillor of my life,□
And patrone of my Muses pupillage,□
Through whose large bountie, poured on me rife,□
In the first season of my feeble age,□
I now doe live, bound yours by vassalage:□
Sith nothing ever may redeeme, nor reave□
Out of your endlesse debt so sure a gage,□
Vouchsafe in worth this small guift to receive,□
Which in your noble hands for pledge I leave□
Of all the rest that I am tyde t' account:□
Rude rymes, the which a rustick Muse did weave□
In savadge soyle, far from Parnassomount,□
And roughly wrought in an unlearned loome:□
The which vouchsafe, dear Lord, your favorable doome.□

TO THE RIGHT NOBLE AND VALOROUS KNIGHT, SIR WALTER RALEIGH, LORD
WARDEIN OF THE STANNERYES, AND LIEFTENAUNT OF CORNEWAILE

TO thee that art the sommers Nightingale,□
Thy souveraine Goddesses most deare delight,□
Why doe I send this rusticke madrigale,□
That may thy tunefull eare unseason quite?□
Thou onely fit this argument to write,□
In whose high thoughts Pleasure hath built her bowre,□
And dainty Love learnd sweetly to endite.□
My rimes I know unsavory and sowre,□
To tast the streames, that like a golden showre□
Flow from thy fruitfull head, of thy loves praise;□
Fitter perhaps to thonder martiall stowre,□
When so thee list thy lofty Muse to raise:□
Yet till that thou thy poeme wilt make knowne,□
Let thy faire Cinthias praises bee thus rudely showne.□

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD BURLEIGH, LORD HIGH TREASURER
OF ENGLAND

TO you, right noble Lord, whose carefull brest□
To menage of most grave affaires is bent,□

And on whose mightie shoulders most doth rest□
The burdein of this kingdomes governement,□
As the wide compasse of the firmament□
On Atlas mighty shoulders is upstayd,□
Unfitly I these ydle rimes present,□
The labor of lost time, and wit unstayd:□
Yet if their deeper sence be inly wayd,□
And the dim vele, with which from comune vew□
Their fairer parts are hid, aside be layd,□
Perhaps not vaine they may appeare to you.□
Such as they be, vouchsafe them to receave,□
And wipe their faults out of your censure grave.

□

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARLE OF CUMBERLAND

REDOUBTED Lord, in whose corageous mind□
The flowre of chevalry, now bloosming faire,□
Doth promise fruite worthy the noble kind□
Which of their praises have left you the haire;□
To you this humble present I prepare,□
For love of vertue and of martiall praise;□
To which though nobly ye inclined are,□
As goodlie well ye shew'd in late assaies,□
Yet brave ensample of long passed daies,□
In which trew honor yee may fashioned see,□
To like desire of honor may ye raise,□
And fill your mind with magnanimitee.□
Receive it, Lord, therefore, as it was ment,□
For honor of your name and high descent.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD OF HUNSDON, HIGH CHAMBERLAINE TO
HER MAJESTY

RENOWMED Lord, that for your worthinesse□
And noble deeds, have your deserved place□
High in the favour of that Emperesse,□
The worlds sole glory and her sexes grace;□

Here eke of right have you a worthie place,□
Both for your nearnes to that Faerie Queene,□
And for your owne high merit in like cace,□
Of which apparaunt prooffe was to be seene,□
When that tumultuous rage and fearfull deene□
Of Northerne rebels ye did pacify,□
And their disloiall powre defaced clene,□
The record of enduring memory.□
Live, Lord, for ever in this lasting verse,□
That all posteritie thy honor may reherse.

□

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD OF BUCKHURST, ONE OF HER
MAJESTIES PRIVIE COUNSELL

IN vain I thinke, right honourable Lord,□
By this rude rime to memorize thy name,□
Whose learned Muse hath writ her owne record□
In golden verse, worthy immortal fame:□
Thou much more fit (were leasure to the same)□
Thy gracious Soverains praises to compile,□
And her imperiall majestie to frame□
In loftie numbers and heroicke stile.□
But sith thou maist not so, give leave a while□
To baser wit his power therein to spend,□
Whose grosse defaults thy daintie pen may file,□
And unadvised oversights amend.□
But evermore vouchsafe it to maintaine□
Against vile Zoilus backbitings vaine.□

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR FR. WALSINGHAM, KNIGHT, PRINCIPALL
SECRETARY TO HER MAJESTY AND OF HER HONOURABLE PRIVY COUNSELL

THAT Mantuane poetes incompared spirit,□
Whose girland now is set in highest place,□
Had not Mecænas, for his worthy merit,□
It first advaunst to great Augustus grace,□
Might long, perhaps, have lien in silence bace,□
Ne bene so much admir'd of later age.□

This lowly Muse, that learns like steps to trace,□
Flies for like aide unto your patronage;□
That are the great Mecenas of this age,□
As wel to al that civil artes professe,□
As those that are inspir'd with martial rage,□
And craves protection of her feeblenesse:□
Which if ye yield, perhaps ye may her rayse□
In bigger tunes to sound your living prayse.

□

TO THE RIGHT NOBLE LORD AND MOST VALIAUNT CAPTAINE, SIR JOHN
NORRIS, KNIGHT, LORD PRESIDENT OF MOUNSTER

WHO ever gave more honourable prize□
To the sweet Muse then did the martiall crew,□
That their brave deeds she might immortalize□
In her shril tromp, and sound their praises dew?□
Who then ought more to favour her then you,□
Moste noble Lord, the honor of this age,□
And precedent of all that armes ensue?□
Whose warlike prowesse and manly courage,□
Tempred with reason and advizement sage,□
Hath fild sad Belgicke with victorious spoile,□
In Fraunce and Ireland left a famous gage,□
And lately shakt the Lusitanian soile.□
Sith, then, each where thou hast dispredd thy fame,□
Love him that hath eternized your name.

□

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE AND MOST VERTUOUS LADY, THE COUNTESSE OF
PENBROKE

REMEMBRAUNCE of that most heroicke spirit,□
The heavens pride, the glory of our daies,□
Which now triumpheth through immortall merit□
Of his brave vertues, crownd with lasting baies□
Of heavenlie blis and everlasting praies;□
Who first my Muse did lift out of the flore,□
To sing his sweet delights in lowlie laies;□
Bids me, most noble Lady, to adore□

His goodly image living evermore□
In the divine resemblance of your face;□
Which with your vertues ye embellish more,□
And native beauty deck with hevenlie grace:□
For his, and for your owne especial sake,□
Vouchsafe from him this token in good worth to take.

TO THE MOST VERTUOUS AND BEAUTIFULL LADY, THE LADY CAREW

NE may I, without blot of endlesse blame,□
You, fairest Lady, leave out of this place,□
But with remembraunce of your gracious name,□
Wherewith that courtly garlond most ye grace,□
And deck the world, adorne these verses base.□
Not that these few lines can in them comprise□
Those glorious ornaments of hevenly grace,□
Wherewith ye triumph over feeble eyes,□
And in subdued harts do tyrannyse;□
For thereunto doth need a golden quill□
And silver leaves, them rightly to devise;□
But to make humble present of good will:□
Which, whenas timely meanes it purchase may,□
In ampler wise it selfe will forth display.

□

TO ALL THE GRATIOUS AND BEAUTIFULL LADIES IN THE COURT

THE CHIAN peincter, when he was requirde□
To pourtraict Venus in her perfect hew,□
To make his worke more absolute, desird□
Of all the fairest maides to have the vew.□
Much more me needs, to draw the semblant trew□
Of Beauties Queene, the worlds sole wenderment,□
To sharpe my sence with sundry beauties vew,□
And steale from each some part of ornament.□
If all the world to seeke I overwent,□
A fairer crew yet no where could I see□
Then that brave court doth to mine eie present,□
That the worlds pride seemes gathered there to bee.□

Of each a part I stole by cunning theft: □
Forgive it me, faire Dames, sith lesse ye have not lefte.

Edmund Spenser

The Faerie Queene, Book I, Canto Iv (Excerpts)

CANTO IIII

To sinfull house of Pride, Duessa
guides the faithfull knight,
Where brothers death to wreak Sansjoy
doth challenge him to fight.

i

Young knight, what ever that dost armes professe,
And through long labours hunttest after fame,
Beware of fraud, beware of ficklenesse,
In choice, and change of thy deare loved Dame,
Least thou of her beleeve too lightly blame,
And rash misweening doe thy hart remove:
For unto knight there is no greater shame,
Then lightnesse and inconstancie in love;
That doth this Redcrosse knights ensample plainly prove.

ii

Who after that he had faire Una lorne,
Through light misdeeming of her loialtie,
And false Duessa in her sted had borne,
Called Fidess', and so supposd to bee;
Long with her traveild, till at last they see
A goodly building, bravely garnished,
The house of mightie Prince it seemd to bee:
And towards it a broad high way that led,
All bare through peoples feet, which thither traveiled.

iii

Great troupes of people traveild thitherward
Both day and night, of each degree and place,
But few returned, having scaped hard,
With balefull beggerie, or foule disgrace,
Which ever after in most wretched case,
Like loathsome lazars, by the hedges lay.
Thither Duessa bad him bend his pace:
For she is wearie of the toilesome way,

And also nigh consumed is the lingring day.

iv

A stately Pallace built of squared bricke,
Which cunningly was without mortar laid,
Whose wals were high, but nothing strong, nor thick,
And golden foile all over them displaid,
That purest skye with brightnesse they dismaid:
High lifted up were many loftie towres,
And goodly galleries farre over laid,
Full of faire windowes, and delightfull bowres;
And on the top a Diall told the timely howres.

v

It was a goodly heape for to behould,
And spake the praises of the workmans wit;
But full great pittie, that so faire a mould
Did on so weake foundation ever sit:
For on a sandie hill, that still did flit,
And fall away, it mounted was full hie,
That every breath of heaven shaked it:
And all the hinder parts, that few could spie,
Were ruinous and old, but painted cunningly.

vi

Arrived there they passed in forth right;
For still to all the gates stood open wide,
Yet charge of them was to a Porter hight
Cald Malven{ 'u }, who entrance none denide:
Thence to the hall, which was on every side,
With rich array and costly arras dight:
Infinite sorts of people did abide
There waiting long, to win the wished sight
Of her, that was the Lady of that Pallace bright.

vii

By them they passe, all gazing on them round,
And to the Presence mount; whose glorious vew

Their frayle amazed senses did confound:
In living Princes court none ever knew
Such endlesse riches, and so sumptuous shew;
Ne Persia selfe, the nourse of pompous pride
Like ever saw. And there a noble crew
Of Lordes and Ladies stood on every side
Which with their presence faire, the place much beautifide.

viii

High above all a cloth of State was spred,
And a rich throne, as bright as sunny day,
On which there sate most brave embellished
With royall robes and gorgeous array,
A mayden Queene, that shone as Titans ray,
In glistring gold, and peerelesse pretious stone:
Yet her bright blazing beautie did assay
To dim the brightnesse of her glorious throne,
As envying her selfe, that too exceeding shone.

ix

Exceeding shone, like Phoebus fairest childe,
That did presume his fathers firie wayne,
And flaming mouthes of steedes unwonted wilde
Through highest heaven with weaker hand to rayne;
Proud of such glory and advancement vaine,
While flashing beames do daze his feeble eyen,
He leaves the welkin way most beaten plaine,
And rapt with whirling wheels, inflames the skyen,
With fire not made to burne, but fairely for to shyne.

x

So proud she shyned in her Princely state,
Looking to heaven; for earth she did disdayne,
And sitting high; for lowly she did hate:
Lo underneath her scornefull feete, was layne
A dreadfull Dragon with an hideous trayne,
And in her hand she held a mirrhour bright,
Wherein her face she often vewed fayne,
And in her selfe-lov'd semblance tooke delight;

For she was wondrous faire, as any living wight.

xi

Of griesly Pluto she the daughter was,
And sad Proserpina the Queene of hell;
Yet did she thinke her pearelesse worth to pas
That parentage, with pride so did she swell,
And thundring Jove, that high in heaven doth dwell,
And wield the world, she claymed for her syre,
Or if that any else did Jove excell:
For to the highest she did still aspyre,
Or if ought higher were then that, did it desyre.

xii

And proud Lucifera men did her call,
That made her selfe a Queene, and crownd to be,
Yet rightfull kingdome she had none at all,
Ne heritage of native soveraintie,
But did usurpe with wrong and tyrannie
Upon the scepter, which she now did hold:
Ne ruld her Realme with lawes, but pollicie,
And strong advizement of six wisards old,
That with their counsels bad her kingdome did uphold.

xiii

Soone as the Elfin knight in presence came,
And false Duessa seeming Lady faire,
A gentle Husher, Vanitie by name
Made rowme, and passage for them did prepaire:
So goodly brought them to the lowest stair
Of her high throne, where they on humble knee
Making obeysance, did the cause declare,
Why they were come, her royall state to see,
To prove the wide report of her great Majestee.

xiv

With loftie eyes, halfe loth to looke so low,
She thanked them in her disdainfull wise,
Ne other grace vouchsafed them to show
Of Princesse worthy, scarce them bad arise.
Her Lordes and Ladies all this while devise
Themselves to setten forth to straungers sight:
Some frounce their curled haire in courtly guise,
Some prancke their ruffes, and others trimly dight
Their gay attire: each others greater pride does spight.

xv

Goodly they all that knight do entertaine,
Right glad with him to have increast their crew:
But to Duess' each one himselfe did paine
All kindnesse and faire courtesie to shew;
For in that court whylome her well they knew:
Yet the stout Faerie mongst the middest crowd
Thought all their glorie vaine in knightly vew,
And that great Princesse too exceeding prowde,
That to strange knight no better countenance allowd.

xvi

Suddein upriseth from her stately place
The royall Dame, and for her coche doth call:
All hurtlen forth, and she with Princely pace,
As faire Aurora in her purple pall,
Out of the East the dawning day doth call:
So forth she comes: her brightnesse brode doth blaze;
The heapes of people thronging in the hall,
Do ride each other, upon her to gaze:
Her glorious glitterand light doth all mens eyes amaze.

xvii

So forth she comes, and to her coche does clyme,
Adorned all with gold, and girlonds gay,

That seemd as fresh as Flora in her prime,
And strove to match, in royall rich array,
Great Junoes golden chaire, the which they say
The Gods stand gazing on, when she does ride
To Joves high house through heavens bras-paved way
Drawne of faire Pecoocks, that excell in pride,
And full of Argus eyes their tailes dispredden wide.

xviii

But this was drawne of six unequalld beasts,
On which her six sage Counsellours did ryde,
Taught to obay their bestiall beheasts,
With like conditions to their kinds applyde:
Of which the first, that all the rest did guyde,
Was sluggish Idlenesse the nourse of sin;
Upon a slouthfull Asse he chose to ryde,
Arayd in habit blacke, and amis thin,
Like to an holy Monck, the service to begin.

xix

And in his hand his Portesse still he bare,
That much was worne, but therein little red,
For of devotion he had little care,
Still drownd in sleepe, and most of his dayes ded;
Scarse could he once uphold his heavie hed,
To looken, whether it were night or day:
May seeme the wayne was very evill led,
When such an one had guiding of the way,
That knew not, whether right he went, or else astray.

xx

From worldly cares himselfe he did esloyne.
And greatly shunned manly exercise,
From every worke he chalenged essoyned.
For contemplation sake: yet otherwise,
His life he led in lawlesse riotise;

By which he grew to grievous malady;
For in his lustlesse limbs through evill guise
A shaking fever raignd continually:
Such one was Idlennesse, first of this company.

xxi

And by his side rode loathsome Gluttony,
Deformed creature, on a filthie swyne,
His belly was up-blowne with luxury,
And eke with fatnesse swollen were his eyne,
And like a Crane his necke was long and fyne,
With which he swallowd up excessive feast,
For want whereof poore people oft did pyne;
And all the way, most like a brutish beast,
He spued up his gorge, that all did him deteast.

xxii

In greene vine leaves he was right fitly clad;
For other clothes he could not weare for heat,
And on his head an yvie girland had,
From under which fast trickled downe the sweat:
Still as he rode, he somewhat still did eat,
And in his hand did beare a bouzing can,
Of which he supt so oft, that on his seat
His dronken corse he scarce upholden can,
In shape and life more like a monster, than man.

xxiii

Unfit he was for any worldly thing,
And eke unhable once to stirre or go,
Not meet to be of counsell to a king,
Whose mind in meat and drinke was drowned so,
That from his friend he seldome knew his fo:
Full of diseases was his carcas blew,
And a dry dropsie through his flesh did flow,
Which by misdiet daily greater grew:

Such one was Gluttony, the second of that crew.

xxiv

And next to him rode lustfull Lechery,
Upon a bearded Goat, whose rugged haire,
And whally eyes (the signe of gelosy,)
Was like the person selfe, whom he did beare:
Who rough, and blacke, and filthy did appeare,
Unseemely man to please faire Ladies eye;
Yet he of Ladies oft was loved deare,
When fairer faces were bid standen by:
O who does know the bent of womens fantasy?

xxv

In a greene gowne he clothed was full faire,
Which underneath did hide his filthinesse,
And in his hand a burning hart he bare,
Full of vaine follies, and new fanglenesse:
For he was false, and fraught with ficklenesse,
And learned had to love with secret lookes,
And well could daunce, and sing with ruefulnesse,
And fortunes tell, and read in loving bookes,
And thousand other wayes, to bait his fleshly hookes.

xxvi

Inconstant man, that loved all he saw,
And lusted after all, that he did love,
Ne would his looser life be tide to law,
But joyd weake wemens hearts to tempt, and prove
If from their loyall loves he might them move;
Which lewdnesse fild him with reprochfull paine
Of that fowle evill, which all men reprove,
That rots the marrow, and consumes the braine:
Such one was Lecherie, the third of all this traine.

xxvii

And greedy Avarice by him did ride,
Upon a Camell loaden all with gold;
Two iron coffers hong on either side,
With precious mettall full, as they might hold,
And in his lap an heape of coine he told;
For of his wicked pelfe his God he made,
And unto hell him selfe for money sold;
Accursed usurie was all his trade,
And right and wrong ylike in equall ballaunce waide.

xxviii

His life was nigh unto deaths doore yplast,
And thred-bare cote, and cobled shoes he ware,
Ne scarce good morsell all his life did tast,
But both from backe and belly still did spare,
To fill his bags, and richesse to compare;
Yet chylde ne kinsman living had he none
To leave them to; but thorough daily care
To get, and nightly feare to lose his owne,
He led a wretched life unto him selfe unknowne.

xxix

Most wretched wight, whom nothing might suffise,
Whose greedy lust did lacke in greatest store,
Whose need had end, but no end covetise,
Whose wealth was want, whose plenty made him pore,
Who had enough, yet wished ever more;
A vile disease, and eke in foote and hand
A grievous gout tormented him full sore,
That well he could not touch, nor go, nor stand:
Such one was Avarice, the fourth of this faire band.

xxx

And next to him malicious Envie rode,

Upon a ravenous wolfe, and still did chaw
Betweene his cankred teeth a venemous tode,
That all the poison ran about his chaw;
But inwardly he chawed his owne maw
At neighbours wealth, that made him ever sad;
For death it was, when any good he saw,
And wept, that cause of weeping none he had,
But when he heard of harme, he wexed wondrous glad.

xxxix

All in a kirtle of discolour'd say
He clothed was, yepainted full of eyes;
And in his bosome secretly there lay
An hatefull Snake, the which his taile uptyes
In many folds, and mortall sting implies.
Still as he rode, he gnasht his teeth, to see
Those heapes of gold with griple Covetyse,
And grudged at the great felicitie
Of proud Lucifera, and his owne companie.

xxxix

He hated all good workes and vertuous deeds,
And him no lesse, that any like did use,
And who with gracious bread the hungry feeds,
His almes for want of faith he doth accuse;
So every good to bad he doth abuse:
And eke the verse of famous Poets witt
He doth backebite, and spightfull poison spues
From leprous mouth on all, that ever writt:
Such one vile Envie was, that fite in row did sitt.

xxxix

And him beside rides fierce revenging Wrath,
Upon a Lion, loth for to be led;
And in his hand a burning brond he hath,
The which he brandisheth about his hed;

His eyes did hurle forth sparkles fiery red,
And stared sterne on all, that him beheld,
As ashes pale of hew and seeming ded;
And on his dagger still his hand he held,
Trembling through hasty rage, when choler in him sweld.

xxxiv

His ruffin raiment all was staind with blood,
Which he had spilt, and all to rags yrent,
Through unadvized rashnesse woxen wood;
For of his hands he had no gouvernement,
Ne car'd for bloud in his avengement:
But when the furious fit was overpast,
His cruell facts he often would repent;
Yet wilfull man he never would forecast,
How many mischieves should ensue his heedlesse hast.

xxxv

Full many mischiefes follow cruell Wrath;
Abhorred bloudshed, and tumultuous strife,
Unmanly murder, and unthrifty scath,
Bitter despight, with rancours rusty knife,
And fretting griefe the enemy of life;
All these, and many evils moe haunt ire,
The swelling Splene, and Frenzy raging rife,
The shaking Palsey, and Saint Fraunces fire:
Such one was Wrath, the last of this ungodly tire.

xxxvi

And after all, upon the wagon beame
Rode Sathan, with a smarting whip in hand,
With which he forward lasht the laesie teme,
So oft as Slowth still in the mire did stand.
Huge routs of people did about them band,
Showting for joy, and still before their way
A foggy mist had covered all the land;

And underneath their feet, all scattered lay
Dead sculs and bones of men, whose life had gone astray.

Edmund Spenser

The Faerie Queene, Book Iii, Canto Vi

THE THIRD BOOKE OF THE FAERIE QUEENE

Contayning

THE LEGENDE OF BRITOMARTIS

OR OF CHASTITIECANTO VI

The birth of faire Belphoebe and
Of Amoret is told.

The Gardins of Adonis fraught
With pleasures manifold.

i

Well may I weene, faire Ladies, all this while
Ye wonder, how this noble Damozell
So great perfections did in her compile,
Sith that in salvage forests she did dwell,
So farre from court and royall Citadell,
The great schoolmistresse of all curtesy:
Seemeth that such wild woods should far expell
All civill usage and gentility,
And gentle sprite deforme with rude rusticity.

ii

But to this faire Belphoebe in her berth
The heavens so favourable were and free,
Looking with myld aspect upon the earth,
In th'Horoscope of her nativitee,
That all the gifts of grace and chastitee
On her they poured forth of plenteous horne;
Jove laught on Venus from his soveraigne see,
And Phoebus with faire beames did her adorne,
And all the Graces rockt her cradle being borne.

iii

Her berth was of the wombe of Morning dew,
And her conception of the joyous Prime,
And all her whole creation did her shew
Pure and unspotted from all loathly crime,

That is ingenerate in fleshly slime.
So was this virgin borne, so was she bred,
So was she trayned up from time to time,
In all chast vertue, and true bounti-hed
Till to her dew perfection she was ripened.

iv

Her mother was the faire Chrysogonee,
The daughter of Amphisa, who by race
A Faerie was, yborne of high degree,
She bore Belphoebe, she bore in like cace
Faire Amoretta in the second place:
These two were twinnes, and twixt them two did share
The heritage of all celestiaall grace.
That all the rest it seem'd they robbed bare
Of bountie, and of beautie, and all vertues rare.

v

It were a goodly storie, to declare,
By what straunge accident faire Chrysogone
Conceiv'd these infants, and how them she bare,
In this wild forrest wandring all alone,
After she had nine moneths fulfilled and gone:
For not as other wemens commune brood,
They were enwomb'd in the sacred throne
Of her chaste bodie, nor with commune food,
As other wemens babes, they sucked vitall blood.

vi

But wondrously they were begot, and bred
Through influence of th'heavens fruitfull ray,
As it in antique bookes is mentioned.
It was upon a Sommers shynie day,
When Titan faire his beames did display,
In a fresh fountaine, farre from all mens vew,
She bath'd her brest, the boyling heat t'allay;
She bath'd with roses red, and violets blew,
And all the sweetest flowres, that in the forrest grew.

vii

Till faint through irkesome wearinesse, adowne
Upon the grassie ground her selfe she layd
To sleepe, the whiles a gentle slombring swowne
Upon her fell all naked bare displayd;
The sunne-beames bright upon her body playd,
Being through former bathing mollifide,
And pierst into her wombe, where they embayd
With so sweet sence and secret power unspide,
That in her pregnant flesh they shortly fructifide.

viii

Miraculous may seeme to him, that reades
So straunge ensample of conception;
But reason teacheth that the fruitfull seades
Of all things living, through impression
Of the sunbeames in moyst complexion,
Doe life conceive and quickned are by kynd:
So after Nilus inundation,
Infinite shapes of creatures men do fynd,
Informed in the mud, on which the Sunne hath shynd.

ix

Great father he of generation
Is rightly cald, th'author of life and light;
And his faire sister for creation
Ministreth matter fit, which tempred right
With heate and humour, breeds the living wight.
So sprong these twinnes in wombe of Chrysogone,
Yet wist she nought thereof, but sore affright,
Wondred to see her belly so upblone,
Which still increast, till she her terme had full outgone.

x

Whereof conceiving shame and foule disgrace,
Albe her guiltlesse conscience her cleard,
She fled into the wildernesse a space,
Till that unweeldy burden she had reard,

And shund dishonor, which as death she feard:
Where wearie of long travell, downe to rest
Her selfe she set, and comfortably cheard;
There a sad cloud of sleepe her overkest,
And seized every sense with sorrow sore opprest.

xi

It fortun'd, faire Venus having lost
Her little sonne, the winged god of love,
Who for some light displeasure, which him crost,
Was from her fled, as flit as ayerie Dove,
And left her blisfull bowre of joy above,
(So from her often he had fled away,
When she for ought him sharpely did reprove,
And wandred in the world in strange aray,
Disguiz'd in thousand shapes, that none might him bewray.)

xii

Him for to seeke, she left her heavenly hous,
The house of goodly formes and faire aspects,
Whence all the world derives the glorious
Features of beautie, and all shapes select,
With which high God his workmanship hath deckt;
And searched every way, through which his wings
Had borne him, or his tract she mote detect:
She promist kisses sweet, and sweeter things
Unto the man, that of him tydings to her brings.

xiii

First she him sought in Court, where most he used
Whylome to haunt, but there she found him not;
But many there she found, which sore accused
His falsehood, and with foule infamous blot
His cruell deedes and wicked wyles did spot:
Ladies and Lords she every where mote heare
Complayning, how with his empoysned shot
Their wofull harts he wounded had whyleare,

And so had left them languishing twixt hope and feare.

xiv

She then the Citties sought from gate to gate,
And every one did aske, did he him see;
And every one her answerd, that too late
He had him seene, and felt the crueltie
Of his sharpe darts and whot artillerie;
And every one threw forth reproches rife
Of his mischievous deedes, and said, That hee
Was the disturber of all civill life,
The enemy of peace, and author of all strife.

xv

Then in the cuntry she abroad him sought,
And in the rurall cottages inquired,
Where also many plaints to her were brought,
How he their heedlesse harts with love had fyred,
And his false venim through their veines inspyred;
And eke the gentle shepheard swaynes, which sat
Keeping their fleecie flockes, as they were hyred,
She sweetly heard complaine, both how and what
Her sonne had to them doen; yet she did smile thereat.

xvi

But when in none of all these she him got,
She gan avize, where else he mote him hyde:
At last she her bethought, that she had not
Yet sought the salvage woods and forrests wyde,
In which full many lovely Nymphes abyde,
Mongst whom might be, that he did closely lye,
Or that the love of some of them him tyde:
For thy she thither cast her course t'apply,
To search the secret haunts of Dianes company.

xvii

Shortly unto the wastefull woods she came,
Whereas she found the Goddesses with her crew,
After late chace of their embrewed game,
Sitting beside a fountaine in a rew,
Some of them washing with the liquid dew
From offtheir dainty limbés the dustie sweat,
And soyle which did deforme their lively hew;
Others lay shaded from the scorching heat;
The rest upon her person gave attendance great.

xviii

She having hong upon a bough on high
Her bow and painted quiver, had unlaste
Her silver buskins from her nimble thigh,
And her lancke loynes ungirt, and brests unbraste,
After her heat the breathing cold to taste;
Her golden lockes, that late in tresses bright
Embreaded were for hindring of her haste,
Now loose about her shoulders hong undight,
And were with sweet Ambrosia all besprinckled light.

xix

Soone as she Venus saw behind her backe,
She was asham'd to be so loose surprized,
And woxe halfe wroth against her damzels slacke,
That had not her thereof before avized,
But suffred her so carelesly disguised
Be overtaken. Soone her garments loose
Upgath'ring, in her bosome she comprized,
Well as she might, and to the Goddesses rose,
Whiles all her Nymphes did like a girlond her enclose.

xx

Goodly she gan faire Cytherea greet,

And shortly asked her, what cause her brought
Into that wilderness for her unmeet,
From her sweete bowres, and beds with pleasures fraught:
That suddain change she strange adventure thought.
To whom halfe weeping, she thus answered,
That she her dearest sonne Cupido sought,
Who in his frowardnesse from her was fled;
That she repented sore, to have him angered.

xxi

Thereat Diana gan to smile, in scorne
Of her vaine plaint, and to her scoffmg sayd;
Great pittie sure, that ye be so forlorne
Of your gay sonne, that gives ye so good ayd
To your disports: ill mote ye bene apayd.
But she was more engrieved, and replide;
Faire sister, ill beseemes it to upbrayd
A dolefull heart with so disdainfull pride;
The like that mine, may be your paine another tide.

xxii

As you in woods and wanton wilderness
Your glory set, to chace the salvage beasts,
So my delight is all in joyfulness,
In beds, in bowres, in banquetts, and in feasts:
And ill becomes you with your loftie creasts,
To scorne the joy, that Jove is glad to seeke;
We both are bound to follow heavens beheasts,
And tend our charges with obeisance meeke:
Spare, gentle sister, with reproch my paine to eeke.

xxiii

And tell me, if that ye my sonne have heard,
To lurk emongst your Nymphes in secret wize;
Or keepe their cabins: much I am affeard,
Lest he like one of them him selfe disguise,

And turne his arrowes to their exercize:
So may he long himselfe full easie hide:
For he is faire and fresh in face and guize,
As any Nymph (let not it be envyde.)
So saying every Nymph full narrowly she eyde.

xxiv

But Phoebe therewith sore was angered,
And sharply said; Goe Dame, goe seeke your boy,
Where you him lately left, in Mars his bed;
He comes not here, we scorne his foolish joy,
Ne lend we leisure to his idle toy:
But if I catch him in this company,
By Stygian lake I vow, whose sad annoy
The Gods doe dread, he dearely shall abyde:
Ile clip his wanton wings, that he no more shall fly.

xxv

Whom when as Venus saw so sore displeas'd,
She inly sory was, and gan relent,
What she had said: so her she soone appeas'd,
With sugred words and gentle blandishment,
Which as a fountaine from her sweet lips went,
And welled goodly forth, that in short space
She was well pleas'd, and forth her damzels sent,
Through all the woods, to search from place to place,
If any tract of him or tydings they mote trace.

xxvi

To search the God of love, her Nymphes she sent
Throughout the wandring forrest every where:
But after them her selfe eke with her went
To seeke the fugitive, both farre and nere.
So long they sought, till they arrived were
In that same shadie covert, whereas lay
Faire Crysogone in slombry traunce whilere:

Who in her sleepe (a wondrous thing to say)
Unwares had borne two babes, as faire as springing day.

xxvii

Unwares she them conceiv'd, unwares she bore:
She bore withouten paine, that she conceived
Withouten pleasure: ne her need implore
Lucinaes aide: which when they both perceived,
They were through wonder nigh of sense bereaved,
And gazing each on other, nought bespake:
At last they both agreed, her seeming grieved
Out of her heavy swowne not to awake,
But from her loving side the tender babes to take.

xxviii

Up they them tooke, each one a babe uptooke,
And with them carried, to be fostered;
Dame Phoebe to a Nymph her babe betooke,
To be upbrought in perfect Maydenhed,
And of her selfe her name Belphoebe red:
But Venus hers thence farre away convayd,
To be upbrought in goodly womanhed,
And in her litle loves stead, which was strayd,
Her Amoretta cald, to comfort her dismayd.

xxix

She brought her to her joyous Paradize,
Where most she wonnes, when she on earth does dwel.
So faire a place, as Nature can devize:
Whether in Paphos, or Cytheron hill,
Or it in Gnidus be, I wote not well;
But well I wote by tryall, that this same
All other pleasant places doth excell,
And called is by her lost lovers name,
The Gardin of Adonis, farre renowmd by fame.

xxx

In that same Gardin all the goodly flowres,
Wherewith dame Nature doth her beautifie,
And decks the girlonds of her paramoures,
Are fetcht: there is the first seminarie
Of all things, that are borne to live and die,
According to their kindes. Long worke it were,
Here to account the endlesse progenie
Of all the weedes, that bud and blossome there;
But so much as doth need, must needs be counted here.

xxxix

It sited was in fruitfull soyle of old,
And girt in with two walles on either side;
The one of yron, the other of bright gold,
That none might thorough breake, nor over-stride:
And double gates it had, which opened wide,
By which both in and out men moten pas;
Th'one faire and fresh, the other old and dride:
Old Genius the porter of them was,
Old Genius, the which a double nature has.

xxxix

He letteth in, he letteth out to wend,
All that to come into the world desire;
A thousand thousand naked babes attend
About him day and night, which doe require,
That he with fleshly weedes would them attire:
Such as him list, such as eternall fate
Ordained hath, he clothes with sinfull mire,
And sendeth forth to live in mortall state,
Till they againe returne backe by the hinder gate.

xxxix

After that they againe returned beene,
They in that Gardin planted be againe;
And grow afresh, as they had never seene
Fleshy corruption, nor mortall paine.
Some thousand yeares so doen they there remaine;
And then of him are clad with other hew,
Or sent into the changefull world againe,
Till thither they returne, where first they grew:
So like a wheele around they runne from old to new.

xxxiv

Ne needs there Gardiner to set, or sow,
To plant or prune: for of their owne accord
All things, as they created were, doe grow,
And yet remember well the mightie word,
Which first was spoken by th'Almightie lord,
That bad them to increase and multiply:
Ne doe they need with water of the ford,
Or of the clouds to moysten their roots dry;
For in themselves eternall moisture they imply.

xxxv

Infinite shapes of creatures there are bred,
And uncouth formes, which none yet ever knew,
And every sort is in a sundry bed
Set by it selfe, and ranckt in comely rew:
Some fit for reasonable soules t'indew,
Some made for beasts, some made for birds to weare,
And all the fruitfull spawne of fishes hew
In endlesse rancks along enraunged were,
That seem'd the Ocean could not containe them there.

xxxvi

Daily they grow, and daily forth are sent
Into the world, it to replenish more;
Yet is the stocke not lessened, nor spent,

But still remaines in everlasting store,
As it at first created was of yore.
For in the wide wombe of the world there lyes,
In hatefull darkenesse and in deepe horrore,
An huge eternall Chaos, which supplies
The substances of natures fruitfull progenyes.

xxxvii

All things from thence doe their first being fetch,
And borrow matter, whereof they are made,
Which when as forme and feature it does ketch,
Becomes a bodie, and doth then invade
The state of life, out of the griesly shade.
That substance is eterne, and bideth so,
Ne when the life decayes, and forme does fade,
Doth it consume, and into nothing go,
But chaunged is, and often altred to and fro.

xxxviii

The substance is not chaunged, nor altered,
But th'only forme and outward fashion;
For every substance is conditioned
To change her hew, and sundry formes to don,
Meet for her temper and complexion:
For formes are variable and decay,
By course of kind, and by occasion;
And that faire flowre of beautie fades away,
As doth the lilly fresh before the sunny ray.

xxxix

Great enemy to it, and to all the rest,
That in the Gardin of Adonis springs,
Is wicked Time, who with his scyth addrest,
Does mow the flowring herbes and goodly things,
And all their glory to the ground downe flings,
Where they doe wither, and are fowly mard:

He flies about, and with his flaggy wings
Beates downe both leaves and buds without regard,
Ne ever pittie may relent his malice hard.

xi

Yet pittie often did the gods relent,
To see so faire things mard, and spoyled quight:
And their great mother Venus did lament
The losse of her deare brood, her deare delight;
Her hart was pierst with pittie at the sight,
When walking through the Gardin, them she saw,
Yet no'te she find redresse for such despight.
For all that lives, is subject to that law:
All things decay in time, and to their end do draw.

xli

But were it not, that Time their troubler is,
All that in this delightfull Gardin growes,
Should happie be, and have immortall blis:
For here all plentie, and all pleasure flowes,
And sweet love gentle fits emongst them throwes,
Without fell rancor, or fond gealositie;
Franckly each paramour his leman knowes,
Each bird his mate, ne any does envie
Their goodly meriment, and gay felicitie.

xlii

There is continuall spring, and harvest there
Continuall, both meeting at one time:
For both the boughes doe laughing blossomes beare,
And with fresh colours decke the wanton Prime,
And eke attonce the heavy trees they clime,
Which seeme to labour under their fruits lode:
The whiles the joyous birdes make their pastime
Emongst the shadie leaves, their sweet abode,
And their true loves without suspition tell abode.

xliii

Right in the midst of that Paradise,
There stood a stately Mount, on whose round top
A gloomy grove of mirtle trees did rise,
Whose shade boughes sharpe steele did never lop,
Nor wicked beasts their tender buds did crop,
But like a girlond compassed the hight,
And from their fruitfull sides sweet gum did drop,
That all the ground with precious dew bedight,
Threw forth most dainty odours, and most sweet delight.

xliv

And in the thickest covert of that shade,
There was a pleasant arbour, not by art,
But of the trees owne inclination made,
Which knitting their rancke braunches part to part,
With wanton yvie twyne entrayld athwart,
And Eglantine, and Caprifole emong,
Fashiond above within their inmost part,
That neither Phoebus beams could through them throng,
Nor Aeolus sharp blast could worke them any wrong.

xlv

And all about grew every sort of flowre,
To which sad lovers were transformd of yore;
Fresh Hyacinthus, Phoebus paramoure,
And dearest love,
Foolish Narcisse, that likes the watry shore,
Sad Amaranthus, made a flowre but late,
Sad Amaranthus, in whose purple gore
Me seemes I see Amintas wretched fate,
To whom sweet Poets verse hath given endlesse date.

xlvi

There wont faire Venus often to enjoy
Her deare Adonis joyous company,
And reape sweet pleasure of the wanton boy;
There yet, some say, in secret he does ly,
Lapped in flowres and pretious spycery,
By her hid from the world, and from the skill
Of Stygian Gods, which doe her love envy;
But she her selfe, when ever that she will,
Possesseth him, and of his sweetnesse takes her fill.

xlvi

And sooth it seemes they say: for he may not
For ever die, and ever buried bee
In balefull night, where all things are forgot;
All be he subject to mortalitie,
Yet is eterne in mutabilitie,
And by succession made perpetuall,
Transformed oft, and chaunged diverslie:
For him the Father of all formes they call;
Therefore needs mote he live, that living gives to all.

xlvi

There now he liveth in eternall blis,
Joying his goddesses, and of her enjoyd:
Ne feareth he henceforth that foe of his,
Which with his cruell tuske him deadly cloyd:
For that wilde Bore, the which him once annoyd,
She firmly hath emprisoned for ay,
That her sweet love his malice mote avoyd,
In a strong rocky Cave, which is they say,
Hewen underneath that Mount, that none him losen may.

xlix

There now he lives in everlasting joy,
With many of the Gods in company,

Which thither haunt, and with the winged boy
Sporting himselfe in safe felicity:
Who when he hath with spoiles and cruelty
Ransackt the world, and in the wofull harts
Of many wretches set his triumphes hye,
Thither resorts, and laying his sad darts
Aside, with faire Adonis playes his wanton parts.

I

And his true love faire Psyche with him playes,
Faire Psyche to him lately reconcyld,
After long troubles and unmeet upbrayes,
With which his mother Venus her revyld,
And eke himselfe her cruelly exyld:
But now in stedfast love and happy state
She with him lives, and hath him borne a chyld,
Pleasure, that doth both gods and men aggrate,
Pleasure, the daughter of Cupid and Psyche late.

li

Hither great Venus brought this infant faire,
The younger daughter of Chrysogonee,
And unto Psyche with great trust and care
Committed her, yfostered to bee,
And trained up in true feminitee:
Who no lesse carefully her tendered,
Then her owne daughter Pleasure, to whom shee
Made her companion, and her lessoned
In all the lore of love, and goodly womanhead....

Edmund Spenser

The Faerie Queene, Book Vi, Canto X

THE SIXTE BOOKE OF THE FAERIE QUEENE

Contayning

THE LEGEND OF S. CALIDORE

OR OF COURTESIECANTO X

Calidore sees the Graces daunce,
To Colins melody:
The whiles his Pastorell is led,
Into captivity.

i

Who now does follow the foule Blatant Beast,
Whilest Calidore does follow that faire Mayd,
Unmyndfull of his vow and high beheast,
Which by the Faery Queene was on him layd,
That he should never leave, nor be delayd
From chacing him, till he had it attchieved?
But now entrapt of love, which him betrayd,
He mindeth more, how he may be relieved
With grace from her, whose love his heart hath sore engrieved.

ii

That from henceforth he meanes no more to sew
His former quest, so full of toile and paine;
Another quest, another game in vew
He hath, the guerdon of his love to gaine:
With whom he myndes for ever to remaine,
And set his rest amongst the rusticke sort,
Rather then hunt still after shadowes vaine
Of courtly favour, fed with light report
Of every blaste, and sayling alwaies on the port.

iii

Ne certes mote he greatly blamed be,
From so high step to stoupe unto so low.
For who had tasted once (as oft did he)
The happy peace, which there doth overthrow,

And prov'd the perfect pleasures, which doe grow
Amongst poore hyndes, in hils, in woods, in dales,
Would never more delight in painted show
Of such false blisse, as there is set for stales,
T'entrap unwary fooles in their eternall bales.

iv

For what hath all that goodly glorious gaze
Like to one sight, which Calidore did vew?
The glaunce whereof their dimmed eies would daze,
That never more they should endure the shew
Of that sunne-shine, that makes them looke askew.
Ne ought in all that world of beauties rare,
(Save onely Glorianaes heavenly hew
To which what can compare?) can it compare;
The which as commeth now, by course I will declare.

v

One day as he did raunge the fields abroad,
Whilest his faire Pastorella was elsewhere,
He chaunst to come, far from all peoples troad,
Unto a place, whose pleasaunce did appere
To passe all others, on the earth which were:
For all that ever was by natures skill
Devized to worke delight, was gathered there,
And there by her were poured forth at fill,
As if this to adorne, she all the rest did pill.

vi

It was an hill plaste in an open plaine,
That round about was bordered with a wood
Of matchlesse hight, that seem'd th'earth to disdain,
In which all trees of honour stately stood,
And did all winter as in sommer bud,
Spreading pavilions for the birds to bowre,
Which in their lower braunches sung aloud;
And in their tops the soring hauke did towre,
Sitting like King of fowles in majesty and powre.

vii

And at the foote thereof, a gentle flud
His silver waves did softly tumble downe,
Unmard with ragged mosse or filthy mud,
Ne mote wylde beastes, ne mote the ruder clowne
Thereto approch, ne filth mote therein drowne:
But Nymphes and Faeries bythe bancks did sit,
In the woods shade, which did the waters crowne,
Keeping all noysome things away from it,
And to the waters fall tuning their accents fit.

viii

And on the top thereof a spacious plaine
Did spred it selfe, to serve to all delight,
Either to daunce, when they to daunce would faine,
Or else to course about their bases light;
Ne ought there wanted, which for pleasure might
Desired be, or thence to banish bale:
So pleasauntly the hill with equall hight,
Did seeme to overlooke the lowly vale;
Therefore it rightly cleeped was mount Acidale.

ix

They say that Venus, when she did dispose
Her selfe to pleasaunce, used to resort
Unto this place, and therein to repose
And rest her selfe, as in a gladsome port,
Or with the Graces there to play and sport;
That even her owne Cytheron, though in it
She used most to keepe her royall court,
And in her souveraine Majesty to sit,
She in regard thereof refusde and thought unfit.

x

Unto this place when as the Elfin Knight
Approcht, him seemed that the merry sound
Of a shrill pipe he playing heard on hight,
And many feete fast thumping th'hollow ground,

That through the woods their Eccho did rebound.
He nigher drew, to weete what mote it be;
There he a troupe of Ladies dauncing found
Full merrily, and making gladfull glee,
And in the midst a Shepheard piping he did see.

xi

He durst not enter into th'open greene,
For dread of them unwares to be descryde,
For breaking of their daunce, if he were seene;
But in the covert of the wood did byde,
Beholding all, yet of them unesyde.
There he did see, that pleased much his sight,
That even he him selfe his eyes envyde,
An hundred naked maidens lilly white,
All raunged in a ring, and dauncing in delight.

xii

All they without were raunged in a ring,
And daunced round; but in the midst of them
Three other Ladies did both daunce and sing,
The whilest the rest them round about did hemme,
And like a girlond did in compasse stemme:
And in the middest of those same three, was placed
Another Damzell, as a precious gemme,
Amidst a ring most richly well enchaced,
That with her goodly presence all the rest much graced.

xiii

Looke how the Crowne, which Ariadne wore
Upon her yvory forehead that same day,
That Theseus her unto his bridale bore,
When the bold Centaures made that bloody fray
With the fierce Lapithes, which did them dismay;
Being now placed in the firmament,
Through the bright heaven doth her beams display,
And is unto the starres an ornament,

Which round about her move in order excellent.

xiv

Such was the beauty of this goodly band,
Whose sundry parts were here too long to tell:
But she that in the midst of them did stand,
Seem'd all the rest in beauty to excell,
Crownd with a rosie girlond, that right well
Did her beseeme. And ever, as the crew
About her daunst, sweet flowres, that far did smell,
And fragrant odours they uppon her threw;
But most of all, those three did her with gifts endew.

xv

Those were the Graces, daughters of delight,
Handmaides of Venus, which are wont to haunt
Uppon this hill, and daunce there day and night:
Those three to men all gifts of grace do graunt,
And all, that Venus in her selfe doth vaunt,
Is borrowed of them. But that faire one,
That in the midst was placed paravaunt,
Was she to whom that shepheard pypt alone,
That made him pipe so merrily, as never none.

xvi

She was to weete that jolly Shepherds lasse,
Which piped there unto that merry rout,
That jolly shepheard, which there piped, was
Poore Colin Clout (who knowes not Colin Clout?)
He pypt apace, whilst they him daunst about.
Pype jolly shepheard, pype thou now apace
Unto thy love, that made thee low to lout;
Thy love is present there with thee in place,
Thy love is there advaunst to be another Grace.

xvii

Much wondred Calidore at this straunge sight,
Whose like before his eye had never seene,
And standing long astonished in spright,
And rapt with pleasaunce, wist not what to weene;
Whether it were the traine of beauties Queene,
Or Nymphes, or Faeries, or enchanted show,
With which his eyes mote have deluded beene.
Therefore resolving, what it was, to know,
Out of the wood he rose, and toward them did go.

xviii

But soone as he appeared to their vew,
They vanisht all away out of his sight,
And cleane were gone, which way he never knew;
All save the shepheard, who for fell despight
Of that displeasure, broke his bagpipe quight,
And made great mone for that unhappy turne.
But Calidore, though no lesse sory wight,
For that mishap, yet seeing him to mourne,
Drew neare, that he the truth of all by him mote learne.

xix

And first him greeting, thus unto him spake,
Haile jolly shepheard, which thy joyous dayes
Here ledest in this goodly merry make,
Frequented of these gentle Nymphes alwayes,
Which to thee flocke, to heare thy lovely layes;
Tell me, what mote these dainty Damzels be,
Which here with thee doe make their pleasant playes?
Right happy thou, that mayst them freely see:
But why when I them saw, fled they away from me?

xx

Not I so happy, answerd then that swaine,

As thou unhappy, which them thence didst chace,
Whom by no meanes thou canst recall againe,
For being gone, none can them bring in place,
But whom they of them selves list so to grace.
Right sory I, (said then Sir Calidore,)
That my ill fortune did them hence displace.
But since all things passed none may now restore,
Tell me, what were they all, whose lacke thee grieves so sore.

xxi

Tho gan that shepheard thus for to dilate;
Then wote thou shepheard, whatsoever thou bee,
That all those Ladies, which thou sawest late,
Are Venus Damzels, all within her fee,
But differing in honour and degree:
They all are Graces, which on her depend,
Besides a thousand more, which ready bee
Her to adorne, when so she forth doth wend:
But those three in the midst, doe chiefe on her attend.

xxii

They are the daughters of sky-ruling Jove,
By him begot of faire Eurynome,
The Oceans daughter, in this pleasant grove,
As he this way comming from feastfull glee,
Of Thetis wedding with {AE}acidee,
In sommers shade him selfe here rested weary.
The first of them hight mylde Euphrosyne,
Next faire Aglaia, last Thalia merry:
Sweete Goddesses all three which me in mirth do cherry.

xxiii

These three on men all gracious gifts bestow,
Which decke the body or adorne the mynde,
To make them lovely or well favourd show,
As comely carriage, entertainment kynde,

Sweete semblaunt. friendly offices that bynde,
And all the complements of curtesie:
They teach us, how to each degree and kynde
should our selves demeane, to low, to hie;
To friends, to foes, which skill men call Civility.

xxiv

Therefore they alwaies smoothly seeme to smile,
That we likewise should mylde and gentle be,
And also naked are, that without guile
Or false dissemblaunce all them plaine may see,
Simple and true from covert malice free:
And eeke them selves so in their daunce they bore,
That two of them still froward seem'd to bee,
But one still towards shew'd her selfe afore;
That good should from us goe, then come in greater store.

xxv

Such were those Goddesses, which ye did see;
But that fourth Mayd, which there amidst them traced,
Who can aread, what creature mote she bee,
Whether a creature, or a goddesse graced
With heavenly gifts from heven first enraced?
But what so sure she was, she worthy was
To be the fourth with those three other placed:
Yet was she certes but a countrey lasse,
Yet she all other countrey lasses farre did passe.

xxvi

So farre as doth the daughter of the day,
All other lesser lights in light excell,
So farre doth she in beautyfull array,
Above all other lasses beare the bell,
Ne lesse in vertue that beseemes her well,
Doth she exceede the rest of all her race,
For which the Graces that here wont to dwell,

Have for more honor brought her to this place,
And graced her so much to be another Grace.

xxvii

Another Grace she well deserves to be,
In whom so many Graces gathered are,
Excelling much the meane of her degree;
Divine resemblaunce, beauty souveraine rare,
Firme Chastity, that spight ne blemish dare;
All which she with such courtesie doth grace,
That all her peres cannot with her compare,
But quite are dimmed, when she is in place.
She made me often pipe and now to pipe apace.

xxviii

Sunne of the world, great glory of the sky,
That all the earth doest lighten with thy rayes,
Great Gloriana, greatest Majesty,
Pardon thy shepheard, mongst so many layes,
As he hath sung of thee in all his dayes,
To make one minime of thy poore handmayd,
And underneath thy feete to place her prayse,
That when thy glory shall be farre displayd
To future age of her this mention may be made.

xxix

When thus that shepherd ended had his speach,
Sayd Calidore: Now sure it yrketh mee,
That to thy blisse I made this luckelesse breach,
As now the author of thy bale to be,
Thus to bereave thy loves deare sight from thee:
But gentle Shepheard pardon thou my shame,
Who rashly sought that, which I mote not see.
Thus did the courteous Knight excuse his blame,
And to recomfort him, all comely meanes did frame....

The Faerie Queene: Book I, Canto I

THE FIRST BOOKE OF THE FAERIE QUEENE

Contayning

THE LEGENDE OF THE KNIGHT OF THE

RED CROSSE, OR OF HOLINESSE Proemi

Lo I the man, whose Muse whilome did maske,
As time her taught in lowly Shepherds weeds,
Am now enforst a far unfitter taske,
For trumpets sterne to chaunge mine Oaten reeds,
And sing of Knights and Ladies gentle deeds;
Whose prayes having slept in silence long,
Me, all too meane, the sacred Muse areeds
To blazon broad emongst her learned throng:
Fierce warres and faithful loves shall moralize my song.

ii

Helpe then, O holy Virgin chiefe of nine,
Thy weaker Novice to performe thy will,
Lay forth out of thine everlasting scryne
The antique rolles, which there lye hidden still,
Of Faerie knights and fairest Tanaquill,
Whom that most noble Briton Prince so long
Sought through the world, and suffered so much ill,
That I must rue his undeserved wrong:
O helpe thou my weake wit, and sharpen my dull tong.

iii

And thou most dreaded impe of highest Jove,
Faire Venus sonne, that with thy cruell dart
At that good knight so cunningly didst rove,
That glorious fire it kindled in his hart,
Lay now thy deadly Heben bow apart,
And with thy mother milde come to mine ayde:
Come both, and with you bring triumphant Mart,
In loves and gentle jollities arrayd,
After his murtherous spoiles and bloody rage allayd.

iv

And with them eke, O Goddess heavenly bright,
Mirrour of grace and Majestie divine,
Great Lady of the greatest Isle, whose light
Like Phoebus lampe throughout the world doth shine,
Shed thy faire beames into my feeble eyne,
And raise my thoughts too humble and too vile,
To thinke of that true glorious type of thine,
The argument of mine afflicted stile:
The which to heare, vouchsafe, O dearest dred a-while.

CANTO I

Edmund Spenser

The Faerie Qveene

Me thought I saw the grave where she lay
Within that Temple, where the vestal flame
Was won't to burne, and passing by that way.
To see that buried dust of living fame,
Whose tomb faire love, and fairer vertue kept,
All suddenly I saw the Faerie Qveene:
At whose approach the soul of Petrarke wept,
And from thenceforth those graces were not seen.
For they this Qveene attended, in whose steed
Obluion laid him down on her herse:
Here at the hardest stones were seen to bleed,
And groans of buried ghosts the heruens did perse.
Where he spright did tremble all for grief.
And curst th'accesse of that celestial thief

Edmund Spenser

The Ruines Of Time

It chaunced me on day beside the shore
Of siluer streaming Thamesis to bee,
Nigh where the goodly Verlame stood of yore,
Of which there now remaines no memorie,
Nor anie little moniment to see,
By which the trauailer, that fares that way,
This once was she, may warned be to say.
There on the other side, I did behold
A Woman sitting sorrowfullie wailing,
Rending her yeolow locks, like wyrie golde,
About her shoulders careleslie downe trailing,
And streames of teares from her faire eyes forth railing.
In her right hand a broken rod she held,
Which towards heauen shee seemd on high to weld.

Whether she were one of that Riuers Nymphes,
Which did the losse of some dere loue lament,
I doubt; or one of those three fatall Impes,
Which draw the dayes of men forth in extent;
Or th' auncient Genius of that Citie brent:
But seeing her so piteouslie perplexed,
I (to her calling) askt what her so vexed.

Ah what delight (quoth she) in earthlie thing,
Or comfort can I, wretched creature haue?
Whose happines the heauens enuying,
From highest staire to lowest step me draue,
And haue in mine owne bowels made my graue,
That of all Nations now I am forlorne,
The worlds sad spectacle, and fortunes scorne.

Much was I mooued at her piteous plaint,
And felt my heart nigh riuén in my brest
With tender ruth to see her sore constraint,
That shedding teares a while I still did rest,
And after did her name of her request.
Name haue I none (quoth she) nor anie being,
Bereft of both by Fates vniust decreeing.

I was that Citie, which the garland wore
Of Britaines pride, deliuer'd vnto me
By Romane Victors, which it wonne of yore;
Though nought at all but ruines now I bee,
And lye in mine owne ashes, as ye see:
Verlame I was; what bootes it that I was,
Sith now I am but weedes and wastfull gras?

O vaine worlds glorie, and vnstedfast state
Of all that liues, on face of sinfull earth,
Which from their first vntill their vtmost date
Tast no one hower of happines or merth,
But like as at the ingate of their berth,
They crying creep out of their mothers woomb,
So wailing backe go to their wofull toomb.

Why then dooth flesh, a bubble glas of breath,
Hunt after honour and aduauncement vaine,
And reare a trophee for deuouring death,
With so great labour and long lasting paine,
As if his daies for euer should remaine?
Sith all that in this world is great or gaie,
Doth as a vapour vanish, and decaie.

Looke backe, who list, vnto the former ages,
And call to count, what is of them become:
Where be those learned wits and antique Sages,
Which of all wisdomes knew the perfect somme:
Where those great warriors, which did ouercommen
The world with conquest of their might and maine,
And made one meare of th' earth & of their raine?

What nowe is of th' Assyrian Lyonesse,
Of whom no footing now on earth appeares?
What of the Persian Beares outragiousnesse,
Whose memorie is quite worne out with yeares?
Who of the Grecian Libbard now ought heares,
That ouerran the East with greedie powre,
And left his whelps their kingdomes to deuoure?

And where is that same great seuen headed beast,
That made all nations vassals of her pride,

To fall before her feete at her beheast,
And in the necke of all the world did ride?
Where doth she all that wondrous welth nowe hide?
With her owne weight downe pressed now shee lies,
And by her heaps her hugeness testifies.

O Rome thy ruine I lament and rue,
And in thy fall my fatall ouerthrowe,
That whilom was, whilst heauens with equall vewe
Deign'd to behold me, and their gifts bestowe,
The picture of thy pride in pompous shew:
And of the whole world as thou wast the Empresse,
So I of this small Northerne world was Princesse.

To tell the beawtie of my buildings fayre,
Adorn'd with purest golde and precious stone;
To tell my riches, and endowments rare
That by my foes are now all spent and gone:
To tell my forces matchable to none,
Were but lost labour, that few would beleue,
And with rehearsing would me more agreeue.

High towers, faire temples, goodly theaters,
Strong walls, rich porches, princelie pallaces,
Large streetes, braue houses, sacred sepulchers,
Sure gates, sweete gardens, stately galleries,
Wrought with faire pillours and fine imageries
All those (Ã´ pitie) now are turnd to dust,
And ouergrown with black obliuions rust.

Theretoo for warlike power, and peoples store,
In Brittanie was none to match with mee,
That manie often did abie full sore:
Ne Troynouaunt, though elder sister shee,
With my great forces might compared bee;
That stout Pendragon to his perill felt,
Who in a seige seauen yeres about me dwelt.

But long ere this Bunduca Britonesse
Her mightie hoast against my bulwarkes brought,
Bunduca, that victorious conqueresse,
That lifting vp her braue heroÃck thought

Bove womens weaknes, with the Romanes fought,
Fought, and in field against them thrice preuailed:
Yet was she foyld, when as she me assailed.

And though at last by force I conquer'd were
Of hardie Saxons, and became their thrall;
Yet was I with much bloodshed bought full deere,
And prizde with slaughter of their Generall:
The moniment of whose sad funerall,
For wonder of the world, long in me lasted;
But now to nought through spoyle of time is wasted.

Wasted it is, as if it neuer were,
And all the rest that me so honord made,
And of the world admired eu'rie where,
Is turnd to smoake, that doth to nothing fade;
And of that brightnes now appears no shade,
But greislie shades, such as doo haunt in hell.
With fearfull fiends, that in deep darknes dwell.

Where my high steeples whilom vsde to stand,
On which the lordly Faulcon wont to towre,
There now is but an heap of lyme and sand,
For the Shricke-owle to build her baleful bowre:
And where the Nightingale wont forth to powre
Her restles plaints, to comfort wakefull Louers,
There now haunt yelling Mewes & whining Plouers.

And where the christall Thamis wont to slide
In siluer channell, downe along the Lee,
About whose flowrie bankes on either side
A thousand Nymphes, with mirthfull iollitee,
Were wont to play, from all annoyance free;
There now no riuers course is to be seene,
But moorish fennes, and marshes euer greene.

Seemes, that that gentle Riuer for great grieffe
Of my mishaps, which oft I to him plained;
Of for to shunne the horrible mischiefe,
With which he saw my cruell foes me pained,
And his pure streames with guiltles blood oft stained,
From my vnhappy neighborhood farre fled,

And his sweete waters away with him led.

There also where the winged ships were seene
In liquid waues to cut their fomie waie,
And thousand Fishers numbred to haue been,
In that wide lake looking for plenteous praie
Of fish, which they with baits vsde to betraie,
Is now no lake, nor anie fishers store,
Nor euer ship shall saile there anie more.

They all are gone, and all with them is gone,
Ne ought to me remaines, but to lament
My long decay, which no man els doth mone,
And mourne my fall with dolefull dreriment.
Yet it is comfort in great languishment,
To be bemoned with compassion kinde,
And mitigates the anguish of the minde.

But me no man bewaileth, but in game,
Ne sheddeth teares from lamentable eie:
Nor anie liues that mentioneth my name
To be remembred of posteritie,
Saue One that maugre fortunes iniurie,
And times decay, and enuies cruell tort,
Hath writ my record in true-seeming sort.

Cambden the nourice of antiquitie,
And lanterne vnto late succeeding age,
To see the light of simple veritie,
Buried in ruines, through the great outrage
Of her owne people, led with warlike rage;
Cambden, though Time all moniments obscure,
Yet thy iust labours euer shall endure.

But whie (vnhappie wight) doo I thus crie,
And grieue that my remembrance quite is raced
Out of the knowledge of posteritie,
And all my antique moniments defaced?
Sith I doo dailie see things highest placed,
So soone as fates their vitall thred haue neuer borne.

It is not long, since these two eyes beheld

A mightie Prince, of most renowned race,
Whom England high in count of honour held,
And greatest ones did serue to gaine his grace;
Of greatest ones he greatest in his place,
Sate in the bosome of his Soueraine,
And Right and loyall did his worde maintaine.

I saw him die, I saw him die, as one
Of the meane people, and brought foorth on beare,
I saw him die, and no man left to mone
His dolefull fate, that late him loued deare:
Scarse anie left to close his eylids neare;
Scarse anie left vpon his lips to laie
The sacred sod, or Requiem to saie.

O trustlesse state of miserable men,
That builde your blis on hope of earthly thing,
And vainly thinke your selues halfe happy then,
When painted faces with smooth flattering
Doo fawne on you, and your wide praises sing,
And when the courting masker louteth lowe,
Him true in heart and trustie to you trow.

All is but fained, and with oaker die,
That euerie shower will wash and wipe away,
All things doo change that vnder heauen abide
And after death all friendship doth decaie.
Therefore what euer man bearest worldlie sway,
Liuing, on God, and on thy selfe relie;
For when thou diest, all shall with thee die.

He now is dead, and all is with him dead,
Saue what in heauens storehouse he vplaid:
His hope is faild, and come to passe his dread,
And euill men, now dead, his deedes vpbraid:
Spite bites the dead, that liuing neuer baid.
He now is gone, and whiles the Foxe is crept
Into the hole, the which the Badger swept.

He now is dead, and all his glorie gone,
And all his greatnes vapoured to nought,
That as a glasse vpon the water is shone,

Which vanisht quite, so soone as it was sought:
His name is worne alreadie out of thought,
Ne anie Poet seekes him to reuiue;
Yet manie Poets honourd him aliuie.

Ne doth his Colin, carelesse Colin Cloute,
Care now his idle bagpipe vp to raise,
Ne tell his sorrow to the listning rout
Of shepherd groomes which wont his songs to praise:
Praise who so list, yet I will him dispraise,
Vntill he quite him of his guiltie blame:
Wake shepherds boy, at length awake for shame.

And who so els did goodnes by him gaine,
And who so els his bounteous minde did trie,
Whether he shepheard be, or shepherds swaine,
(for manie did, which doo it now denie)
Awake, and to his Song a part applie:
And I, the whilest you mourne for his decease,
Will with my mourning plaints your plaint increase.

He dyde, and after him his brother noble Peere,
His brother Prince, his brother noble Peere,
That whilst he liued, was of none enuyde,
And dead is now, as liuing, counted deare,
Deare vnto all that true affection beare:
But vnto thee most deare, Æ' dearest Dame,
His noble Spouse, and Paragon of fame.

He whilst he liued, happie was through thee,
And being dead is happie now much more;
Liuing, that lincked chaunst with thee to bee,
And dead, because him dead thou dost adore
As liuing, and thy lost deare loue deplore.
So whilst that thou, faire flower of chastitie,
Dost liue, by thee thy Lord shall neuer die.

Thy Lord shall neuer die, the whiles this verse
Shall live, and surely it shall liue for euer:
For euer it shall liue, and shall rehearse
His worthie praise, and vertues dying neuer,
Though death his soule doo from his bodie seuer.

And thou thy selfe herein shalt also liue;
Such grace the heauens doo to my verses giue.

Ne shall his sister, ne thy father die,
Thy father, that good Earle of rare renoune,
And noble Patrone of weak pouertie;
Whose great good deeds in countrey and in towne
Haue purchast him in heauen an happie crowne;
Where he now liueth in eternall blis,
And left his sonne t' ensue those steps of his.

He noble bud, his Grandsires liuelie hayre,
Vnder the shadow of thy countenance
Now ginnes to shoote vp fast, and flourish fayre,
In learned artes and goodlie gouernance,
That him to highest honour shall aduaunce.
Braue Impe of Bedford, grow apace in bountie,
And count of wisdom more than of thy Countie.

Ne may I let thy husbands sister die,
That goodly Ladie, sith she eke did spring
Out of his stocke, and famous familie,
Whose praises I to future age doo sing,
And foorth out of her happie womb did bring
The sacred brood of learning and all honour;
In whom the heauens powrde all their gifts vpon her.

Most gentle spirite breathed from aboue,
Out of the bosome of the makers blis,
In whom all bountie and all vertuous loue
Appeared in their natie propertis,
And did enrich that noble breast of his,
With treasure passing all this worldes worth,
Worthie of heaven it selfe, which brought it forth.

His blessed spirite full of power diuine
And influence of all celestiall grace,
Loathing this sinfull earth and earthlie slime,
Fled backe too soone vnto his natie place.
Too soone for all that did his loue embrace,
Too soone for all this wretched world, whom he
Robd of all right and true nobilitie.

Yet ere his happie soule to heauen went
Out of this fleshlie g[ao]le, he did deuise
Vnto his heauenlie maker to present
His bodie, as a spotles sacrifice;
And chose, that guiltie hands of enemies
Should powre forth th' offring of his guiltles blood:
So life exchanging for his countries good.

O noble spirite, liue there euer blessed,
The worlds late wonder, and the heauens new ioy,
Liue euer there, and leaue me here distressed
With mortall cares, and cumbrous worlds anoy.
But where thou dost that happines enioy,
Bid me, Æ´ bid me quicklie come to thee,
That happie there I maie thee alwaies see.

Yet whilst the fates affoord me vitall breath,
I will it spend in speaking of thy praise,
And sing to thee, vntill that timelie death
By heauens doome doo ende my earthlie daies:
Thereto doo thou my humble spirite raise,
And into me that sacred breath inspire,
Which thou there breathest perfect and entire.

Then will I sing, but who can better sing,
Than thine owne sister, peerles Ladie bright,
Which to thee sings with deep harts sorrowing,
Sorrowing tempered with deare delight;
That her to heare I feele my feeble spright
Robbed of sense, and rauished with ioy:
O sad ioy made of mourning and anoy.

Yet will I sing, but who can better sing,
Than thou thy selfe, thine owne selves valiance,
That whilst thou liuedst, madest the forrests ring,
And fields resownd, and flockes to leap and daunce,
And shepherds leaue their lambs vnto mischaunce,
To runne thy shrill Arcadian Pipe to heare:
O happie were those dayes, thrice happie were.

But now more happie thou, and wretched wee,

Which want the wonted sweetnes of thy voice,
Whiles thou now in Elisian fields so free,
With Orpheus, and with Linus and the choice
Of all that euer did in rimes reioyce,
Conuersest, and doost heare their heauenlie layes,
And they heare thine, and thine doo better praise.

So there thou liuest, singing euermore,
And here thou liuest, being euer song
Of vs, which liuing loued thee afore,
Which now thee worship, mongst that blessed throng
Of heauenlie Poets and Heroes strong.
So thou both here and there immortall art,
And euerie where through excellent desart.

But such as neither of themselues can sing,
Nor yet are sung of others for reward,
Die in obscure obliuion, as the thing
Which neuer was, ne euer with regard
Their names shall of the later age be heard,
But shall in rustie darknes euer lie,
Vnles they mentioend be with infamie.

What booteth it to haue beene rich aliue?
What to be great? what to be gracious?
When after death no token doth suruiue
Of former being in this mortall hous,
But sleepes in dust dead and inglorious,
Like beast, whose breath but in his nostrrels is,
And hath no hope of happinesse or blis.

How manie great ones may remembred be,
Which in their daise most famouslie did flourish;
Of whome no word we heare, nor signe now see,
But as things wipt out with a sponge to perishe,
Because they liuing cared not to cherishe
No gentle wits, through pride or couetize,
Which might their names for ever memorize.

Prouide therefore (ye Princes) whilst ye liue,
That of the Muses ye may friended bee,
Which vnto men eternitie do giue;

For they be daughters of Dame memorie
And Ioue the father of eternitie,
And do those men in golden thrones repose,
Whose merits they to glorifie do chose.

The seuen fold yron gates of grislie Hell,
And horrid house of sad Proserpina,
They able are with power of mightie spell
To breake, and thence the soules to bring awai
Out of dread darknesse, to eternall day,
And them immortall make, which els would die
In foule forgetfulnesse, and nameles lie.

So whilome raised they the puissant brood
Of golden girt Alcmena, for great merite,
Out of the dust, to which the Oetoean wood
Had him consum'd, and spent his vitall spirite:
To highest heauen, where now he doth inherite
All happinesse in Hebes siluer bowre,
Chosen to be her dearest Paramoure.

So raisde they eke faire Ledaes warlick twinnes,
And interchanged life vnto them lent,
That when th'one dies, th' other then beginnes
To shew in Heauen his brightnes orient;
And they, for pittie of the sad wayment
Which Orpheus for Eurydice did make,
Her back againe to life sent for his sake.

So happie are they, and so fortunate,
Whome the Pierian sacred sisters loue,
That freed from bands of implacable fate
And power of death, they liue for aye aboue,
Where mortall wreaques their blis may not remoue:
But with the Gods, for former vertues meede,
On Nectar and Ambrosia do feede.

For deeds doe die, how euer noblie donne,
And thoughts of men do as themselues decay,
But wise wordes taught in numbers for to runne,
Recorded by the Muses, liue for ay;
Ne may with storming showers be washt away,

Ne bitter breathing windes with harmfull blast,
Nor age, nor envie shall them euer wast.

In vaine doo earthly Princes then, in vaine
Seeke with Pyramides, to heauen aspired;
Or huge Colosses, built with costlie paine;
Or brasen Pillours, neuer to be fired,
Or Shrines, made of the mettall most desired;
To make their memories for euer liue:
For how can mortall immortalitie giue.

Such one Mausolus made, the worlds great wonder,
But now no remnant doth thereof remaine:
Such one Marcellus but was torne with thunder:
Such one Lisippus, but is worne with raine;
Such one King Edmond, but was rent for gaine.
All such vaine moniments of earthlie masse,
Deuour'd of Time, in time to nought doo passe.

But fame with golden wings aloft doth flie,
Aboue the reach of ruinous decay,
And with braue plumes doth beate the azure skie,
Admir'd of base-borne men from farre away:
Then who so will with vertuous deeds assay
To mount to heauen, on Pegasus must ride,
And with sweete Poets verse be glorifide.

For not to haue been dipt in Lethe lake,
Could saue the sonne of Thetis from to die;
But that blinde bard did him immortal make
With verses, dipt in deaw of Castalie:
Which made the Easterne Conqueror to crie,
O fortunate yong-man, whose vertue found
So braue a Trompe, thy noble acts to sound.

Therefore in this halfe happie I doo read
Good Meliboe, that hath a Poet got,
To sing his liuing praises being dead,
Deseruing neuer here to be forgot,
In spight of enuie that his deeds would spot:
Since whose decease, learning lies vnregarded,
And men of armes doo wander vnrewarded.

Those two be those two great calamities,
That long agoe did grieue the noble spright
Of Salomon with great indignities;
Who whilome was aliue the wisest wight.
But now his wisdom is disprooued quite;
For he that now welds all things at his will,
Scorns th' one and th' other in his deeper skill.

O grieue of griefes, Æ': gall of all good heartes,
to see that vertue should dispised bee
Of him, that first was raisde for vertuous parts,
And now broad spreading like an aged tree,
Lets none shoot vp, that nigh him planted bee:
O let the man, of whom the Muse is scorned,
Nor aliue, nor dead be of the Muse adorned.

O vile worlds trust, that with such vaine illusion
Hath so wise men bewicht, and ouerkest,
That they see not the way of their confusion,
O vainesse to be added to the rest,
That do my soule with inward grieue infest:
Let them behold the piteous fall of mee:
And in my case their owne ensample see.

And who so els that sits in highest seate
Of this worlds glorie, worshipped of all,
Ne feareth change of time, nor fortunes threate,
Let him behold the horror of my fall,
And his owne end vnto remembrance call;
That of like ruine he may warned bee,
And in himselfe be moou'd to pittie mee.

Thus hauing ended all her piteous plaint,
With dolefull shrikes shee vanished away,
That I through inward sorrowe wexen faint,
And all astonished with deepe dismay,
For her departure, had no word to say:
But fate long time in sencelesse sad affright,
Looking still, if I might of her haue sight.

Which when I missed, hauing looked long,

My thought returned greued home againe,
Renewing her complaint with passion strong,
For ruth of that same womans piteous paine;
Whose wordes recording in my troubled braine,
I felt such anguish wound my feeble heart,
That frosen horror ran through euerie part.

So inlie greuing in my groning brest,
And deepelie musing at her doubtfull speach,
Whose meaning much I labor'd forth to wreste,
Being about my slender reasons reach;
At length by demonstration me to teach,
Before mine eies strange sights presented were,
Like tragicke Pageants seeming to appeare.

1.

I SAW an Image, all of ma[ss]ie gold,
Plac'd on high vpon an Altare faire,
That all, which did the same from farre beholde,
Might worship it, and fall on lowest staire.
Not that great Idoll might with this compaire,
To which the Assyrian tyrant would haue made
The holie brethren, falslie to haue praid,

But th' Altare, on the which this Image staid,
Was (Ã´ great pitie) built of brickle clay,
That shortly the foundation decaid,
With showres of heauen and tempests worne away,
Then downe it fell, and low in ashes lay,
Scorn'd of euerie one, which by it went;
That I it seeing, dearelie did lament.

2.

Next vnto this a statelie Towre appeared,
Built all of richest stone, that might bee found,
And nigh vnto the Heauens in height vpreared,
But placed on a plot of sandie ground:
Not that great Towre, which is so much renownd
For tongues confusion in holie writ,
King Ninus worke, might be compar'd to it.

But Ã´ vaine labours of terrestriall wit,

That buildes so stronglie on so frayle a soyle,
As with each storme does fall away, and flit,
And giues the fruit of all your travailes toyle
To be the pray of Tyme, and Fortunes spoyle:
I saw this Towre fall sodainelie to dust,
That nigh with grieve thereof my heart was Brust.

3.

Then did I see a pleasant Paradize,
Full of sweete flowres and daintiest delights,
Such as on earth man could not more deuize,
With pleasures choyce to feed his cheerefull sprights;
Not that, which Merlin by his Magicke slights
Made for the gentle squire, to entertaine
His fayre Belphoebe, could this gardine staine.

But Æ' short pleasure bought with lasting paine,
Why will hereafter anie flesh delight
In earthlie blis, and ioy in pleasures vaine,
Since that I sawe this gardine wasted quite,
That where it was scarce seemed anie sight?
That I, which once that beautie did beholde,
Could not from teares my melting eyes with-holde.

4.

Soone after this a Giaunt came in place,
Of wondrous power, and of exceeding stature,
That none durst vewe the horror of his face,
Yet was he milde of speach, and meeke of nature.
Not he, which in despight of his Creatour
With railing tearmes defied the Iewish hoast,
Might with this mightie one in hugenes boast.

For from the one he could to th' other coast,
Stretch his strong thighes, and th' Occaeon ouerstride,
And reach his hand into his enemies hoast.
But see the end of pompe and fleshlie pride;
One of his feete vnwares from him did slide,
That downe hee fell into the deepe Abisse,
Where drownd with him is all his earthlie blisse.

5.

Then did I see a Bridge, made all of golde,
Ouer the Sea from one to other side,
Withouten prop or pillour it t' vpholde,
But like the colour'd Rainbowe arched wide:
Not that great Arche, which Traian edifide,
To be a wonder to all age ensuing,
Was matchable to this in equall vewing.

But (ah) what bootes it to see earthlie thing
In glorie, or in greatnes to excell,
Sith time doth greatest things to ruine bring?
This goodlie bridge, one foote not fastned well,
Gan faile, and all the rest downe shortlie fell,
Ne of so braue a building ought remained,
That grieffe thereof my spirite greatly pained.

6.

I saw two Beares, as white as anie milke,
Lying together in a mightie caue,
Of milde aspect, and haire as soft as silke,
That saluage nature seemed not to haue,
Nor after greedie spoyle of blood to craue:
Two fairer beasts might not elsewhere be found,
Although the compast world were sought around.

But what can long abide aboue this ground
In state of blis, or stedfast happinesse?
The Caue, in which these Beares lay sleeping sound,
Was but earth, and with her owne weightinesse,
Vpon them fell, and did vnwares oppresse,
That for great sorrow of their sudden fate,
Henceforth all wor[l]ds felicitie I hate.

Much was I troubled in my heauie spright,
At sight of these sad spectacles forepast,
That all my senses were bereaued quight,
And I in minde remained sore agast,
Distraught twixt feare and pitie; when at last
I heard a voyce, which loudly to me called,
That with the suddein shrill I was appalled.

Behold (said it) and by ensample see,

That all is vanitie and grieve of minde,
Ne other comfort in this world can be,
But hope of heauen, and heart to God inclinde;
For all the rest must needs be left behinde:
With that it bad me, to the other side
To cast mine eye, where other sights I spide.

1.

UPON that famous Riuers further shore,
There stood a snowie Swan of heauenlie hiew,
And gentle kinde, as euer Fowle afore;
A fairer one in all the goodlie crieu
Of white Strimonian brood might no man view:
There he most sweetly sung the prophecie
Of his owne death in dolefull Elegie.

At last, when all his mourning melodie
He ended had, that both the shores resounded,
Feeling the fit that him forewarnd to die,
With loftie flight aboue the earth he bounded,
And out of sight to highest heauen mounted:
Where now he is become an heauenly signe;
There now the ioy is his, here sorrow mine.

2.

Whilist thus I looked, loe adowne the Lee,
I saw an Harpe stroong all with siluer twyne,
And made of golde and costlie yuorie,
Swimming, that whilome seemed to haue been
The harpe, on which Dan Orpheus was seene
Wylde beasts and forrests after him to lead,
But was th' Harpe of Philisides now dead.

At length out of the Riuer it was reard
And borne aboue the cloudes to be diuin'd,
Whilst all the way most heauenly noyse was heard
Of the strings, stirred with the warbling wind,
That wrought both ioy and sorrow in my mind:
So now in heauen a signe it doth appeare,
The Harpe well knowne beside the Northern Beare.

3.

Soone after this I saw, on th' other side,
A curious Coffe made of Heben wood,
That in it did most precious treasure hide,
Exceeding all this baser worldes good:
Yet through the ouerflowing of the flood
It almost drowned was, and done to nought,
That sight thereof much grieu'd my pensieue thought.

At length when most in perill it was brought,
Two Angels downe descending with swift flight,
Out of the swelling streame it lightly caught,
And twixt their blessed armes it carried quight
Aboue the reach of anie liuing sight:
So now it is transform'd into that starre,
In which all heauenly treasures are.

4.

Looking aside I saw a stately Bed,
Adorned all with costly cloth of gold,
That might for anie Princes couche be red,
And deckt with daintie flowres, as if it shold
Be for some bride, her ioyous night to hold:
Therein a goodly Virgine sleeping lay;
A fairer wight saw neuer summers day.

I heard a voyce that called farre away
And her awaking bad her quickly dight,
For lo her Bridegrome was in readie ray
To come to her, and seeke her loues delight:
With that she started vp with cherefull sight,
When suddeinly both bed and all was gone,
And I in languor left there all alone.

5.

Still as I gazed, I beheld where stood
A Knight all arm'd, vpon a winged steed,
The same that was bred of Medusaes blood,
In which Dan Perseus borne of heauenly see,
The faire Andromeda from perill freed:
Full mortally this Knight ywounded was,
That streames of blood foorth flowed on the gras.

Yet was he deckt (small ioy it was to him alas)
With manie garlands for his victories,
And with rich spoyles, which late he did purchas
Through braue atcheiuements from his enemies:
Fainting at last through long infirmities,
He smote his steed, that straight to heauen him bore,
And left me here his losse for to deplore.

6.

Lastly I saw an Arke of purest golde
Vpon a brazen pillour standing hie,
Which th' ashes seem'd of some great Prin[c]e to hold,
Enclosde therein for endles memorie
Of him, whom all the world did glorifie:
Seemed the heauens with the earth did disagree,
Whether should of those ashes keeper bee.
At last me seem'd wing footed Mercurie,
From heauen descending to appease their strife,
The Arke did beare with him aboue the skie,
And to those ashes gaue a second life,
To liue in heauen, where happines is rife:
At which the earth did grieue exceedingly,
And I for dole was almost like to die.

L'Enuoy.

Immortall spirite of Philisides,
Which now art made the heauens ornament,
That whilome wast the worlds chiefst riches;
Giue leaue to him that lou'de thee to lament
His losse, by lacke of thee to heauen hent,
And with last duties of this broken verse,
Broken with sighes, to decke thy sable Herse.

And ye faire Ladie th' honor of your daies,
And glorie of the world, your high thoughts scorne;
Vouchsafe this moniment of his last praise,
With some few siluer dropping teares t'adorne:
And as ye be of heauenlie off-spring borne,
So vnto heauen let your high minde aspire,
And loath this drosse of sinfull worlds desire.

FINIS.

Edmund Spenser

The Shepheardes Calender: April

APRILL: Ægloga Quarta THENOT & HOBBINOLL

Tell me good Hobbinoll, what garres thee greete?
What? hath some Wolfe thy tender Lambes ytorne?
Or is thy Bagpype broke, that soundes so sweete?
Or art thou of thy loved lasse forlorne?

Or bene thine eyes attempted to the yeare,
Quenching the gasping furrowes thirst with rayne?
Like April shoure, so stremes the trickling teares
Adowne thy cheeke, to quenche thy thristye payne.

HOBBINOLL

Nor thys, nor that, so muche doeth make me mourne,
But for the ladde, whome long I lovd so deare,
Nowe loves a lasse, that all his love doth scorne:
He plongd in payne, his tressed locks dooth teare.

Shepheards delights he dooth them all forswear,
Hys pleasaunt Pipe, whych made us meriment,
He wylfully hath broke, and doth forbear
His wonted songs, wherein he all outwent.

THENOT

What is he for a Ladde, you so lament?
Ys love such pinching payne to them, that prove?
And hath he skill to make so excellent,
Yet hath so little skill to brydle love?

HOBBINOLL

Colin thou kenst, the Southerne shepheardes boye:
Him Love hath wounded with a deadly darte.
Whilome on him was all my care and joye,
Forcing with gyfts to winne his wanton heart.

But now from me hys madding mynd is starte,
And woes the Widdowes daughter of the glenne:
So nowe fayre Rosalind hath bredde hys smart,
So now his frend is chaunged for a frenne.

THENOT

But if hys ditties bene so trimly dight,
I pray thee Hobbinoll, recorde some one:
The whiles our flockes doe graze about in sight,
And we close shrowded in thys shade alone.

HOBBINOLL

Contented I: then will I singe his laye
Of fayre Elisa, Queene of shepheardes all:
Which once he made, as by a spring he laye,
And tuned it unto the Waters fall.

Ye daynty Nymphs, that in this blessed Brooke
doe bathe your brest,
Forsake your watry bowres, and hether looke,
at my request:
And eke you Virgins, that on Parnasse dwell,
Whence floweth Helicon the learned well,
Helpe me to blaze
Her worthy praise,
Which in her sexe doth all excell.

Of fayre Eliza be your silver song,
that blessed wight:
The flowre of Virgins, may shee florish long,
In princely plight.
For shee is Syrinx daughter without spotte,
Which Pan the shepherds God of her begot:
So sprong her grace
Of heavenly race,
No mortall blemishe may her blotte.

See, where she sits upon the grassie greene,
(O seemely sight)
Yclad in Scarlot like a mayden Queene,
And Ermines white.
Upon her head a Cremosin coronet,
With Damaske roses and Daffadillies set:
Bayleaves betweene,
And Primroses greene
Embellish the sweete Violet.

Tell me, have ye seene her angelick face,
Like Ph{o}be fayre?
Her heavenly haveour, her princely grace
can you well compare?
The Redde rose medled with the White yfere,
In either cheeke depeincten lively chere.
Her modest eye,
Her Majestie,
Where have you seene the like, but there?

I sawe Ph{o}bus thrust out his golden hedde,
upon her to gaze:
But when he sawe, how broade her beames did spredde,
it did him amaze.
He blusht to see another Sunne belowe,
Ne durst againe his fyrye face out showe:
Let him, if he dare,
His brightnesse compare
With hers, to have the overthrowe.

Shewe thy selfe Cynthia with thy silver rayes,
and be not abasht:
When shee the beames of her beauty displayes,
O how art thou dasht?
But I will not match her with Latonaes seede,
Such follie great sorow to Niobe did breede.
Now she is a stone,
And makes dayly mone,
Warning all other to take heede.

Pan may be proud, that ever he begot
such a Bellibone,
And Syrinx rejoyse, that ever was her lot
to beare such an one.
Soone as my younglings cryen for the dam,
To her will I offer a milkwhite Lamb:
Shee is my goddesse plaine,
And I her shepherds swayne,
Albee forswonck and forswatt I am.

I see Calliope speede her to the place,
where my Goddesse shines:

And after her the other Muses trace,
with their Violines.
Bene they not Bay braunches, which they doe beare,
All for Elisa in her hand to weare?
So sweetely they play,
And sing all the way,
That it a heaven is to heare.

Lo how finely the graces can it foote
to the Instrument:
They dauncen deffly, and singen soote,
in their meriment.
Wants not a fourth grace, to make the daunce even?
Let that rowme to my Lady be yeven:
She shalbe a grace,
To fyll the fourth place,
And reigne with the rest in heaven.

And whither rennes this bevie of Ladies bright,
raunged in a rowe?
They bene all Ladyes of the lake behight,
that unto her goe.
Chloris, that is the chiefest Nymph of al,
Of Olive braunches beares a Coronall:
Olives bene for peace,
When wars doe surcease:
Such for a Princesse bene principall.

Ye shepherds daughters, that dwell on the greene,
hye you there apace:
Let none come there, but that Virgins bene,
to adorne her grace.
And when you come, whereas shee is in place,
See, that your rudeness doe not you disgrace:
Binde your fillets faste,
And gird in your waste,
For more finesse, with a tawdrie lace.

Bring hether the Pincke and purple Cullambine,
With Gelliflowres:
Bring Coronations, and Sops in wine,
worne of Paramoures.

Strowe me the ground with Daffadowndillies,
And Cowslips, and Kingcups, and loved Lillies:
The pretie Pawnce,
And the Chevisaunce,
Shall match with the fayre flowre Delice.

Now ryse up Elisa, decked as thou art,
in royall aray:
And now ye daintie Damsells may depart
echeone her way,
I feare, I have troubled your troupes to longe:
Let dame Eliza thanke you for her song.
And if you come hether,
When Damsines I gether,
I will part them all you among.

THENOT

And was thilk same song of Colins owne making?
Ah foolish boy, that is with love yblent:
Great pittie is, he be in such taking,
For naught caren, that bene so lewdly bent.

HOBBINOLL

Sicker I hold him, for a greater fon,
That loves the thing, he cannot purchase.
But let us homeward: for night draweth on,
And twincling starres the daylight hence TS EMBLEME

O quam te memorem virgo?HOBBINOLLS EMBLEME

O dea certe.

Edmund Spenser

The Shepherdes Calender: August

August: Ægloga Octaua. Willye. Perigot. Cuddie.

Willye.

Ell me Perigot, what shalbe the game,
Wherefore with myne thou dare thy musick matche?
Or bene thy Bagpypes renne farre out of frame?
Or hath the Crampe thy ioynts benomd with ache?

Perigot.

Ah Willye, when the hart is ill assayde,
How can Bagpipe, or ioynts be well apayd?

Willye.

What the foule euill hath thee so bestadde?
Whilom thou was peregall to the best,
And wont to make the iolly shepeheards gladde
With pyping and dauncing, didst passe the rest.

Perigot.

Ah Willye now I haue learnd a newe daunce:
My old musick mard by a newe mischaunce.

Willye.

Mischiefe mought to that newe mischaunce befall,
That hath so raft vs of our meriment.

But reede me, what payne doth thee so appall?
Or louest thou, or bene thy younglings miswent?

Perigot.

Loue hath misled both my younglings, and mee:
I pyne for payne, and they my payne to see.

Willye.

Perdie and wellawaye: ill may they thriue:
Neuer knewe I louers sheepe in good plight.
But and if rymes with me thou dare striue,
Such fond fantasies shall soone be put to flight.

Perigot.

That shall I doe, though mochell worse I fared:
Neuer shall be sayde that Perigot was dared.

Willye.

Then loe Perigot the Pledge, which I plight:
A mazer ywrought of the Maple warre:
Wherein is enchased many a fayre sight
Of Beres and Tygres, that maken fiers warre:

And ouer them spred a goodly wild vine,
Entrailed with a wanton Yuie twine.
Thereby is a Lambe in the Wolues iawes:
But see, how fast renneth the shepheard swayne,
To saue the innocent from the beastes pawes:
And here with his shepehooke hath him slayne.
Tell me, such a cup hast thou euer sene?
Well mought it beseme any haruest Queene.

Perigot.

Thereto will I pawne yon spotted Lambe,
Of all my flocke there nis sike another:
For I brought him vp without the Dambe.
But Colin Clout rafte me of his brother,
That he purchast of me in the playne field:
Sore against my will was I forst to yield.

Willye.

Sicker make like account of his brother.
But who shall iudge the wager wonne or lost?

Perigot.

That shall yonder heardgrome, and none other,
Which ouer the pousse hetherward doth post.

Willye.

But for the Sunnebeame so sore doth vs beate,
Were not better, to shunne the scortching heate?

Perigot.

Well agreed Willy: then sitte thee downe swayne:
Sike a song neuer heardest thou, but Colin sing.
Cuddie.

Gynne, when ye lyst, ye iolly shepherds twayne:
Sike a iudge, as Cuddie, were for a king.

Perigot. T fell vpon a holly eue,

Willye. hey ho hollidaye,

Per. When holly fathers wont to shrieue:

Wil. now gynneth this roundelay.

Per. Sitting vpon a hill so hye,

Wil. hey ho the high hyll,

Per. The while my flocke did feede thereby,

Wil. the while the shepheard selfe did spill:

Per. I saw the bouncing Bellibone,

Wil. Hey ho Bonibell,

Per. Tripping ouer the dale alone,
 Wil. she can trippe it very well:
 Per. Well decked in a frocke of gray,
 Wil. hey ho gray is greeete,
 Per. And in a Kirtle of greene saye,
 Wil. the greene is for maydens meete:
 Per. A chapelet on her head she wore,
 Wil. hey ho chapelet,
 Per. Of sweete Violets therein was store,
 Wil. she sweeter than the Violet.
 Per. My sheepe did leaue theyr wonted foode,
 Wil. hey ho seely sheepe,
 Per. And gazd on her, as they were wood,
 Wil. woode as he, that did them keepe.
 Per. As the bonilasse passed bye,
 Wil. hey ho bonilasse,
 Per. She roude at me with glauncing eye,
 Wil. as cleare as the christall glasse:
 Per. All as the Sunnye beame so bright,
 Wil. hey ho the Sunne beame,
 Per. Glaunceth from Phoebus face forthright,
 Wil. so loue into thy hart did streame:
 Per. Or as the thonder cleaues the cloudes,
 Wil. hey ho the Thonder,
 Per. Wherein the lightsome leuin shroudes,
 Wil. so cleaues thy soule a sonder:
 Per. Or as Dame Cynthias siluer raye
 Wil. hey ho the Moonelight,
 Per. Vpon the glittering waue doth playe:
 Wil. such play is a pitteous plight.
 Per. The glaunce into my heart did glide,
 Wil. hey ho the glyder,
 Per. Therewith my soule was sharply gryde,
 Wil. uch wounds soone wexen wider.
 Per. Hating to raunch the arrow out,
 Wil. hey ho Perigot,
 Per. I left the head in my hart roote:
 Wil. it was a desperate shot.
 Per. There it ranckleth ay more and more,
 Wil. hey ho the arrowe,
 Per. Ne can I find salue for my sore:
 Wil. loue is a curelesse sorrowe.

Per. And though my bale with death I bought,
Wil. hey ho the heauie cheere,
Per. Yet should thilke lasse not from my thought:
Wil. so you may buye gold to deare.
Per. But whether in paynefull loue I pyne,
Wil. hey ho pinching payne,
Per. Or thriue in welth, she shalbe mine.
Wil. but if thou can her obteine.
Per. And if for gracelesse greefe I dye,
Wil. hey ho gracelesse grieffe,
Per. Witnesse, shee slewe me with her eye:
Wil. let thy follye be the priefe.
Per. And you, that sawe it, simple shepe,
Wil. hey ho the fayre flocke,
Per. For priefe thereof, my death shall weepe,
Wil. and mone with many a mocke.
Per. So learnd I loue on a hollye eue,
Wil. hey ho hollidaye,
Per. That euer since my hart did greue.
Wil. now endeth our roundelay.

Cuddye.

Sicker sike a roundle neuer heard I none.
Little lacketh Perigot of the best.
And Willye is not greatly ouergone,
So weren his vndersongs well adrest.

Willye.

Herdgrome, I feare me, thou haue a squint eye:
Areede vprightly, who has the victorye?

Cuddie.

Fayth of my soule, I deeme ech haue gayned.
For thy let the Lambe be Willye his owne:
And for Perigot so well hath hym payned,
To him be the wroughten mazer alone.

Perigot.

Perigot is well pleased with the doome.
Ne can Willye wite the witelesse herdgroome.

Willye.

Never dempt more right of beautye I weene,
The shepheard of Ida, that iudged beauties Queene.

Cuddie.

But tell me shepherds, should it not yshend
Your roundels fresh, to heare a dolefull verse
Of Rosalend (who knowes not Rosalend?)
That Colin made, ylke can I you rehearse.

Perigot.

Now say it Cuddie, as thou art a ladde:
With mery thing its good to medle sadde.

Willy.

Fayth of my soule, thou shalt ycrouned be
In Colins stede, if thou this song areede:
For neuer thing on earth so pleaseth me,
As him to heare, or matter of his deede.

Cuddie.

Then listneth ech vnto my heauy laye,
And tune your pypes as ruthful, as ye may.
E wastefull woodes beare witnessse of my woe,
Wherein my plaints did oftentimes resound:
Ye carelesse byrds are priuie to my cryes,
Which in your songs were wont to make a part:
Thou pleasaunt spring hast luld me oft a sleepe,
Whose streames my trickling teares did ofte augment.
Resort of people doth my greefs augment,
The walled townes do worke my greater woe:
The forest wide is fitter to resound
The hollow Echo of my carefull cryes,
I hate the house, since thence my loue did part,
Whose waylefull want debarres myne eyes from sleepe.
Let stremes of teares supply the place of sleepe:
Let all that sweete is, voyd: and all that may augment
My doole, drawe neare. More meete to wayle my woe,
Bene the wild woddes my sorrowes to resound,
Then bedde, or bowre, both which I fill with cryes,
When I them see so waist, and fynd no part
Of pleasure past. Here will I dwell apart
In gastful groue therefore, till my last sleepe

Doe close mine eyes: so shall I not augment
With sight of such a chaunge my recklesse woe:
Helpe me, ye banefull byrds, whose shrieking sound
Ys signe of dreery death, my deadly cryes
Most ruthfully to tune. And as my cryes
(Which of my woe cannot bewray least part)
You heare all night, when nature craueth sleepe,
Increase, so let your yrksome yells augment.
Thus all the night in plaints, the daye in woe
I vowed haue to wayst, till safe and sound
She home returne, whose voyces siluer sound
To cheerefull songs can chaunge my cherelesse cryes.
Hence with the Nightingale will I take part,
That blessed byrd, that spends her time of sleepe
In songs and plaintiue pleas, the more taugment
The memory of hys misdeede, that bred her woe:
And you that feele no woe, | when as the sound
Of these my nightly cryes | ye heare apart,
Let breake your sounder sleepe | and pitie augment.

Perigot.

O Colin, Colin, the shepherds ioye,
How I admire ech turning of thy verse:
And Cuddie, fresh Cuddie, the liefest boye,
How dolefully his doole thou didst rehearse.

Cuddie.

Then blowe your pypes shepherds, til you be at home:
The night nigheth fast, yts time to be gone.

Perigot his Embleme.

Vincenti gloria victi.

Willyes Embleme.

Vinto non vitto.

Cuddies Embleme.

Felice chi puo.

Edmund Spenser

The Shepherdes Calender: December

December: Ægloga Duodecima.

He gentle shepheard satte beside a springe,
All in the shadowe of a bushy brere,
That Colin hight, which wel could pype and singe,
For he of Tityrus his songs did lere.
There as he satte in secreate shade alone,
Thus gan he make of loue his piteous mone.
O soueraigne Pan thou God of shepherds all,
Which of our tender Lambkins takest keepe:
And when our flocks into mischaunce mought fall,
Doest save from mischeife the vnwary sheepe:
Als of their maisters hast no lesse regarde,
Then of the flocks, which thou doest watch and ward:

I thee beseche (so be thou deigne to heare,
Rude ditties tund to shepherds Oaten reede,
Or if I euer sonet song so cleare,
As it with pleasaunce mought thy fancie feede)
Hearken awhile from thy greene cabinet,
The rurall song of carefull Colinet.

Whilome in youth, when flowrd my ioyfull spring,
Like Swallow swift I wandred here and there:
For heate of heedlesse lust me so did sting,
That I of doubted daunger had no feare.
I went the wastefull woodes and forest wyde,
Withouten dreade of Wolues to bene espyed.

I wont to raunge amydde the mazie thickette,
And gather nuttes to make me Christmas game:
And ioyed oft to chace the trembling Pricket,
Or hunt the hartlesse hare, til shee were tame.
What wreaked I of wintrye ages waste,
Tho deemed I, my spring would euer laste.

How often haue I scaled the craggie Oke,
All to dislodge the Rauen of her neste:
Howe haue I wearied with many a stroke,

The stately Walnut tree, the while the rest
Vnder the tree fell all for nuts at strife:
For ylike to me was libertee and lyfe.

And for I was in thilke same looser yeares,
(Whether the Muse so wrought me from my birth,
Or I tomuch beleeued my shepherd peres)
Somedele ybent to song and musicks mirth,
A good olde shepheard, Wrenock was his name,
Made me by arte more cunning in the same.

Fro thence I durst in derring [doe] compare
With shepherds swayne, what euer fedde in field:
And if that Hobbinol right iudgement bare,
To Pan his owne selfe pype I neede not yield.
For if the flocking Nymphes did folow Pan,
The wiser Muses after Colin ranne.

But ah such pryde at length was ill repayde,
The shepherds God (perdie God was he none)
My hurtlesse pleasaunce did me ill vpbraide,
My freedome lorne, my life he left to mone.
Loue they him called, that gaue me checkmate,
But better mought they haue behote him Hate.

Tho gan my louely Spring bid me farewell,
And Sommer season sped him to display
(For loue then in the Lyons house did dwell)
The raging fyre, that kindled at his ray.
A comett stird vp that vnkindly heate,
That reigned (as men sayd) in Venus seate.

Forth was I ledde, not as I wont afore,
When choise I had to choose my wandring waye:
But whether luck and loues vnbridled lore
Would leade me forth on Fancies bitte to playe:
The bush my bedde, the bramble was my bowre,
The Woodes can witnesse many a wofull stowre.

Where I was wont to seeke the honey Bee,
Working her formall rowmes in Wexen frame:
The grieslie Todestool growne there mought I se

And loathed Paddocks lording on the same.
And where the chaunting birds luld me a sleepe,
The ghastlie Owle her grieuous ynne doth keepe.

Then as the springe giues place to elder time,
And bringeth forth the fruite of sommers pryde:
Also my age now passed yougthly pryme,
To thinges of ryper reason selfe applyed.
And learnd of lighter timber cotes to frame,
Such as might saue my sheepe and me fro shame.

To make fine cages for the Nightingale,
And Baskets of bulrushes was my wont:
Who to entrappe the fish in winding sale
Was better seene, or hurtful beastes to hont?
I learned als the signes of heauen to ken,
How Phoebe sayles, where Venus sittes and when.

And tryed time yet taught me greater thinges,
The sodain rysing of the raging seas:
The soothe of byrds by beating of their wings,
The power of herbs, both which can hurt and ease:
And which be wont tenrage the restlesse sheepe,
And which be wont to worke eternall sleepe.

But ah vnwise and witlesse Colin cloute,
That kydst the hidden kinds of many a wede:
Yet kydst not ene to cure thy sore hart roote,
Whose ranckling wound as yet does rifely bleede.
Why liuest thou stil, and yet hast thy deathes wound?
Why dyest thou stil, and yet aliue art founde?

Thus is my sommer worne away and wasted,
Thus is my haruest hastened all to rathe:
The eare that budded faire, is burnt & blasted,
And all my hoped gaine is turned to scathe.
Of all the seede, that in my youth was sowne,
Was nought but brakes and brambles to be mowne.

My boughes with bloosmes that crowned were at firste,
And promised of timely fruite such store,
Are left both bare and barrein now at erst:

The flattring fruite is fallen to grownd before.
And rotted, ere they were halfe mellow ripe:
My haruest wast, my hope away dyd wipe.

The fragrant flowres, that in my garden grewe,
Bene withered, as they had bene gathered long.
Theyr rootes bene dried vp for lacke of dewe,
Yet dewed with teares they han be euer among.
Ah who has wrought my Ro[s]alind this spight
To spil the flowres, that should her girlond dight,

And I, that whilome wont to frame my pype,
Vnto the shifting of the shepherds foote:
Sike follies nowe haue gathered as too ripe,
And cast hem out, as rotten an vnsoote.
The loser Lasse I cast to please nomore,
One if I please, enough is me therefore.

And thus of all my haruest hope I haue
Nought reaped but a weedye crop of care:
Which, when I thought haue thresht in swelling sheaue,
Cockel for corne, and chaffe for barley bare.
Soone as the chaffe should in the fan be fynd,
All was blowne away of the wauering wynd.

So now my yeare drawes to his latter terme,
My spring is spent, my sommer burnt vp quite:
My harueste hasts to stirre vp winter sterne,
And bids him clayme with rigorous rage hys right.
So nowe he stormes with many a sturdy stoure,
So now his blustering blast eche coste doth scoure.

The carefull cold hath nypt my rugged rynde,
And in my face deepe furrowes eld hath pight:
My head besprent with hoary frost I fynd,
And by myne eie the Crow his clawe dooth wright.
Delight is layd abedde, and pleasure past,
No sonne now shines, cloudes han all ouercast.

Now leaue ye shepherds boyes yo[u]r merry glee,
My Muse is hoarse and weary of thys stounde:
Here will I hang my pype vpon this tree,

Was neuer pype of reede did better sounde.
Winter is come, that blowes the bitter blaste,
And after Winter dreerie death does hast.

Gather ye together my little flocke,
My little flock, that was to me so lief:
Let me, ah lette me in your folds ye lock,
Ere the breme Winter breede you greater grieffe.
Winter is come, that blowes the balefull breath,
And after Winter commeth timely death.

Adieu delightes, that lulled me asleepe,
Adieu my deare, whose loue I bought so deare:
Adieu my little Lambes and loued sheepe,
Adieu ye Woodes that oft my witsesse were:
Adieu good Hobbinol, that was so true,
Tell Rosalind, her Colin bids her adieu.

Colins Embleme.

[Vivitur ingenio, caetera mortis erunt.]

Edmund Spenser

The Shepheardes Calender: Februarie

Februarie: Ægloga Secunda. CVDDIE & THENOT.

CVDDIE.

AH for pittie, wil ranke Winters rage,
These bitter blasts neuer ginne tasswage?
The keene cold blowes throug my beaten hyde,
All as I were through the body gryde.
My ragged rontes all shiver and shake,
As doen high Towers in an earthquake:
They wont in the wind wagge their wrigle tailles,
Perke as Peacock: but nowe it auales.

THENOT.

Lewdly complainest thou laesie ladde,
Of Winters wracke, for making thee sadde.
Must not the world wend in his commun course
From good to badd, and from badde to worse,
From worse vnto that is worst of all,
And then returne to his former fall?
Who will not suffer the stormy time,
Where will he liue tyll the lusty prime?
Selfe haue I worne out thrise threttie yeares,
Some in much ioy, many in many teares:
Yet never complained of cold nor heate,
Of Sommers flame, nor of Winters threat:
Ne euer was to Fortune foeman,
But gently tooke, that vngently came.
And euer my flocke was my chiefe care,
Winter or Sommer they mought well fare.

CVDDIE.

No marueile Thenot, if thou can not beare
Cherefully the Winters wrathfull cheare:
For Age and Winter accord full nie,
This chill, that cold, this crooked, that wrye.
And as the lowring Wether lookes downe,
So semest thou like good fryday to frowne.
But my flowring youth is foe to frost,
My shippe vnwont in stormes to be tost.

THENOT.

The soueraigne of seas he blames in vaine,
That once seabeate, will to sea againe.
So loytring liue you little heardgroomes,
Keeping your beastes in the budded broomes:
And when the shining sunne laugheth once,
You deemen, the Spring is come attonce.
Tho gynne you, fond flyes, the cold to scorn,
And crowing in pypes made of greene corne,
You thinke to be Lords of the yeare.
But eft, when ye count you freed from feare,
Comes the breme winter with chamfred browes,
Full of wrinckles and frostie furrowes:
Drerily shooting his stormy darte,
Which cruddles the blood, and pricks the harte.
Then is your carelesse corage accoied,
Your carefull heards with cold bene annoied.
Then paye you the price of your surqedrie,
With weeping, and wayling, and misery.

CVDDIE.

Ah foolish old man, I scorne thy skill,
That wouldest me, my springing yough to spil.
I deeme, thy braine emperished bee
Through rusty elde, that hath rotted thee:
Or sicker thy head veray tottie is,
So on thy corbe shoulder it leanes amisse.
Now thy selfe hast lost both lopp and topp,
Als my budding branch thou wouldest cropp:
But were thy yeares greene, as now bene myne,
To other delights they would encline.
Tho wouldest thou learne to caroll of Loue,
And hery with hymnes thy lasses gloue.
Tho wouldest thou pype of Phyllis prayse:
But Phyllis is myne for many dayes:
I wonne her with a girdle of gelt,
Embost with buegle about the belt.
Such an one shepeheardes woulde make full faine:
Such an one would make thee younge againe.

THENOT.

Thou art a fon, of thy loue to boste,
All that is lent to loue, wyll be lost.

CVDDIE.

Seest, howe brag yond Bullocke beares,
So smirke, so smoothe, his pricked eares?
His hornes bene as broade, as Rainebowe bent,
His dewelap as lythe, as lasse of Kent.
See howe he venteth into the wynd.
Weenest of loue is not his mynd?
Seemeth thy flock thy counsell can,
So lustlesse bene they, so weake so wan,
Clothed with cold, and hoary wyth frost.
Thy flocks father his corage hath lost:
Thy Ewes, that wont to haue blowen bags,
Like wailful widdowes hangen their crags:
The rather Lambes bene starued with cold,
All for their Maister is lustlesse and old.

THENOT.

Cuddie, I wote thou kenst little good,
So vainely tadvance thy headlesse hood.
For Youngth is a bubble blown vp with breath,
Whose witt is weakenesse, whose wage is death,
Whose way is wildernesse, whose ynnne Penance,
And stoopegallaunt Age the hoste of Greeuance.
But shall I tel thee a tale of truth,
Which I cond of Tityrus in my youth,
Keeping his sheepe on the hils of Kent?

CVDDIE.

To nought more, Thenot, my mind is bent,
Then to heare nouells of his deuse:
They bene so well thewed, and so wise,
What euer that good old man bespake.

THENOT.

Many meete tales of youth did he make,
And some of loue, and some of cheualrie:
But none fitter than this to applie.
Now listen a while, and hearken the end.
THere grewe an aged Tree on the greene,

A goodly Oake sometime had it bene,
With armes full strong and largely displayd,
But of their leaues they were disarayde:
The bodie bigge, and mightily pight,
Thoroughly rooted, and of wonderous hight:
Whilome had bene the King of the field,
And mochell mast to the husband did yelde,
And with his nuts larded many swine.
But now the gray mosse marred his rine,
His bared boughes were beaten with stormes,
His toppe was bald, & wasted with wormes,
His honor decayed, his braunches sere.
Hard by his side grew a bragging brere,
Which proudly thrust into Thelement,
And seemed to threat the Firmament.
Yt was embellisht with blossomes fayre,
And thereto aye wonned to repayre
The shepherds daughters, to gather flowres,
To peinct thir girlonds with his colowres.
And in his small bushes vsed to shrowde
The sweete Nightingale singing so lowde:
Which made this foolish Brere wexe so bold,
That on a time he cast him to scold,
And snebbe the good Oake, for he was old.
Why standst there (quoth he) thou brutish blocke?
Nor for fruct, nor for shadowe serues thy stocke:
Seest, how fresh my flowers bene spreadde,
Dyed in Lilly white, and Cremsin redde,
With leaves engrained in lusty greene,
Colours meete to clothe a mayden Queene.
Thy wast bignes but combers the grownd,
And dirks the beauty of my blossomes rownd.
The mouldie mosse, which thee accloieith,
My Sinnamon smell too much annoieith.
Wherefore soone I rede thee, hence remove,
Least thou the price of my displeasure proue.
So spake this bold brere with great disdain:
Little him answered the Oake againe,
But yielded, with shame and greefe adawed,
That of a weede he was ouerawed.
Yt chaunced after vpon a day,
The Hus-bandman selfe to come that way,

Of custome to seruewe his grownd,
 And his trees of state in compasse rownd.
 Him when the spitefull brere had espyed,
 Causlesse complained, and lowdly cryed
 Vnto his Lord, stirring vp sterne strife:
 O my liege Lord, the God of my life,
 Pleaseth you ponder your Suppliants plaint,
 Caused of wrong, and cruell constraint,
 Which I your poore Vassall dayly endure:
 And but your goodnes the same recure,
 Am like for desperate doole to dye,
 Through felonous force of mine enemie.
 Greatly aghast with this piteous plea,
 Him rested the goodman on the lea,
 And badde the Brere in his plaint proceede.
 With painted words tho gan this proude weede,
 (As most vsen Ambitious folke
 His colowred crime with craft to cloke.
 Ah my soueraigne, Lord of creatures all,
 Thou placer of plants both humble and tall,
 Was not I planted of thine owne hand,
 To be the primrose of all thy land,
 With flowring blossomes, to furnish the prime,
 And scarlot berries in Sommer time?
 How falls it then, that this faded Oake,
 Whose bodie is sere, whose braunches broke,
 Whose naked Armes stretch vnto the fyre,
 Vnto such tyrannie doth aspire:
 Hindering with his shade my louely light,
 And robbing me of the swete sonnes sight?
 So beate his old boughes my tender side,
 That oft the bloud springeth from wounds wyde:
 Vntimely my flowres forced to fall,
 That bene the honor of your Coranall.
 And oft he lets his cancker wormes light
 Vpon my braunches, to worke me more spight:
 And oft his hoarie locks downe doth cast,
 Where with my fresh flowretts bene defast.
 For this, and many more such outrage,
 Crauing your goodlihead to aswage
 The ranckorous rigour of his might,
 Nought aske I, but onely to hold my right:

Submitting me to your good sufferance,
And praying to be garded from greeuance.
To this the Oake cast him to replie
Well as he couth: but his enemie
Had kindled such coles of displeasure,
That the good man noulde stay his leasure,
But home him hasted with furious heate,
Encreasing his wrath with many a threate.
His harmefull Hatchet he hent in hand,
(Alas, that it so ready should stand)
And to the field alone he speedeth.
(Ay little helpe to harme there needeth)
Anger nould let him speake to the tree,
Enaunter his rage mought cooled bee:
But to the roote bent his sturdy stroke,
And made many wounds in the wast Oake.
The Axes edge did oft turne againe,
As if halfe vnwilling to cutte the graine:
Semed, the sencelesse yron dyd feare,
Or to wrong holy eld did forbear.
For it had bene an auncient tree,
Sacred with many a mysteree,
And often crost with the priestes crewe,
And often halowed with holy water dewe.
But sike fancies weren foolerie,
And broughten this Oake to this miserye.
For nought mought they quitten him from decay:
For fiercely the good man at him did laye.
The blocke oft goned vnder the blow,
And sighed to see his neare ouerthrow.
In fine the steele had pierced his pith,
Tho downe to the earth he fell forthwith:
His wonderous weight made the grounde to quake,
Thearth shronke vnder him, and seemed to shake.
There lyeth the Oake, pitied of none.
Now stands the Brere like a Lord alone,
Puffed vp with pryde and vaine pleasaunce:
But all this glee had no continuaunce.
For eftsones Winter gan to approche,
The blustring Boreas did encroche,
And beate vpon the solitarie Brere:
For nowe no succoure was seene him nere.

Now gan he repent his pryde to late:
For naked left and disconsolate,
The byting frost nipt his stalke dead,
The watrie wette weighed downe his head,
And heaped snowe burdned him so sore,
That nowe vpright he can stand no more:
And being downe, is trodde in the durt
Of cattell, and brouzed, and sorely hurt.
Such was thend of this Ambitious brere,
For scorning Eld

CVDDIE.

Now I pray thee shepheard, tel it not forth:
Here is a long tale, and little worth.
So longe haue I listned to thy speche,
That graffed to the ground is my breache:
My hartblood is welnigh frorne I feele,
And my galage growne fast to my heele:
But little ease of thy lewd tale I tasted.
Hye thee home shepheard, the day is nigh wasted.

Edmund Spenser

The Shepherdes Calender: Januarie

Januarie: Ægloga Prime. Colin Cloute.

A Shepeheard's boye (no better doe him call)
when Winters wastful spight was almost spent,
All in a sunneshine day, as did befall,
Led forth his flock, that had been long ypent.
So faynt they woxe, and feeble in the folde,
That now vnnethes their feete could them vphold.

All as the Sheepe, such was the shepeheard's looke,
For pale and wanne he was, (alas the while,)
May seeme he lovd, or els some care he tooke:
Well couth he tune his pipe, and frame his stile.
Tho to a hill his faynting flocke he ledde,
And thus him playnd, the while his shepe there fedde.

Ye gods of loue, that pitie louers payne,
(if any gods the paine of louers pitie):
Looke from aboue, where you in ioyes remaine,
And bowe your eares vnto my doleful dittie.
And Pan thou shepherds God, that once didst loue,
Pitie the paines, that thou thy selfe didst proue.

Thou barrein ground, whome winters wrath hath wasted,
Art made a myrrhour, to behold my plight:
Whilome thy fresh spring flowrd, and after hasted
Thy sommer prowde with Daffadillies dight.
And now is come thy wynters stormy state,
Thy mantle mard, wherein thou mas-kedst late.

Such rage as winters, reigneth in my heart,
My life bloud friesing wtih vnkindly cold:
Such stormy stoures do breede my balefull smarte,
As if my yeare were wast, and woxen old.
And yet alas, but now my spring begonne,
And yet alas, yt is already donne.

You naked trees, whose shady leaves are lost,
Wherein the byrds were wont to build their bowre:

And now are clothd with mosse and hoary frost,
Instede of bloosmes, wherwith your buds did flowre:
I see your teares, that from your boughes doe raine,
Whose drops in drery ysicles remaine.

All so my lustfull leafe is drye and sere,
My timely buds with wayling all are wasted:
The blossome, which my braunch of youth did beare,
With breathed sighes is blowne away, & blasted,
And from mine eyes the drizzling teares descend,
As on your boughes the ysicles depend.

Thou feeble flocke, whose fleece is rough and rent,
Whose knees are weak through fast and evill fare:
Mayst witness well by thy ill gouernement,
Thy maysters mind is ouercome with care.
Thou weak, I wanne: thou leabe, I quite forlorne:
With mourning pyne I, you with pyning mourne.

A thousand sithes I curse that carefull hower,
Wherein I longd the neighbour towne to see:
And eke tenne thousand sithes I blesse the stoure,
Wherein I sawe so fayre a sight, as shee.
Yet all for naught: snch [such] sight hath bred my bane.
Ah God, that loue should breede both ioy and payne.

It is not Hobbinol, wherefore I plaine,
Albee my loue he seeke with dayly suit:
His clownish gifts and curtsies I disdaine,
His kiddes, his cracknelles, and his early fruit.
Ah foolish Hobbinol, thy gyfts bene vayne:
Colin them gives to Rosalind againe.

I loue thilke lasse, (alas why doe I loue?)
And am forlorne, (alas why am I lorne?)
Shee deignes not my good will, but doth reprove,
And of my rurall musick holdeth scorne.
Shepheards deuise she hateth as the snake,
And laughes the songes, that Colin Clout doth make.

Wherefore my pype, albee rude Pan thou please,
Yet for thou pleasest not, where most I would:

And thou vnlucky Muse, that wontst to ease
My musing mynd, yet canst not, when thou should:
Both pype and Muse, shall sore the while aby.
So broke his oaten pype, and downe dyd lye.

By that, the welked Phoebus gan availe,
His weary waine, and nowe the frosty Night
Her mantle black through heauen gan overhaile.
Which seene, the pensife boy halfe in despight
Arose, and homeward drove his sonned sheepe,
Whose hanging heads did seeme his carefull case to weepe.

Edmund Spenser

The Shepherdes Calender: July

July: Ægloga Septima. Thomalin & Morrell.

Thomalin.

IS not thilke same a goteheard prowde,
that sittes on yonder bancke,
Whose straying heard them selfe doth shrowde
among the bushes rancke?

Morrell.

What ho, thou iollye shepherds swayne,
come vp the hill to me:
Better is, then the lowly playne,
als for thy flocke, and thee.

Thomalin.

Ah God shield, man, that I should clime,
and learne to looke alofte,
This reede is ryfe, that oftentime
great clymbers fall vnsoft.
In humble dales is footing fast,
the trode is not so tickle:
And though one fall through heedlesse hast,
yet is his misse not mickle.
And now the Sonne hath reared vp
his fyriefooted teme,
Making his way betweene the Cuppe,
and golden Diademe:
The rampant Lyon hunts he fast,
with Dogge of noysome breath,
Whose balefull barking bringes in hast
pyne, plagues, and dreery death.
Agaynst his cruell scortching heate
where hast thou couerture?
The wastefull hylls vnto his threate
is a playne ouerture.
But if thee lust, to holden chat
with seely shepherds swayne,
Come downe, and learne the little what,
that Thomalin can sayne.

Morrell.

Syker, thous but a laesie loord,
and rekes much of thy swinck,
That with fond termes, and weetlesse words
to blere myne eyes doest thinke.

In euill houre thou hentest in hond
thus holy hylles to blame,
For sacred vnto saints they stond,
and of them han theyr name.

S. Michels mount who does not know,
that wardes the Westernne coste?

And of S. Brigets bowre I trow,
all Kent can rightly boaste:

And they that con of Muses skill,
sayne most what, that they dwell
(As goteheards wont) vpon a hill,
beside a learned well.

And wonned not the great god Pan,
vpon mount Oliuet:

Feeding the blessed flocke of Dan,
which dyd himselfe beget?

Thomalin.

O blessed sheepe, O shepheard great,
that bought his flocke so deare,
And them did saue with bloody sweat
from Wolues, that would them teare.

Morrel.

Besyde, as holy fathers sayne,
there is a hyllye place,
Where Titan ryseth from the mayne,
to renne hys dayly race.

Vpon whose toppe the starres bene stayed,
and all the skie doth leane,

There is the caue, where Phebe layed,
The shepheard long to dreame.

Whilome there vsed shepheards all
to feede theyr flocks at will,
Till by his foly one did fall,
that all the rest did spill.

And sithens shepheardes bene foresayd
from places of delight:
For thy I weene thou be affrayed,
to clime this hilles height.
Of Synah can I tell thee more,
and of our Ladyes bowre:
But little needes to strow my store,
suffice this hill of our.
Here han the holy Faunes resource,
and Syluanes haunten rathe.
Here has the salt Medway his sourse,
wherein the Nymphes doe bathe.
The salt Medway, that trickling stremis
adowne the dales of Kent:
Till with his elder brother Themis
his brackish waues be meynt.
Here growes Melampode euery where,
and Terebinth good for Gotes:
The one, my madding kiddes to smere,
the next, to heale theyr throtes.
Hereto, the hills bene nigher heuen,
and thence the passage ethe.
As well can proue the piercing levin,
that seeldome falls byneth.

Thomalin.

Syker thou speakes lyke a lewde lorrell,
of Heauen to demen so:
How be I am but rude and borrell,
yet nearer wayes I knowe.
To Kerke the narre, from God more farre,
has bene an old sayd sawe.
And he that striues to touch the starres,
oft stombles at a strawe.
Alsoone may shepheard clymbe to skye,
that leades in lowly dales,
As Goteherd proud that sitting hye,
vpon the Mountaine sayles.
My seely sheepe like well belowe,
they neede not Melampode:
For they bene hale enough, I trowe,
and liken theyr abode.

But if they with thy Gotes should yede,
 they soone myght be corrupted:
 Or like not of the frowie fede,
 or with the weedes be gluttid.
 The hylls, where dwelled holy saints,
 I reuerence and adore:
 Not for themselfe, but for the sayncts,
 which han be dead of yore.
 And nowe they bene to heauen forewent,
 theyr good is with them goe:
 Theyr sample onely to vs lent,
 that als we mought doe soe.
 Shepherds they weren of the best,
 and liued in lowly leas:
 And sith theyr soules bene now at rest,
 why done we them disease?
 Such one he was, (as I haue heard
 old Algrind often sayne)
 That whilome was the first shepheard,
 and liued with little gayne:
 As meeke he was, as meeke mought be,
 simple, as simple sheepe,
 Humble, and like in eche degree
 the flocke, which he did keepe.
 Often he vsed of hys keepe
 a sacrifice to bring,
 Nowe with a Kidde, now with a sheepe
 The Altars hallowing.
 So lowted he vnto hys Lord,
 such fauour couth he fynd,
 That sithens neuer was abhord,
 the simple shepherds kynd.
 And such I weene the brethren were,
 that came from Canaan:
 The brethren twelue, that kept yfere
 The flockes of mighty Pan.
 But nothing such thilke shepheard was,
 whom Ida hyll dyd beare,
 That left hys flocke, to fetch a lasse,
 whose loue he bought to deare:
 For he was proude, that ill was payd,
 (no such mought shepherds bee)

And with lewde lust was ouerlayd:
 tway things doen ill agree:
 But shepheard mought be meeke and mylde,
 well eyed, as Argus was,
 With fleshly follyes vndefyled,
 and stoute as steede of brasse.
 Sike one (sayd Algrin) Moses was,
 that sawe hys makers face,
 His face more cleare, then Christall glasse,
 and spake to him in place.
 This had a brother, (his name I knewe)
 the first of all his cote,
 A shepheard trewe, yet not so true,
 as he that earst I hote.
 Whilome all these were lowe, and lief,
 and loued their flocks to feede,
 They neuer strouen to be chiefe,
 and simple was theyr weede.
 But now (thanked be God therefore)
 the world is well amend,
 Their weedes bene not so nighly wore,
 such simplesse mought them shend:
 They bene yclad in purple and pall,
 so hath theyr god them blist,
 They reigne and rulen ouer all,
 and lord it, as they list:
 Ygyrt with belts of glitterand gold,
 (mought they good sheepeheards bene)
 Theyr Pan theyr sheepe to them has sold,
 I saye as some haue seene.
 For Palinode (if thou him ken)
 yode late on Pilgrimage
 To Rome, (if such be Rome) and then
 he sawe thilke misusage.
 For shepeheards (sayd he) there doen leade,
 As Lordes done other where,
 Theyr sheepe han crustes, and they the bread:
 the chippes, and they the chere:
 They han the fleece, and eke the flesh,
 (O seely sheepe the while)
 The corn is theyrs, let other thresh,
 their hands they may not file.

They han great stores, and thriftye stockes,
great freendes and feeble foes:
What neede hem caren for their flocks?
theyr boyes can looke to those.
These wisardsweltre in welths waues,
pampred in pleasures deepe,
They han fatte kernes, and leany knaues,
their fasting flockes to keepe.
Sike mister men bene all misgone,
they heapen hylles of wrath:
Sike syrly shepheards han we none,
they keepen all the path.

Morell.

Here is a great deale of good matter,
lost for lacke of telling,
Now sicker I see, thou doest but clatter:
harme may come of melling.
Thou medlest more, then shall haue thanke,
to wyten shepheards welth:
When folke bene fat, and riches rancke,
it is a signe of helth.
But say to me, what is Algrin he,
that is so oft bynempt.

Thomalin.

He is a shepheard great in gree,
but hath bene long ypent.
One daye he sat vpon a hyll,
(as now thou wouldest me:
But I am tought by Algrins ill,
To loue the lowe degree.)
For sitting so with bared scalpe,
an Eagle sored hye,
That weening hys whyte head was chalke,
A shell fish downe let flye:
Shee weend the shell fish to haue broake,
but therewith bruzd his brayne,
So now astonied with the stroke,
he lyes in lingring payne.

Morrell.

Ah good Algrin, his hap was ill,
But shall be bett in time.
Now farwell shepheard, sith thys hyll
thou hast such doubt to climbe.

Thomalins Embleme.
In medio virtus.

Morrells Embleme.
In summo foelicitas

Edmund Spenser

The Shepherdes Calender: June

June: A Egloga Sexta. HOBBINOL & COLIN Cloute.

HOBBINOL.

LO! Collin, here the place, whose pleasaunt syte
From other shades hath weand my wandring mynde.
Tell me, what wants me here, to worke delyte?
The simple ayre, the gentle warbling wynde,
So calme, so coole, as no where else I fynde:
The grassye ground with daintye Daysies dight,
The Bramble bush, where Byrds of euery kynde
To the waters fall their tunes attemper right.

COLLIN.

O happy Hobbinoll, I blesse thy state,
That Paradise hast found, whych Adam lost.
Here wander may thy flock early or late,
Withouten dreade of Wolues to bene ytost:
Thy louely layes here mayet thou freely boste.
But I vnhappy man, whom cruell fate,
And angry Gods pursue from coste to coste,
Can nowhere fynd, to shouder my lucklesse pate.

HOBBINOLL.

Then if by me thou list aduised be,
Forsake the soyle, that so doth the bewitch:
Leaue me those hilles, where harbrough nis to see,
Nor holybush, nor brere, nor winding witche:
And to the dales resort, where shepherds ritch,
And fruitfull flocks bene euery where to see.
Here no night Rauens lodge more blacke then pitche,
Nor eluish ghosts, nor gastly owles doe flee.
But frendly Faeries, met with many Graces,
And lightfote Nymphes can chace the lingring night,
With Heydeguyes, and trimly trodden traces,
Whilst systers nyne, which dwell on Parnasse hight,
Doe make them musick, for their more delight:
And Pan himselfe to kisse their christall faces,
Will pype and daunce, when Phoebe shineth bright:
Such pierlesse pleasures haue we in these places.

COLLIN.

And I, whylst youth, and course of carelesse yeeres
Did let me walke withouten lincks of loue,
In such delights did ioy amongst my peeres:
But ryper age such pleasures doth reprove,
My fancye eke from former follies moue
To stayed steps: for time in passing weares
(As garments doen, which wexen old aboue)
And draweth newe delightes with hoary heares.
Tho couth I sing of loue, and tune my pype
Vnto my plaintiue pleas in verses made:
Tho would I seeke ,
To giue my Rosalind, and in Sommer shade
Dight gaudy Girlonds, was my comen trade,
To crowne her golden locks, but yeeres more rype,
And losse of her, whose loue as lyfe I wayd,
Those weary wanton toyes away dyd wype.

HOBBINOLL.

Colin, to heare thy rymes and roundelayes,
Which thou were wont on wastfull hylls to singe,
I more delight, then larke in Sommer dayes:
Whose Echo made the neyghbour groues to ring,
And taught the byrds, which in the lower spring
Did shroude in shady leaues from sonny rayes,
Frame to thy songe their chereful cheriping,
Or hold theyr peace, for shame of thy swete layes.
I sawe Calliope wyth Muses moe,
Soone as thy oaten pype began to sound,
Theyr youry Luyts and Tamburins forgoe:
And from the fountaine, where they sat around,
Renne after hastely thy siluer sound.
But when they came, where thou thy skill didst showe,
They drewe abacke, as halfe with shame confound,
Shepherd to see, them in theyr art outgoe.

COLLIN.

Of Muses Hobbinol, I conne no skill:
For they bene daughters of the hyghest Ioue,
And holden scorne of homely shepherds quill.
For sith I heard, that Pan with Phoebus stroue,

Which him to much rebuke and Daunger droue:
I neuer lyst presume to Parnasse hyll,
But pyping lowe in shade of lowly groue,
I play to please my selfe, all be it ill.
Nought weigh I, who my song doth prayse or blame,
Ne striue to winne renowne, or passe the rest:
With shepheard sittes not, followe flying fame:
But feede his flocke in fields, where falls hem best.
I wote my rymes bene rough, and rudely drest:
The fyttter they, my carefull case to frame:
Enough is me to paint out my vnrest,
And poore my piteous plaints out in the same.

The God of shepherds Tityrus is dead,
Who taught me homely, as I can, to make.
He, whilst he liued, was the soueraigne head
Of shepherds all, that bene with loue ytake:
Well couth he wayle hys Woes, and lightly slake
The flames, which loue within his heart had bredd,
And tell vs mery tales, to keepe vs wake,
The while our sheepe about vs safely fedde.

Nowe dead he is, and lyeth wrapt in lead,
(O why should death on hym such outrage showe?)
And all hys passing skil with him is fledde,
The fame whereof doth dayly greater growe.
But if on me some little drops would flowe,
Of that the spring was in his learned hedde,
I soone would learne these woods, to wayle my woe,
And teache the trees, their trickling teares to shedde.

Then should my plaints, causd of discourtesee,
As messengers of all my painful plight,
Flye to my loue, where euer that she bee,
And pierce her heart with poynt of worthy wight:
As shee deserues, that wrought so deadly spight.
And thou Menalcas, that by trecheree
Didst vnderfong my lasse, to wexe so light,
Shouldest well be knowne for such thy villanee.

But since I am not, as I wish I were,
Ye gentle shepherds, which your flocks do feede,

Whether on hylls, or dales, or other where,
Beare witnesse all of thys so wicked deede:
And tell the lasse, whose flowre is woxe a weede,
And faultlesse fayth, is turned to faithlesse fere,
That she the truest shepherds hart made bleede,
That lyues on earth, and loued her most dere.

HOBBINOL.

O carefull Colin, I lament thy case,
Thy teares would make the hardest flint to flowe.
Ah faithlesse Rosalind, and voide of grace,
That art the roote of all this ruthfull woe.
But now is time, I gesse, homeward to goe:
Then ryse ye blessed flocks, and home apace,
Least night with stealing steppes doe you forsloe,
And wett your tender Lambes, that by you trace.

Colins embleme.

Gia speme spenta.

Edmund Spenser

The Shepheardes Calender: March

March: Ægloga Tertia. Willye & Thomalin.

Willye.

Thomalin, why sytten we soe,
As weren ouerwent with woe,
Vpon so fayre a morow?
The ioyous time now nighest fast,
That shall alegge this bitter blast,
And slake the winters sorowe.

Thomalin.

Sicker Willye, thou warnest well:
For Winters wrath beginnes to quell,
And pleasant spring appeareth.
The grasse now ginnes to be refresht,
The Swallow peepes out of her nest,
And clowdie Welkin cleareth.

Willye.

Seest not thilke same Hawthorne studde,
How bragly it beginnes to budde,
And vtter his tender head?
Flora now calleth forth eche flower,
And bids make ready Maias bowre,
That newe is vpryst from bedde.
Tho shall we sporten in delight,
And learne with Lettice to wexe light,
That scornefully lookes askaunce,
Tho will we little Loue awake,
That nowe sleepeth in Lethe lake,
And pray him leaden our daunce.

Thomalin.

Willye, I wene thou bee assott:
For lustie Loue still sleepeth not,
But is abroad at his game.

Willye.

How kenst thou, that he is awoke?

Or hast thy selfe his slomber broke?
Or made preuie to the same?

Thomalin.

No, but happely I hym spyde,
Where in a bush he did him hide,
With winges of purple and blewe.
And were not, that my sheepe would stray,
The preuie marks I would bewray,
Whereby by chaunce I him knewe.

Willye.

Thomalin, haue no care for thy,
My selfe will haue a double eye,
Ylike to my flocke and thine:
For als at home I haue a syre,
A stepdame eke as whott as fyre,
That dewly adayes counts mine.

Thomalin.

Nay, but thy seeing will not serue,
My sheepe for that may chaunce to swerue,
And fall into some mischief.
For sithens is but the third morowe,
That I chaunst to fall a sleepe with sorowe,
And waked againe with grieffe:
The while thilke same vnhappye Ewe,
Whose clouted legge her hurt doth shewe,
Fell headlong into a dell.
And there vnioynted both her bones:
Mought her necke bene ioynted attones,
She shoulde haue neede no more spell.
Thelf was so wanton and so wood,
(But now I trowe can better good)
She mought ne gang on the greene,

Willye.

Let be, as may be, that is past:
That is to come, let be forecast.
Now tell vs, what thou hast seene.

Thomalin.

It was vpon a holiday,
When shepheardes groomes han leaue to playe,
I cast to goe a shooting.
Long wandring vp and downe the land,
With bowe and bolts in either hand,
For birds in bushes tooting:
At length within an Yuie todde
(There shrouded was the little God)
I heard a busie bustling.
I bent my bow against the bush,
Listening if any thing did rushe,
But then heard no more rustling.
Tho peeping close into the thicke,
Might see the mouing of some quicke.
Whose shape appeared not:
But were it faerie, feend, or snake,
My courage earnd it to awake,
And manfully thereat shotte.
With that sprong forth a naked swayne,
With spotted winges like Peacocks trayne,
And laughing lope to a tree.
His gylden quiuer at his backe,
And silver bowe, which was but slacke,
Which lightly he bent at me.
That seeing, I leuelde againe,
And shott at him with might and maine,
As thicke, as it had hayled.
So long I shott, that al was spent:
Tho pumie stones I hastily hent,
And threwe: but nought availed:
He was so wimble, and so wight,
From bough to bough he lepped light,
And oft the pumies latched.
Therewith affrayd I ranne away:
But he, that earst seemd but to playe,
A shaft in earnest snatched,
And hit me running in the heele:
For then I little smart did feele:
But soone it sore encreased.
And now it ranckleth more and more,
And inwardly it festreth sore,
Ne wote I, how to cease it.

Willye.

Thomalin, I pittie thy plight.
Perdie with loue thou diddest fight:
I know him by a token.
For once I heard my father say,
How he him caught vpon a day,
(Whereof he wilbe wroken)
Entangled in a fowling net,
Which he for carrion Crowes had set,
That in our Peeretree haunted.
Tho sayd, he was a winged lad,
But bowe and shafts as then none had:
Els had he sore be daunted.
But see the Welkin thicks apace,
And stouping Phebus steepes his face:
Yts time to hast vs homeward.

Willyes Embleme.

To be wise and eke to loue,
Is graunted scarce to God aboue.

Thomalins Embleme.

Of Hony and of Gaule in loue there is store:
The Honye is much, but the Gaule is more.

Edmund Spenser

The Shepherdes Calender: May

May: A Egloga Quinta. Palinode & Piers.

Palinode.

IS not thilke the mery moneth of May,
When loue lads masken in fresh aray?
How falles it then, we no merrier bene,
Ylike as others, girt in gawdy greene?
Our bloncket liueryes bene all to sadde,
For thilke same season, when all is ycladd
With pleasaunce: the grownd with grasse, the Wods
With greene leaues, the bushes with bloosming Buds.
Yougthes folke now flocken in euery where,
To gather may bus-kets and smelling brere:
And home they hasten the postes to dight,
And all the Kirke pillours eare day light,
With Hawthorne buds, and swete Eglantine,
And girlonds of roses and Sopps in wine.
Such merimake holy Saints doth queme,
But we here sytten as drownd in a dreme.

PIERS.

For Younkens Palinode such follies fitte,
But we tway bene men of elder witt.

PALINODE.

Sicker this morrowe, ne lenger agoe,
I sawe a shole of shepeheardes outgoe,
With singing, and shouting, and iolly chere:
Before them yode a lusty Tabrere,
That to the many a Horne pype playd,
Whereto they dauncen eche one with his mayd.
To see those folkes make such iouysaunce,
Made my heart after the pype to daunce.
Tho to the greene Wood they speeden hem all,
To fetchen home May with their musicall:
And home they bringen in a royall throne,
Crowned as king: and his Queene attone
Was Lady Flora, on whom did attend
A fayre flock of Faeries, and a fresh bend

Of louely Nymphes. (O that I were there,
To helpen the Ladyes their Maybush beare)
Ah Piers, bene not thy teeth on edge, to thinke
How great sport they gaynen with little swinck.

PIERS.

Perdie so farre am I from enuie,
That their fondnesse inly I pitie.
Those faytours little regarden their charge,
While they letting their sheepe runne at large,
Passen their time, that should be sparely spent,
In lustihede and wanton meryment.
Thilke same bene shepeheards for the Deuils stedde,
That playen while their flockes be vnfedde.
Well is it seene, theyr sheepe bene not their owne,
That letten them runne at randon alone.
But they bene hyred for little pay
Of other, that caren as little as they,
What fallen the flocke, so they han the fleece,
And get all the gayne, paying but a peece.
I muse, what account both these will make,
The one for the hire, which he doth take,
And thother for leauing his Lords tas-ke,
When [great] Pan account of shepeherdes shall aske.

PALINODE.

Sicker now I see thou speakest of spight,
All for thou lackest somedele their delight.
I (as I am) had rather be enuied,
All were it of my foe, then fonly pitied:
And yet if neede were, pitied would be,
Rather, then other should scorne at me:
For pittied is mishappe, that nas remedie,
But scorned bene dedes of [fond] foolerie.
What shoulde shepheards other things tend,
Then sith their God his good does them send,
Reapen the fruite thereof, that is pleasure,
The while they here liuen, at ease and leasure?
For when they bene dead, their good is ygoe,
They sleepen in rest, well as other moe.
Tho with them wends, what they spent in cost,
But what they left behind them, is lost.

Good is no good, but if it be spend:
God giueth good for none other end.

PIERS.

Ah Palinodie, thou art a worldes childe:
Who touches Pitch mought needes be defilde.
But shepherds (as Algrind vsed to say,)
Mought not liue ylike, as men of the laye:
With them it sits to care for their heire,
Enaunter their heritage doe impaire:
They must prouide for meanes of maintenaunce,
And to continue their wont countenaunce.
But shepheard must walke another way,
Sike worldly souenance he must foresay.
The sonne of his loines why should he regard
To leaue enriched with that he hath spard?
Should not thilke God, that gaue him that good,
Eke cherish his child, if in his wayes he stood?
For if he misliue in leudnes and lust,
Little bootes all the welth and the trust,
That his father left by inheritaunce:
All will be soone wasted with misgouernaunce.
But through this, and other their miscreaunce,
They maken many a wrong cheuisaunce,
Heaping vp waues of welth and woe,
The floddes whereof shall them ouerflowe.
Sike mens follie I cannot compare
Better, then to the Apes folish care,
That is so enamoured of her young one,
(And yet God wote, such cause hath she none)
That with her hard hold, and straight embracing,
She stoppeth the breath of her youngling.
So often times, when as good is meant,
Euil ensueth of wrong entent.
The time was once, and may againe retorne,
(For ought may happen, that hath bene beforene)
When shepeherds had none inheritaunce,
Ne of land, nor fee in sufferaunce:
But what might arise of the bare sheepe,
(Were it more or lesse) which they did keepe.
Well ywis was it with shepherds thoe:
Nought hauing, nought feared they to forgoe.

For Pan himselfe was their inheritaunce,
And little them serued for their mayntenaunce.
The [shepheards] God so wel them guided,
That of nought they were vnprouded,
Butter enough, honye, milke, and whay,
And their flockes fleeces, them to araye.
But tract of time, and long prosperitie:
That nource of vice, this of insolencie,
Lulled the shepheards in suc securitie,
That not content with loyal obeysaunce,
Some gan to gape for greedie gouernaunce,
And match them selfe with mighty potentates,
Louers of Lordship and troublers of states:
Tho gan shepheards swaines to looke a loft,
And leaue to liue hard, and learne to ligge soft:
Tho vnder colour of shepeheardes, somewhile
There crept in Wolues, ful of fraude and guile,
That often deuoured their owne sheepe,
And often the shepheards, that did hem keepe.
This was the first sourse of shepheards sorowe,
That now nill be quitt with baile, nor borrowe.

PALINODE.

Three things to beare, bene very burdenous,
But the fourth to forbear, is outragious.
Wemen that of Loues longing once lust,
Hardly forbear, but haue it they must:
So when choler is inflamed with rage,
Wanting reuenge, is hard to asswage:
And who can counsell a thristie soule,
With patience to forbear the offred bowle?
But of all burdens, that a man can beare,
Moste is, a fooles talke to beare and to heare.
I wene the Geant has not such a weight,
That beares on his shoulders the heauens height.
Thou findest faulte, where nys to be found,
And buildest strong warke vpon a weake ground:
Thou raylest on right withouten reason,
And blamest hem much, for small encheason.
How shoulde shepheardes liue, if not so?
What? should they pynen in payne and woe?
Nay sayd I thereto, by my deare borrowe,

If I may rest, I nill liue in sorrowe.
Sorrowe ne neede be hastened on:
For he will come without calling anone.
While times endure of tranquillitie,
Vsen we freely our felicitie.
For when approchen the stormie stowres,
We mought with our shoulders beare of the sharpe showres.
And sooth to sayne, nought seemeth sike strife,
That shepheardes so witen ech others life,
And layen her faults the world before,
The while their foes done eache of hem scorne.
Let none mislike of that may not be mended:
So conteck soone by concord mought be ended.

PIERS.

Shepherd, I list none accordaunce make
With shepherd, that does the right way forsake.
And of the twaine, if choice were to me,
Had leuer my foe, then my freend he be.
For what concord han light and darke sam?
Or what peace has the Lion with the Lambe?
Such faitors, when their false harts bene hidde,
Will doe, as did the Foxe by the Kidde.

PALINODE.

Now Piers, of felowship, tell vs that saying:
For the Ladde can keepe both our flocks from straying.

PIERS.

THilke same Kidde (as I can well deuse
Was too very foolish and vnwise.
For on a tyme in Sommer season,
The Gate her dame, that had good reason,
Yode forth abroade vnto the greene wood,
To brouze, or play, or what shee thought good.
But for she had a motherly care
Of her young sonne, and wit to beware,
Shee set her youngling before her knee,
That was both fresh and louely to see,
And full of fauour, as kidde mought be:
His Vellet head began to shoot out,
And his wreathed hornes gan newly sprout:

The blossomes of lust to bud did beginne,
 And spring forth ranckly vnder his chinne.
 My sonne (quoth she) (and with that gan weepe:
 For carefull thoughts in her heart did creepe)
 God blesse thee poore Orphane, as he mought me,
 And send thee ioy of thy iollitee.
 Thy father (that word she spake with payne:
 For a sigh had nigh rent her heart in twaine)
 Thy father, had he liued this day,
 To see the braunche of his body displaie,
 How would he haue ioyed at this sweete sight?
 But ah false Fortune such ioy did him spight,
 And cutte of hys dayes with vntimely woe,
 Betraying him into the traines of hys foe.
 Now I a wayfull widdowe behight,
 Of my old age haue this one delight,
 To see thee succede in thy fathers steade,
 And florish in flowres of lusty head.
 For euen so thy father his head vpheld,
 And so his hauty hornes did he weld.
 Tho marking him with melting eyes,
 A thrilling throbbe from her hart did aryse,
 And interrupted all her other speache,
 With some old sorowe, that made a new breache:
 Seemed shee sawe in the younglings face
 The old lineaments of his fathers grace.
 At last her solein silence she broke,
 And gan his newe budded beard to stroke.
 Kiddie (quoth shee) thou kenst the great care,
 I have of thy health and thy welfare,
 Which many wylde beastes ligen in waite,
 For to entrap in thy tender state:
 But most the Foxe, maister of collusion:
 For he has voued thy last confusion.
 For thy my Kiddie be ruld by mee,
 And neuer giue trust to his trecheree.
 And if he chaunce come, when I am abroad,
 Sperre the yate fast for feare of fraude:
 Ne for all his worst, nor for his best,
 Open the dore at his request.
 So schooled the Gate her wanton sonne,
 That answerd his mother, all should be done.

Tho went the pensife Damme out of dore,
 And chaunst to stomble at the threshold flore:
 Her stombling steppe some what her amazed,
 (For such, as signes of ill luck bene dispraised)
 Yet forth shee yode thereat halfe aghast:
 And Kiddie the dore sperred after her fast.
 It was not long, after shee was gone,
 But the false Foxe came to the dore anone:
 Not as a Foxe, for then he had be kend,
 But all as a poore pedlar he did wend,
 Bearing a trusse of tryfles at hys backe,
 As bells, and babes, and glasses in hys packe.
 A Biggen he had got about his brayne,
 For in his headpeace he felt a sore payne.
 His hinder heele was wrapt in a clout,
 For with great cold he had gotte the gout.
 There at the dore he cast me downe hys pack,
 And layd him downe, and groned, Alack, Alack.
 Ah deare Lord, and sweet Saint Charitee,
 That some good body woulde once pitie mee.
 Well heard Kiddie al this sore constraint,
 And lenged to know the cause of his complaint:
 Tho creeping close behind the Wickets clinck,
 Preuelie he peeped out through a chinck:
 Yet not so preuelie, but the Foxe him spyed:
 For deceitfull meaning is double eyed.
 Ah good young maister (then gan he crye)
 Iesus blesse that sweete face, I espye,
 And keepe your corpse from the carefull stounds,
 That in my carrion carcass abounds.
 The Kidd pittying hys heauinesse,
 Asked the cause of his great distresse,
 And also who, and whence that he were.
 Tho he, that had well ycond his lere,
 Thus medled his talke with many a teare,
 Sicke, sicke, alas, and little lack of dead,
 But I be relieued by your beastlyhead.
 I am a poore Sheepe, albe my coloure donne:
 For with long traueile I am Brent in the sonne.
 And if that my Grandsire me sayd, be true,
 Sicker I am very sybbe to you:
 So be your goodlihead doe not disdayne

The base kinred of so simple swaine.
Of mercye and favour then I you pray,
With your ayd to forstall my neere decay.
Tho out of his packe a glasse he tooke:
Wherein while kiddie vnwares did looke,
He was so enamoured with the newell,
That nought he deemed deare for the iewell.
Tho opened he the dore, and in came
The false Foxe, as he were starke lame.
His tayle he clapt betwixt his legs twayne,
Lest he should be descried by his trayne.
Being within, the Kidde made him good glee,
All for the loue of the glasse he did see.
After his chere the Pedlar can chat,
And tell many lesings of this, and that:
And how he could shewe many a fine knack.
Tho shewed his ware, and opened his packe,
All saue a bell, which he left behind
In the bas-ket for the Kidde to fynd.
Which when the Kidde stooped down to catch,
He popt him in, and his bas-ket did latch,
Ne stayed he once, the dore to make fast,
But ran away with him in all hast.
Home when the doubtful Damme had her hyde,
She mought see the dore stand open wyde.
All aghast, lowdly she gan to call
Her Kidde: but he nould answeare at all.
Tho on the flore she sawe the merchandise,
Of which her sonne had sette to dere a prise.
What helpe? her Kidde shee knewe well was gone:
Shee weeped, and wayled, and made great mone.
Such end had the Kidde, for he nould warned be
Of craft coloured with simplicitie:
And such end perdie does all hem remayne,
That of such false freendship bene fayne.

PALINODIE.

Truly Piers, thou art beside thy wit,
Furthest fro the marke, weening it to hit.
Now I pray thee, lette me thy tale borrowe
For our sir Iohn, to say to morrowe
At the Kerke, when it is holliday:

For well he meanes, but little can say.
But and if Foxes bene so crafty, as so,
Much needeth all shepherds hem to know.

PIERS.

Of their falshode more could I recount.
But now the bright Sunne gynneth to dismount:
And for the deawie night now doth nye,
I hold it best for vs, home to hye.

Palinodes Embleme.

[Pas men apiotos apistei]

Piers his Embleme.

[Tis d' ara piotis apisto]

Edmund Spenser

The Shepherdes Calender: November

November: Ægloga vndecima. Thenot & Colin.

Thenot.

Colin my deare, when shall it please thee sing,
As thou were | wont songs of some iouisaunce?
Thy Muse to long slombreth in sorrowing,
Lulled a sleepe through loues misgouernaunce.
Now somewhat sing, whose endles souenaunce,
Emong the shepeheards swaines may aye remaine,
Whether thee list the loued lasse aduaunce,
Or honor Pan with hymnes of higher vaine.

Colin.

Thenot, now nis the time of merimake.
Nor Pan to herye, nor with loue to playe:
Sike myrth in May is meetest for to make,
Or summer shade vnder the cocked haye.
But nowe sadde Winter welked hath the day,
And Phoebus weary of his yerely tas-ke,
Ystabled hath his steedes in lowlye laye,
And taken vp his ynne in Fishes has-ke.
Thilke sollein season sadder plight doth aske:
And loatheth sike delightes, as thou doest prayse:
The mornefull Muse in myrth now list ne mas-ke,
As shee was wont in youghth and sommer dayes.
But if thou algate lust light virelayes,
And looser songs of loue to vnderfong
Who but thy selfe deserues sike Poetes prayse?
Relieue thy Oaten pypes, that sleepen long.

Thenot.

The Nightingale is souereigne of song,
Before him sits the Titmose silent bee:
And I vnfitte to thrust in [s]kilfull thronge,
Should Colin make iudge of my fooleree.
Nay, better learne of hem, that learned bee,
An han be watered at the Muses well:
The kindlye dewe drops from the higher tree,
And wets the little plants that lowly dwell.

But if sadde winters wrathe and season chill,
Accorde not with thy Muses meriment:
To sadder times thou mayst attune thy quill,
And sing of sorrowe and deathes dreeriment.
For deade is Dido, dead alas and drent,
Dido the greate shepehearde his daughter sheene:
The fayrest May she was that euer went,
Her like shee has not left behind I weene.
And if thou wilt bewayle my wofull tene:
I shall thee giue yond Cosset for thy payne:
And if thy rymes as rownd and ruffull bene,
As those that did thy Rosalind complayne,
Much greater gyfts for guerdon thou shalt gayne,
Then Kidde of Cosset, which I thee bynempt:
Then vp I say, thou iolly shepeheard swayne,
Let not my small demaund be so contempt.

Colin.

Thenot to that I choose, thou doest me tempt,
But ah to well I wote my humble vaine,
And howe my rymes bene rugged and vnkempt:
Yet as I conne, my conning I will strayne.
Vp then Melpomene thou mounefulst Muse of nyne,
Such cause of mourning neuer hadst afore:
Vp grieslie ghostes and vp my ruffull ryme,
Matter of myrth now shalt thou haue no more.
For dead she is, that myrth thee made of yore.
Didomy deare alas is dead,
Dead and lyeth wrapt in lead:
O heauie herse,
Let streaming teares be poured out in store:
O carefull verse.

Shepheards, that by your flocks on Kentish downes abyde,
Waile ye this wofull waste of natures warke:
Waile we the wight, whose presence was our pryde:
Waile we the wight, whose absence is our carke.
The sonne of all the world is dimme and darke:
The earth now lacks her wonted light,
And all we dwell in deadly night,
O heauie herse,
Breake we our pypes, that shrild as lowde as Larke,

O carefull verse.

Why do we longer liue, (ah why liue we so long)
Whose better dayes death hath shut vp in woe?
The fayrest floure our gyrlond all emong,
Is faded quite and into dust ygoe.
Sing now ye shepherds daughters, sing no moe
The songs that Colin made in her prayse,
But into weeping turne your wanton layes,
O heauie herse,
Now is time to dye. Nay time was long ygoe,
O carefull verse.

Whence is it, that the flouret of the field doth fade,
And lyeth buried long in Winters bale:
Yet soone as spring his mantle hath displayd,
It floureth fresh, as it should neuer fayle?
But thing on earth that is of most auaile,
As vertues braunch and beauties budde,
Reliuen not for any good.
O heauie herse,
The braunch once dead, the budde eke needes must quaile,
O carefull verse.

She while she was, (that was, a woful word to sayne)
For beauties prayse and pleasaunce had no pere:
So well she couth the shepherds entertayne,
With cakes and cracknells and such country chere.
Ne would she scorne the simple shepherds swaine,
For she would call hem often heame
And giue hem curds and clouted Creame.
O heauie herse,
Als Colin cloute she would not once disdayne.
O carefull verse.

But nowe sike happy cheere is turnd to heauie chaunce,
Such pleasaunce now displast by dolors dint:
All Musick sleepes, where death doth leade the daunce,
And shepherds wonted solace is extinct.
The blew in black, the greene in gray is tinct,
The gaudie girlonds deck her graue,
The faded flowres her corse embraue.

O heauie herse,
Morne nowe my Muse, now morne with teares besprint.
O carefull verse.

O thou great shepheard Lobbin, how great is thy griefe,
Where bene the nosegayes that she dight for thee:
The coloured chaplets wrought with a chiefe,
The knotted rushrings, and gilte Rosemaree?
For shee deemed nothing too deere for thee.
Ah they bene all yclad in clay,
One bitter blast blew all away.
O heauie herse,
Thereof nought remaynes but the memoree.
O carefull verse.

Ay me that dreerie death should strike so mortall stroke,
That can vndoe Dame natures kindly course:
The faded lockes fall from the loftie oke,
The flouds do gaspe, for dryed is thyr sourse,
And flouds of teares flowe in theyr stead perforce.
The mantled medowes mourne,
Theyr sondry colours tourne.
O heauie herse,
The heauens doe melt in teares without remorse.
O carefull verse.

The feeble flocks in field refuse their former foode,
And hang theyr heads, as they would learne to weepe:
The beastes in forest wayle as they were woode,
Except the Wolues, that chase the wandring sheepe:
Now she is gon that safely did hem keepe.
The Turtle on the bared braunch,
Laments the wound, that death did launch.
O heauie herse,
And Philomele her song with teares doth steepe.
O carefull verse.

The water Nymphs, that wont with her to sing and daunce,
And for her girlond Oliue braunches beare,
Now balefull boughes of Cypres doen aduance:
The Muses, that were wont greene bayes to weare,
Now bringen bitter Eldre braunches seare:

The fatall sisters eke repent,
Her vitall threde so soone was spent.
O heauie herse,
Mourne now my Muse, now mourne with heauie cheare.
O carefull verse.

O trustlesse state of earthly things, and slipper hope
Of mortal men, that swincke and sweate for nought,
And shooting wide, doe misse the marked scope:
Now haue I learnd (a lesson derely bought)
That nys on earth assuraunce to be sought:
For what might be in earthlie mould,
That did her buried body hould,
O heauie herse,
Yet saw I on the beare when it was brought,
O carefull verse.

But maugre death, and dreaded sisters deadly spight,
And gates of hel, and fyrie furies forse:
She hath the bonds broke of eternall night,
Her soule vnbodyed of the burdenous corpse.
Why then weepes Lobbin so without remorse?
O Lobb, thy losse no longer lament,
Didonis dead, but into heauen hent.
O happye herse,
Cease now my Muse, now cease thy sorrowes sourse,
O ioyfull verse.

Why wayle we then? why weary we the Gods with playnts,
As if some euill were to her betight?
She raignes a goddesse now emong the saintes,
That whilome was the saynt of shepherds light:
And is enstalled nowe in heauens hight.
I see thee blessed soule, I see,
Walke in Elisian fieldes so free.
O happy herse,
Might I once come to thee (O that I might)
O ioyfull verse.

Vnwise and wretched men to weete whats good or ill,
We deeme of Death as doome of ill desert:
But knewe we fooles, what it vs brings vntil,

Dye would we dayly, once it to expert.
No daunger there the shepheard can astert:
Fayre fieldes and pleasaunt layes there bene,
The fieldes ay fresh, the grasse ay greene:
O happy herse,
Make hast ye shepheards, thether to reuert,
O ioyfull verse.

Dido is gone afore (whose turne shall be the next?)
There liues shee with the blessed Gods in blisse,
There drincks she Nectar with Ambrosia mixt,
And ioyes enioyes, that mortall men do misse.
The honor now of highest gods she is,
That whilome was poore shepheards pryde,
While here on earth she did abyde.
O happy herse,
Ceasse now my song, my woe now wasted is.
O ioyfull verse.

Thenot.

Ay francke shepheard, how bene thy verses meint
With doolful pleasaunce, so as I ne wote,
Whether reioyce or weepe for great constrainte?
Thyne be the cossette, well hast thow it gotte.
Vp Colin vp, ynough thou mourned hast,
Noy gynnes to mizzle, hye we homeward fast.

Colins Embleme.

La mort ny mord.

Edmund Spenser

The Shepherdes Calender: October

OCTOBER: Ægloga DecimaPIERCE & CUDDIE

Cuddie, for shame hold up thy heavye head,
And let us cast with what delight to chace,
And weary thys long lingring Phoebus race.
Whilome thou wont the shepherds laddes to leade,
In rymes, in ridles, and in bydding base:
Now they in thee, and thou in sleepe art dead.

CUDDY

Piers, I have pyped erst so long with payne,
That all mine Oten reedes bene rent and wore:
And my poore Muse hath spent her spared store,
Yet little good hath got, and much lesse gayne,
Such pleasaunce makes the Grashopper so poore,
And ligge so layd, when Winter doth her straine.

The dapper ditties, that I wont devise,
To feede youthes fancie, and the flocking fry,
Delighten much: what I the bett for thy?
They han the pleasure, I a sclender prise.
I beate the bush, the byrds to them doe flye:
What good thereof to Cuddie can arise?

PIERS

Cuddie, the prayse is better, then the price,
The glory eke much greater then the gayne:
O what an honor is it, to restraine
The lust of lawlesse youth with good advice:
Or pricke them forth with pleasaunce of thy vaine,
Whereto thou list their trayned willes entice.

Soone as thou gynst to sette thy notes in frame,
O how the rurall routes to thee doe cleave:
Seemeth thou dost their soule of sence bereave,
All as the shepherd, that did fetch his dame
From Plutoes balefull bowre withouten leave:
His musicks might the hellish hound did tame.

CUDDIE

So praysen babes the Peacocks spotted traine,
And wondren at bright Argus blazing eye:
But who rewards him ere the more for thy?
Or feedes him once the fuller by a graine?
Sike prayse is smoke, that sheddeth in the skye,
Sike words bene wynd, and wasten soone in vayne.

PIERS

Abandon then the base and viler clowne,
Lyft up thy selfe out of the lowly dust:
And sing of bloody Mars, of wars, of giusts.
Turne thee to those, that weld the awful crowne,
To doubted Knights, whose woundlesse armour rusts,
And helmes unbruzed wexen dayly browne.

There may thy Muse display her fluttryng wing,
And stretch her selfe at large from East to West:
Whither thou list in fayre Elisa rest,
Or if thee please in bigger notes to sing,
Advaunce the worthy whome shee loveth best,
That first the white beare to the stake did bring.

And when the stubborne stroke of stronger stounds,
Has somewhat slackt the tenor of thy string:
Of love and lustihed tho mayst thou sing,
And carrol lowde, and leade the Myllers rownde,
All were Elisa one of thilke same ring.
So mought our Cuddies name to Heaven sownde.

CUDDYE

Indeed the Romish Tityrus, I heare,
Through his Mec{oe}nas left his Oaten reede,
Whereon he earst had taught his flocks to feede,
And laboured lands to yield the timely eare,
And eft did sing of warres and deadly drede,
So as the Heavens did quake his verse to here.

But ah Mec{oe}nas is yclad in claye,
And great Augustus long ygoe is dead:
And all the worthies ligger wrapt in leade,
That matter made for Poets on to play:
For ever, who in derring doe were drede,

The loftie verse of hem was loved aye.

But after vertue gan for age to stoupe,
And mighty manhode brought a bedde of ease:
The vaunting Poets found nought worth a pease,
To put in preace emong the learned troupe.
Tho gan the streames of flowing wittes to cease,
And sonnebright honour pend in shamefull coupe.

And if that any buddes of Poesie,
Yet of the old stocke gan to shoote agayne:
Or it mens follies mote be forst to fayne,
And rolle with rest in rymes of rybaudrye:
Or as it sprong, it wither must agayne:
Tom Piper makes us better melodie.

PIERS

O pierlesse Poesye, where is then thy place?
If nor in Princes pallace thou doe sitt:
(And yet is Princes pallace the most fitt)
Ne brest of baser birth doth thee embrace.
Then make thee winges of thine aspyring wit,
And, whence thou camst, flye backe to heaven apace.

CUDDIE

Ah Percy it is all to weake and wanne,
So high to sore, and make so large a flight:
Her peeced pyneons bene not so in plight,
For Colin fittes such famous flight to scanne:
He, were he not with love so ill bedight,
Would mount as high, and sing as soote as Swanne.

PIERS

Ah fon, for love does teach him climbe so hie,
And lyftes him up out of the loathsome myre:
Such immortall mirrhor, as he doth admire,
Would rayse ones mynd above the starry skie.
And cause a caytive corage to aspire,
For lofty love doth loath a lowly eye.

CUDDIE

All otherwise the state of Poet stands,

For lordly love is such a Tyranne fell:
That where he rules, all power he doth expell.
The vaunted verse a vacant head demaundes,
Ne wont with crabbed care the Muses dwell.
Unwisely weaves, that takes two webbes in hand.

Who ever casts to compasse weightye prise,
And thinks to throwe out thondring words of threate:
Let powre in lavish cups and thriftie bitts of meate,
For Bacchus fruite is frend to Phoebus wise.
And when with Wine the braine begins to sweate,
The numbers flowe as fast as spring doth ryse.

Thou kenst not Percie howe the ryme should rage.
O if my temples were distaind with wine,
And girt in girlonds of wild Yvie twine,
How I could reare the Muse on stately stage,
And teache her tread aloft in buskin fine,
With queint Bellona in her equipage.

But ah my corage cooles ere it be warme,
For thy, content us in thys humble shade:
Where no such troublous tydes han us assayde,
Here we our slender pipes may safely charme.

PIERS

And when my Gates shall han their bellies layd:
Cuddie shall have a Kidde to store his IES EMBLEME

Agitante calescimus illo
|&c|.

Edmund Spenser

The Shepherdes Calender: September

September: Ægloga Nona. Hobbinol & Diggon Dauie.

Hobbinol.

Diggon Dauie, I bidde her god day:
Or Diggon her is, or I missaye.

Diggon.

Her was her, while it was daye light,
But nowe her is a most wretched wight.
For day, that was, is wightly past,
And now at earst the dirke night doth hast.

Hobbinoll.

Diggon areede, who has thee so dight?
Neuer I wist thee in so poor a plight.
Where is the fayre flocke, thou was wont to leade?
Or bene they chaffred? or at mischiefe dead?

Diggon.

Ah for loue of that, is to thee moste leefe,
Hobbinol, I pray thee gall not my old grieffe:
Sike question ripeth vp cause of newe woe,
For one opened mote vnfolde many moe.

Hobbinoll.

Nay, but sorrow close shrouded in hart
I know, to kepe, is a burdenous smart.
Eche thing imparted is more eath to beare:
When the rayne is faln, the cloudes wexen cleare.
And nowe sithence I sawe thy head last,
Thrise three Moones bene fully spent and past:
Since when thou hast measured much grownd,
And wandred I wene about the world rounde,
So as thou can many thinges relate:
But tell me first of thy flocks astate.

Diggon.

My sheepe bene wasted, (wae is me therefore)
The iolly shepheard that was of yore,

Is nowe nor iolloye, nor shepehearde more.
In forrein costes, men sayd, was plentye:
And so there is, but all of miserye.
I dempt there much to haue eeked my store,
But such eeking hath made my hart sore.
In tho countryes, whereas I haue bene,
No being for those, that truely mene,
But for such, as of guile maken gayne,
No such countrye, as there to remaine.
They setten to sale their shops of shame,
And maken a Mart of theyr good name.
The shepherds there robben one another,
And layen baytes to beguile her brother.
Or they will buy his sheepe out of the cote,
Or they will caruen the shepherds throte.
The shepherds swayne you cannot wel ken,
But it be by his pryde, from other men:
They looken bigge as Bulls, that bene bate,
And bearen the cragge so stiffe and so state,
As cocke on his dunghill, crowing cranck.

Hobbinoll.

Diggon, I am so stiffe, and so stanck,
That vneth may I stand any more:
And nowe the Westerne wind bloweth sore,
That nowe is in his chiefe souereigntee,
Beating the withered leafe from the tree.
Sitte we downe here under the hill:
Tho may we talke, and tellen our fill,
And make a mocke at the blustring blast.
Now say on Diggon, what euer thou hast.

Diggon.

Hobbin, ah hobbin, I curse the stounde,
That euer I cast to haue lorne this grounde.
Wel-away the while I was so fonde,
To leaue the good, that I had in honde,
In hope of better, that was vncouth:
So lost the Dogge the flesh in his mouth.
My seely sheepe (ah seely sheepe)
That here by there I whilome vsed to keepe,
All were they lustye, as thou didst see,

Bene all sterued with pyne and penuree.
Hardly my selfe escaped thilke payne,
Driuen for neede to come home agayne.

Hobbinoll.

Ah fon, now by thy losse art taught,
That seeldome chaunge the better brought.
Content who liues with tryed state,
Neede feare no chaunge of frowning fate:
But who will seeke for vnknowne gayne,
Oft liues by losse, and leaues with payne.

Diggon.

I wote ne Hobbin how I was bewicht
With vayne desyre, and hope to be enricht.
But sicker so it is, as the bright starre
Seemeth ay greater, when it is farre:
I thought the soyle would haue made me rich:
But nowe I wote, it is nothing sich.
For eyther the shepeheards bene ydle and still,
And ledde of theyr sheepe, what way they wyll:
Or they bene false, and full of couetise,
And casten to compasse many wrong emprise.
But the more bene fraught with fraud and spight,
Ne in good nor goodnes taken delight:
But kinde coales of conteck and yre,
Wherewith they sette all the world on fire:
Which when they thinke agayne to quench
With holy water, they doen hem all drench.
They saye they con to heauen the high way,
But by my soule I dare vndersaye,
Thye neuer sette foote in that same troade,
But balk the right way, and strayen abroad.
They boast they han the deuill at commaund:
But aske hem therefore, what they han paund.
Marrie that great Pan bought with deare borrow,
To quite it from the blacke bowre of sorrowe.
But they han sold thilk same long agoe:
For thy woulden drawe with hem many moe.
But let hem gange alone a Gods name:
As they han brewed, so let hem beare blame.

Hobbinoll.

Diggon, I praye the speake not so dirke.
Such myster saying me seemeth to mirke.

Diggon.

Then playnely to speake of shepherds most what,
Badde is the best (this english is flatt.)
Their ill hauiour garres men missay,
Both of their doctrine, and of their faye.
They sayne the world is much war then it wont,
All for her shepherds bene beastly and blont.
Other sayne, but how truely I note,
All for they holden shame of theyr cote.
Some sticke not to say, (whote cole on her tongue)
That sike mischeife graseth hem emong,
All for the casten too much of worlds care,
To deck her Dame, and enrich her heyre:
For such encheason, If you goe nye,
Fewe chymneis reeking you shall espye:
The fat Oxe, that wont ligge in the stal,
Is nowe fast stalled in her crumenall.
Thus chatten the people in theyr steads,
Ylike as a Monster of many heads.
But they that shooten nearest the pricke,
Sayne, other the fat from their beards doen lick.
For bigge Bulles of Basanbrace hem about,
That with theyr hornes butten the more stoute:
But the leane soules treaden vnder foote.
And to seeke redresse mought little boote:
For liker bene they to pluck away more,
Then ought of the gotten good to restore.
For they bene like foule wagmoires ouergrast,
That if thy galage once sticketh fast,
The more to wind it out thou doest swinck,
Thou mought ay deeper and deeper sinck.
Yet better leaue of with a little losse,
Then by much wrestling to leese the grosse.

Hobbinoll.

Nowe Diggon, I see thou speakest to plaine:
Better it were, a little to feyne,
And cleanly couer, that cannot be cured.

Such il, as is forced, mought nedes be endured.
But of sike pastoures howe done the flocks creepe?

Diggon.

Sike as the shepherds, sike bene her sheepe,
For they nill listen to the shepherds voyce,
But if he call hem at theyr good choyce,
They wander at wil, and stray at pleasure,
And to theyr foldes yeeld at their owne leasure.
But they had be better come at their cal:
for many han into mischiefe fall,
And bene of rauenous Wolues yrent,
All for they nould be buxome and bent.

Hobbinoll.

Fye on thee Diggon, and all thy foule leasing,
Well is knowne that sith the Saxon king,
Neuer was Woolfe seene many nor some,
Nor in all Kent, nor in Christendome:
But the fewer Woolues (the soth to sayne,)
The more bene the Foxes that here remaine.

Diggon.

Yes, but they gang in more secrete wise,
And with sheepes clothing doen hem disguise,
They walke not widely as they were wont
For feare of raungers, and the great hunt:
But priuely prolling too and froe,
Enaunter they mought be inly knowe.

Hobbinoll.

Or priue or pert yf any bene,
We han great Bandogs will tear their skinne.

Diggon.

Indeede thy ball is a bold bigge curre,
And could make a iolly hole in theyr furre.
But not good Dogges hem needeth to chace,
But heedy shepherds to discernen their face.
For all their craft is in their countenance,
They bene so graue and full of mayntenance.
But shall I tell thee what my selfe knowe,

Chaunced to Roffynn not long ygoe?

Hobbinoll.

Say it out Diggon, what euer it hight,
For not but well mought him betight.
He is so meeke, wise, and merciable,
And with his word his worke is conuenable.
Colin clout I wene be his selfe boye,
(Ah for Colin he whilome my ioye)
Shepherds sich, God mought vs many send,
That doen so carefully theyr flocks tend.

Diggon.

Thilk same shepherd mought I well marke:
He has a Dogge to byte or to bark,
Neuer had shepherd so nene a kurre,
That waketh, and if but a leafe sturre.
Whilome there wonned a wicked Wolfe,
That with many a Lambe had glutted his gulfe.
And euer at night wont to repayre
Vnto the flocke, when the Welkin shone faire,
Ycladde in clothing of seely sheepe,
When the good old man vsed to sleepe.
Tho at midnight he would barke and ball,
(For he had eft learned a cures call.)
As if a Woolfe were emong the sheepe.
With that the shpheard would breake his sleepe,
And send out Lowder (for so his dog hote)
To raunge the fields with wide oppen throte.
Tho when as Lowder was farre away,
This Woluish sheepe would catchen his pray,
A Lambe, or a Kidde, or a weanell wast:
With that to the wood would he speede him fast.
Long time he vsed this slippery pranck,
Ere Roffy could for his laboure him thanck.
At end the shepherd his practise spyed,
(For Roffy is wise, and as Argus eyed)
And when at euen he came to the flocke,
Fast in theyr folds he did them locke,
And tooke out the Woolfe in his counterfect cote,
And let out the sheepes bloud at his throte.

Hobbinoll.

Marry Diggon, what should him affraye,
To take his owne where euer it laye?
For had his wesand bene a little widder,
He would hue deuoured both hidder and shidder.

Diggon.

Mischiefe light on him, and Gods great curse,
Too good for him had bene a great deale worse:
For it was a perilous beast aboue all,
And eke had he cond the shepherds call.
And oft in the night came to the shepecote,
And called Lowder, with a hollow throte,
As if it the old man selfe had bene.
The dog his maisters voice did it weene,
Yet halfe in doubt, he opened the dore,
And ranne out, as he was wont of yore.
No sooner was out, but swifter then thought,
Fast by the hyde the Wolfe lowder caught:
And had not Roffy renne to the steuen,
Lowder had be slaine thilke same euen.

Hobbinoll.

God shield man, he should so ill haue thriue,
All for he did his deuoyr beliuie.
If sike bene Wolues, as thou hast told,
How mought we Diggon, hem be-hold.

Diggon.

How, but with heede and watchfulnesse,
Forstallen hem of their wilinesse?
For thy with shepheard sittes not playe,
Or sleepe, as some doen, all the long day:
But euer ligger in watch and ward,
From soddein force theyr flocks for to gard.

Hobbinoll.

Ah Diggon, thilke same rule were too straight,
All the cold season to wach and waite.
We bene of flesh, men as other bee,
Why should we be bound to such miseree?
What euer thing lacketh chaungeable rest,

Mought needes decay, when it is at best.

Diggon.

Ah but Hobbinol, all this long tale,
Nought easeth the care, that doth me forhaile.
What shall I doe? what way shall I wend,
My piteous plight and losse to amend?
Ah, good Hobbinol, mought I thee praye,
Of ayde or counsell in my decaye.

Hobbinoll.

Now by my soule Diggon, I lament
The haplesse mischief, that has thee hent,
Nethesse thou seest my lowly saile,
That froward fortune doth euer auaile.
But were Hobbinoll, as God mought please,
Diggon should soone find fauour and ease.
But if to my cotage thou wilt resort,
So as I can, I wil thee comfort:
There mayst thou ligge in a vetchy bed,
Till fayrer Fortune shewe forth her head.

Diggon.

Ah Hobbinol, God mought it thee requite.
Diggon on fewe such freends did euer lite.

Diggons Embleme.

Inopem me copia fecit.

Edmund Spenser

The Tamed Deer

Like as a huntsman after weary chase
Seeing the game from him escaped away,
Sits down to rest him in some shady place,
With panting hounds beguiled of their prey:
So, after long pursuit and vain assay,
When I all weary had the chase forsook,
The gentle deer returned the self-same way,
Thinking to quench her thirst at the next brook.
There she beholding me with milder look,
Sought not to fly, but fearless still did bide;
Till I in hand her yet half trembling took,
And with her own good-will her firmly tied.
Strange thing, me seemed, to see a beast so wild
So goodly won, with her own will beguiled.

Edmund Spenser

The Teares Of The Muses

Rehearse to me ye sacred Sisters nine:
The golden brood of great Apolloes wit,
Those piteous plaints and sorrowful sad tine,
Which late ye powred forth as ye did sit
Beside the siluer Springs of Helicone,
Making your musick of hart-breaking mone.
For since the time that Phoebus foolish sonne
Ythundered through Ioues auengefull wrath,
For trauersing the charret of the Sunne
Beyond the compasse of his pointed path,
Of you his mournfull Sisters was lamented,
Such mournfull tunes were neuer since inuented.

Nor since that faire Calliope did lose
Her loued Twinnes, the dearlings of her ioy,
Her Palici, whom her vnkindly foes
The fatall Sisters, did for spight destroy,
Whom all the Muses did bewaile long space;
Was euer heard such wayling in this place.

For all their groues, which with the heauenly noyses,
Of their sweete instruments were wont to sound,
And th' hollow hills, from which their siluer voyces
Were wont redoubled Echoes to rebound,
Did now rebound with nought but ruffull cries,
And yelling shrieks throwne vp into the skies.

The trembling streames, which wont in chanel cleare
To romble gently downe with murmur soft,
And were by them right tunefull taught to beare
A Bases part amongst their consorts oft;
Now forst to ouerflowe with brackish teares,
With troublous noyse did dull their daintie eares.

The ioyous Nymphes and lightfoote Faeries
Which thether came to heare their musick sweet,
And to the measure of their melodies
Did learne to moue their nimble shifting feete;
Now hearing them so heauily lament,

Like heuilly lamenting from them went.

And all that els was wont to worke delight
Through the diuine infusion of their skill,
And all that els seemd faire and fresh in sight,
So made by nature for to serue their will,
Was turned now to dismall heauinesse,
Was turned now to dreadfull vglinesse.

Ay me, what thing on earth that all thing breeds,
Might be the cause of so impatient plight?
What furie, or what feend with felon deeds
Hath stirred vp so mischieuous despight?
Can grieffe then enter into heauenly harts,
And pierce immortall breasts with mortall smarts?

Vouchsafe ye then, whom onely it concernes,
To me those secret causes to display;
For none but you, or who of you it learnes
Can rightfully aread so dolefull lay.
Begin thou eldest Sister of the crew,
And let the rest in order thee ensew.

Clio.

HEARE thou great Father of the Gods on hie
That most art dreaded for thy thunder darts
And thou our Syre that raignst in Castalie
And mount Parnasse, the God of goodly Arts:
Heare and behold the miserable state
Of vs thy daughters, dolefull desolate.
Behold the fowle reproach and open shame,
The which is day by day vnto vs wrought
By such as hate the honour of our name,
The foes of learning, and each gentle thought;
They not contented vs themselues to scorne,
Doo seeke to make vs of the world forlorne.

Ne onely they that dwell in lowly dust,
The sonnes of darknes and of ignoraunce;
But they whom thou, great Ioue, by doome vniust

Didst to the type of honour earst aduance;
They now puft vp with sdeignfull insolence,
Despite the brood of blessed Sapience.

The sectaries of my celestiall skill,
That wont to be the worlds cheife ornament,
And learned Impes that wont to shoot vp still,
And grow to hight of kingdomes gouernment
They vnderkeep, and with their spredding armes
Do beat their buds, that perish through their harmes.

It most behoues the honorable race
Of mightie Peeres, true wisdomes to sustaine,
And with their noble countenance to grace
The learned forheads, without gifts or gaine:
Or rather learnd themselues behoues to bee;
That is the girlond of Nobilitie.

But (ah) all otherwise they doo esteeme
Of th'heauenly gift of wisdomes influence,
And to be learned it a base thing deeme;
Base minded they that want intelligence:
For God himselfe for wisdomes most is praised,
And men to God thereby are nighest raised.

But they doo onely striue themselues to raise
Through pompous pride, and foolish vanitie;
In th'eyes of people they put all their praise,
And onely boast of Armes and Auncestrie:
But vertuous deeds, which did those Armes first giue
To their Grandsyres, they care not to atchiue.

So I, that doo all noble feates professe,
To register, and sound in trump of gold;
Through their bad dooings, or base slothfulnesse,
Finde nothing worthie to be writ, or told:
For better farre it were to hide their names,
Than telling them to blazon out their blames.

So shall succeeding ages haue no light
Of things forepast, nor moniments of time,
And all that in this world is worthie hight

Shall die in darknesse, and lie hid in slime:
Therefore I mourne with deep harts sorrowing,
Because I nothing noble haue to sing.

With that she raynd such store of streaming teares,
That could haue made a stonie heart to weep,
And all her Sisters rent their golden heares,
And their faire faces with salt humour steep.
So ended shee: and then the next [in rew],
Began her greiuous plaint as doth ensew.

Melpomene

O WHO shall powre into my swollen eyes
A sea of teares that neuer may be dryde,
A brasen voice that many with shrilling cryes
Pierce the dull heauens and fill the ayer wide,
And yron sides that sighing may endure,
To waile the wretchednes of world impure?
Ah, wretched world the den of wickednesse,
Deformd with filth and fowle iniquitie;
Ah wretched world the house of heauinesse,
Fild with the wreacks of mortall miserie:
Ah wretched world, and all that is therein,
The vassals of Gods wrath, amd slaues of sin.

Most miserable creature vnder sky
Man without vnderstanding doth appeare;
For all this worlds affliction he thereby,
And Fortunes freakes is wisely taught to beare:
Of wretched life the onely ioy shee is,
And th'only comfort in calamities.

She armes the brest with constant patience
Against the bitter throwes of dolours darts,
She solaceth with rules of Sapience
The gentle minds, in midst of worldlie smarts:
When he is sad, shee seeks to make him merie,
And doth refresh his sprights when they be werie.

But he that is of reasons skill bereft,

And wants the staffe of wisdom him to stay,
Is like a ship in midst of tempest left
Withouten helme or Pilot her to sway,
Full sad and dreadfull is that ships euent:
So is the man that wants intendment.

Whie then doo foolish men so much despize
The precious store of this celestiall riches?
Why doo they banish vs, that patronize
The name of learning? Most vnhappie wretches,
The which lie drowned in deep wretchednes,
Yet doo not see their owne vnhappines.

My part it is and my professed skill
The Stage with Tragick buskin to adorne,
And fill the Scene with plaint, and outcries shrill
Of wretched persons, to misfortune borne:
But none more tragick matter I can finde
Then this, of men depriu'd of sense and minde.

For all mans life me seemes a Tragedy,
Full of sad sights and sore Catastrophees;
First comming to the world with weeping eye,
Where all his dayes like dolorous Trophees,
Are heapt with spyles of fortune and of feare,
And he at last laid forth on balefull beare.

So all with ruff spectacles is fild,
Fit for Megara or Persephone;
But I, that in true Tragedies am skild,
The flowre of wit, finde nought to busie me:
Therefore I mourne, and pitifully mone,
Because that mourning matter I haue none.

Then gan she woefully to waile, and wring
Her wretched hands in lamentable wise:
And all her Sisters thereto answering,
Threw forth lowd shrieks and drerie dolefull cries.
So rested she: and then the next in rew,
Began her grieuous plaint as doth ensew.

Thalia.

WHERE be the sweete delights of learnings treasure,
That wont with Comick sock to beautefie
The painted Theaters, and fill with pleasure
The listners eyes, and eares with melodie;
In which I late was wont to raine as Queene,
And maske in mirth with Graces well beseene?
O all is gone, and all that goodly glee,
Which wont to be the glorie of gay wits,
Is layd abed, and no where now to see;
And in her roome vnseemly Sorrow sits,
With hollow browes and greisly countenance,
Marring my ioyous gentle dalliaunce.

And him beside sits ugly Barbarisme,
And brutish Ignorance, ycrept of late
Out of dredd darknes of the deepe Abysme,
Where being bredd, he light and heauen does hate:
They in the mindes of men now tyrannize,
And the faire Scene with rudenes foule disguise.

All places they with follie haue possest,
And with vaine toyes the vulgare entertaine;
But me haue banished, with all the rest
That whilome wont to wait vpon my traine,
Fine Counterfesaunce, and vnhurtfull Sport,
Delight, and Laughter deckt in seemly sort.

All these and all that els the Comick Stage
With season'd wit and goodly pleasance graced;
By which mans life in his likest image
Was limned forth, are wholly now defaced;
And those sweete wits which wont the like to frame,
Are now despizd, and made a laughing game.

And he the man, whom Nature selfe had made
To mock her selfe, and Truth to imitate,
With kindly counter vnder Mimick shade,
Our pleasant Willy, ah is dead of late:
With whom all ioy and iolly meriment
Is also deaded, and in dolour drent.

In stead thereof scoffing Scurrilitie,
And scornfull Follie with Contempt is crept,
Rolling in rymes of shameles ribaudrie
Without regard, or due Decorum kept,
Each idle wit at will presumes to make,
And doth the Learneds taske vpon him take.

But that same gentle Spirit, from whose pen
Large streames of honnie and sweete Nectar flowe,
Scorning the boldnes of such base-borne men,
Which dare their follies forth so rashlie throwe;
Doth rather choose to sit in idle Cell,
Than so himselfe to mockerie to sell.

So am I made the seruant of the manie,
And laughing stocke of all that list to scorne,
Not honored nor cared for of anie;
But loath'd of losels as a thing forlorne:
Therefore I mourne and sorrow with the rest,
Vntill my cause of sorrow be redrest.

There with she lowdly did lament and shriek,
Pouring forth stremes of teares abundantly,
And all her Sisters with compassion like,
The breaches of her singul[t]s did supply.
So rested she: and then the next in rew
Began her grieuous plaint, as doth ensew.

Euterpe.

LIKE as the Dearling of the Summers pryde,
Faire Philomele, when winters stormie wrath
The goodly fields, that earst so gay were dyde
In colours diuers, quite despoyled hath,
All comfortlesse doth hide her chearlesse head
During the time of that her widowhead:
So we, that earst were wont in sweet accord
All places with our pleasant notes to fill,
Whilest fauourable times did vs afford
Free libertie to chaunt our charmes at will:

All comfortlesse vpon the bared bow,
Like wofull Culuers doo sit wayling now.

For far more bitter storme than winters stowre
The beautie of the world hath lately wasted,
And those fresh buds, which wont so faire to flowre,
Hath marred quite, and all their blossoms blasted:
And those yong plants, which wont with fruit t' abound,
Now without fruite or leaues are to be found.

A stonie coldnesse hath benumbd the sence
And liuelie spirits of each liuing wight,
And dimd with darknesse their intelligence,
Darknesse more than Cymerians daylie night?
And monstrous error flying in the ayre,
Hath mard the face of all that semed fayre.

Image of hellish horreur Ignorance,
Borne in the bosome of the black Abyesse,
And fed with furies milke, for sustenance
Of his weake infancie, begot amisse
By yawning Sloth on his owne mother Night;
So hee his sonnes both Syre and brother hight.

Her armd with blindnesse and with boldnes stout,
(For blind is bold) hath our fayre light defaced;
And, gathering vnto him a ragged rout
Of Faunes and Satyres, hath our dwellings raced
And our chast bowers, in which all vertue rained,
With brutishnesse and beastlie filth hath stained.

The sacred springs of horsefoot Helicon,
So oft bedeawed with our learned layes,
And speaking streames of pure Castalion,
The famous witnesse of our wonted praise,
They trampled haue their fowle footings trade,
And like to troubled puddles haue them made.

Our pleasant groues, which planted were with paines,
That with our musick wont so oft to ring,
And arbors sweet, in which the Shepherds swaines
Were wont so oft their Pastoralls to sing,

They haue cut downe, and all their pleasaunce mard,
That now no pastorall is to bee hard.

In stead of them fowle Goblins and Shreikowles
With fearfull howling do all places fill;
And feeble Eccho now laments and howles,
The dreadfull accents of their outcries shrill.
So all is turned into wildernesse,
Whilest Ignorance the Muses doth oppresse.

And I whose ioy was earst with Spirit full
To teach the warbling pipe to sound aloft,
My spirits now dismayd with sorrow dull,
Doo mone my miserie with silence soft.
Therefore I mourne and waile incessantly,
Till please the heauens afford me remedy.

Therewith she wayled with exceeding woe,
And piteous lamentation did make,
And all her sisters seeing her doo soe,
With equall plaints her sorrowe did partake.
So rested shee: and then the next in rew,
Began her grieuous plaint, as doth ensew.

Terpsichore.

WHO so hath in the lap of soft delight
Beene long time luld, and fed with pleasures sweet,
Feareles through his owne fault or Fortunes spight,
To tumble into sorrow and regret,
Yf chaunce him fall into calamitie,
Finds greater burthen of his miserie.
So wee that earst in ioyance did abound
And in the bosome of all blis did sit,
Like virgin Queenes with laurell garlands cround
For vertues meed and ornament of wit,
Sith ignorance our kingdome did confound,
Bee now become most wretched wightes on ground:

And in our royall thrones which lately stood
In th' hearts of men to rule them carefully,

He now hath placed his accursed brood,
By him begotten of fowle infamy;
Blind Error, scornfull Follie, and base Spight,
Who hold by wrong, that wee should haue by right.

They to the vulgar sort now pipe and sing,
And make them merrie with their fooleries,
They cherelie chaunt and rymes at randon fling,
The fruitfull spawne of their ranke fantasies:
They feede the eares of fooles with flattery,
And good men blame, and losels magnify:

All places they doo with their toyes possesse,
And raigne in liking of the multitude,
The schooles they fill with fond new fanglennesse,
And sway in Court with pride and rashnes rude;
Mongst simple shepheards they do boast their skill,
And say their musicke matches Phoebus quill.

The noble hearts to pleasures they allure,
And tell their Prince that learning is but vaine,
Faire Ladies loues they spot with thoughts impure,
And gentle mindes with lewd delights distaine:
Clerks they to loathly idlenes entice,
And fill their bookes with discipline of vice.

So euery where they rule and tyrannize,
For their vsurped kingdomes maintenaunce,
The whiles we silly Maides, whom they dispize,
And with reproachfull scorne discountenance,
From our owne natiue heritage exilde,
Walk through the world of euery one reuilde.

Nor anie one doth care to call vs in,
Or once vouchsafeth vs to entertaine,
Vnlesse some one perhaps of gentle kin,
For pitties sake compassion our paine:
And yeeld vs some reliefe in this distresse:
Yet to be so relieu'd is wretchednesse.

So wander we all carefull comfortlesse,
Yet none doth care to comfort vs at all;

So seeke we helpe our sorrow to redresse,
Yet none vouchsafes to answer to our call:
Therefore we mourne and pittillesse complaine,
Because none liuing pittieeth our paine.

With that she wept and wofullie waymented,
That naught on earth her grieffe might pacifie;
And all the rest her dolefull din augmented
With shrikes and goanes and grieuous agonie.
So ended shee: and then the next in rew,
Began her piteous plaint as doth ensew.

Erato.

YE gentle Spirits breathing from aboue,
Where ye in Venus siluer bowre were bred,
Thoughts halfe deuine, full of the fire of loue,
With beawtie kindled and with pleasure fed,
Which ye now in securitie possesse,
Forgetfull of your former heauinesse:
Now change the tenor of your ioyous layes,
With which ye vse your loues to deifie,
And blazon forth an earthlie beauties praise,
Aboue the compasse of the arched skie:
Now change your praises into piteous cries,
And Eulogies turne into Elegies:

Such as ye wont whenas those bitter stounds
Of raging loue first gan you to torment,
And launch your hearts with lamentable wounds
Of secret sorrow and sad languishment,
Before your Loues did take you vnto grace;
Those now renew as fitter for this place.

For I that rule in measure moderate
The tempest of that stormie passion,
And vse to paint in rimes the troublous state
Of Louers life in likest fashion,
Am put from practise of my kindlie skill,
Banisht by those that Loue with leawdnes fill.

Loue wont to be schoolmaster of my skill,
And the sweet deuicefull matter of my song;
Sweete Loue deuoyd of villanie or ill,
But pure and spotles, as at first he sprong
Out of th'Almighties bosome, where he nests;
From thence infused into mortall brests.

Such high conceipt of that celstiall fire,
The base-borne brood of blindnes cannot gesse,
Ne euer dare their dunghill thoughts aspire
Vnto so loftie pitch of perfectnesse,
But rime at riot, and doo rage in loue;
Yet little wot what doth thereto behoue.

Faire Cytheree the Mother of delight,
And Queene of beautie, now thou maist go pack;
For lo thy Kingdome is defaced quight,
Thy scepter rent, and power put to wrack;
And thy gay Sonne, that winged God of Loue,
May now goe prune his plumes like ruffed Doue.

And ye three Twins to light by Venus brought,
The sweete companions of the Muses late,
From whom what euer thing is goodly thought
Doth borrow grace, the fancie to aggrate;
Go beg with vs, and be companions still
As heretofore of good, so now of ill.

For neither you nor we shall anie more
Find entertainment, or in Court or Schoole:
For that which was accounted heretofore
The learneds meed, is now lent to the foole,
He sings of loue, and maketh louing layes,
And they him heare, and they him highly prayse.

With that she powred foorth a brackish flood
Of bitter teares, and made exceeding mone;
And all her Sisters seeing her sad mood,
With lowd laments her answered all at one.
So ended she: and then the next in rew
Began her grieuous plaint, as doth ensew.

Calliope.

TO whom shall I my euill case complaine,
Or tell the anguish of my inward smart,
Sith none is left to remedie my paine,
Or deignes to pitie a perplexed hart;
But rather seekes my sorrow to augment
With fowle reproach, and cruell banishment.
For they, to whom I vsed to applie
The faithfull seruice of my learned skill,
The goodly off-spring of Ioues progenie,
That wont the world with famous acts to fill;
Whose liuing praises in heroick style,
It is my cheife possession to compyle.

They, all corrupted through the rust of time,
That doth all fairest things on earth deface,
Or through vnnoble sloth, or sinfull crime,
That doth degenerate the noble race;
Haue both desire of worthie deeds forlorne,
And name of learning vtterly doo scorne.

Ne doo they care to haue the auncestrie
Of th' old HeroÃ«s memorizde anew,
Ne doo they care that late posteritie
Should know their names, or speak their praises dew:
But die forgot from whence at first they sprong,
As they themselues shalbe forgot ere long.

What bootes it then to come from glorious
Forefathers, or to haue been nobly bredd?
What oddes twixt Irus and old Inachus,
Twixt best and worst, when both alike are dedd;
If none of neither mention should make,
Nor out of dust their memories awake?

Or who would euer care to doo braue deed,
Or striue in vertue others to excell;
If none should yeeld him his deserued meed,
Due praise, that is the spur of dooing well?
For if good were not praised more than ill,

None would choose goodnes of his owne freewill.

Therefore the nurse of vertue I am hight,
And golden Trompet of eternitie,
That lowly thoughts lift vp to heauens hight,
And mortall men haue powre to deifie:
Bacchus and Hercules I raisd to heauen,
And Charlemaine, amongst the Starris seauen.

But now I will my golden Clarion rend,
And will henceforth immortalize no more:
Sith I no more find worthie to commend
For prize of value, or for learned lore:
For noble Peeres whom I was wont to raise,
Now onely seeke for pleasure, nought for praise.

Their great reuenues all in sumptuous pride
They spend, that nought to learning they may spare;
And the rich fee which Poets wont diuide,
Now Parasites and Sycophants doo share:
Therefore I mourne and endlesse sorrow make,
Both for my selfe and for my Sisters sake.

With that she lowdly gan to waile and shrike,
And from her eyes a sea of teares did powre,
And all her sisters with compassion like,
Did more increase the sharpnes of her showre.
So ended she: and then the next in rew
Began her plaint, as doth herein ensew.

Urania.

What wrath of Gods, or wicked influence
Of Starres conspiring wretched men t' afflict,
Hath powrd on earth this noyous pestilence,
That mortall mindes doth inwardly infect
With loue of blindnesse and of ignorance,
To dwell in darknesse without souerance?
What difference twixt man and beast is left,
When th' heauenlie light of knowledge is put out,

And th' ornaments of wisdom are bereft?
Then wandreth he in error and in doubt,
Vnweeting of the danger hee is in,
Through flesh's frailty, and deceit of sin.

In this wide world in which they wretches stray,
It is the onely comfort which they haue,
It is their light, their loadstarre and their day;
But hell, and darkness and the grislie graue,
Is ignorance, the enemy of grace,
That mindes of men borne heauenly doth debace.

Through knowledge we behold the world's creation,
How in his cradle first he fostered was:
And iudge of Nature's cunning operation,
How things she formed of a formlesse mas:
By knowledge wee doo learne our selues to knowe,
And what to man, and what to God wee owe.

From hence wee mount aloft vnto the skie,
And looke into the Christall firmament,
There we behold the heuens great Hierarchie,
The Starres pure light, the Spheres swift mouement,
The Spirites and Intelligences fayre,
And Angels waighting on th' Almightyes chayre.

And there with humble minde and high insight,
Th'eternall Makers maiestie wee viewe,
His loue, his truth, his glorie, and his might,
And mercie more than mortall men can vew.
O soueraigne Lord, Æ' soueraigne happinesse
To see thee, and thy mercie measurelesse:

Such happiness haue they, that do embrace
The precepts of my heauenly discipline;
But shame and sorrow and accursed case
Haue they, that scorne the schoole of arts diuine,
And banish me, which do professe the skill
To make men heauenly wise, through humbled will.

How euer yet they mee despise and spight,
I feede on sweet contentment of my thought,

And please my selfe with mine owne selfe-delight,
In contemplation of things heauenlie wrought:
So loathing earth, I looke vp to the sky,
And being driuen hence I thether fly.

Thence I behold the miserie of men,
Which want the blis that wisdom would them breed,
And like brute beasts doo lie in loathsome den,
Of ghostly darkenes, and of gastlie dread:
For whom I mourne and for my selfe complaine,
And for my Sisters eake whom they disdain.

With that shee wept and waild so pityouslie,
As if her eyes had been two springing wells:
And all the rest her sorrow to supplie,
Did throw forth shrieks and cries and dreery yells.
So ended shee, and then the next in rew,
Began her mournfull plaint as doth ensew.

Polyhymnia.

A DOLEFULL case desires a dolefull song,
Without vaine art or curious complements,
And squallid Fortune into basenes flong,
Doth scorne the pride of wonted ornaments.
Then fittest are these ragged rimes for mee,
To tell my sorrowes that exceeding bee:
For the sweet numbers and melodious measures,
With which I wont the winged words to tie,
And make a tuneful Diapase of pleasures,
Now being let to runne at libertie
By those which haue no skill to rule them right,
Haue now quite lost their naturall delight.

Heapes of huge words vphoorded hideously,
With horrid sound though hauing little sence,
They thinke to be chiefe praise of Poëtry:
And thereby wanting due intelligence,
Haue mard the face of goodly Poësie,
And made a monster of their fantasie:

Whilom in ages past none might professe
But Princes and high Priests that secret skill,
The sacred lawes therein they wont expresse,
And with deepe Oracles their verses fill:
Then was shee held in soueraigne dignitie,
And made the nursling of Nobilitie.

But now nor Prince nor Priest doth her maintayne,
But suffer her prophaned for to bee
Of the base vulgar, that with hands vncleane
Dares to pollute her hidden mysterie,
And treadeth vnder foote hir holie things,
Which was the care of Kesars and of Kings.

One onelie liues, her ages ornament,
And myrrour of her Makers maiestie;
That with rich bountie and deare cherishment,
Supports the praise of noble Poësie:
Ne onelie fauours them which it professe,
But is herselfe a peereles Poëtesse.

Most peereles Prince, most peereles Poëtesse,
The true Pandora of all heauenly graces,
Diuine Elisa, sacred Emperesse:
Liue she for euer, and her royall P'laces
Be fild with praises of diuine wits,
That her eternize with their heauenlie writs.

Some few beside, this sacred skill esteme,
Admirers of her glorious excellence,
Which being lightned with her beawties beme,
Are thereby fild with happie influence:
And lifted vp about the worldes gaze,
To sing with Angels her immortal praize.

But all the rest as borne of saluage brood,
And hauing beene with Acorns alwaies fed;
Can no whit fauour this celestiall food,
But with base thoughts are into blindness led,
And kept from looking on the lightsome day:
For whome I waile and weepe all that I may.

Eftsoones such store of teares she forth did powre,
As if shee all to water would haue gone;
And all her sisters seeing her sad stowre,
Did weep and waile and make exceeding mone,
And all their learned instruments did breake:
The rest vntold no louing tongue can speake.

Edmund Spenser

The Visions Of Petrarch

Being one day at my window all alone,
So manie strange things happened me to see,
As much it grieueth me to thinke thereon.
At my right hand a Hynde appear'd to mee,
So faire as mote the greatest God delite;
Two eager dogs did her pursue in chace,
Of which the one was blacke, the other white:
With deadly force so in their cruell race
They pincht the haunches of that gentle beast,
That at the last, and in short time I spide,
Vnder a Rocke where she alas opprest,
Fell to the ground, and there vntimely dide.
Cruell death vanquishing so noble beautie,
Oft makes me wayle so hard a destinie.

After at sea a tall ship did appeare,
Made all of Heben and white Yuorie,
The sailes of golde, of silke the tackle were,
Milde was the winde, calme seem'd the sea to bee,
The skie eachwhere did show full bright and faire;
With rich treasures this gay ship fraigted was:
But sudden storme did so turmoyle the aire,
And tumbled vp the sea, that she (alas)
Strake on a rock, that vnder water lay,
And perished past all recouerie.
O how great ruth and sorrowfull assay,
Doth vex my sprite with perplexitie,
Thus in a moment to see lost and drown'd,
So great riches, as like cannot be found.

Then heauenly branches did I see arise
Out of the fresh and lustie Lawrell tree,
Amidst the yong greene wood: of Paradise
Some noble plant I thought my selfe to see:
Such store of birds therein yshrowded were,
Chaunting in shade their sundrie melodie,
That with their sweetnes I was rauish't nere.
While on the Lawrell fixed was mine eie,
The skie gan euerie where to ouercast,

And darkned was the welkin all about,
When sudden flash of heauens fire out brast,
And rent this royall tree quite by the roote,
Which makes me much and euer to complaine:
For no such shadow shalbe had againe.

Within this wood, out of a rocke did rise
A spring of water, mildly tumbling downe,
Whereto approched not in anie wise
The homely shepheard, nor the ruder clowne;
But manie Muses, and the Nymphes withall,
That sweetly in accord did tune their voyce
To the soft sounding of the waters fall,
That my glad hart thereat did much reioyce.
But while herein I tooke my chiefe delight,
I saw (alas) the gaping earth deuoure
The spring, the place, and all cleane out of sight.
Which yet agreeues my hart euen to this houre,
And wounds my soule with ruffull memorie,
To see such pleasures gon so suddenly.

I saw a Phoenix in the wood alone,
With purple wings, and crest of golden hewe;
Strange bird he was, whereby I thought anone,
That of some heauenly wight I had the vewe;
Vntill he came vnto the broken tree,
And to the spring, that late deuoured was.
What say I more? each thing at last we see
Doth passe away: the Phoenix there alas
Spying the tree destroid, the water dride,
Himself smote with his beake, as in disdaine,
And so foorthwith in great despight he dide:
That yet my heart burnes in exceeding paine,
For ruth and pitie of so haples plight.
O let mine eyes no more see such a sight.

At last so faire a Ladie did I spie,
That thinking yet on her I burne and quake;
On hearbs and flowres she walked pensiuely,
Milde, but yet loue she proudly did forsake:
White seem'd her robes, yet wouen so they were,
As snow and golde together had been wrought.

Aboue the wast a darke clowde shrouded her,
A stinging Serpent by the heele her caught;
Wherewith she languisht as the gathered floure,
And well assur'd she mounted vp to ioy.
Alas, on earth so nothing doth endure,
But bitter grieffe and sorrowfull annoy:
Which make this life wretched and miserable,
Tossed with stormes of fortune variable.

When I beheld this tickle trustles state
Of vaine worlds glorie, flitting too and fro,
And mortall men tossed by troublous fate
In restles seas of wretchednes and woe,
I wish I might this wearie life forgoe,
And shortly turne vnto my happie rest,
Where my free spirite might not anie moe
Be vext with sights, that doo her peace molest.
And ye faire Ladie, in whose bounteous brest
All heauenly grace and vertue shrined is,
When ye these rythmes doo read, and vew the rest,
Loath this base world, and thinke of heauens blis:
And though ye be the fairest of Gods creatures,
Yet thinke, that death shall spoyle your goodly features.

Edmund Spenser

Virgils Gnat

Wrong'd, yet not daring to expresse my paine,
To you (great Lord) the causer of my care,
In cloudie teares my case I thus complaine
Vnto yourselfe, that onely priuie are:
But if that any Oedipus vnware
Shall chauce, through power of some diuining spright,
To reade the secrete of this riddle rare,
And know the purporte of my euill plight,
Let him rest pleased with his owne insight,
Ne further seeke to glose vpon the text:
For grieffe enough it is to griued wight
To feele his fault, and not be further vext.
But what so by my selfe may not be shownen,
May by this Gnatts complaint be easily knowen.

We now haue playde (Augustus) wantonly,
Tuning our song vnto a tender Muse,
And like a cobweb weauing slenderly,
Haue onely playde: let thus much then excuse
This Gnatts small Poeme, that th' whole history
Is but a jest, though envie it abuse:
But who such sports and sweet delights doth blame,
Shall lighter seeme than this Gnatts idle name.

Hereafter, when as season more secure
Shall bring forth fruit, this Muse shall speak to thee
In bigger notes, that may thy sense allure,
And for thy worth frame some fit Poesie,
The golden offspring of Latona pure,
And ornament of great Ioues progenie,
Phoebus shall be the author of my song,
Playing on iuorie harp with siluer strong.

He shall inspire my verse with gentle mood
Of Poets Prince, whether he woon beside
Faire Xanthus sprinckled with Chimãras blood;
Or in the woods of Astery abide;
Or whereas mount Parnasse, the Muses brood,

Doth his broad forehead like two hornes diuide,
And the sweete waues of sounding Castaly
With liquid foote doth slide downe easily.

Wherefore ye Sisters which the glorie bee
Of the Pierian streames, fayre Naiades,
Go too, and dauncing all in companie,
Adorne that God: and thou holie Pales,
To whome the honest care of husbandrie
Returneth by continuall successe,
Haue care for to pursue his footing light;
Through the wide woods, & groues, with green leaues dight.

Professing thee I lifted am aloft
Betwixt the forrest wide and starrie sky:
And thou most dread (Octavius) which oft
To learned wits giuest courage worthily,
O come (thou sacred childe) come sliding soft,
And fauour my beginnings graciously:
For not these leaues do sing that dreadfull stound,
When Giants bloud did staine PhlegrÃ|an ground.

Nor how th' halfe horsy people, Centaures hight,
Fought with the bloudie Lapithaes at bord,
Nor how the East with tyranous despight
Burnt th Attick towres, and people slew with sword;
Was digged downe, nor yron bands aboard
The Pontick sea by their huge Nauy cast,
My volume shall renowne, so long since past.

Nor Hellespont trampled with horses feete,
When flocking Persians did the Greeks affray;
But my soft Muse, as for her power more meete,
Delights (with Phoebus friendly leaue) to play
An easie running verse with tender feete.
And thou (dread sacred child) to thee alway,
Let euerlasting lightsome glory striue,
Through the worlds endles ages to suruiue.

And let an happie roome remaine for thee
Mongst heauenly ranks, where blessed soules do rest;
And let long lasting life with ioyous glee,

As thy due meede that thou deseruest best,
Hereafter many yeares remembred be
Amongst good men, of whom thou oft are blest;
Liue thou for euer in all happinesse:
But let us turne to our first businesse.

The fiery sun was mounted now on hight
Vp to the heauenly towers, and shot each where
Out of his golden Charet glistening light;
And fayre Aurora with her rosie heare,
The hatefull darknes now had put to flight,
When as the shepheard seeing day appeare,
His little Goats gan driue out of their stalls,
To feede abroad, where pasture best befalls.

To an high mountaines top he with them went,
Where thickest grasse did cloath the open hills:
They now amongst the woods and thickets ment,
Now in the valleies wandring at their wills,
Spread themselues farre abroad through each descent;
Some on the soft greene grasse feeding their fills;
Some clambring through the hollow cliffes on hy,
Nibble the bushie shrubs, which growe thereby.

Others the vtmost boughs of trees doe crop,
And brouze the woodbine twigges, that freshly bud
This with full bit doth catch the vtmost top
Of some soft Willow, or new growen stud;
This with sharpe teeth the brambles leaues doth lop,
And chaw the tender prickles in her Cud;
The whiles another high doth ouerlooke
Her owne like image in christall brooke.

O the great happines, which shepherds haue,
Who so loathes not too much the poor estate,
With minde that ill vse doth before depraue,
Ne measures all things by the costly rate
Of riotise, and semblants outward braue;
No such sad cares, as wont to macerate
And rend the greedie mindes of couetous men,
Do euer creepe into the shepherds den.

Ne cares he if the fleece, which him araves,
Be not twice steeped in Assyrian dye,
Ne glistening of golde, which vnderlayes
The summer beames, doe blinde his gazing eye.
Ne pictures beautie, nor the glauncing rayes
Of precious stones, whence no good commeth by;
Of Bãtus or of Alcons vanity.

Ne ought the whelky pearles esteemeth hee,
Which are from Indian seas brought far away:
But with pure brest from carefull sorrow free,
On the soft grasse his limbs doth oft display,
In sweete spring time, when flowres varietie
With sundrie colours paints the sprinckled lay;
There lyin all at ease, from guile or spight,
With pype of fennie reedes doth him delight.

There he, Lord of himselfe, with palme bedight,
His looser locks doth wrap in wreath of vine:
There his milk dropping Goats be his delight,
And fruitful Pales, and the forrest greene,
And darkesome caues in pleasaunt vallies pight,
Whereas continuall shade is to be seene,
And where fresh springing wells, as christall neate,
Do alwayes flow, to quench his thirstie heate.

O who can lead them to a more happie life,
Than he, that with cleane minde and heart sincere,
No greedy riches knowes nor bloudie strife,
No deadly fight of warlick fleete doth feare,
Ne runs in perill of foes cruell knife,
That in the sacred temples he may reare,
A trophee of his glittering spoyels and treasure,
Or may abound in riches aboue measure.

Of him his God is worshipt with his sythe,
And not with skill of craftsman polished:
He ioyes in groues, and makes himselfe full blythe,
With sundrie flowers in wilde fieldes gathered;
Ne frankincens he from Panchãa buyth,
Sweete quiet harbours in his harmeles head,
And perfect pleasure builds her iouyous bowre,

Free from sad cares, that rich mens hearts deuowre.

This all his care, this all his whole indeuour,
To this his minde and senses he doth bend,
How he may flow in quiets matchles treasour,
Content with any food that God doth send;
And how his limbs, resolu'd through idle leisour,
Vnto sweete sleepe he may securely lend,
In some coole shadow from the scorching heate,
The whiles his flock their chawed cuds do eate.

O flocks, O Faunes, and O ye pleasaunt springs
Of Tempe, where the countrey Nymphs are rife,
Through whose not costly care each shepheard sings
As merrie notes vpon his rusticke Fife,
As that AscrÃ|an bard, whose fame now rings
Through the wide world, and leads as ioyfull life.
Free from all troubles and from worldly toyle,
In which fond men doe all their dayes turmoyle.

In such delights whilst thus his carelesse time
This shepheard driues, vpleaning on his batt,
And on shrill reedes chaunting his rustick rime,
Hyperion throwing foorth his beames full hott,
Into the highest top of heauen gan clime,
And the world parting by an equall lott,
Did shed his whirling flames on either side,
As the great Ocean doth himselfe diuide.

Then gan the shepheard gather into one
His stragling Goates, and draue them to a foord,
Whose cÃ|rule streame, rombling in Pible stone,
Crept vnder mosse as greene as any goord.
Now had the Sun halfe heauen ouergone,
When he heard back from that water foord,
Draue from the force of Phoebus boyling ray,
Into thick shadowes, there themselues to lay.

Soone as he them plac'd in thy sacred wood
(O Delian Goddess) saw, to which of yore
Came the bad daughter of old Cadmus brood,
Cruell Agaue, flying vengeance sore

Of king Nictilus for the guiltie blood,
Which she with cursed hands had shed before;
There she halfe frantick hauing slaine her sonne,
Did shrowd her selfe like punishment to shonne.

Here also playing on the grassy greene,
Woodgods, and Satyres, and swift Dryades,
With many Fairies oft were dauncing seene.
Not so much did Dan Orpheus repressse,
The streames of Hebrus with his songs I weene,
As that faire troupe of woodie Goddesses
Staied thee, (O Peneus) powring foorth to thee,
From cheereful lookes great mirth & gladsome glee.

The verie nature of the place, resounding
With gentle murmure of the breathing ayre,
A pleasant bowre with all delight abounding
In the fresh shadowe did for them prepayre,
To rest their limbs with wearines redounding.
For first the high Plaine trees with braunches faire,
Out of the lowly vallies did arise,
And high shoote vp their heads into the skyes.

And them amongst the wicked Lotos grew,
Wicked, for holding guilefully away
Vlysses men, whom rapt with sweetnes new,
Taking to hoste, it quite from him did stay,
And eke those trees, in whose transformed hew
The Sunnes sad daughters waylde the rash decay
Of Phaeton, whose limbs with lightning rent,
They gathering vp, with sweete teares did lament.

And that same tree, in which Demophoon,
By his disloyalty lamented sore,
Eternall hurte left vnto many one:
Whom als accompanied the Oke, of yore
Through fatall charmes transformd to such an one:
The Oke, whose Acornes were our foode, before
That Ceres seede of mortall men were knowne,
Which first Triptoleme taught how to be sowne.

Here also grew the rougher rinded Pine,

The great Argoan ships braue ornament
Whom golden Fleece did make an heauenly signe;
Which coueting, with his high tops extent,
To make the mountaines touch the starres diuine,
Decks all the forrest with embellishment,
And the blacke Holme that loues the watrie vale,
And the sweete Cypresse signe of deadly bale.

Emongst the rest the clambring Yuie grew,
Knitting his wanton armes with grasping hold,
Least that the Poplar happely should rew
Her brothers strokes, whose boughes she doth enfold
With her lythe twigs, till they the top suruew,
And paint with pallid greene her buds of gold.
Next did the Myrtle tree to her approach,
Not yet vnmindfull of her olde reproach.

But the small Birds in their wide boughs embowring,
Chaunted their sundrie tunes with sweete consent,
And vnder them a siluer Spring forth powring
His trickling streames, a gentle murmure sent;
Thereto the frogs, bred in the slimie scowring
Of the moist moores, their iarring voyces bent;
And shrill grasshoppers chirped them around:
All which the ayrie Echo did resound.

In this so pleasant place this Shepherds flocke
Lay euerie where, their wearie limbs to rest,
On euerie bush, and euerie hollow rocke
Where breathe on them the whistling wind mote best;
The whiles the Shepherd self tending his stocke,
Sate by the fountaine side, in shade to rest,
Where gentle slumbring sleep opressed him,
Displaid on ground, and seized euerie lim.

Of trecherie or traines nought tooke he keep,
But looslie on the grassie greene dispredd,
His dearest life did trust to careles sleep;
Which weighing down his drouping drowsie hedd,
In quiet rest his molten heart did steep,
Deuoid of care, and feare of all falsehedd:
Had not inconstant fortune, bent to ill,

Bid strange mischance his quietnes to spill.

For at his wonted time in that same place
An huge great Serpent all with speckles pide,
To drench himselfe in moorish slime did trace,
There from the boyling heate himselfe to hide:
He passing by with rolling wreathed pace,
With brandisht tongue the emptie aire did gride,
And wrapt his scalie boughts with fell despight,
That all things seem'd appalled at his sight.

Now more and more hauing himself enrolde,
His glittering breast he lifteth vp on hie,
And with proud vaunt his head aloft doth holde;
His creste aboue spotted with purple die,
On euerie side did shine like scalie golde,
And his bright eyes glauncing full dreadfullie,
Did seeme to flame out flakes of flashing fyre,
And with sterne lookes to threaten kindled yre.

Thus wise long time he did himselfe dispace
There round about, when as at last he spide
Lying along before him in that place,
That flocks grand Captaine, and most trustie guide:
Eftsoones more fierce in visage, and in pace,
Throwing his firie eyes on euerie side,
He commeth on, and all things in his way
Full stearnly rends, that might his passage stay.

Much he disdaines, that anie one should dare
To come vnto his haunt; for which intent
He inly burns, and gins straight to prepare
The weapons, which Nature to him hath lent:
Fellie he hisseth, and doth fiercely stare,
And hath his iawes with angrie spirits rent,
That all his tract with bloudie drops is stained,
And all his foldes are now in length outstrained.

Whom thus at point prepared, to preuent,
A little nursling of the humid ayre,
A Gnat vnto the sleepe Shepheard went,
And marking where his ey-lids twinckling rare,

Shewd the two pearles, which sight vnto him lent,
Through their thin couerings appearing fayre,
His little needle there infixing deep,
Warnd him awake, from death himselfe to keep.

Wherewith enrag'd, he fiecely gan vpstart,
And with his hand him rashly bruizing, slewe
As in auengement of his heedles smart,
That streight the sprite out of his senses flew,
And life out of his members did depart:
When suddenly casting aside his vew,
He spide his foe with felonous intent,
And feruent eyes to his destruction bent.

All suddenly dismaid, and hartles quight,
He fled abacke, and catching hastie holde
Of a yong alder hard beside him pight,
It rent, and streight about him gan beholde,
What God or Fortune would assist his might.
But whether God or Fortune made him bold
Its hard to read: yet hardie will he had
To ouercome, that made him lesse adrad.

The scalie backe of that most hideous snake
Enwrapped round, oft faining to retire,
And oft him to assaile, he fiercelly strake
Whereas his temples did his creast front tyre;
And for he was but slowe, did slowth off shake,
And gazing ghastly on (for feare and yre
Had blent so much his sense, that lesse he feard
Yet when he saw him slaine, himself he cheard.

By this the night forth from the darksome bowre
Of Herebus her teemed steedes gan call,
And laesie Vesper in his timelie howre
From golden Oeta gan proceede withall;
Whenas the Shepheard after this sharpe stowre,
Seeing the doubled shadowes low to fall,
Gathering his straying flocke, does homeward fare,
And vnto rest his wearie ioynts prepare.

Into whose sense so soone as lighter sleepe

Was entered, and now loosing euerie lim,
Sweete slumbring deaw in carelessnesse did steepe,
The Image of that Gnat appeard to him,
And in sad tearmes gan sorrowfully weepe,
With greislie countenance and visage grim,
Wailing the wrong which he had done of late,
In steed of good hastning his cruell fate.

Said he, what haue I wretch deseru'd, that thus
Into this bitter bale I am outcast,
Whilest that thy life more deare and precious
Was than mine owne, so long as it did last?
I now in lieu of paines so gracious,
am tost in th' ayre with euerie windie blast:
Thou safe deliuered from sad decay,
Thy careles limbs in loose sleep dost display.

So liuest thou, but my poore wretched ghost
Is forst to ferrie ouer Lethes Riuer,
And spoyld of Charon too and fro am tost.
Seest thou, how all places quake and quiuer
Lightned with deadly lamps on euerie post?
Tisiphone each where doth shake and shiuer
Her flaming fire brond, encountring me,
Whose lockes vncombed cruell adders be.

And Cerberus, whose many mouthes doo bay,
And barke out flames, as if on fire he fed;
Adowne whose necke in terrible array,
Ten thousand snakes cralling about his hed
Doo hang in heapes, that horribly affray,
And bloodie eyes do glister firie red;
He oftentimes me dreadfullie doth threaten,
With painfull torments to be sorely beaten.

Ay me, that thanks so much should faile of meed,
For that I thee restor'd to life againe,
Euen from the doore of death and deadlie dread.
Where then is now the guerdon of my paine?
Where the reward of my so piteous deed?
The praise of pitie vanisht is in vaine,
And th' antique faith of Iustice long agone

Out of the land is fled away and gone.

I saw anothers fate approaching fast,
And left mine owne his safetie to tender;
Into the same mishap I now am cast,
And shun'd destruction doth destruction render;
Not vnto him that neuer hath trespass,
But punishment is due to the offender.
Yet long destruction be the punishment,
So long as thankfull will may it relent.

I carried am into waste wildernesse,
Waste wildernes, amongst Cymerian shades,
Where endles paines and hideous heauinesse
Is round about me heapt in darksome glades.
For there huge Othos sits in sad distresse,
Fast bound with serpents that him oft inuades;
Far of beholding Ephialtes tide,
Which once assai'd to burne this world so wide.

And there is mournfull Tityus mindefull yet
Of thy displeasure, O Latona faire;
Displeasure too implacable was it,
That made him meat for wild foules of the ayre:
Much do I feare among such fiends to sit;
Much do I feare back to them to repayre,
To the black shadowes of the Stygian shore,
Where wretched ghosts sit wailing euermore.

There next the vtmost brinck doth he abide,
That did the bankets of the Gods bewray,
Whose throat through thirst to nought nigh being dride
His sense to seeke for ease turnes euery way:
And he that in auengement of his pride,
For scorning to the sacred Gods to pray,
Against a mountaine rolls a mighty stone,
Calling in vaine for rest, and can haue none.

Go ye with them, go cursed damosells,
Whose bridale torches foule Erynnis tynde,
And Hymen at your Spousalls sad, foretells
Tydings of death and massacre vnkinde:

With them that cruell Colchid mother dwells,
The which conceiu'd in her reuengefull minde,
With bitter woundes her owne deere babes to slay,
And murdred troupes vpon great heapes to lay.

There also those two Pandionian maides,
Calling on Itis, Itis euermore,
Whom wretched boy they slew with guiltie blades;
For whome the Thracian king lamenting sore,
Turn'd to a Lapwing, fowlie them vpbraydes,
And fluttering round about them still does sore;
There now they all eternally complaine
Of others wrong, and suffer endles paine.

But the two brethren borne of Cadmus blood,
Whilst each does for the Soueraignty contend,
Blinde through ambition, and with vengeance wood
Each doth against the others bodie bend
His cursed steele, of neither well withstood,
And with wide wounds their carcasses doth rend;
That yet they both doe mortall foes remaine,
Sith each with brothers bloudie hands was slaine.

Ah (waladay) there is no end of paine,
Nor change of labour may intreated bee:
Yet I beyond all these am carried faine,
Where others powers farre different I see,
And must passe ouer to th' Elisian plaine:
There grim Persephone encountring mee,
Doth vrge her fellowFuries earnestly,
With their bright firebronds me to terrifie.

There chast Alceste liues inuiolate,
Free from all care, for that her husbands daies
She did prolong by changing fate for fate,
Lo there liues also the immortall praise
Of womankinde, most faithfull to her mate,
Penelope: and from her farre awayes
A rulesse rout of yongmen, which her woo'd
All slaine with darts, lie wallowed in their blood.

And sad Eurydice thence now no more

Must turne to life, but there detained bee,
For looking back, being forbid before:
Yet was the guilt thereof, Orpheus, in thee.
Bold sure he was, and worthie spirite bore,
That durst those lowest shadowes goe to see,
And could beleue that anie thing could please
Fell Cerberus, or Stygian powres appease.

Ne feard the burning waues of Phlegeton,
Nor those same mournfull kingdomes compassed
With rustie horrour and fowle fashion,
And deep digd vawtes, and Tartar couered
With bloodie night, and darke confusion,
And iudgement seates, whose Iudge is deadlie dred,
A iudge, that after death doth punish sore
The faults, which life hath trespassed before.

But valiant fortune made Dan Orpheus bolde:
For the swift running riuers still did stand,
And the wilde beasts their furie did withhold,
To follow Orpheus musicke through the land:
And th' Okes deep grounded in the earthly molde
Did moue, as if they could him vnderstand;
And the shrill woods, which were of sense bereau'd,
Through their hard barke his siluer sound receau'd.

And eke the Moone her hastie steedes did stay,
Drawing in teemes along the starrie skie,
And didst (Ã´ monthly Virgin) thou delay
Thy nightly course, to heare his melodie?
The same was able with like louely lay
The Queene of hell to moue as easily,
To yeeld Eurydice vnto her fere,
Backe to be borne, though it vnlawfull were.

She (Ladie) hauing well before approoued,
The feends to be too cruell and seuere,
Obseru'd th' appointed way, as her behooued,
Ne euer did her ey-sight turne arere,
Ne euer spake, ne cause of speaking mooued:
But cruell Orpheus thou much crueller,
Seeking to kisse her, brok'st the Gods decree,

And thereby mad'st her euer damn'd to be.

Ah but sweete loue of pardon worthie is,
And doth deserue to haue small faults remitted;
If Hell at least things lightly done amis
Knew how to pardon, when ought is omitted:
Yet are ye both receiued into blis,
And to the seates of happie soules admitted.
And you, beside the honourable band
Of great heroes doo in order stand.

There be the two stout sonnes of Aeacus,
Fierce Peleus, and the hardie Telamon.
Both seeming now full glad and ioyeous
Through their Syres dreadfull iurisdiction,
Being the Iudge of all that horrid hous:
And both of them by strange occasion,
Renown'd in choyce of happie marriage
Through Venus grace, and vertues cariage.

For th'one was raiisht of his owne bondmaide,
The faire Ixione captiu'd from Troy:
But th' other was with Thetis loue assaid,
Great Nereus his daughter, and his ioy.
On this side them there is a yongman layd,
Their match in glorie, mightie, fierce and coy;
That from th' Argolick ships, with furious yre,
Bett back the furie of the Troian fyre.

O who would not recount the strong diuorces
Of that great warre, which Troianes oft behelde,
And oft beheld the warlike Greekish forces,
When Teucrian soyle with bloodie riuers swelde,
And wide Sigean shores were spred with corses,
And Simois and Xanthus blood out welde,
Whilst Hector raged with outragious minde,
Flames, weapons, wounds, in Greeks fleete to haue tynde.

For Ida selfe, in ayde of that fierce fight,
Out of her mountaines ministred supplies,
And like a kindly nourse, did yeeld (for spight)
Store of firebronds out of her nourseries,

Vnto her foster children that they might
Inflame the Nauie of their enemies,
And all the Rhœtean shore to ashes turne,
Where lay the ships, which they did seeke to burne.

Gainst which the noble sonne of Telamon
Opposd' himselfe, and thwarting his huge shield,
Them battell bad, gainst whom appeared anon
Hector, the glorie of the Troian field:
Both fierce and furious in contention
Encountred, that their mightie strokes so shrild,
As the great clap of thunder, which doth ryue
The ratling heauens, and cloudes asunder dryue.

So th' one with fire and weapons did contend
To cut the ships, from turning home againe
To Argos, th' other stroue for to defend
The force of Vulcane with his might and maine.
Thus th'one Aecide did his fame extend:
But th' other ioy'd, that on the Phrygian playne
Hauing the blood of vanquisht Hector shedd,
He compast Troy thrice with his bodie dedd.

Againe great dole on either partie grewe,
That him to death vnfaithfull Paris sent,
And also him that false Vlysses slewe,
Drawne into danger through close ambushment:
Therefore from him Laërtes sonne his vewe
Doth turne aside, and boasts his good euent
In working of Strymonian Rhœsus fall,
And efte in Dolonsslye surprysall.

Againe the dreadfull Cycones him dismay,
And blacke Læstrigones, a people stout:
Then greedie Scilla, vnder whom there bay
Manie great bandogs, which her gird about:
Then doo the Aetnean Cyclops him affray,
And deep Charybdis gulphing in and out:
Lastly the squalid lakes of Tartarie,
And griesly Feends of hell him terrifie.

There also goodly Agamemnon bosts,

The glorie of the stock of Tantalus,
And famous light of all the Greekish hosts,
Vnder whose conduct most victorious,
The Dorick flames consum'd the Iliack posts.
Ah but the Greekes themselues more dolorous,
To thee, Æ' Troy, paid penance for thy fall,
In th' Hellespont being nigh drowned all.

Well may appeare by proofe of their mischaunce,
The changefull turning of mens slipperie state,
That none, whom fortune freely doth aduance,
Himselfe therefore to heauen should eleuate:
For loftie type of honour through the glaunce
Of enuies dart, is downe in dust prostrate;
And all that vaunts in worldly vanitie,
Shall fall through fortunes mutabilitie.

Th' Argolicke power returning home againe,
Enricht with spoyes of th' Erichonian towre,
Did happie winde and weather entertaine,
And with good speed the fomie billowes scowre:
No signe of storme, no feare of future paine,
Which soone ensued them with heaueie stowre.
Nere Æ's to the Seas a token gaue,
The whiles their crooked keeles the surges claue.

Suddenly, whether through the Gods decree,
Or haplesse rising of some froward starre,
The heauens on euerie side enclowded bee:
Black stormes and fogs are blowen vp from farre,
That now the Pylote can no loadstarre see,
But skies and seas doo make most dreadfull warre;
The billowes striuing to the heauens to reach,
And th' heauens striuing them for to impeach.

And in auengement of their bold attempt,
Both Sun and starres and all the heauenly powres
Conspire in one to wreake their rash contempt,
And downe on them to fall from highest towres:
The skie in pieces seeming to be rent,
Throwes lightning forth, & haile, & harmful showres
That death on euerie side to them appeares

In thousand formes, to worke more ghastly feares.

Some in the greedie flouds are sunke and drent,
Some on the rocks of Caphareus are throwne;
Some on th' Euboick Cliffs in pieces rent;
Some scattred on the HercŃan shores vnknowne;
And manie lost, of whom no monument
Remaines,
nor memorie is to be showne:
Whilst all the purchase of the Phrigan pray
Tost on salt billowes, round about doth stray.

Here manie other like HeroŃs bee,
Equall in honour to the former crue,
Whom ye in goodly seates may placed see,
Descended all from Rome by linage due,
From Rome, that holds the world in souereigntie,
And doth all Nations vnto her subdue:
Here Fabij and Decij doo dwell,
Horatij that in vertue did excell.

And here the antique fame of stout Camill
Doth euer liue, and constant Curtius,
Who stifly bent his vowed life to spill
For Countreyes health, a gulph most hideous
Amidst the Towe with his owne corps did fill,
T' appease the powers; and prudent Mutius,
Who in his flesh endur'd the scorching flame,
To daunt his foe by ensample of the same.

And here wise Curius, companion
Of noble vertues, liues in endles rest;
And stout Flaminius, whose deuotion
Taught him the fires scorn'd furie to detest;
And here the praise of either Scipion
Abides in highest place aboue the best,
To whom the ruin'd walls of Carthage vow'd,
Trembling their forces, sound their praises lowd.

Liue they for euer through their lasting praise:
But I poore wretch am forced to retourne
To the sad lakes, that Phoebus sunnie rayes

Doo neuer see, where soules doo alwaies mourne,
And by the wayling shores to waste my dayes,
Where Phlegeton with quenchles flames doth burne;
By which iust Minos righteous soules doth seuer
From wicked ones, to liue in blisse for euer.

Me therefore thus the cruell fiends of hell
Girt with long snakes, and thousand yron chaynes,
Through doome of that their cruell Iudge, compell
With bitter torture and impatient paines,
Cause of my death, and iust complaint to tell.
For thou art he, whom my poore ghost complaines
To be the author of her ill vnwares,
That careles hear'st my intollerable cares.

Them therefore as bequeathing to the winde,
I now depart, returning to thee neuer,
And leaue this lamentable plaint behinde.
But doo thou haunt the soft downe rolling riuer,
And wilde greene woods, and fruitful pastures minde,
And let the flitting aire my vaine words seuer.
Thus hauing said, he heauily departed
With piteous crie, that anie would haue smarted.

Now, when the sloathful fit of lifes sweete rest
Had left the heauie Shepheard, wondrous cares
His inly griued minde full sore opprest;
That balefull sorrow he no longer beares,
For that Gnats death, which deeply was imprest:
But bends what euer power his aged yeares
Him lent, yet being such, as through their might
He lately slue his dreadfull foe in fight.

By that same Riuer lurking vnder greene,
Eftsoones he gins to fashion forth a place,
And squaring it in compasse well beseene,
There plotteth out a tombe by measured space:
His yron headed spade tho making cleene,
To dig vp sods out of the flowrie grasse,
His worke he shortly to good purpose brought,
Like as he had conceiu'd it in his thought.

An heape of earth he hoorded vp on hie,
Enclosing it with banks on euerie side,
And thereupon did raise full busily
A little mount, of greene turffs edifide;
And on the top of all, that passers by
Might it behold, the toomb he did provide
Of smoothest marble stone in order set,
That neuer might his luckie scape forget.

And round about he taugt sweete flowres to growe,
The Rose engrained in pure scarlet die,
The Lilly fresh, and Violet belowe,
The Marigolde, and cherefull Rosemarie,
The Spartan Mirtle, whence sweet gumb does flowe,
The purple Hyacinthe, and fresh Costmarie,
And Saffron sought for in Cilician soyle,
And Lawrell th' ornament of Phoebus toyle.

Fresh Rhododaphne, and the Sabine flowre
Matching the wealth of th' auncient Frankincence,
And pallid Yuie, building of his owne bowre,
And Box yet mindfull of his olde offence,
Red Amaranthus, lucklesse Paramour,
Oxeye still greene, and bitter Patience;
Ne wants there pale Narcisse, that in a well
Seeing his beautie, in loue with it fell,

And whatsoever other flowre of worth,
And whatso other hearb of louely hew
The iouyous Spring out of the ground brings forth,
To cloath her selfe in colours fresh and new;
He planted there, and reard a mount of earth,
In whose high front was writ as doth ensue.

To thee, small Gnat, in lieu of his life saued,
The Shepheard hath thy deaths record engraued.

Edmund Spenser

Visions Of The Worlds Vanitie.

One day, whiles that my daylie cares did sleepe,
My spirit, shaking off her earthly prison,
Began to enter into meditation deepe
Of things exceeding reach of common reason;
Such as this age, in which all good is geason,
And all that humble is and meane debaced,
Hath brought forth in her last declining season,
Griefe of good mindes, to see goodnesse disgraced.
On which when as my thought was throughly placed,
Vnto my eyes strange showes presented were,
Picturing that, which I in minde embraced,
That yet those sights empassion me full nere.
Such as they were (faire Ladie) take in worth,
That when time serues, may bring things better forth.

2

In Summers day, when Phoebus fairly shone,
I saw a Bull as white as driuen snowe,
With gilden hornes embowed like the Moone,
In a fresh flowring meadow lying lowe:
Vp to his eares the verdant grasse did growe,
And the gay floures did offer to be eaten;
But he with fatnes so did ouerflowe,
That he all wallowed in the weedes downe beaten,
Ne car'd with them his daintie lips to sweeten:
Till that a Brize, a scorned little creature,
Through his faire hide his angrie sting did threaten,
And vext so sore, that all his goodly feature,
And all his plenteous pasture nought him pleased:
So by the small the great is oft diseased.

3

Beside the fruitfull shore of muddie Nile,
Vpon a sunnie banke outstretched lay
In monstrous length, a mightie Crocodile,
That cram'd with guiltles blood, and greedie pray
Of wretched people trauailing that way,

Thought all things lesse than his disdainfull pride.
I saw a little Bird, cal'd Tedula,
The least of thousands which on earth abide,
That forst this hideous beast to open wide
The greisly gates of his deuouring hell,
And let him feede, as Nature doth prouide,
Vpon his iawes, that with blacke venime swell.
Why then should greatest things the least disdaine,
Sith that so small so mighty can constraine?

4

The kingly Bird, that beares Ioues thunder-clap,
One day did scorne the simple Scarabee,
Proud of his highest seruice, and good hap,
That made all other Foules his thralls to bee:
The silly Flie, that no other redresse did see,
Spide where the Eagle built his towring nest,
And kindling fire within the hollow tree,
Burnt vp his yong ones, and himselfe distrest;
Ne suffred him in anie place to rest,
But droue in Ioues owne lap his eggs to lay;
Where gathering also filth him to infest,
Forst with the filth his eggs to fling away:
For which when as the Foule was wroth, said Ioue,
Lo how the least the greatest may reprove.

5

Toward the sea turning my troubled eye,
I saw the fish (if fish I may it cleepe)
That makes the sea before his face to flye,
And with his flaggie finnes doth seeme to sweepe
The fomie waues out of the dreadfull deep,
The huge Leuiathan, dame Natures wonder,
Making his sport, that manie makes to weep:
A sword-fish small him from the rest did sunder,
That in his throat him pricking softly vnder,
His wide Abyesse him forced forth to spewe,
That all the sea did roare like heauens thunder,
And all the waues were stain'd with filthie hewe.
Hereby I learned haue, not to despise,

What euer thing seemes small in common eyes.

6

An hideous Dragon, dreadfull to behold,
Whose backe was arm'd against the dint of speare
With shields of brasse, that shone like burnisht golde,
And forkhed sting, that death in it did beare,
Stroue with a Spider his vnequall peare:
And bad defiance to his enemye.
The subtill vermin creeping closely neare,
Did in his drinke shed poyson priuily;
Which through his entrailes spredding diuersly,
Made him to swell, that nigh his bowells burst,
And him enforst to yeeld the victorie,
That did so much in his owne greatnesse trust.
O how great vainnesse is it then to scorne
The weake, that hath the strong so oft forlorne.

7

High on a hill a goodly Cedar grewe,
Of wondrous length, and streight proportion,
That farre abroad her daintie odours threwe;
Mongst all the daughters of proud Libanon,
Her match in beautie was not anie one.
Shortly within her inmost pith there bred
A litle wicked worme, perceiue'd of none,
That on her sap and vitall moysture fed:
Thenceforth her garland so much honoured
Began to die, (O great ruth for the same)
And her faire lockes fell from her loftie head,
That shortly balde, and bared she became.
I, which this sight beheld, was much dismayed,
To see so goodly thing so soone decayed.

8

Soone after this I saw an Elephant,
Adorn'd with bells and bosses gorgeouslie,
That on his backe did beare (as batteilant)
A gilden towre, which shone exceedinglie;

That he himselfe through foolish vanitie,
Both for his rich attire, and goodly forme,
Was puffed vp with passing surquedrie,
And shortly gan all other beasts to scorne,
Till that a little Ant, a silly worme,
Into his nostrils creeping, so him pained,
That casting downe his towres, he did deforme
Both borrowed pride, and natiue beautie stained.
Let therefore nought that great is, therein glorie,
Sith so small thing his happines may varie.

9

Looking far fourth into the Ocean wide,
A goodly ship with banners brauely dight,
And flag in her top-gallant I espide,
Through the maine sea making her merry flight:
Faire blew the winde into her bosome right;
And th' heauens looked louely all the while,
That she did seeme to daunce, as in delight,
And at her owne felicitie did smile.
All sodainely there cloue vnto her keele
A little fish, that men call Remora,
Which stopt her course, and held her by the heele,
That winde nor tide could moue her thence away.
Straunge thing me seemeth, that so small a thing
Should able be so great an one to wring.

10

A mighty Lyon, Lord of all the wood,
Hauing his hunger throughly satisfide,
With pray of beasts, and spoyle of liuing blood,
Safe in his dreadles den him thought to hide:
His sternesse was his prayse, his strength his pride,
And all his glory in his cruell clawes.
I saw a wasp, that fiecely him defide,
And bad him battaile euen to his iawes;
Sore he him stong, that it the blood forth drawes,
And his proude heart is fild with fretting ire:
In vaine he threats his teeth, his tayle, his pawes,
And from his bloodie eyes doth sparkle fire;

That dead himselfe he wisheth for despight.
So weakest may anoy the most of might.

11

What time the Romaine Empire bore the raine
Of all the world, and florisht most in might,
The nations gan their soueraigntie disdaine,
And cast to quitt them from their bondage quight:
So when all shrouded were in silent night,
The Galles were, by corrupting of a mayde,
Possest nigh of the Capitol through slight,
Had not a Goose the treachery bewrayde.
If then a Goose great Rome from ruine stayde,
And Ioue himselfe, the patron of the place,
Preserud from being to his foes betrayde,
Why do vaine men mean things so much deface,
And in their might repose their most assurance,
Sith nought on earth can challenge long endurance?

12

When these sad sights were ouerpast and gone,
My spright was greatly moued in her rest,
With inward ruth and deare affection,
To see so great things by so small distrest:
Thenceforth I gan in my engrieued brest
To scorne all difference of great and small,
Sith that the greatest often are opprest,
And vnawares doe into daunger fall.
And ye, that read these ruines tragicall
Learne by their losse to loue the low degree,
And if that fortune chaunce you vp to call
To honours seat, forget not what you be:
For he that of himselfe is most secure,
Shall finde his state most fickle and vnsure.

Edmund Spenser

Whilst It Is Prime

FRESH Spring, the herald of loves mighty king,
In whose cote-armour richly are displayd
All sorts of flowers, the which on earth do spring,
In goodly colours gloriously arrayd--
Goe to my love, where she is carelesse layd,
Yet in her winters bowre not well awake;
Tell her the joyous time wil not be staid,
Unlesse she doe him by the forelock take;
Bid her therefore her selfe soone ready make,
To wayt on Love amongst his lovely crew;
Where every one, that misseth then her make,
Shall be by him amearst with penance dew.
 Make hast, therefore, sweet love, whilst it is prime;
 For none can call againe the passed time.

Edmund Spenser