

Classic Poetry Series

Sir Philip Sidney
- poems -

Publication Date:

2004

Publisher:

Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Sir Philip Sidney(1554 - 1586)

Sir Philip Sidney was born at Penshurst Place, Kent, eldest son of Sir Henry Sidney. He entered Shrewsbury School in 1564 on the same day as Fulke Greville, his friend and biographer. After attending Christ Church, Oxford (1568-72), he travelled in Europe where for three years he perfected his knowledge of Latin, French and Italian. In 1577, aged twenty-two, he was sent as ambassador to the German Emperor and the Prince of Orange.

His strong Protestant sympathies made him advise Elizabeth I in a private letter (1579) against marrying the Duke of Anjou, Roman Catholic heir to the French throne. He was knighted in 1583 and became Member of Parliament for Kent in 1581 and 1584-85. In 1585 he was appointed joint master of the ordnance, the office in charge of the country's military supplies.

A patron of scholars, his wide range of interests accounted for the dedication to him of over forty works of various disciplines. The best-known poet to enjoy his patronage was Spenser who dedicated his *Shepherd's Calendar* to him. Avoiding commercialism, he did not publish his works in his lifetime. He was fighting against the Spaniards in the Netherlands when he received a wound which eventually killed him at the age of thirty-two. All England mourned this courtier and statesman who had embodied the Elizabethan ideal of virtue.

A Ditty

My true-love hath my heart, and I have his,
By just exchange one to the other given:
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss,
There never was a better bargain driven:
My true-love hath my heart, and I have his.

His heart in me keeps him and me in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides:
He loves my heart, for once it was his own,
I cherish his because in me it bides:
My true-love hath my heart, and I have his.

Sir Philip Sidney

Astrophel And Stella Lxxxiv: Highway

Highway, since you my chief Parnassus be,
And that my Muse, to some ears not unsweet,
Tempers her words to trampling horses' feet
More oft than to a chamber melody.
Now, blessed you bear onward blessed me
To her, where I my heart, safe-left, shall meet:
My Muse and I must you of duty greet
With thanks and wishes, wishing thankfully.
Be you still fair, honour'd by public heed;
By no encroachment wrong'd, nor time forgot,
Nor blam'd for blood, nor sham'd for sinful deed;
And that you know I envy you no lot
Of highest wish, I wish you so much bliss,--
Hundreds of years you Stella's feet may kiss.

Sir Philip Sidney

Astrophel And Stella Vii: Whennature Made Her Chief Work

When Nature made her chief work, Stella's eyes,
In colour black why wrapt she beams so bright?
Would she in beamy black, like painter wise,
Frame daintiest lustre, mix'd of shades and light?
Or did she else that sober hue devise,
In object best to knit and strength our sight;
Lest, if no veil these brave gleams did disguise,
They, sunlike, should more dazzle than delight?
Or would she her miraculous power show,
That, whereas black seems beauty's contrary,
She even in black doth make all beauties flow?
Both so, and thus,--she, minding Love should be
Plac'd ever there, gave him this mourning weed
To honour all their deaths who for her bleed.

Sir Philip Sidney

Astrophel And Stella: I

ASTROPHEL AND STELLA: I

Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show,
That she, dear she, might take some pleasure of my pain,--
Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her know,
Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain,--
I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe;
Studying inventions fine her wits to entertain,
Oft turning others' leaves, to see if thence would flow
Some fresh and fruitful showers upon my sunburn'd brain.
But words came halting forth, wanting invention's stay;
Invention, Nature's child, fled step-dame Study's blows;
And others' feet still seem'd but strangers in my way.
Thus great with child to speak and helpless in my throes,
Biting my truant pen, beating myself for spite,
"Fool," said my Muse to me, "look in thy heart, and write."

Sir Philip Sidney

Astrophel And Stella: Iii

Let dainty wits cry on the sisters nine,
That, bravely mask'd, their fancies may be told;
Or, Pindar's apes, flaunt they in phrases fine,
Enam'ling with pied flowers their thoughts of gold.
Or else let them in statelier glory shine,
Ennobling newfound tropes with problems old;
Or with strange similes enrich each line,
Of herbs or beasts which Ind or Afric hold.
For me, in sooth, no Muse but one I know;
Phrases and problems from my reach do grow,
And strange things cost too dear for my poor sprites.
How then? even thus: in Stella's face I read
What love and beauty be; then all my deed
But copying is, what in her Nature writes.

Sir Philip Sidney

Astrophel And Stella: Lxiv

No more, my dear, no more these counsels try;
Oh, give my passions leave to run their race;
Let Fortune lay on me her worst disgrace;
Let folk o'ercharg'd with brain against me cry;
Let clouds bedim my face, break in mine eye;
Let me no steps but of lost labour trace;
Let all the earth with scorn recount my case,
But do not will me from my love to fly.
I do not envy Aristotle's wit,
Nor do aspire to Caesar's bleeding fame;
Nor aught do care though some above me sit;
Nor hope nor wish another course to frame,
But that which once may win thy cruel heart:
Thou art my wit, and thou my virtue art.

Sir Philip Sidney

Astrophel And Stella: Lxxi

Who will in fairest book of nature know
How virtue may best lodg'd in beauty be,
Let him but learn of love to read in thee,
Stella, those fair lines which true goodness show.
There shall he find all vices' overthrow,
Not by rude force, but sweetest sovereignty
Of reason, from whose light those night-birds fly;
That inward sun in thine eyes shineth so.
And, not content to be perfection's heir
Thyself, dost strive all minds that way to move,
Who mark in thee what is in thee most fair.
So while thy beauty draws thy heart to love,
As fast thy virtue bends that love to good:
But "Ah," Desire still cries, "Give me some food!"

Sir Philip Sidney

Astrophel And Stella: Xcii

Be your words made, good sir, of Indian ware,
That you allow me them by so small rate?
Or do you cutted Spartans imitate?
Or do you mean my tender ears to spare,
That to my questions you so total are?
When I demand of Phœnix Stella's state,
You say, forsooth, you left her well of late:
O God, think you that satisfies my care?
I would know whether she did sit or walk;
How cloth'd, how waited on; sigh'd she, or smil'd;
Whereof, with whom, how often did she talk;
With what pastime time's journey she beguiled;
If her lips deign'd to sweeten my poor name.
Say all; and all well said, still say the same.

Sir Philip Sidney

Astrophel And Stella: Xli

Having this day my horse, my hand, my lance
Guided so well that I obtain'd the prize,
Both by the judgment of the English eyes
And of some sent from that sweet enemy France;
Horsemen my skill in horsemanship advance,
Town folks my strength; a daintier judge applies
His praise to sleight which from good use doth rise;
Some lucky wits impute it but to chance;
Others, because of both sides I do take
My blood from them who did excel in this,
Think Nature me a man of arms did make.
How far they shot awry! The true cause is,
Stella look'd on, and from her heav'nly face
Sent forth the beams which made so fair my race.

Sir Philip Sidney

Astrophel And Stella: Xv

You that do search for every purling spring
Which from the ribs of old Parnassus flows,
And every flower, not sweet perhaps, which grows
Near thereabouts, into your poesy wring;
Ye that do dictionary's method bring
Into your rimes, running in rattling rows;
You that poor Petrarch's long-deceased woes
With new-born sighs and denizen'd wit do sing:
You take wrong ways; those far-fet helps be such
As do bewray a want of inward touch,
And sure, at length stol'n goods do come to light.
But if, both for your love and skill, your name
You seek to nurse at fullest breasts of Fame,
Stella behold, and then begin to endite.

Sir Philip Sidney

Astrophel And Stella: Xx

Fly, fly, my friends, I have my death wound, fly!
See there that boy, that murd'ring boy, I say,
Who, like a thief, hid in dark bush doth lie
Till bloody bullet get him wrongful prey.
So tyrant he no fitter place could spy,
Nor so fair level in so secret stay,
As that sweet black which veils the heav'nly eye;
There himself with his shot he close doth lay.
Poor passenger, pass now thereby I did,
And stay'd, pleas'd with the prospect of the place,
While that black hue from me the bad guest hid;
But straight I saw motions of lightning grace
And then descried the glist'ring of his dart:
But ere I could fly thence it pierc'd my heart.

Sir Philip Sidney

Astrophel And Stella: Xxiii

The curious wits, seeing dull pensiveness
Bewray itself in my long-settl'd eyes,
Whence those same fumes of melancholy rise,
With idle pains and missing aim do guess.
Some, that know how my spring I did address,
Deem that my Muse some fruit of knowledge plies;
Others, because the prince my service tries,
Think that I think state errors to redress;
But harder judges judge ambition's rage--
Scourge of itself, still climbing slipp'ry place--
Holds my young brain captiv'd in golden cage.
O fool or over-wise! alas, the race
Of all my thoughts hath neither stop nor start
But only Stella's eyes and Stella's heart.

Sir Philip Sidney

Astrophel And Stella: Xxxi

With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies!
How silently, and with how wan a face!
What, may it be that even in heav'nly place
That busy archer his sharp arrows tries!
Sure, if that long-with love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case,
I read it in thy looks; thy languish'd grace
To me, that feel the like, thy state describes.
Then, ev'n of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
Is constant love deem'd there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be lov'd, and yet
Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?
Do they call virtue there ungratefulness?

Sir Philip Sidney

Astrophel And Stella: Xxxiii

I might!--unhappy word--O me, I might,
And then would not, or could not, see my bliss;
Till now wrapt in a most infernal night,
I find how heav'nly day, wretch! I did miss.
Heart, rend thyself, thou dost thyself but right;
No lovely Paris made thy Helen his,
No force, no fraud robb'd thee of thy delight,
Nor Fortune of thy fortune author is;
But to myself myself did give the blow,
While too much wit, forsooth, so troubled me
That I respects for both our sakes must show:
And yet could not by rising morn foresee
How fair a day was near: O punish'd eyes,
That I had been more foolish,--or more wise!

Sir Philip Sidney

Astrophel And Stella: Xxxix

Come Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
Th' indifferent judge between the high and low.
With shield of proof shield me from out the prease
Of those fierce darts despair at me doth throw:
O make in me those civil wars to cease;
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so.
Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
A chamber deaf to noise and blind to light,
A rosy garland and a weary head:
And if these things, as being thine by right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

Sir Philip Sidney

Astrophel And Stella-Eleventh Song

"Who is it that this dark night
Underneath my window plaineth?"
'It is one who from thy sight
Being, ah! exiled, disdaineth
Every other vulgar light.'

"Why, alas! and are you he?
Be not yet those fancies changed?"
'Dear, when you find change in me,
Though from me you be estranged,
Let my change to ruin be.'

"Well, in absence this will die;
Leave to see, and leave to wonder."
'Absence sure will help, If I
Can learn how myself to sunder
From what in my heart doth lie.'

"But time will these thoughts remove:
Time doth work what no man knoweth."
'Time doth as the subject prove,
With time still the affection groweth
In the faithful turtle dove.'

"What if you new beauties see?
Will not they stir new affection?"
'I will think they pictures be,
Image-like of saint's perfection,
Poorly counterfeiting thee.'

"But your reason's purest light
Bids you leave such minds to nourish."
'Dear, do reason no such spite, —
Never doth thy beauty flourish
More than in my reason's sight.'

"But the wrongs love bears will make
Love at length leave undertaking."
'No, the more fools do it shake

In a ground of so firm making,
Deeper still they drive the stake.'

"Peace! I think that some give ear;
Come no more, lest I get anger."

'Bliss, I will my bliss forbear,
Fearing, sweet, you to endanger;
But my soul shall harbour there.'

Well, begone, begone, I say,
Lest that Argus' eyes perceive you."
'O unjust Fortune's sway,
Which can make me thus to leave you,
And from louts to run away!'

Sir Philip Sidney

Astrophel And Stella-First Song

Doubt you to whom my Muse these notes intendeth,
Which now my breast o'ercharged to music lendeth?
To you, to you, all song of praise is due;
Only in you my song begins and endeth.

Who hath the eyes which marry state with pleasure?
Who keeps the key of Nature's chiefest treasure?
To you, to you, all song of praise is due;
Only for you the heaven forgat all measure.

Who hath the lips where wit in fairness reigneth?
Who womankind at once both decks and staineth?
To you, to you, all song of praise is due;
Only by you Cupid his crown maintaineth.

Who hath the feet whose step all sweetness planteth?
Who else, for whom Fame worthy trumpets wanteth?
To you, to you, all song of praise is due;
Only to you her sceptre Venus granteth.

Who hath the breast whose milk doth passions nourish?
Whose grace is such that when it chides doth cherish?
To you, to you, all song of praise is due;
Only through you the tree of life doth flourish.

Who hath the hand which without stroke subdueth?
Who long-dead beauty with increase reneweth?
To you, to you, all song of praise is due;
Only at you all envy hopeless rueth.

Who hath the hair which, loosest, fastest tieth?
Who makes a man live then glad when he dieth?
To you, to you, all song of praise is due;
Only of you the flatterer never lieth.

Who hath the voice which soul from senses sunders?
Whose force but yours the bolts of beauty thunders?
To you, to you, all song of praise is due;

Only with you not miracles are wonders.

Doubt you to whom my Muse these notes intendeth,
Which now my breast o'ercharged to music lendeth?
To you, to you, all song of praise is due;
Only in you my song begins and endeth.

Sir Philip Sidney

Astrophel And Stella-Sonnet Liv

Because I breathe not love to every one,
Nor do not use set colours for to wear,
Nor nourish special locks of vowed hair,
Nor give each speech a full point of a groan,
The courtly nymphs, acquainted with the moan
Of them who in their lips Love's standard bear,
"What, he!" say they of me, "now I dare swear
He cannot love. No, no, let him alone."—
And think so still, so Stella know my mind!
Profess indeed I do not Cupid's art;
But you, fair maids, at length this true shall find,
That his right badge is worn but in the heart.
Dumb swans, not chattering pies, do lovers prove:
They love indeed who quake to say they love.

Sir Philip Sidney

Astrophel And Stella-Sonnet Xxxi

With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies!
How silently, and with how wan a face!
What! may it be that even in heavenly place
That busy archer his sharp arrows tries?
Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case:
I read it in thy looks; thy languished grace,
To me that feel the like, thy state describes.
Then even of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
Is constant love deemed there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be loved, and yet
Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?
Do they call virtue there ungratefulness?

Sir Philip Sidney

Come Sleep, O Sleep! The Certain Knot Of Peace

Come, Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
Th' indifferent judge between the high and low;
With shield of proof shield me from out the press
Of those fierce darts Despair at me doth throw!
O make in me those civil wars to cease!—
I will good tribute pay if thou do so.
Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
A chamber deaf of noise and blind of light,
A rosy garland, and a weary head;
And if these things, as being thine in right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

Sir Philip Sidney

Leave Me, O Love Which Reachest But To Dust

Leave me, O love which reachest but to dust,
And thou, my mind, aspire to higher things;
Grow rich in that which never taketh rust:
Whatever fades but fading pleasure brings.
Draw in thy beams, and humble all thy might
To that sweet yoke where lasting freedoms be,
Which breaks the clouds and opens forth the light
That doth both shine and give us sight to see.
O, take fast hold; let that light be thy guide
In this small course which birth draws out to death,
And think how evil becometh him to slide
Who seeketh heaven, and comes of heavenly breath.
Then farewell, world! thy uttermost I see:
Eternal Love, maintain thy life in me.

Sir Philip Sidney

Leave Me, O Love, Which Reachest But To Dust

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

Draw in thy beams, and humble all thy might,
To that sweet yoke, where lasting freedoms be:
Which breaks the clouds and opens forth the light,
That doth both shine and give us sight to see.

O take fast hold, let that light be thy guide,
In this small course which birth draws out to death,
And think how evil becometh him to slide,
Who seeketh heaven, and comes of heavenly breath.
Then farewell world, thy uttermost I see,
Eternal Love, maintain thy life in me.

Sir Philip Sidney

Loving In Truth, And Fain In Verse My Love To Show

Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show,
That She, dear She, might take some pleasure of my pain,
—Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her know,
Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain—
I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe,
Studying inventions fine, her wits to entertain,
Oft turning others' leaves, to see if thence would flow
Some fresh and fruitful showers upon my sunburnt brain.
But words came halting forth, wanting Invention's stay;
Invention, Nature's child, fled step-dame Study's blows;
And others' feet still seemed but strangers in my way.
Thus, great with child to speak, and helpless in my throes,
Biting my truant pen, beating myself for spite—
"Fool!" said my Muse to me "look in thy heart, and write!"

Sir Philip Sidney

My True Love Hath My Heart, And I Have His

My true-love hath my heart, and I have his,
By just exchange, one for the other giv'n.
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss;
There never was a better bargain driv'n.
His heart in me keeps me and him in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides;
He loves my heart, for once it was his own;
I cherish his, because in me it bides.
His heart his wound received from my sight:
My heart was wounded with his wounded heart;
For as from me, on him his hurt did light,
So still me thought in me his hurt did smart:
Both equal hurt, in this change sought our bliss:
My true love hath my heart and I have his.

Sir Philip Sidney

Philomela

The Nightingale, as soon as April bringeth
Unto her rested sense a perfect waking,
While late-bare Earth, proud of new clothing, springeth,
Sings out her woes, a thorn her song-book making;
And mournfully bewailing,
Her throat in tunes expresseth
What grief her breast oppreseth,
For Tereus' force on her chaste will prevailing.
O Philomela fair, O take some gladness
That here is juster cause of plaintful sadness!
Thine earth now springs, mine fadeth;
Thy thorn without, my thorn my heart invadeth.

Alas! she hath no other cause of anguish
But Tereus' love, on her by strong hand wroken;
Wherein she suffering, all her spirits languish,
Full womanlike complains her will was broken
But I, who, daily craving,
Cannot have to content me,
Have more cause to lament me,
Since wanting is more woe than too much having.

O Philomela fair, O take some gladness
That here is juster cause of plaintful sadness!
Thine earth now springs, mine fadeth;
Thy thorn without, my thorn my heart invadeth.

Sir Philip Sidney

Psalm 139

O Lord in me there lieth nought
But to thy search revealed lies;
For when I sit
Thou markest it:
Nor less thou notest when I rise:
Yea, closest closet of my thought
Hath open windows to thine eyes.

Thou walkest with me when I walk;
When to my bed for rest I go,
I find thee there,
And everywhere,
Not youngest thought in me doth grow,
No, not one word I cast to talk
But, yet unuttered, thou dost know.

If forth I march, thou goest before;
If back I turn, thou com'st behind;
So forth nor back
Thy guard I lack;
Nay, on me too thy hand I find.
Well I thy wisdom may adore,
But never reach with earthly mind.

To shun thy notice, leave thine eye,
O whither might I take my way?
To starry sphere?
Thy throne is there:
To dead men's undelightsome stay?
There is thy walk, and there to lie
Unknown, in vain should I assay.

O sun, whom light nor flight can match!
Suppose thy lightful flightful wings
Thou lend to me,
And I could flee
As far as thee the evening brings:
Even led to west he would me catch
Nor should I lurk with western things.

Do thou thy best, O secret night!
In sable veil to cover me:
Thy sable veil
Shall vainly fail:
With day unmasked my night shall be,
For night is day, and darkness light,
O Father of all lights, to thee.

Sir Philip Sidney

Psalm 19: Coeli Enarrant

The heavenly frame sets forth the fame
Of him that only thunders;
The firmament, so strangely bent,
Shows his handworking wonders.

Day unto day doth it display,
Their course doth it acknowledge,
And night to night succeeding right
In darkness teach clear knowledge.

There is no speech, no language which
Is so of skill bereaved,
But of the skies the teaching cries
They have heard and conceived.

There be no eyen but read the line
From so fair book proceeding,
Their words be set in letters great
For everybody's reading.

Is not he blind that doth not find
The tabernacle builded
There by His Grace for sun's fair face
In beams of beauty gilded?

Who forth doth come, like a bridegroom,
From out his veiling places,
As glad is he, as giants be
To run their mighty races.

His race is even from ends of heaven;
About that vault he goeth;
There be no realms hid from his beams;
His heat to all he throweth.

O law of His, how perfect 'tis
The very soul amending;
God's witness sure for aye doth dure
To simplest wisdom lending.

God's dooms be right, and cheer the sprite,
All His commandments being
So purely wise it gives the eyes
Both light and force of seeing.

Of Him the fear doth cleanness bear
And so endures forever,
His judgments be self verity,
They are unrighteous never.

Then what man would so soon seek gold
Or glittering golden money?
By them is past in sweetest taste,
Honey or comb of honey.

By them is made Thy servants' trade
Most circumspectly guarded,
And who doth frame to keep the same
Shall fully be rewarded.

Who is the man that ever can
His faults know and acknowledge?
O Lord, cleanse me from faults that be
Most secret from all knowledge.

Thy servant keep, lest in him creep
Presumptuous sins' offenses;
Let them not have me for their slave
Nor reign upon my senses.

So shall my sprite be still upright
In thought and conversation,
So shall I bide well purified
From much abomination.

So let words sprung from my weak tongue
And my heart's meditation,
My saving might, Lord, in Thy sight,
Receive good acceptation!

Psalm 23

The Lord, the Lord, my Shepherd is,
And so can never I
Taste misery:
He rests me in green pastures His:
By waters still and sweet,
He guides my feet.

He me revives; leads me the way
Which righteousness doth take,
For his name's sake:
Yea, though I should through valleys stray
Of death's dark shade, I will
No whit fear ill.

For Thou, dear Lord, Thou me besettest
Thy rod and thy staff be
To comfort me:
Before me Thou a table settest,
Even when foe's envious eye
Doth it espy.

Thou oilst my head, Thou fillest my cup;
Nay more, Thou endless good,
Shalt give me food.
To Thee, I say, ascended up,
Where Thou, the Lord of all,
Dost hold thy hall.

Sir Philip Sidney

Psalm 93

Clothed with state, and girt with might,
Monarch-like Jehovah reigns,
He who earth's foundation pight -
Pight at first, and yet sustains;
He whose stable throne disdains
Motions shock and age's flight;
He who endless one remains
One, the same, in changeless plight.

Rivers, - yea though the rivers roar,
Roaring though sea-billows rise,
Vex the deep, and break the shore, -
Stronger art thou, Lord of skies!
Firm and true thy promise lies
Now and still as heretofore:
Holy worship never dies
In thy house where we adore.

Sir Philip Sidney

Ring Out Your Bells

Ring out your bells, let mourning shows be spread;
For Love is dead--
All love is dead, infected
With plague of deep disdain;
Worth, as nought worth, rejected,
And Faith fair scorn doth gain.
From so ungrateful fancy,
From such a female franzy,
From them that use men thus,
Good Lord, deliver us!

Weep, neighbours, weep; do you not hear it said
That Love is dead?
His death-bed, peacock's folly;
His winding-sheet is shame;
His will, false-seeming holy;
His sole exec'tor, blame.
From so ungrateful fancy,
From such a female franzy,
From them that use men thus,
Good Lord, deliver us!

Let dirge be sung and trentals rightly read,
For Love is dead;
Sir Wrong his tomb ordaineth
My mistress' marble heart,
Which epitaph containeth,
"Her eyes were once his dart."
From so ungrateful fancy,
From such a female franzy,
From them that use men thus,
Good Lord, deliver us!

Alas, I lie, rage hath this error bred;
Love is not dead;
Love is not dead, but sleepeth
In her unmatched mind,
Where she his counsel keepeth,
Till due desert she find.

Therefore from so vile fancy,
To call such wit a franzy,
Who Love can temper thus,
Good Lord, deliver us!

Sir Philip Sidney

Sleep

Come Sleep; O Sleep! the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
Th' indifferent judge between the high and low;
With shield of proof shield me from out the prease
Of those fierce darts Despair at me doth throw:
O make in me those civil wars to cease;
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so.
Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
A chamber deaf to noise and blind of light,
A rosy garland and a weary head;
And if these things, as being thine by right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

Sir Philip Sidney

Song

Who hath his fancy pleased
With fruits of happy sight,
Let here his eyes be raised
On Nature's sweetest light;
A light which doth dissever
And yet unite the eyes,
A light which, dying never,
Is cause the looker dies.

She never dies, but lasteth
In life of lover's heart;
He ever dies that wasteth
In love his chiefest part:
Thus is her life still guarded
In never-dying faith;
Thus is his death rewarded,
Since she lives in his death.

Look then, and die! The pleasure
Doth answer well the pain:
Small loss of mortal treasure,
Who may immortal gain!
Immortal be her graces,
Immortal is her mind;
They, fit for heavenly places--
This, heaven in it doth bind.

But eyes these beauties see not,
Nor sense that grace descries;
Yet eyes deprived be not
From sight of her fair eyes--
Which, as of inward glory
They are the outward seal,
So may they live still sorry,
Which die not in that weal.

But who hath fancies pleased
With fruits of happy sight,
Let here his eyes be raised

On Nature's sweetest light!

Sir Philip Sidney

Song From Arcadia

My true love hath my heart, and I have his,
By Just Exchange, one for the other given.
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss,
There never was a better bargain driven.
His heart in me keeps me and him in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides;
He loves my heart, for once it was his own,
I cherish his, because in me it bides.
His heart his wound received from my sight,
My heart was wounded with his wounded heart;
For as from me on him his hurt did light,
So still methought in me his hurt did smart.
Both equal hurt, in his change sought our bliss;
My true love hath my heart and I have his.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 10: Reason

Reason, in faith thou art well serv'd, that still
Wouldst brabbling be with sense and love in me:
I rather wish'd thee climb the Muses' hill,
Or reach the fruit of Nature's choicest tree,

Or seek heav'n's course, or heav'n's inside to see:
Why shouldst thou toil our thorny soil to till?
Leave sense, and those which sense's objects be:
Deal thou with powers of thoughts, leave love to will.

But thou wouldst needs fight both with love and sense,
With sword of wit, giving wounds of dispraise,
Till downright blows did foil thy cunning fence:

For soon as they strake thee with Stella's rays,
Reason thou kneel'dst, and offeredst straight to prove
By reason good, good reason her to love.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 100: Oh Tears, No Tears

Oh tears, no tears, but rain from Beauty's skies,
Making those lilies and those roses grow,
Which aye most fair, now more than most fair show,
While graceful Pity Beauty beautifies.

Oh honeyed sighs, which from that breast do rise,
Whose pants do make unspilling cream to flow,
Wing'd with whose breath, so pleasing zephyrs blow
As can refresh the hell where my soul fries.

Oh plaints conserv'd in such a sugar'd phrase
That Eloquence itself envies your praise
While sobb'd-out words a perfect music give.

Such tears, sighs, plaints, no sorrow is but joy:
Or if such heav'nly signs must prove annoy,
All mirth farewell, let me in sorrow live.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 101: Stella Is Sick

Stella is sick, and in that sickbed lies
Sweetness, which breathes and pants as oft as she:
And Grace, sick too, such fine conclusions tries
That Sickness brags itself best grac'd to be.

Beauty is sick, but sick in so fair guise
That is that paleness Beauty's white we see,
And Joy, which is inseparate from those eyes,
Stella now learns (strange case) to weep in thee.

Love moves thy pain, and like a faithful page,
As thy looks stir, runs up and down to make
All folks press'd at thy will thy pain t'assuage.

Nature with care sweats for her darling's sake,
Knowing worlds pass, ere she enough can find
Of such heav'n stuff, to clothe so heav'nly mind.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 102: Wher Be Those Roses Gone

Where be those roses gone, which sweeten'd so our eyes?
Where those red cheeks, which oft with fair increase did frame
The height of honor in the kindly badge of shame?
Who hath the crimson weeds stol'n from my morning skies?

How did the color fade of those vermilion dyes
Which Nature self did make, and self engrain'd the same?
I would know by what right this paleness overcame
That hue, whose force my heart still unto thraldom ties.

Galen's adoptive sons, who by a beaten way
Their judgments hackney on, the fault of sickness lay,
But feeling proof makes me say they mistake it furre:

It is but Love, which makes his paper perfect white
To write therein more fresh the story of delight,
While Beauty's reddest ink Venus for him doth stir.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 103: Oh Happy Thames

Oh happy Thames, that didst my Stella bear,
I saw thyself with many a smiling line
Upon thy cheerful face, Joy's livery wear,
While those fair planets on thy streams did shine.

The boat for joy could not to dance forbear,
While wanton winds with beauties so divine
Ravish'd, stay'd not, till in her golden hair
They did themselves (oh sweetest prison) twine.

And fain those Aeol's youth there would their stay
Have mde, but, forc'd by Nature still to fly,
First did with puffing kiss those locks display:

She so dishevel'd, blush'd; from window I
With sight thereof cried out; oh fair disgrace,
Let Honor self to thee grant highest place.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 104: Envious Wits

Envious wits, what hath been mine offense,
That with such poisonous care my looks you mark,
That to each word, nay sigh of mine you hark,
As grudging me my sorrow's eloquence?

Ah, is it not enough that I am thence?
Thence, so far thence, that scarcely any spark
Of comfort dare come to this dungeon dark,
Where rigorous exile locks up all my sense?

But if I by a happy window pass,
If I but stars upon mine armor bear
--Sick, thirsty, glad (though but of empty glass):

Your moral notes straight my hid meaning tear
From out my ribs, and puffing prove that I
Do Stella love. Fools, who doth it deny?

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 105: Unhappy Sight

Unhappy sight, and hath she vanish'd by
So near, in so good time, so free a place?
Dead glass, dost thou thy object so embrace,
As what my heart still sees thou canst not spy?

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

But cease, mine eyes; your tears do witness well
That you, guiltless thereof, your nectar miss'd:
Curs'd be the page from whom the bad torch fell.

Curs'd be the night which did your strife resist,
Curs'd be the coachman which did drive so fast,
With no worse curse than absence makes me taste.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 106: Oh Absent Presence

Oh absent presence, Stella is not here;
False flattering Hope, that with so fair a face
Bare me in hand, that in this orphan place,
Stella, I say my Stella, should appear:

What sayest thou now? Where is that dainty cheer
Thou toldst mine eyes should help their famish'd case?
But thou art gone, now that self felt disgrace
Doth make me most to wish my comfort near.

But here I do store of fair ladies meet,
Who may with charm of conversation sweet
Make in my heavy mold new thought to grow:

Sure they prevail as much with me as he
That bade his friend, but then new maim'd, to be
Merry with him, and not think of his woe.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 107: Stella, Since Thou So Right

Stella, since thou so right a princess art
Of all the powers which life bestows on me,
That ere by them aught undertaken be
They first resort unto that sovereign part;

Sweet, for a while give respite to my heart,
Which pants as though it still should leap to thee,
And on my thoughts give thy lieutenancy
To this great cause, which needs both use and art.

And as a queen, who from her presence sends
Whom she employs, dismiss from thee my wit,
Till it have wrought what thy own will attends.

On servant's shame oft master's blame doth sit;
Oh let not fools in me thy works reprove,
And scorning say, 'See what it is to love.'

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 108: When Sorrow

When sorrow (using mine own fire's might)
Melts down his lead into my boiling breast;
Through that dark furnace to my heart oppress'd
There shines a joy from thee, my only light;

But soon as thought of thee breeds my delight,
And my young soul flutters to thee his nest,
Most rude despair, my daily unbidden guest,
Clips straight my wings, straight wraps me in his night,

And makes me then bow down my head and say,
'Ah, what doth Phoebus' gold that wretch avail
Whom iron doors do keep from use of day?'

So strangely (alas) thy works in me prevail,
That in my woes for thee thou art my joy,
And in my joys for thee my only annoy.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 32: Morpheus The Lively Son

Morpheus the lively son of deadly sleep,
Witness of life to them that living die,
A prophet oft, and oft an history,
A poet eke, as humors fly or creep,

Since thou in me so sure a power dost keep,
That never I with clos'd-up sense do lie,
But by thy work my Stella I descry,
Teaching blind eyes both how to smile and weep;

Vouchsafe of all acquaintance this to tell:
Whence hast thou ivory, rubies, pearl and gold,
To show her skin, lips, teeth, and head so well?

'Fool,' answers he, 'no Indies such treasures hold,
But from thy heart, while my sire charmeth thee,
Sweet Stella's image I do steal to me.'

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 34: Come Let Me Write

Come, let me write. 'And to what end?' To ease
A burthen'd heart. 'How can words ease, which are
The glasses of thy daily vexing care?'
Oft cruel fights well pictur'd forth do please.

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

'What idler thing than speak and not be heard?'
What harder thing than smart, and not to speak?
Peace, foolish wit, with wit my wit is marr'd.

Thus write I while I doubt to write, and wreak
My harms on ink's poor loss; perhaps some find
Stella's great powers, that so confuse my mind.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 35: What May Words Say

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

What Nestor's counsel can my flames allay,
Since Reason's self doth blow the coal in me?
And ah what hope, that hope should once see day,
Where Cupid is sworn page to Chastity?

Honor is honor'd, that thou dost possess
Him as thy slave, and now long needy Fame
Doth even grom rich, naming my Stella's name.

Wit learns in thee perfection to express,
Not thou by praise, but praisie in thee is rais'd:
It is a praise to praise, when thou art prais'd.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 36: Stella, Whence Doth This

Stella, whence doth this new assault arise,
A conquer'd, yelden, ransack'd heart to win?
Whereto long since through my long batter'd eyes,
Whole armies of thy beauties entered in.

And there long since, Love thy lieutenant lies,
My forces raz'd, thy banners rais'd within:
Of conquest, do not these effects suffice,
But wilt now war upon thine own begin?

With so sweet voice, and by sweet Nature so
In sweetest strength, so sweetly skill'd withal,
In all sweet stratagems sweet Art can show,

That not my soul, which at thy foot did fall
Long since, forc'd by thy beams, but stone nor tree
By Sense's privilege, can 'scape from thee.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 37: My Mouth Doth Water

My mouth doth water, and my breast doth swell,
My tongue doth itch, my thoughts in labor be:
Listen then, lordings, with good ear to me,
For of my life I must a riddle tell.

Toward Aurora's court a nymph doth dwell,
Rich in all beauties which man's eye can see:
Beauties so far from reach of words, that we
Abase her praise, saying she doth excel:

Rich in the treasure of deserv'd renown,
Rich in the riches of a royal heart,
Rich in those gifts which give th'eternal crown;

Who though most rich in these and every part,
Which make the patents of true worldly bliss,
Hath no misfortune, but that Rich she is.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 38: This Night While Sleep Begins

This night while sleep begins with heavy wings
To hatch mine eyes, and that unbitted thought
Doth fall to stray, and my chief powers are brought
To leave the scepter of all subject things,

The first that straight my fancy's error brings
Unto my mind, is Stella's image, wrought
By Love's own self, but with so curious draught,
That she, methinks, not only shines but sings.

I start, look, hark, but what in clos'd-up sense
Was held, in open'd sense it flies away,
Leaving me nought but wailing eloquence:

I, seeing betters sights in sight's decay,
Call'd it anew, and wooed sleep again:
But him her host that unkind guest had slain.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 40: As Good To Write

As good to write as for to lie and groan,
Oh Stella dear, how much thy power hath wrought,
That hast my mind, none of the basest, brought
My still-kept course, while others sleep, to moan.

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

And then, think thus, although thy beauty be
Made manifest by such a victory,
Yet noblest conquerors do wrecks avoid.

Since then thou hast so far subdued me,
That in my heart I offer still to thee,
Oh do not let thy Temple be destroyed.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 41: Having This Day My Horse

Having this day my horse, my hand, my lance
Guided so well that I obtain'd the prize,
Both by the judgment of the English eyes
And of some sent from that sweet enemy France;
Horsemen my skill in horsemanship advance,
Town folks my strength; a daintier judge applies
His praise to sleight which from good use doth rise;
Some lucky wits impute it but to chance;
Others, because of both sides I do take
My blood from them who did excel in this,
Think Nature me a man of arms did make.
How far they shot awry! The true cause is,
Stella look'd on, and from her heav'nly face
Sent forth the beams which made so fair my race.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 42: Oh Eyes, Which Do The Spheres

Oh eyes, which do the spheres of beauty move,
Whose beams be joys, whose joys all virtues be,
Who while they make Love conquer, conquer Love,
The schools where Venus hath learn'd chastity;

Oh eyes, whose humble looks most glorious prove,
Only lov'd tyrants, just in cruelty,
Do not, oh do not from poor me remove,
Keep still my zenith, ever shine on me.

For though I never see them, but straightways
My life forgets to nourish languish'd sprites;
Yet still on me, oh eyes, dart down your rays:

And if from majesty of sacred lights,
Oppressing mortal sense, my death proceed,
Wracks triumphs be, which Love (high set) doth breed.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 43: Fair Eyes, Sweet Lips

Fair eyes, sweet lips, dear heart, that foolish I
Could hope by Cupid's help on you to prey;
Since to himself he doth your gifts apply,
As his main force, choice sport, and easeful stay.

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

When he will play, then in her lips he is,
Where blushing red, that Love's self them doth love,
With either lip he doth the other kiss:

But when he will for quiet's sake remove
From all the world, her heart is then his room
Where well he knows, no man to him can come.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 44: My Words, I Know Do Well

My words I know do well set forth my mind,
My mind bemoans his sense of inward smart;
Such smart may pity claim of any heart,
Her heart, sweet heart, is of no tiger's kind:

And yet she hears, yet I no pity find;
But more I cry, less grace she doth impart,
Alas, what cause is there so overthwart,
That nobleness itself makes thus unkind?

I much do guess, yet find no truth save this:
That when the breath of my complaints doth touch
Those dainty doors unto the court of bliss,

The heav'nly nature of that place is such,
That once come there, the sobs of mine annoys
Are metamorphos'd straight to tunes of joys.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 45: Stella Oft Sees

Stella oft sees the very face of woe
Painted in my beclouded stormy face:
But cannot skill to pity my disgrace,
Not though thereof the cause herself she know:

Yet hearing late a fable, which did show
Of lovers never known, a grievous case,
Pity thereof gat in her breast such place
That, from that sea deriv'd, tears' spring did flow.

Alas, if fancy drawn by imag'd things,
Though false, yet with free scope more grace doth breed
Than servant's wrack, where new doubts honor brings;

Then think, my dear, that you in me do read
Of lovers' ruin some sad tragedy:
I am not I, pity the tale of me.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 46: I Curs'D Thee Oft

I curs'd thee oft, I pity now thy case,
Blind-hitting boy, since she that thee and me
Rules with a beck, so tyrannizeth thee,
That thou must want or food, or dwelling place,

For she protest to banish thee her face.
Her face? Oh Love, a rogue thou then shouldst be!
If Love learn not alone to love and see,
Without desire to feed of further grace.

Alas poor wag, that now a scholar art
To such a schoolmistress, whose lessons new
Thou needs must miss, and so thou needs must smart.

Yet dear, let me his pardon get of you,
So long (though he from book miche to desire)
Till without fuel you can make hot fire.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 47: What, Have I Thus Betray'D

What, have I thus betray'd my liberty?
Can those black beams such burning marks engrave
In my free side? or am I
born a slave,
Whose neck becomes such yoke of tyranny?

Or want I sense to feel my misery?
Or sprite, disdain of such disdain to have,
Who for long faith, though daily help I crave,
May get no alms but scorn of beggery?

Virtue awake, beauty but beauty is;
I may, I must, I can, I will, I do
Leave following that, which it is gain to miss.

Let her go! Soft, but here she comes. Go to,
Unkind, I love you not. Oh me, that eye
Doth make my heart give to my tongue the lie.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 48: Soul's Joy, Bend Not

Soul's joy, bend not those morning stars from me,
Where Virtue is made strong by Beauty's might,
Where Love is chasteness, Pain doth learn delight,
And Humbleness grows one with Majesty.

Whatever may ensue, oh let me be
Copartner of the riches of that sight:
Let not mine eyes be hell-driv'n from that light:
Oh look, oh shine, oh let me die and see.

For though I oft myself of them bemoan,
That though my heart their beamy darts be gone,
Whose cureless wounds ev'n now most freshly bleed:

Yet since my death-wound is already got,
Dear killer, spare not thy sweet cruel shot:
A kind of grace it is to kill with speed.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 5: It Is Most True

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

It is most true, what we call Cupid's dart,
An image is, which for ourselves we carve:
And, fools, adore in temple of hour heart,
Till that good God make Church and churchman starve.

True, that ture beauty virtue is indeed,
Whereof this beauty can be but a shade,
Which elements with mortal mixture breed:

True, that on earth we are but pilgrims made,
And should in soul up to our country move:
True, and yet true that I must Stella love.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 50: Stella, The Fullness Of My Thoughts

Stella, the fullness of my thoughts of thee
Cannot be stay'd within my panting breast,
But they do swell and struggle forth of me,
Till that in words thy figure be express'd.

And yet as soon as they so formed be,
According to my Lord Love's own behest:
With sad eyes I their weak proportion see,
To portrait that which in this world is best.

So that I cannot choose but write my mind,
And cannot choose but put out what I write,
While these poor babes their death in birth do find:

And now my pen these lines had dashed quite,
But that they stopp'd his fury from the same,
Because their forefront bare sweet Stella's name.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 51: Pardon Mine Ears

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

On silly me do not the burden lay,
Of all the grave conceits your brain doth breed;
But find some Hercules to bear, instead
Of Atlas tir'd, your wisdom's heav'nly sway.

For me, while you discourse of courtly tides,
Of cunning fishers in most troubled streams,
Of straying ways, when valiant error guides:

Meanwhile my heart confers with Stella's beams
And is even irk'd that so sweet comedy,
By such unsuited speech should hinder'd be.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 52: A Strife Is Grown

A strife is grown between Virtue and Love,
While each pretends that Stella must be his:
Her eyes, her lips, her all, saith Love, do this
Since they do wear his badge, most firmly prove.

But Virtue thus that title doth disprove:
That Stella (oh dear name) that Stella is
That virtuous soul, sure heir of heav'nly bliss,
Not this fair outside, which our hearts doth move;

And therefore, though her beauty and her grace
Be Love's indeed, in Stella's self he may
By no pretense claim any manner place.

Well, Love, since this demur our suit will stay,
Let Virtue have that Stella's self; yet thus
That Virtue but that body grant to us.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 53: In Martial Sports

In martial sports I had my cunning tried,
And yet to break more staves did me address:
While, with the people's shouts, I must confess,
Youth, luck, and praise, ev'n fill'd my veins with pride;

When Cupid having me his slave descried,
In Mars's livery, prancing in the press:
'What now, Sir Fool,' said he; I would no less.
'Look here, I say.' I look'd and Stella spied,

Who hard by made a window send forth light.
My heart then quak'd, then dazzled were mine eyes;
One hand forgot to rule, th'other to fight.

Nor trumpet's sound I heard, nor friendly cries;
My foe came on, and beat the air for me,
Till that her blush taught me my shame to see.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 54: Because I Breathe

Because I breathe not love to every one,
Nor do not use set colours for to wear,
Nor nourish special locks of vowed hair,
Nor give each speech a full point of a groan,
The courtly nymphs, acquainted with the moan
Of them who in their lips Love's standard bear,
'What, he!' say they of me, 'now I dare swear
He cannot love. No, no, let him alone.'-
And think so still, so Stella know my mind!
Profess indeed I do not Cupid's art;
But you, fair maids, at length this true shall find,
That his right badge is worn but in the heart.
Dumb swans, not chattering pies, do lovers prove:
They love indeed who quake to say they love.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 55: Muses, I Oft Invoked

Muses, I oft invoked your hold aid,
With choicest flow'rs my speech t'engarland so
That it, despis'd in true by naked show,
Might win some grace in your sweet grace array'd.

And oft whole troops of saddest words I stay'd,
Striving abroad a-foraging to go;
Until by your inspiring I might know
How their black banner might be best display'd.

But now I mean no more your help to try,
Nor other sug'ring of my speech to prove,
But on her name incessantly to cry:

For let me but name her whom I do love
So sweet sounds straight mine ear and heart do hit,
That I well find no eloquence like it.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 56: Fie, School Of Patience

Fie, school of Patience, fie! your lesson is
Far, far too long to learn it without book:
What, a whole week without one piece of look,
And think I should not your large precepts miss?

When I might read those letters fair of bliss,
Which in her face teach virtue, I could brook
Somewhat thy leaden counsels, which I took
As of a friend that meant not much amiss:

But now that I, alas, do want her sight,
What, dost thou think that I can ever take
In thy cold stuff a phlegmatic delight?

No, Patience, if thou wilt my good, then make
Her come, and hear with patience my desire,
And then with patience bid me bear my fire.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 57: Woe, Having Made With Many Fights

Woe, having made with many fights his own
Each sense of mine; each gift, each power of mind
Grown now his slaves, he forc'd them out to find
The thoroughest words, fit for Woe's self to groan,

Hoping that when they might find Stella alone,
Before she could prepare to be unkind,
Her soul, arm'd but with such a dainty rind,
Should soon be pierc'd with sharpness of the moan.

She heard my plaints, and did not only hear,
But them (so sweet is she) most sweetly sing,
With that fair breast making woe's darkness clear:

A pretty case! I hoped her to bring
To feel my griefs, and she with face and voice
So sweets my pains, that my pains me rejoice.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 58: Doubt There Hath Been

Doubt there hath been, when with his golden chain
The Orator so far men's hearts doth bind,
That no place else their guided steps can find,
But as he them more short or slack doth rein,

Whether with words this sovereignty he gain,
Cloth'd with fine tropes, with strongest reasons lin'd,
Or else pronouncing grace, wherewith his mind
Prints his own lively form in rudest brain:

Now judge by this, in piercing phrases late,
Th'anatomy of all my woes I wrate;
Stella's sweet breath the same to me did read.

Oh voice, oh face! maugre my speech's might,
Which wooed woe, most ravishing delight
E'en those sad words, e'en in sad me did breed.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 59: Dear, Why Make You More

Dear, why make you more of a dog than me?
If he do love, I burn, I burn in love;
If he wait well, I never thence would move;
If he be fair, yet but a dog can be.

Little he is, so little worth is he;
He barks, my songs thine own voice oft doth prove:
Bidden perhaps he fetcheth thee a glove,
But I unbid, fetch ev'n my soul to thee.

Yet while I languish, him that bosom clips,
That lap doth lap, nay lets in spite of spite
This sour-breath'd mate taste of those sugar'd lips.

Alas, if you grant only such delight
To witless thngs, then Love I hope (since wit
Becomes a clog) will soon ease me of it.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 6: Some Lovers Speak

Some lovers speak when they their Muses entertain,
Of hopes begot by fear, of wot not what desires:
Of force of heav'nly beams, infusing hellish pain:
Of living deaths, dear wounds, fair storms, and freezing fires.

Some one his song in Jove, and Jove's strange tales attires,
Broidered with bulls and swans, powdered with golden rain;
Another humbler wit to shepherd's pipe retires,
Yet hiding royal blood full oft in rural vein.

To some a sweetest plaint a sweetest style affords,
While tears pour out his ink, and sighs breathe out his words:
His paper pale despair, and pain his pen doth move.

I can speak what I feel, and feel as much as they,
But think that all the map of my state I display,
When trembling voice brings forth that I do Stella love.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 60: When My Good Angel Guides Me

When my good angel guides me to the place,
Where all my good I do in Stella see,
That heav'n of joys throws only down on me
Thunder'd disdains and lightnings of disgrace:

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

Now I, wit-beaten long by hardest Fate,
So dull am, that I cannot look into
The ground of this fierce Love and lovely hate:

Then some good body tell me how I do,
Whose presence absence, absence presence is;
Blist in my curse, and cursed in my bliss.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 61: Oft With True Sighs

Oft with true sighs, oft with uncalled tears,
Now with slow words, now with dumb eloquence
I Stella's eyes assail, invade her ears;
But this at last is her sweet breath'd defense:

That who indeed infelt affection bears,
So captives to his saint both soul and sense,
That wholly hers, all selfness he forbears,
Thence his desires he learns, his life's course thence.

Now since her chaste mind hates this love in me,
With chasten'd mind, I straight must show that she
Shall quickly me from what she hates remove.

Oh Doctor Cupid, thou for me reply,
Driv'n else to grant by angel's sophistry,
That I love not, without I leave to love.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 62: Late, Tir'D With Woe

Late tir'd with woe, ev'n ready for to pine,
With rage of love, I call'd my love unkind;
She is whose eyes Love, though unfelt, doth shine,
Sweet said that I true love in her should find.

I joy'd, but straight thus water'd was my wine,
That love she did, but lov'd a Love not blind,
Which would not let me, when she lov'd, decline
From nobler course, fit for my birth and mind:

And therefore by her love's authority,
Will'd me these tempests of vain love to flee,
And anchor fast myself on Virtue's shore.

Alas, if this the only metal be
Of Love, new-coin'd to help my beggary,
Dear, love me not, that you may love me more.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 63: Oh Grammar Rules

Oh grammar rules, oh now your virtues show
So children still read you with awefull eyes,
As my young dove may in your precepts wise
Her grant to me, by her own virtue know.

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

Sing then, my Muse, now Io Paeon sing,
Heav'n's envy not at my high triumphing:
But grammar's force with sweet success confirm:

For grammar says (oh this, dear Stella, weigh,)
For grammar says (to grammar who says nay?)
That in one speech two negatives affirm.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 65: Love By Sure Proof

Love by sure proof I may call thee unkind,
That giv'st no better ear to my just cries:
Thou whom to me such my good turns should bind,
As I may well recount, but none can prize:

For when, nak'd boy, thou couldst no harbor find
In this old world, grown now so too too wise,
I lodg'd thee in my heart, and being blind
By nature born, I gave to thee mine eyes.

Mine eyes, my light, my heart, my life alas,
If so great services may scorn'd be,
Yet let this thought thy tigrish courage pass:

That I perhaps am somewhat kin to thee,
Since in thine arms, if learn'd fame truth hath spread,
Thou bear'st the arrow, I the arrowhead.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 66: And Do I See Some Cause

And do I see some cause a hope to feed,
Or doth the tedious burden of long woe
In weaken'd minds, quick apprehension breed,
Of every image which may comfort show?

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

And yet amid all fears a hope there is
Stol'n to my heart, since last fair night, nay day,
Stella's eyes sent to me the beams of bliss,

Looking on me, while I look'd other way:
But when mine eyes back to their heav'n did move,
They fled with blush, which guilty seem'd of love.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 67: Hope, Art Thou True

Hope, art thou true, or dost thou flatter me?
Doth Stella now begin with piteous eye
The ruins of her conquest to espy:
Will she take time, before all wracked be?

Her eye's speech is translated thus by thee.
But failst thou not in phrase so heav'nly high?
Look on again, the fair text better try:
What blushing notes dost thou in margin see?

What sighs stol'n out, or kill'd before full born?
Hast thou found such and such like arguments?
Or art thou else to comfort me foresworn?

Well, how so thou interpret the contents,
I am resolv'd thy error to maintain,
Rather than by more truth to get more pain.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 68: Stella, The Only Planet

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

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

And all in vain, for while thy breath most sweet,
With choicest words, thy words with reasons rare,
Thy reasons firmly set on Virtue's feet,

Labor to kill in me this killing care:
Oh, think I then, what paradise of joy
It is, so fair a Virtue to enjoy.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 69: Oh Joy, Too High For My Low Style

Oh joy, too high for my low style to show:
Oh bliss, fit for a nobler state than me:
Envy, put out thine eyes, lest thou do see
What oceans of delight in me do flow.

My friend, that oft saw through all masks my woe,
Come, come, and let me pour myself on thee;
Gone is the winter of my misery,
My spring appears, oh see what here doth grow.

For Stella hath with words where faith doth shine,
Of her high heart giv'n me the monarchy:
I, I, oh I may say that she is mine,

And though she give but thus condition'ly
This realm of bliss, while virtuous course I take,
No kings be crown'd, but they some covenants make.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 7: When Nature

When Nature made her chief work, Stella's eyes,
In color black why wrapp'd she beams so bright?
Would she in beamy black, like painter wise,
Frame daintiest lustre, mix'd of shades and light?

Or did she else that sober hue devise,
In object best to knit and strength our sight,
Lest if no veil those brave gleams did disguise,
They sun-like should more dazzle than delight?

Or would she her miraculous power show,
That whereas black seems Beauty's contrary,
She even if black doth make all beauties flow?

Both so and thus, she minding Love should be
Placed ever there, gave him this mourning weed,
To honor all their deaths, who for her bleed.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 70: My Muse May Well Grudge

My Muse may well grudge at my heav'nly joy,
If still I force her in sad rimes to creep:
She oft hath drunk my tears, now hopes t'enjoy
Nectar of mirth, since I Jove's cup do keep.

Sonnets be not bound prentice to annoy:
Trebles sing high, as well as basses deep:
Grief but Love's winter livery is, the boy
Hath cheeks to smile, as well as eyes to weep.

Come then, my Muse, show thou height of delight
In well-rais'd notes, my pen the best it may
Shall paint out joy, though but in black and white.

Cease, eager Muse; peace, pen, for my sake stay;
I give you here my hand for truth of this:
Wise silence is best music unto bliss.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 72: Desire, Though Thou My Old Companion Art

Desire, though thou my old companion art,
And oft so clings to my pure love, that I
One from the other scarcely can descry,
While each doth blow the fire of my heart;

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

Service and honor, wonder with delight,
Fear to offend, will worthy to appear,
Care shining in mine eyes, faith in my sprite:

These things are left me by my only dear;
But thou, Desire, because thou wouldst have all,
Now banish'd art. But yet alas how shall?

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 73: Love Still A Boy

Love still a boy, and oft a wanton is,
School'd only by his mother's tender eye:
What wonder then if he his lesson miss,
When for so soft a rod dear play he try?

And yet my Star, because a sugar'd kiss
In sport I suck'd, while she asleep did lie,
Doth low'r, nay chide; nay, threat for only this:
Sweet, it was saucy Love, not humble I.

But no 'scuse serves, she makes her wrath appear
In Beauty's throne; see now who dares come near
Those scarlet judges, threat'ning bloody pain?

Oh heav'nly fool, thy most kiss-worthy face
Anger invests with such a lovely grace,
That Anger's self I needs must kiss again.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 74: I Never Drank

I never drank of Aganippe well,
Nor ever did in shade of Tempe sit,
And Muses scorn with vulgar brains to swell;
Poor layman I, for sacred rites unfit.

Some do I hear of poets' fury tell,
But (God wot) wot not what they mean by it:
And this I swear by blackest brook of hell,
I am no pick-purse of another's wit.

How fall it then, that with so smooth an ease
My thoughts I speak, and what I speak doth flow
In verse, and that my verse best wits doth please?

Guess we the cause. 'What, it it thus?' Fie, no.
'Or so?' Much less. 'How then?' Sure, thus it is:
My lips are sweet, inspir'd with Stella's kiss.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 75: Of All The Kings

Of all the kings that ever here did reign,
Edward nam'd Fourth, as first in praise I name;
Not for his fair outside, nor well-lin'd brain,
Although less gifts imp feathers oft on Fame:

Nor that he could young-wise, wise-valiant frame
His sire's revenge, join'd with a kingdom's gain;
And, gain'd by Mars, could yet mad Mars so tame,
That balance weigh'd what sword did late obtain;

Nor that he made the Flow'r-de-luce so 'fraid,
Though strongly hedg'd of bloody Lion's paws,
That witty Lewis to him a tribute paid;

Nor this, nor that, nor any such small cause,
But only for this worthy knight durst prove
To lose his crown, rather than fail his love.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 76: She Comes, And Straight Therewith

She comes, and straight therewith her shining twins do move
Their rays to me, who in her tedious absence lay
Benighted in cold woe; but now appears my day,
The only light of joy, the only warmth of love.

She comes with light and warmth, which like Aurora prove
Of gentle force, so that mine eyes dare gladly play
With such a rosy morn, whose beams most freshly gay
Scorch not, but only do dark chilling sprites remove.

But lo, while I do speak, it groweth noon with me,
Her flamy glist'ring lights increase with time and place;
My heart cries, Ah, it burns; mine eyes now dazzl'd be:

No wind, no shade can cool, what help then in my case,
But with short breath, long looks, staid feet and walking head,
Pray that my sun go down with meeker beams to bed.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 77: Those Looks, Whose Beams Be Joy

Those looks, whose beams be joy, whose motion is delight,
That face, whose lecture shows what perfect beauty is:
That presence, which doth give dark hearts a living light:
That grace, which Venus weeps that she herself doth miss:

That hand, which without touch holds more than Atlas might:
Those lips, which make death's pay a mean price for a kiss:
That skin, skin, whose passe-praise hue scorns this poor term of white:
Those words, which do sublime the quintessence of bliss:

That voice, which makes the soul plant himself in the ears:
That conversation sweet, where such high comforts be,
As constru'd in true speech, the name of heav'n it bears,

Makes me in my best thought and quiet'st judgment see,
That in no more but these I might be fully blest:
Yet ah, my maiden Muse doth blush to tell the rest.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 78: Oh How The Pleasant Airs

Oh how the pleasant airs of true love be
Infect'd by those vapors, which arise
From out that noisome gulf, which gaping lies
Between the jaws of hellish Jealousy:

A monster, others' harm, self-misery,
Beauty's plague, Virtue's scourge, succour of lies;
Who his own joy to his own hurt applies,
And only cherish doth with injury;

Who since he hath, by Nature's special grace,
So piercing paws as spoil when they embrace,
So nimble feet as stir still, though on thorns,

So many eyes ay seeking their own woe,
So ample ears as never good news know:
Is it not evil that such a Devil want horns?

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 79: Sweet Kiss, Thy Sweets I Fain

Sweet kiss, thy sweets I fain would sweetly endite,
Which even of sweetness sweetest sweet'ner art:
Pleasing'st consort, where each sense holds a part;
Which, coupling doves, guides Venus' chariot right;

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

Teaching the mean at once to take and give;
The friendly fray, where blows both wound and heal,
The pretty death, while each in other live;

Poor hope's first wealth, hostage of promis'd weal,
Breakfast of love. But lo! lo, where she is.
Cease we to praise; now pray we for a kiss.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 8: Love, Born In Greece

Love, born in Greece, of late fled from his native place,
Forc'd by a tedious proof, that Turkish harden'd heart
Is no fit mark to pierce with his fine pointed dart,
And pleas'd with our soft peace, stayed here his flying race.

But finding these north climes do coldly him embrace,
Not used to frozen clips, he strave to find some part
Where with most ease and warmth he might employ his art:
At length he perch'd himself in Stella's joyful face,

Whose fair skin, beamy eyes, like morning sun on snow,
Deceiv'd the quaking boy, who thought from so pure light
Effects of lively heat must needs in nature grow.

But she most fair, most cold, made him thence take his flight
To my close heart, where while some firebrands he did lay,
He burnt un'wares his wings, and cannot fly away.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 80: Sweet Swelling Lip

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

The new Parnassus, where the Muses bide,
Sweet'ner of music, wisdom's baeautifier:
Breather of life, and fast'ner of desire,
Where Beauty's blush in Honor's grain is dyed.

Thus much my heart compell'd my mouth to say,
But now, spite of my heart, my mouth will stay,
Loathing all lies, doubting this flattery is:

And no spur can his resty race renew,
Without how far this praise is short of you,
Sweet lip, you teach my mouth with one sweet kiss.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 81: Oh Kiss, Which Dost

Oh kiss, which dost those ruddy gems impart,
Or gems, or fruits of new-found Paradise,
Breathing all bliss and sweet'ning to the heart,
Teaching dumb lips a nobler exercise;

Oh kiss, which souls, even souls, together ties
By links of Love, and only Nature's art:
How fain would I paint thee to all men's eyes,
Or of thy gifts at least shade out some part;

But she forbids, with blushing words, she says
She builds her fame on higher-seated praise;
But my heart burns, I cannot silent be.

Then since (dear life) you fain would have me peace,
And I, mad with delight, want wit to cease,
Stop you my mouth with still, still kissing me.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 82: Nymph Of The Garden

Nymph of the garden where all beauties be,
Beauties which do in excellency pass
His who till death look'd in a wat'ry glass,
Or hers, whom naked the Trojan boy did see;

Sweet garden nymph, which keeps the cherry tree
Whose fruit doth far th'Hesperian taste surpass;
Most sweet-fair, most fair-sweet, do not alas,
From coming near those cherries banish me:

For though full of desire, empty of wit,
Admitted late by your best-graced Grace,
I caught at one of them a hungry bit,

Pardon that fault. Once more grant me the place
And I do swear e'en by the same delight,
I will but kiss, I never more will bite.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 83: Good, Brother Philip

Good, brother Philip, I have borne you long.
I was content you should in favor creep,
While craftily you seem'd your cut to keep,
As though that fair soft hand did you great wrong.

I bare (with envy) yet I bare your song,
When in her neck you did love ditties peep;
Nay, more fool I, oft suffer'd you to sleep
In lilies' nest, where Love's self lies along.

What, doth high place ambitious thoughts augment?
Is sauciness reward of courtesy?
Cannot such grace your silly self content,

But you must needs with those lips billing be?
And through those lips drink nectar from that tongue?
Leave that, Sir Phip, lest off your neck be wrung.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 85: I See The House

I see the house; my heart thyself contain,
Beware full sails drown not thy tott'ring barge,
Lest joy, by nature apt sprites to enlarge,
Thee to ty wrack beyond thy limits strain.

Nor do like lords, whose weak confused brain
Not pointing to fit folks each undercharge,
While every office themselves will discharge,
With doing all, leave nothing done but pain.

But give apt servants their due place: let eyes
See beauty's total sum summ'd in her face;
Let ears hear speech, which wit to wonder ties;

Let breath suck up those sweets; let arms embrace
The globe of weal, lips Love's indentures make:
Thou but of all the kingly tribute take.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 86: Alas, Whence Come This Change Of Looks?

Alas, whence come this change of looks? If I
Have chang'd desert, let mine own conscience be
A still-felt plague, to self-condemning me:
Let woe gripe on my heart, shame load mine eye.

But if all faith, like spotless ermine lie
Safe in my soul, which only doth to thee
(As his sole object of felicity)
With wings of love in air of wonder fly,

Oh ease your hand, treat not so hard your slave:
In justice pains come not till faults do call.
Or if I needs, sweet Judge, must torments have,

Use something else to chasten me withal
Than those blest eyes, where all my hopes do dwell.
No doom should make one's heav'n become his hell.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 87: When I Was Forc'D From Stella

When I was forc'd from Stella, ever dear
Stella, food of my thoughts, heart of my heart;
Stella, whose eyes make all my tempests clear,
By iron laws of duty to depart:

Alas I found that she with me did smart;
I saw that tears did in her eyes appear;
I saw that sighs her sweetest lips did part,
And her sad words my saddest sense did hear.

For me, I wept to see pearls scatter'd so;
I sigh'd her sighs, and wailed for her woe,
Yet swam in joy, such love in her was seen.

Thus, while th'effect most bitter was to me,
And nothing than the couse more sweet could be,
I had been vex'd, if vex'd I had not been.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 88: Out, Traitor Absence

Out, traitor Absence, darest thou counsel me
From my dear captiveness to run away,
Because in brave array here marched she
That to win me, oft shows a present pay?

Is faith so weak? Or is such force in thee?
When sun is hid, can stars such beams display?
Cannot heav'n's food, once felt, keep stomachs free
From base desire on earthly cates to prey?

Tush, Absence, while thy mists eclipse that light,
My orphan sense flies to th'inward sight
Where memory sets forth the beams of love;

That where before heart lov'd and eyes did see,
In heart both sight and love now coupl'd be;
United powers make each the stronger prove.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 89: Now, That Of Absence

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

Each day seems long, and longs for long-stay'd night;
The night as tedious, woos th'approach of day;
Tir'd with the dusty toils of busy day,
Languish'd with horrors of the silent night;

Suffering the evils both of the day and night,
While no night is more dark than is my day,
Nor no day hath less quiet than my night:

With such bad mixture of my night and day,
That living thus in blackest winter night,
I feel the flames of hottest summer day.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 9: Queen Virtue's Court

Queen Virtue's court, which some call Stella's face,
Prepar'd by Nature's choicest furniture,
Hath his front built of alabaster pure;
Gold in the covering of that stately place.

The door by which sometimes comes forth her Grace
Red porphir is, which lock of pearl makes sure,
Whose porches rich (which name of cheeks endure)
Marble mix'd red and white do interlace.

The windows now through which this heav'nly guest
Looks o'er the world, and can find nothing such,
Which dare claim from those lights the name of best,

Of touch they are that without touch doth touch,
Which Cupid's self from Beauty's mine did draw:
Of touch they are, and poor I am their straw.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 90: Stella, Think Not That I

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

Nor so ambitious am I, as to frame
A nest for praise in my young laurel tree:
In truth I swear, I wish not there should be
Grav'd in mine epitaph a poet's name:

Ne if I would, could I just title make,
That any laud to me thereof should grow,
Without my plumes from others' wings I take.

For nothing from my wit or will doth flow,
Since all my words thy beauty doth indite,
And Love doth hold my hand, and makes me write.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 91: Stella While Now

Stella, while now by honor's cruel might,
I am from you, light of my life, mis-led,
And that fair you, my Sun, thus overspread
With absence' veil, I live in sorrow's night;

If this dark place yet show like candle light
Some beauty's piece, as amber-color'd head,
Milk hands, rose cheeks, or lips more sweet, more red,
Or seeing jet's black but in blackness bright.

They please, I do confess; they please mine eyes,
But why? Because of you they models be,
Models such be wood globes of glist'ring skies.

Dear, therefore be not jealous over me,
If you hear that they seem my heart to move.
Not them, oh no, but you in them I love.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 92: Be Your Words Made

Be your words made, good sir, of Indian ware,
That you allow me them by so small rate?
Or do you cutted Spartans imitate?
Or do you mean my tender ears to spare,
That to my questions you so total are?
When I demand of Phœnix Stella's state,
You say, forsooth, you left her well of late:
O God, think you that satisfies my care?
I would know whether she did sit or walk;
How cloth'd, how waited on; sigh'd she, or smil'd;
Whereof, with whom, how often did she talk;
With what pastime time's journey she beguiled;
If her lips deign'd to sweeten my poor name.
Say all; and all well said, still say the same.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 93: Oh Fate, Oh Fault

Oh fate, oh fault, oh curse, child of my bliss,
What sobs can give words grace my grief to show?
What ink is black enough to paint my woe?
Through me, wretch me, ev'n Stella vexed is.

Yet Truth (if caitiff's breath may call thee) this
Witness with me: that my foul stumbling so
From carelessness did in no manner grow,
But wit confus'd with too much care did miss.

And do I then myself this vain 'scuse give?
I have (live I and know this?) harmed thee;
Though worlds quite me, shall I myself forgive?

Only with pains my pains thus eased be,
That all thy hurts in my heart's wrack I read;
I cry thy sighs, my dear; thy tears I bleed.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 94: Grief Find The Words

Grief find the words, for thou hast made my brain
So dark with misty vapors, which arise
From out thy heavy mold, that inbent eyes
Can scarce discern the shape of mine own pain.

Do thou then (for thou canst) do thou complain
For my poor soul, which now that sickness tries,
Which ev'n to sense, sense of itself denies,
Though harbingers of death lodge there his train.

Or if thy love of plaint yet mine forbears,
As of a caitiff worthy so to die,
Yet wail thyself, and wail with causeful tears,

That though in wretchedness thy life doth lie,
Yet growest more wretched than thy nature bears
By being plac'd in such a wretch as I.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 95: Yet Sighs, Dear Sighs

Yet Sighs, dear Sighs, indeed true friends you are,
That do not leave your least friend at the worst,
But as you with my breast I oft have nurs'd,
So grateful now you wait upon my care.

Faint coward Joy no longer tarry dare,
Seeing Hope yield when this woe strake him first:
Delight protests he is not for th'accurst,
Though oft himself my mate-in-arms he sware.

Nay Sorrow comes with such main rage, that he
Kills his own children, Tears, finding that they
By love were made apt to consort with me.

Only, true Sighs, you do not go away;
Thank may you have for such a thankful part,
Thank-worthiest yet when you shall break my heart.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 96: Thought, With Good Cause

Thought, with good cause thou lik'st so well the Night,
Since kind or chance gives both one livery,
Both sadly black, both blackly darken'd be,
Night barr'd from sun, thou from thy own sunlight;

Silence in both displays his sullen might,
Slow Heaviness in both holds one degree--
That full of doubts, thou of perplexity;
Thy tears express Night's native moisture right.

In both a mazeful solitariness:
In Night of sprites the ghastly powers to stir,
In thee, or sprites or sprited ghastliness.

But, but (alas) Night's side the odds hath fur,
For that at length yet doth invite some rest,
Thou though still tir'd, yet still do'st it detest.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 97: Dian, That Fain Would Cheer

Dian, that fain would cheer her friend the Night,
Shows her oft at the full her fairest race,
Bringing with her those starry nymphs, whose chase
From heav'nly standing hits each mortal wight.

But ah, poor Night, in love with Phoebus' light,
And endlessly despairing of his grace,
Herself (to show no other joy hath place)
Silent and sad in mourning weeds doth dight:

Ev'n so (alas) a lady, Dian's peer,
With chice delights and rarest company
Would fain drive clouds from out my heavy cheer.

But woe is me, though Joy itself were she,
She could not show my blind brain ways of joy
While I despair my Sun's sight to enjoy.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 98: Ah Bed, The Field Where Joy's Peace

Ah bed, the field where joy's peace some do see,
The field where all my thought to war be train'd,
How is thy grace by my strange fortune stain'd!
How thy lee shores by my sighs storm'd be!

With sweet soft shades thou oft invitest me
To steal some rest, but wretch I am constrain'd
(Spurr'd with Love's spur, though gall'd and shortly rein'd
With Care's hand) to turn and toss in thee.

While the black horrors of the silent night
Paint woe's black face so lively to my sight,
That tedious leisure marks each wrinkled line:

But when Aurora leads out Phoebus' dance
Mine eyes then only wink, for spite perchance,
That worms should have their Sun, and I want mine.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet 99: When Far-Spent Night

When far-spent night persuades each mortal eye,
To whom nor art nor nature granted light,
To lay his then mark-wanting shafts of sight,
Clos'd with their quivers, in sleep's armory;

With windows ope then most my mind doth lie,
Viewing the shape of darkness and delight,
Takes in that sad hue which the inward night
Of his maz'd powers keeps perfect harmony;

But when birds charm, and that sweet air which is
Morn's messenger, with rose enamel'd skies,
Calls each wight to salute the flower of bliss,

In tomb of lids then buried are mine eyes,
Forc'd by their lord, who is asham'd to find
Such light in sense, with such a darken'd mind.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet I: Loving In Truth

Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show,
That she (dear She) might take some pleasure of my pain:
Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her know,
Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain;

I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe,
Studying inventions fine, her wits to entertain:
Oft turning others' leaves, to see if thence would flow
Some fresh and fruitful showers upon my sun-burn'd brain.

But words came halting forth, wanting Invention's stay,
Invention, Nature's child, fled step-dame Study's blows,
And others' feet still seem'd but strangers in my way.

Thus, great with child to speak, and helpless in my throes,
Biting my truant pen, beating myself for spite--
"Fool," said my Muse to me, "look in thy heart and write."

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet II: Not At First Sight

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

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

Now even that footstep of lost liberty
Is gone, and now like slave-born Muscovite
I call it praise to suffer tyranny;

And now employ the remnant of my wit
To make myself believe that all is well,
While with a feeling skill I paint my hell.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Iii: With How Sad Steps

With how sad steps, O moon, thou climb'st the skies!
How silently, and with how wan a face!
What! may it be that even in heavenly place
That busy archer his sharp arrows tries?
Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case:
I read it in thy looks; thy languished grace
To me, that feel the like, thy state describes.
Then, even of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
Is constant love deemed there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be loved, and yet
Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?
Do they call 'virtue' there - ungratefulness?

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Iv: Virtue, Alas

Virtue, alas, now let me take some rest.
Thou set'st a bate between my soul and wit.
If vain love have my simple soul oppress'd,
Leave what thou likest not, deal not thou with it.

The scepter use in some old Cato's breast;
Churches or schools are for thy seat more fit.
I do confess, pardon a fault confess'd,
My mouth too tender is for thy hard bit.

But if that needs thou wilt usurping be,
The little reason that is left in me,
And still th'effect of thy persuasions prove:

I swear, my heart such one shall show to thee
That shrines in flesh so true a deity,
That Virtue, thou thyself shalt be in love.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet IX: Queen Virtue's Court

Queen Virtue's court, which some call Stella's face,
Prepar'd by Nature's choicest furniture,
Hath his front built of alabaster pure;
Gold in the covering of that stately place.

The door by which sometimes comes forth her Grace
Red porphir is, which lock of pearl makes sure,
Whose porches rich (which name of cheeks endure)
Marble mix'd red and white do interlace.

The windows now through which this heav'nly guest
Looks o'er the world, and can find nothing such,
Which dare claim from those lights the name of best,

Of touch they are that without touch doth touch,
Which Cupid's self from Beauty's mine did draw:
Of touch they are, and poor I am their straw.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Lxiv: No More, My Dear

No more, my dear, no more these counsels try;
Oh, give my passions leave to run their race;
Let Fortune lay on me her worst disgrace;
Let folk o'ercharg'd with brain against me cry;
Let clouds bedim my face, break in mine eye;
Let me no steps but of lost labour trace;
Let all the earth with scorn recount my case,
But do not will me from my love to fly.
I do not envy Aristotle's wit,
Nor do aspire to Caesar's bleeding fame;
Nor aught do care though some above me sit;
Nor hope nor wish another course to frame,
But that which once may win thy cruel heart:
Thou art my wit, and thou my virtue art.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Lxxi: Who Will In Fairest Book

Who will in fairest book of nature know
How virtue may best lodg'd in beauty be,
Let him but learn of love to read in thee,
Stella, those fair lines which true goodness show.
There shall he find all vices' overthrow,
Not by rude force, but sweetest sovereignty
Of reason, from whose light those night-birds fly;
That inward sun in thine eyes shineth so.
And, not content to be perfection's heir
Thyself, dost strive all minds that way to move,
Who mark in thee what is in thee most fair.
So while thy beauty draws thy heart to love,
As fast thy virtue bends that love to good:
But "Ah," Desire still cries, "Give me some food!"

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Lxxxiv: Highway

Highway, since you my chief Parnassus be,
And that my Muse, to some ears not unsweet,
Tempers her words to trampling horses' feet
More oft than to a chamber melody.
Now, blessed you bear onward blessed me
To her, where I my heart, safe-left, shall meet:
My Muse and I must you of duty greet
With thanks and wishes, wishing thankfully.
Be you still fair, honour'd by public heed;
By no encroachment wrong'd, nor time forgot,
Nor blam'd for blood, nor sham'd for sinful deed;
And that you know I envy you no lot
Of highest wish, I wish you so much bliss,--
Hundreds of years you Stella's feet may kiss.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet V: It Is Most True

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

It is most true, what we call Cupid's dart,
An image is, which for ourselves we carve:
And, fools, adore in temple of our heart,
Till that good God make Church and churchman starve.

True, that true beauty virtue is indeed,
Whereof this beauty can be but a shade,
Which elements with mortal mixture breed:

True, that on earth we are but pilgrims made,
And should in soul up to our country move:
True, and yet true that I must Stella love.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Vi: Some Lovers Speak

Some lovers speak when they their Muses entertain,
Of hopes begot by fear, of wot not what desires:
Of force of heav'nly beams, infusing hellish pain:
Of living deaths, dear wounds, fair storms, and freezing fires.

Some one his song in Jove, and Jove's strange tales attires,
Broidered with bulls and swans, powdered with golden rain;
Another humbler wit to shepherd's pipe retires,
Yet hiding royal blood full oft in rural vein.

To some a sweetest plaint a sweetest style affords,
While tears pour out his ink, and sighs breathe out his words:
His paper pale despair, and pain his pen doth move.

I can speak what I feel, and feel as much as they,
But think that all the map of my state I display,
When trembling voice brings forth that I do Stella love.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Vii: When Nature

When Nature made her chief work, Stella's eyes,
In color black why wrapp'd she beams so bright?
Would she in beamy black, like painter wise,
Frame daintiest lustre, mix'd of shades and light?

Or did she else that sober hue devise,
In object best to knit and strength our sight,
Lest if no veil those brave gleams did disguise,
They sun-like should more dazzle than delight?

Or would she her miraculous power show,
That whereas black seems Beauty's contrary,
She even if black doth make all beauties flow?

Both so and thus, she minding Love should be
Placed ever there, gave him this mourning weed,
To honor all their deaths, who for her bleed.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet VIII: Love, Born In Greece

Love, born in Greece, of late fled from his native place,
Forc'd by a tedious proof, that Turkish harden'd heart
Is no fit mark to pierce with his fine pointed dart,
And pleas'd with our soft peace, stayed here his flying race.

But finding these north climes do coldly him embrace,
Not used to frozen clips, he strave to find some part
Where with most ease and warmth he might employ his art:
At length he perch'd himself in Stella's joyful face,

Whose fair skin, beamy eyes, like morning sun on snow,
Deceiv'd the quaking boy, who thought from so pure light
Effects of lively heat must needs in nature grow.

But she most fair, most cold, made him thence take his flight
To my close heart, where while some firebrands he did lay,
He burnt un'wares his wings, and cannot fly away.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet X: Reason

Reason, in faith thou art well serv'd, that still
Wouldst brabbling be with sense and love in me:
I rather wish'd thee climb the Muses' hill,
Or reach the fruit of Nature's choicest tree,

Or seek heav'n's course, or heav'n's inside to see:
Why shouldst thou toil our thorny soil to till?
Leave sense, and those which sense's objects be:
Deal thou with powers of thoughts, leave love to will.

But thou wouldst needs fight both with love and sense,
With sword of wit, giving wounds of dispraise,
Till downright blows did foil thy cunning fence:

For soon as they strake thee with Stella's rays,
Reason thou kneel'dst, and offeredst straight to prove
By reason good, good reason her to love.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xcii: Be Your Words Made

Be your words made, good sir, of Indian ware,
That you allow me them by so small rate?
Or do you cutted Spartans imitate?
Or do you mean my tender ears to spare,
That to my questions you so total are?
When I demand of Phœnix Stella's state,
You say, forsooth, you left her well of late:
O God, think you that satisfies my care?
I would know whether she did sit or walk;
How cloth'd, how waited on; sigh'd she, or smil'd;
Whereof, with whom, how often did she talk;
With what pastime time's journey she beguiled;
If her lips deign'd to sweeten my poor name.
Say all; and all well said, still say the same.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xi: In Truth, Oh Love

In truth, oh Love, with what a boyish kind
Thou doest proceed in thy most serious ways:
That when the heav'n to thee his best displays,
Yet of that best thou leav'st the best behind.

For like a child that some fair book doth find,
With gilded leaves or colored vellum plays,
Or at the most on some find picture stays,
But never heeds the fruit of writer's mind:

So when thou saw'st in Nature's cabinet
Stella, thou straight lookst babies in her eyes,
In her cheek's pit thou didst thy pitfall set:

And in her breast bopeep or couching lies,
Playing and shining in each outward part:
But, fool, seekst not to get into her heart.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xii: Cupid, Because Thou

Cupid, because thou shin'st in Stella's eyes,
That from her locks, thy day-nets, noe scapes free,
That those lips swell, so full of thee they be,
That her sweet breath makes oft thy flames to rise,

That in her breast thy pap well sugared lies,
That he Grace gracious makes thy wrongs, that she
What words so ere she speak persuades for thee,
That her clear voice lifts thy fame to the skies:

Thou countest Stella thine, like those whose powers
Having got up a breach by fighting well,
Cry, "Victory, this fair day all is ours."

Oh no, her heart is such a citadel,
So fortified with wit, stored with disdain,
That to win it, is all the skill and pain.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xiii: Phoebus Was Judge

Phoebus was judge between Jove, Mars, and Love,
Of those three gods, whose arms the fairest were:
Jove's golden shield did eagle sables bear,
Whose talons held young Ganymede above:

But in vert field Mars bare a golden spear,
Which through a bleeding heart his point did shove:
Each had his crest; Mars carried Venus' glove,
Jove in his helm the thunderbolt did rear.

Cupid them smiles, for on his crest there lies
Stella's fair hair, her face he makes his shield,
Where roses gules are borne in silver field.

Phoebus drew wide the curtains of the skies
To blaze these last, and sware devoutly then,
The first, thus match'd, were scanty gentlemen.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xiv: Alas, Have I Not

Alas, have I not pain enough, my friend,
Upon whose breast a fiercer gripe doth tire,
Than did on him who first stole down the fire,
While Love on me doth all his quiver spend,

But with your rhubarb words you must contend,
To grieve me worse, in saying that desire
Doth plunge my well-form'd soul even in the mire
Of sinful thoughts, which do in ruin end?

If that be sin which doth the manners frame,
Well stayed with truth in word and faith of deed,
Ready of wit and fearing nought but shame:

If that be sin which in fix'd hearts doth breed
A loathing of all loose unchastity,
Then love is sin, and let me sinful be.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xix: On Cupid's Bow

On Cupid's bow how are my heartstrings bent,
That see my wrack, and yet embrace the same?
When most I glory, then I feel most shame:
I willing run, yet while I run, repent.

My best wits still their own disgrace invent:
My very ink turns straight to Stella's name;
And yet my words, as them my pen doth frame,
Advise themselves that they are vainly spent.

For though she pass all things, yet what is all
That unto me, who fare like him that both
Looks to the skies and in a ditch doth fall?

Oh let me prop my mind, yet in his growth,
And not in Nature, for best fruits unfit:
"Scholar," saith Love, "bend hitherward your wit."

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xli: Having This Day My Horse

Having this day my horse, my hand, my lance
Guided so well that I obtain'd the prize,
Both by the judgment of the English eyes
And of some sent from that sweet enemy France;
Horsemen my skill in horsemanship advance,
Town folks my strength; a daintier judge applies
His praise to sleight which from good use doth rise;
Some lucky wits impute it but to chance;
Others, because of both sides I do take
My blood from them who did excel in this,
Think Nature me a man of arms did make.
How far they shot awry! The true cause is,
Stella look'd on, and from her heav'nly face
Sent forth the beams which made so fair my race.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xv: You That Do Search

You that do search for every purling spring,
Which from the ribs of old Parnassus flows,
And every flower, not sweet perhaps, which grows
Near thereabouts, into your poesy wring;

You that do dictionary's method bring
Into your rimes, running in rattling rows;
You that poor Petrarch's long-deceased woes,
With new-born sighs and denizen'd wit do sing,

You take wrong ways: those far-fet helps be such
As do bewray a want of inward touch:
And sure at length stol'n goods do come to light.

But if (both for your love and skill) your name
You seek to nurse at fullest breasts of Fame,
Stella behold, and then begin to endite.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xvi: In Nature Apt

In nature apt to like when I did see
Beauties, which were of many carats fine,
My boiling sprites did thither soon incline,
And, Love, I thought that I was full of thee:

But finding not those restless flames in me,
Which others said did make their souls to pine,
I thought those babes of some pin's hurt did whine,
By my love judging what love's pain might be.

But while I thus with this young lion played,
Mine eyes (shall I say curst or blest?) beheld
Stella; now she is nam'd, need more be said?

In her sight I a lesson new have spell'd,
I now hav learn'd Love right, and learn'd even so,
As who by being poisoned doth poison know.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet XVII: His Mother Dear Cupid

His mother dear Cupid offended late,
Because that Mars grown slacker in her love,
With pricking shot he did not throughly more
To keep the pace of their first loving state.

The boy refus'd for fear of Mars's hate,
Who threaten'd stripes, if he his wrath did prove:
But she in chafe him from her lap did shove,
Brake bow, brake shafts, while Cupid weeping sate:

Till that his grandame Nature pitying it
Of stella's brows make him two better bows,
And in her eyes of arrows infinite.

Oh how for joy he leaps, oh how he crows,
And straight therewith like wags new got to play,
Falls to shrewd turns, and I was in his way.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet XVIII: With What Sharp Checks

With what sharp checks I in myself am shent,
When into Reason's audit I do go:
And by just counts myself a bankrupt know
Of all the goods, which heav'n to me hath lent:

Unable quite to pay even Nature's rent,
Which unto it by birthright I do owe:
And, which is worse, no good excuse can show,
But that my wealth I have most idly spend.

My youth doth waste, my knowledge brings forth toys,
My wit doth strive those passions to defend,
Which for reward spoil it with vain annoys.

I see my course to lose myself doth bend:
I see and yet no greater sorrow take,
Than that I lose no more for Stella's sake.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xx: Fly, Fly, My Friends

Fly, fly, my friends, I have my death wound; fly!
See there that boy, that murdering boy I say,
Who like a thief, hid in dark bush doth lie,
Till bloody bullet get him wrongful prey.

So tyrant he no fitter place could spy,
Nor so fair level in so secret stay,
As that sweet black which veils the heav'nly eye:
There himself with his shot he close doth lay.

Poor passenger, pass now thereby I did,
And stayed pleas'd with the prospect of the place,
While that black hue from me the bad guest hid:

But straight I saw motions of lightning grace,
And then descried the glist'ring of his dart:
But ere I could fly hence, it pierc'd my heart.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xxi: Your Words, My Friend

Your words, my friend, (right healthful caustics) blame
My young mind marr'd, whom Love doth windlass so,
That mine own writings like bad servants show
My wits, quick in vain thoughts, in virtue lame;

That Plato I read for nought, but if he tame
Such doltish gyres; that to my birth I owe
Nobler desires, lest else that friendly foe,
Great Expectation, were a train of shame.

For since mad March great promise made of me,
If now the May of my years much decline,
What can be hoped my harvest time will be?

Sure you say well, "Your wisdom's golden mine,
Dig deep with learning's spade." Now tell me this,
Hath this world aught so fair as Stella is?

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xxii: In Highest Way Of Heav'N

In highest way of heav'n the Sun did ride,
Progressing then from fair twins' golden place:
Having no scarf of clouds before his face,
But shining forth of heat in his chief pride;

When some fair ladies by hard promise tied,
On horseback met him in his furious race,
Yet each prepar'd with fan's well-shading grace
From that foe's wounds their tender skins to hide.

Stella alone with face unarmed march'd.
Either to do like him which open shone,
Or careless of the wealth because her own:

Yet were the hid and meaner beauties parch'd,
Her daintiest bare went free; the cause was this,
The Sun, which others burn'd, did her but kiss.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xxiii: The Curious Wits

The curious wits seeing dull pensiveness
Bewray itself in my long settled eyes,
Whence those same fumes of melancholy rise,
With idle pains, and missing aim, do guess.

Some that know how my spring I did address,
Deem that my Muse some fruit of knowledge plies:
Others, because the Prince my service tries,
Think that I think state errors to redress.

But harder judges judge ambition's rage,
Scourge of itself, still climbing slipp'ry place,
Holds my young brain cativ'd in golden cage.

Oh Fools, or over-wise, alas the race
Of all my thoughts hath neither stop nor start,
But only Stella's eyes and Stella's heart.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xxiv: Rich Fools There Be

Rich fools there be, whose base and filthy heart
Lies hatching still the goods wherein they flow:
And damning their own selves to Tantal's smart,
Wealth breeding want, more blist more wretched grow.

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

But that rich fool who by blind Fortune's lot
The richest gem of love and life enjoys,
And can with foul abuse such beauties blot;

Let him, depriv'd of sweet but unfelt joys,
(Exil'd for aye from those high treasures, which
He knows not) grow in only folly rich.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xxix: Like Some Weak Lords

Like some weak lords, neighbor'd by mighty kings,
To keep themselves and their chief cities free,
Do easily yield, that all their coasts may be
Ready to store their camps of needful things:

So Stella's heart finding what power Love brings,
To keep itself in life and liberty,
Doth willing grant, that in the frontiers he
Use all to help his other conquerings:

And thus her heart escapes, but thus her eyes
Serve him with shot, her lips his heralds are;
Her breasts his tents, legs his triumphal car;

Her flesh his food, her skin his armor brave,
And I, but for because my prospect lies
Upon that coast, am giv'n up for a slave.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xxv: The Wisest Scholar

The wisest scholar of the wight most wise
By Phoebus' doom, with sugar'd sentence says,
That Virtue, if it once met with our eyes,
Strange flames of love it in our souls would raise;

But for that man with pain his truth descries,
Whiles he each thing in sense's balance weighs,
And so nor will, nor can behold those skies
Which inward sun to heroic mind displays,

Virtue of late with virtuous care to stir
Love of herself, took Stella's shape, that she
To mortal eyes might sweetly shine in her.

It is most true, for since I her did see,
Virtue's great beauty in that face I prove,
And find th'effect, for I do burn in love.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xxvi: Though Dusty Wits

Though dusty wits dare scorn astrology,
And fools can think those lamps of purest light
Whose numbers, ways, greatness, eternity,
Promising wonders, wonder do invite,

To have for no cause birthright in the sky,
But for to spangle the black weeds of night:
Or for some brawl, which in that chamber high,
They should still dance to please a gazer's sight;

For me, I do Nature unidle know,
And know great causes, great effects procure:
And know those bodies high reign on the low.

And if these rules did fail, proof makes me sure,
Who oft fore-judge my after-following race,
By only those two stars in Stella's face.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xxvii: Because I Oft

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

They deem, and of their doom the rumor flies,
That poison foul of bubbling pride doth lie
So in my swelling breast that only I
Fawn on myself, and others do despise:

Yet pride I think doth not my soul possess,
Which looks too oft in his unflatt'ring glass:
But one worse fault, ambition, I confess,

That makes me oft my best friends overpass,
Unseen, unheard, while though to highest place
Bends all his powers, even unto Stella's grace.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xxviii: You That With Allegory's Curious Frame

You that with allegory's curious frame,
Of others' children changelings use to make,
With me those pains for God's sake do not take:
I list not dig so deep for brazen fame.

When I say "Stella," I do mean the same
Princess of Beauty, for whose only sake
The reins of Love I love, though never slake,
And joy therein, though nations count it shame.

I beg no subject to use eloquence,
Nor in hid ways do guide Philosophy:
Look at my hands for no such quintessence;

But know that I in pure simplicity
Breathe out the flames which burn within my heart
Love only reading unto me this art.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xxx: Whether The Turkish New Moon

Whether the Turkish new moon minded be
To fill his horns this year on Christian coast;
How Poles' right king means, with leave of host,
To warm with ill-made fire cold Muscovy;

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

How Ulster likes of that same golden bit
Wherewith my father once made it half tame;
If in the Scotch court be no welt'ring yet:

These questions busy wits to me do frame.
I, cumber'd with good manners, answer do,
But know not how, for still I think of you.

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xxxi: With How Sad Steps, O Moon

With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies!
How silently, and with how wan a face!
What, may it be that even in heav'nly place
That busy archer his sharp arrows tries!
Sure, if that long-with love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case,
I read it in thy looks; thy languish'd grace
To me, that feel the like, thy state describes.
Then, ev'n of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
Is constant love deem'd there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be lov'd, and yet
Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?
Do they call virtue there ungratefulness?

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xxxiii: I Might

I might!--unhappy word--O me, I might,
And then would not, or could not, see my bliss;
Till now wrapt in a most infernal night,
I find how heav'nly day, wretch! I did miss.
Heart, rend thyself, thou dost thyself but right;
No lovely Paris made thy Helen his,
No force, no fraud robb'd thee of thy delight,
Nor Fortune of thy fortune author is;
But to myself myself did give the blow,
While too much wit, forsooth, so troubled me
That I respects for both our sakes must show:
And yet could not by rising morn foresee
How fair a day was near: O punish'd eyes,
That I had been more foolish,--or more wise!

Sir Philip Sidney

Sonnet Xxxix: Come, Sleep!

Come Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
Th' indifferent judge between the high and low.
With shield of proof shield me from out the prease
Of those fierce darts despair at me doth throw:
O make in me those civil wars to cease;
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so.
Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
A chamber deaf to noise and blind to light,
A rosy garland and a weary head:
And if these things, as being thine by right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

Sir Philip Sidney

Splendidis Longum Valedico Nugis

Leave me, O Love, which reachest but to dust,
And thou, my mind, aspire to higher things!
Grow rich in that which never taketh rust:
Whatever fades, but fading pleasure brings.
Draw in thy beams, and humble all thy might
To that sweet yoke where lasting freedoms be;
Which breaks the clouds and opens forth the light
That doth both shine and give us sight to see.
O take fast hold! let that light be thy guide
In this small course which birth draws out to death,
And think how evil becometh him to slide
Who seeketh Heaven, and comes of heavenly breath.
Then farewell, world! thy uttermost I see:
Eternal Love, maintain thy life in me!

Sir Philip Sidney

The Highway

Highway, since you my chief Parnassus be,
And that my Muse, to some ears not unsweet,
Tempers her words to trampling horses' feet
More oft than to a chamber-melody,--
Now blessed you bear onward blessed me
To her, where I my heart, safe-left, shall meet;
My Muse and I must you of duty greet
With thanks and wishes, wishing thankfully;
Be you still fair, honour'd by public heed;
By no encroachment wrong'd, nor time forgot;
Nor blamed for blood, nor shamed for sinful deed;
And that you know I envy you no lot
Of highest wish, I wish you so much bliss,
Hundreds of years you Stella's feet may kiss!

Sir Philip Sidney

The Nightingale

The nightingale, as soon as April bringeth
Unto her rested sense a perfect waking,
While late bare earth, proud of new clothing, springeth,
Sings out her woes, a thorn her song-book making,
And mournfully bewailing,
Her throat in tunes expresseth
What grief her breast oppresseth
For Tereus' force on her chaste will prevailing.
O Philomela fair, O take some gladness,
That here is juster cause of plaintful sadness:
Thine earth now springs, mine fadeth;
Thy thorn without, my thorn my heart invadeth.

Alas, she hath no other cause of anguish
But Tereus' love, on her by strong hand wroken,
Wherein she suffering, all her spirits languish;
Full womanlike complains her will was broken.
But I, who daily craving,
Cannot have to content me,
Have more cause to lament me,
Since wanting is more woe than too much having.
O Philomela fair, O take some gladness,
That here is juster cause of plaintful sadness:
Thine earth now springs, mine fadeth;
Thy thorn without, my thorn my heart invadeth.

Sir Philip Sidney

Thou Blind Man's Mark

Thou blind man's mark, thou fool's self chosen snare,
Fond fancy's scum, and dregs of scatter'd thought,
Band of all evils, cradle of causeless care,
Thou web of will, whose end is never wrought.

Desire, desire I have too dearly bought,
With price of mangled mind thy worthless ware,
Too long, too long asleep thou hast me brought,
Who should my mind to higher things prepare.

But yet in vain thou hast my ruin sought,
In vain thou madest me to vain things aspire,
In vain thou kindlest all thy smoky fire.

For virtue hath this better lesson taught,
Within myself to seek my only hire:
Desiring nought but how to kill desire.

Sir Philip Sidney

To The Sad Moon

With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies!
How silently, and with how wan a face!
What! May it be that even in heavenly place
That busy archer his sharp arrows tries?
Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case:
I read it in thy looks; thy languished grace
To me, that feel the like, thy state describes.
Then, even of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
Is constant love deemed there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be loved, and yet
Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?
Do they call 'virtue' there— ungratefulness?

Sir Philip Sidney

Voices At The Window

Who is it that, this dark night,
Underneath my window plaineth?
It is one who from thy sight
Being, ah, exiled, disdaineth
Every other vulgar light.

Why, alas, and are you he?
Be not yet those fancies changeed?
Dear, when you find change in me,
Though from me you be estranged,
Let my change to ruin be.

Well, in absence this will die:
Leave to see, and leave to wonder.
Absence sure will help, if I
Can learn how myself to sunder
From what in my heart doth lie.

But time will these thoughts remove;
Time doth work what no man knoweth.
Time doth as the subject prove:
With time still the affection groweth
In the faithful turtle-dove.

What if you new beauties see?
Will not they stir new affection?
I will think they pictures be
(Image-like, of saints' perfection)
Poorly counterfeiting thee.

But your reason's purest light
Bids you leave such minds to nourish.
Dear, do reason no such spite!
Never doth thy beauty flourish
More than in my reason's sight.

Sir Philip Sidney

You Gote-Heard Gods

Strephon.

You Gote-heard Gods, that loue the grassie mountaines,
You Nimphes that haunt the springs in pleasant vallies,
You Satyrs ioyde with free and quiet forests,
Vouchsafe your silent eares to playning musique,
Which to my woes giues still an early morning;
And drawes the dolor on till wery euening.

Klaius.

O Mercurie, foregoer to the euening,
O heauenlie huntresse of the sauage mountaines,
O louelie starre, entitled of the morning,
While that my voice doth fill these wofull vallies,
Vouchsafe your silent eares to plaining musique,
Which oft hath Echo tir'd in secrete forrests.

Strephon.

I that was once free-burges of the forrests,
Where shade from Sunne, and sports I sought at euening,
I that was once esteem'd for pleasant musique,
Am banisht now among the monstrous mountaines
Of huge despaire, and foule afflictions vallies,
Am growne a shrich-owle to my selfe each morning.

Klaius.

I that was once delighted euery morning,
Hunting the wilde inhabitants of forrests,
I that was once the musique of these vallies,
So darkened am, that all my day is euening,
Hart-broken so, that molehilles seeme high mountaines,
And fill the vales with cries in steed of musique.

Strephon.

Long since alas, my deadly Swannish musique

Hath made it selfe a crier of the morning,
And hath with wailing strength clim'd highest mountaines:
Long since my thoughts more desert be then forrests:
Long since I see my ioyes come to their euening,
And state throwen downe to ouer-troden vallies.

Klaius.

Long since the happie dwellers of these vallies,
Haue praide me leaue my strange exclaiming musique,
Which troubles their dayes worke, and ioyes of euening:
Long since I hate the night, more hate the morning:
Long since my thoughts chase me like beasts in forrests,
And make me wish my selfe layd vnder mountaines.

Strephon.

Me seemes I see the high and stately mountaines,
Transforme themselues to lowe delected vallies:
Me seemes I heare in these ill changed forrests,
The Nightingales doo learne of Owles their musique:
Me seemes I feele the comfort of the morning
Turnde to the mortall serene of an euening.

Klaius.

Me seemes I see a filthie clowdie euening,
As soon as Sunne begins to clime the mountaines:
Me seemes I feele a noysome sent, the morning
When I doo smell the flowers of these vallies:
Me seemes I heare, when I doo heare sweete musique,
The dreadfull cries of murdred men in forrests.

Strephon.

I wish to fire the trees of all these forrests;
I giue the Sunne a last farewell each euening;
I curse the fidling finders out of Musicke:
With enuie I doo hate the loftie mountaines;
And with despite despise the humble vallies:
I doo detest night, euening, day, and morning.

Klaius.

Curse to my selfe my prayer is, the morning:
My fire is more, then can be made with forrests;
My state more base, then are the basest vallies:
I wish no euenings more to see, each euening;
Shamed I hate my selfe in sight of mountaines,
And stoppe mine eares, lest I growe mad with Musicke.

Strephon.

For she, whose parts maintainde a perfect musique,
Whose beautie shin'de more then the blushing morning,
Who much did passe in state the stately mountaines,
In straightnes past the Cedars of the forrests,
Hath cast me wretch into eternall euening,
By taking her two Sunnes from these darke vallies.

Klaius.

For she, to whom compar'd, the Alpes are vallies,
She, whose lest word brings from the spheares their musique,
At whose approach the Sunne rose in the euening,
Who, where she went, bare in her forehead morning,
Is gone, is gone from these our spoyled forrests,
Turning to desarts our best pastur'de mountaines.

Strephon. Klaius.

These mountaines witsesse shall, so shall these vallies,
These forrests eke, made wretched by our musique,
Our morning hymne is this, and song at euening.

Sir Philip Sidney