

VENUS AND ADONIS

'Vilia miretur vulgus; mihi flavus Apollo
Pocula Castalia plena ministret aqua.'

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY WRIOTHESLY

EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON, AND BARON OF TICHFIELD

RIGHT HONOURABLE,

I KNOW not how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolished lines to your lordship, nor how the world will censure me for choosing so strong a prop to support so weak a burden: only, if your honour seem but pleased, I account myself highly praised, and vow to take advantage of all idle hours, till I have honoured you with some graver labour. But if the first heir of my invention prove deformed, I shall be sorry it had so noble a godfather, and never after ear so barren a land, for fear it yield me still so bad a harvest. I leave it to your honourable survey, and your honour to your heart's content; which I wish may always answer your own wish and the world's hopeful expectation.

Your honour's in all duty,

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

EVEN as the sun with purple-colour'd face
Had ta'en his last leave of the weeping morn,
Rose-cheek'd Adonis hied him to the chase;
Hunting he lov'd, but love he laugh'd to scorn;
Sick-thoughted Venus makes amain unto
him, 5
And like a bold-fac'd suitor 'gins to woo him.

'Thrice fairer than myself,' thus she began,
'The field's chief flower, sweet above compare, 8
Stain to all nymphs, more lovely than a man,
More white and red than doves or roses are;
Nature that made thee, with herself at strife,
Saith that the world hath ending with thy
life. 12

'Vouchsafe, thou wonder, to alight thy steed,
And rein his proud head to the saddle-bow;
If thou wilt deign this favour, for thy meed
A thousand honey secrets shalt thou know: 16
Here come and sit, where never serpent
hisses;
And being set, I'll smother thee with
kisses:

'And yet not cloy thy lips with loath'd satiety,
But rather famish them amid their plenty, 20
Making them red and pale with fresh variety;
Ten kisses short as one, one long as twenty:
A summer's day will seem an hour but short,
Being wasted in such time-beguiling sport.' 24

With this she seizeth on his sweating palm,
The precedent of pith and livelihood,
And, trembling in her passion, calls it balm,
Earth's sovereign salve to do a goddess good: 28
Being so enrag'd, desire doth lend her force
Courageously to pluck him from his horse.

Over one arm the lusty courser's rein,
Under her other was the tender boy, 32
Who blush'd and pouted in a dull disdain,
With leaden appetite, unapt to toy;
She red and hot as coals of glowing fire,
He red for shame, but frosty in desire. 36

The studded bridle on a ragged bough
Nimble she fastens;—O! how quick is love:—
The steed is stalled up, and even now
To tie the rider she begins to prove: 40
Backward she push'd him, as she would be
thrust, [lust,
And govern'd him in strength, though not in

So soon was she along, as he was down,
Each leaning on their elbows and their hips: 44
Now doth she stroke his cheek, now doth he
frown,
And 'gins to chide, but soon she stops his lips;
And kissing speaks, with lustful language
broken,
'If thou wilt chide, thy lips shall never open.'

He burns with bashful shame; she with her tears
Doth quench the maiden burning of his cheeks;
Then with her windy sighs and golden hairs
To fan and blow them dry again she seeks: 52
He saith she is immodest, blames her miss;
What follows more she murders with a kiss.

Even as an empty eagle, sharp by fast,
Tires with her beak on feathers, flesh and bone,
Shaking her wings, devouring all in haste, 57
Till either gorge be stuff'd or prey be gone;
Even so she kiss'd his brow, his cheek, his chin,
And where she ends she doth anew begin. 60

Forc'd to content, but never to obey,
Panting he lies, and breatheth in her face;
She feedeth on the steam, as on a prey,
And calls it heavenly moisture, air of grace; 64
Wishing her cheeks were gardens full of
flowers,
So they were dew'd with such distilling
showers.

Look! how a bird lies tangled in a net, 68
So fasten'd in her arms Adonis lies;
Pure shame and aw'd resistance made him fret,
Which bred more beauty in his angry eyes:
Rain added to a river that is rank
Perforce will force it overflow the bank. 72

Still she entreats, and prettily entreats,
For to a pretty ear she tunes her tale;
Still is he sullen, still he lowers and frets.
'Twixt crimson shame and anger ashy-pale; 76
Being red, she loves him best; and being
white,
Her best is better'd with a more delight.

Look how he can, she cannot choose but love;
And by her fair immortal hand she swears, 80
From his soft bosom never to remove,
Till he take truce with her contending tears,
Which long have rain'd, making her cheeks
all wet;
And one sweet kiss shall pay this countless
debt. 84

Upon this promise did he raise his chin
Like a dive-dapper peering through a wave,
Who, being look'd on, ducks as quickly in;
So offers he to give what she did crave; 88
But when her lips were ready for his pay,
He winks, and turns his lips another way.

Never did passenger in summer's heat
More thirst for drink than she for this good
turn. 92
Her help she sees, but help she cannot get;
She bathes in water, yet her fire must burn:
'O! pity,' gan she cry, 'flint-hearted boy:
'Tis but a kiss I beg; why art thou coy? 96

'I have been woo'd, as I entreat thee now,
Even by the stern and direful god of war,
Whose sinewy neck in battle ne'er did bow,
Who conquers where he comes in every jar; 100
Yet hath he been my captive and my slave,
And begg'd for that which thou unask'd shalt
have.

'Over my altars hath he hung his lance,
His batter'd shield, his uncontrolled crest, 104
And for my sake hath learn'd to sport and
dance,
To toy, to wanton, dally, smile, and jest;
Scorning his churlish drum and ensign red,
Making my arms his field, his tent my bed.

'Thus he that overrul'd I oversway'd, 109
Leading him prisoner in a red-rose chain:
Strong-temper'd steel his stronger strength
obey'd,
Yet was he servile to my coy disdain. 112
O! be not proud, nor brag not of thy might,
For mastering her that foil'd the god of fight.

'Touch but my lips with those fair lips of thine,—
Though mine be not so fair, yet are they red,—
The kiss shall be thine own as well as mine: 117
What seest thou in the ground? hold up thy
head:
Look in mine eyeballs, there thy beauty lies;
Then why not lips on lips, since eyes in
eyes? 120

1075

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'Art thou asham'd to kiss? then wink again,
And I will wink; so shall the day seem night;
Love keeps his revels where there are but twain;
Be bold to play, our sport is not in sight: 124
These blue-vein'd violets whereon we lean
Never can blab, nor know not what we mean.

'The tender spring upon thy tempting lip
Shows thee unripe, yet mayst thou well be
tasted. 128
Make use of time, let not advantage slip;
Beauty within itself should not be wasted:
Fair flowers that are not gather'd in their
prime 131
Rot and consume themselves in little time.

'Were I hard-favour'd, foul, or wrinkled-old,
Ill-nurtur'd, crooked, churlish, harsh in voice,
O'erworn, despised, rheumatic, and cold,
Thick-sighted, barren, lean, and lacking juice,
Then mightst thou pause, for then I were not
for thee; 137
But having no defects, why dost abhor me?

'Thou canst not see one wrinkle in my brow;
Mine eyes are grey and bright, and quick in
turning; 140
My beauty as the spring doth yearly grow;
My flesh is soft and plump, my marrow burn-
ing;
My smooth moist hand, were it with thy
hand felt,
Would in thy palm dissolve, or seem to melt.

'Bid me discourse, I will enchant thine ear, 145
Or like a fairy trip upon the green,
Or, like a nymph, with long dishevell'd hair,
Dance on the sands, and yet no footing seen:
Love is a spirit all compact of fire, 149
Not gross to sink, but light, and will aspire.

'Witness this primrose bank whereon I lie;
These forceless flowers like sturdy trees support
me; 152
Two strengthless doves will draw me through
the sky,
From morn till night, even where I list to sport
me:
Is love so light, sweet boy, and may it be
That thou shouldst think it heavy unto thee?

'Is thine own heart to thine own face affected?
Can thy right hand seize love upon thy left?
Then woo thyself, be of thyself rejected,
Steal thine own freedom, and complain on
theft. 160
Narcissus so himself himself forsook,
And died to kiss his shadow in the brook.

'Torches are made to light, jewels to wear,
Dainties to taste, fresh beauty for the use, 164
Herbs for their smell, and sappy plants to bear;
Things growing to themselves are growth's
abuse:
Seeds spring from seeds, and beauty breedeth
beauty;
Thou wast begot; to get it is thy duty. 168

'Upon the earth's increase why shouldst thou
feed,
Unless the earth with thy increase be fed?
By law of nature thou art bound to breed,
That thine may live when thou thyself art dead;
And so in spite of death thou dost survive, 173
In that thy likeness still is left alive.'

By this the love-sick queen began to sweat,
For where they lay the shadow had forsook
them, 176
And Titan, tired in the mid-day heat,
With burning eye did hotly overlook them;
Wishing Adonis had his team to guide,
So he were like him and by Venus' side. 180

And now Adonis with a lazy spright,
And with a heavy, dark, disliking eye,
His louring brows o'erwhelming his fair sight,
Like misty vapours when they blot the sky, 184
Souring his cheeks, cries, 'Fie! no more of
love:
The sun doth burn my face; I must remove.'

'Ay me,' quoth Venus, 'young, and so unkind?
What bare excuses mak'st thou to be gone; 188
I'll sigh celestial breath, whose gentle wind
Shall cool the heat of this descending sun:
I'll make a shadow for thee of my hairs;
If they burn too, I'll quench them with my
tears. 192

'The sun that shines from heaven shines but
warm,
And lo! I lie between that sun and thee:
The heat I have from thence doth little harm,
Thine eye darts forth the fire that burneth me;
And were I not immortal, life were done 197
Between this heavenly and earthly sun.

'Art thou obdurate, flinty, hard as steel?
Nay, more than flint, for stone at rain re-
lenteth. 200
Art thou a woman's son, and canst not feel
What 'tis to love? how want of love tormenteth?
O! had thy mother borne so hard a mind,
She had not brought forth thee, but died
unkind. 204

'What am I that thou shouldst contemn me
this?
Or what great danger dwells upon my suit?
What were thy lips the worse for one poor kiss?
Speak, fair; but speak fair words, or else be
mute: 208
Give me one kiss, I'll give it thee again,
And one for interest, if thou wilt have twain.

'Fie! lifeless picture, cold and senseless stone,
Well-painted idol, image dull and dead, 212
Statue contenting but the eye alone,
Thing like a man, but of no woman bred:
Thou art no man, though of a man's com-
plexion,
For men will kiss even by their own direction.'

This said, impatience chokes her pleading
tongue, 217
And swelling passion doth provoke a pause;
Red cheeks and fiery eyes blaze forth her wrong;
Being judge in love, she cannot right her cause:
And now she weeps, and now she fain would
speak, 221
And now her sobs do her intendments break.

Sometimes she shakes her head, and then his
hand;
Now gazeth she on him, now on the ground; 224
Sometimes her arms infold him like a band:
She would, he will not in her arms be bound;
And when from thence he struggles to be
gone,
She locks her lily fingers one in one. 228

'Fondling,' she saith, 'since I have hemm'd thee
here
Within the circuit of this ivory pale,
I'll be a park, and thou shalt be my deer;
Feed where thou wilt, on mountain or in dale:
Graze on my lips, and if those hills be dry, 233
Stray lower, where the pleasant fountains lie.

'Within this limit is relief enough,
Sweet bottom-grass and high delightful plain,
Round rising hillocks, brakes obscure and
rough, 237
To shelter thee from tempest and from rain:
Then be my deer, since I am such a park;
No dog shall rouse thee, though a thousand
bark. 240

At this Adonis smiles as in disdain,
That in each cheek appears a pretty dimple:
Love made those hollows, if himself were slain,
He might be buried in a tomb so simple; 244
Foreknowing well, if there he came to lie,
Why, there Love liv'd and there he could not
die.

These lovely caves, these round enchanting pits,
Open'd their mouths to swallow Venus' liking.
Being mad before, how doth she now for wits?
Struck dead at first, what needs a second strik-
ing? 250
Poor queen of love, in thine own law forlorn,
To love a cheek that smiles at thee in scorn!

Now which way shall she turn? what shall she
say?
Her words are done, her woes the more increas-
ing; 254
The time is spent, her object will away,
And from her twining arms doth urge releasing:
'Pity,' she cries; 'some favour, some re-
morse!' 257
Away he springs, and hasteth to his horse.

But, lo! from forth a copse that neighbours by,
A breeding jennet, lusty, young, and proud, 260
Adonis' trampling courser doth espy,
And forth she rushes, snorts and neighs aloud:
The strong-neck'd steed, being tied unto a
tree,
Breaketh his rein, and to her straight goes he.

Imperiously he leaps, he neighs, he bounds, 265
And now his woven girths he breaks asunder;
The bearing earth with his hard hoof he wounds,
Whose hollow womb resounds like heaven's
thunder; 268
The iron bit he crushes 'tween his teeth,
Controlling what he was controlled with.

His ears up-prick'd; his braided hanging
mane 271
Upon his compass'd crest now stand on end;
His nostrils drink the air, and forth again,
As from a furnace, vapours doth he send:
His eye, which scornfully glisters like fire,
Shows his hot courage and his high desire.

Sometime he trots, as if he told the steps, 277
With gentle majesty and modest pride;
Anon he rears upright, curvets and leaps,
As who should say, 'Lo! thus my strength is
tried; 280
And this I do to captivate the eye
Of the fair breeder that is standing by.'

What recketh he his rider's angry stir,
His flattering 'Holla,' or his 'Stand, I say?' 284
What cares he now for curb or pricking spur?
For rich caparisons or trapping gay?
He sees his love, and nothing else he sees,
Nor nothing else with his proud sight agrees.

Look, when a painter would surpass the life,
In limning out a well-proportion'd steed,
His art with nature's workmanship at strife,
As if the dead the living should exceed; 292
So did this horse excel a common one,
In shape, in courage, colour, pace and bone.

Round-hoof'd, short-jointed, fetlocks shag and
long,
Broad breast, full eye, small head, and nostril
wide, 296
High crest, short ears, straight legs and passing
strong,
Thin mane, thick tail, broad buttock, tender
hide:
Look, what a horse should have he did not
lack,
Save a proud rider on so proud a back. 300

Sometimes he scuds far off, and there he stares;
Anon he starts at stirring of a feather;
To bid the wind a base he now prepares,
And wh'er he run or fly they know not whether;
For through his mane and tail the high wind
sings, 305
Fanning the hairs, who wave like feather'd
wings.

He looks upon his love, and neighs unto her;
She answers him as if she knew his mind; 308
Being proud, as females are, to see him woo her,
She puts on outward strangeness, seems un-
kind,
Spurns at his love and scorns the heat he feels,
Beating his kind embracements with her heels.

Then, like a melancholy malcontent, 313
He vails his tail that, like a falling plume
Cool shadow to his melting buttock lent:
He stamps, and bites the poor flies in his fume.
His love, perceiving how he is enrag'd, 317
Grew kinder, and his fury was assuag'd.

His testy master goeth about to take him;
When lo! the unback'd breeder, full of fear, 320
Jealous of catching, swiftly doth forsake him,
With her the horse, and left Adonis there.
As they were mad, unto the wood they hie
them,
Out-stripping crows that strive to over-fly
them. 324

All swoln with chafing, down Adonis sits,
Banning his boisterous and unruly beast:
And now the happy season once more fits,
That love-sick Love by pleading may be blest;
For lovers say, the heart hath treble wrong
When it is barr'd the aidance of the tongue.

An oven that is stopp'd, or river stay'd,
Burneth more hotly, swelleth with more rage:
So of concealed sorrow may be said; 333
Free vent of words love's fire doth assuage;
But when the heart's attorney once is mute,
The client breaks, as desperate in his suit. 336

He sees her coming, and begins to glow,—
Even as a dying coal revives with wind,—
And with his bonnet hides his angry brow;
Looks on the dull earth with disturbed mind,
Taking no notice that she is so nigh, 341
For all askance he holds her in his eye.

O! what a sight it was, wistly to view
How she came stealing to the wayward boy;
To note the fighting conflict of her hue, 345
How white and red each other did destroy:
But now her cheek was pale, and by and by
It flash'd forth fire, as lightning from the sky.

Now was she just before him as he sat, 349
And like a lowly lover down she kneels;
With one fair hand she heaveth up his hat,
Her other tender hand his fair cheek feels: 352
His tenderer cheek receives her soft hand's
print,
As apt as new-fall'n snow takes any dint.

O! what a war of looks was then between them;
Her eyes petitioners to his eyes suing; 356
His eyes saw her eyes as they had not seen them;
Her eyes woo'd still, his eyes disdain'd the woo-
ing:
And all this dumb play had his acts made
plain
With tears, which, chorus-like, her eyes did
rain. 360

Full gently now she takes him by the hand,
A lily prison'd in a gaol of snow,
Or ivory in an alabaster band;
So white a friend engirts so white a foe: 364
This beauteous combat, wilful and unwilling,
Show'd like two silver doves that sit a-billing.

Once more the engine of her thoughts began:
 'O fairest mover on this mortal round, 368
 Would thou wert as I am, and I a man,
 My heart all whole as thine, thy heart my wound;
 For one sweet look thy help I would assure
 thee,
 Though nothing but my body's bane would
 cure thee.' 372

'Give me my hand,' saith he, 'why dost thou
 feel it?'
 'Give me my heart,' saith she, 'and thou shalt
 have it;
 O! give it me, lest thy hard heart do steel it,
 And being steel'd, soft sighs can never grave it:
 Then love's deep groans I never shall regard,
 Because Adonis' heart hath made mine hard.'

'For shame,' he cries, 'let go, and let me go;
 My day's delight is past, my horse is gone, 380
 And 'tis your fault I am bereft him so:
 I pray you hence, and leave me here alone:
 For all my mind, my thought, my busy care,
 Is how to get my palfrey from the mare.' 384

Thus she replies: 'Thy palfrey, as he should,
 Welcomes the warm approach of sweet desire:
 Affection is a coal that must be cool'd;
 Else, suffer'd, it will set the heart on fire: 388
 The sea hath bounds, but deep desire hath
 none;
 Therefore no marvel though thy horse be gone.'

'How like a jade he stood, tied to the tree,
 Servilely master'd with a leathern rein! 392
 But when he saw his love, his youth's fair fee,
 He held such petty bondage in disdain;
 Throwing the base thong from his bending
 crest,
 Enfranchising his mouth, his back, his
 breast.' 396

'Who sees his true-love in her naked bed,
 Teaching the sheets a whiter hue than white,
 But, when his glutton eye so full hath fed,
 His other agents aim at like delight? 400
 Who is so faint, that dare not be so bold
 To touch the fire, the weather being cold?

'Let me excuse thy courser, gentle boy;
 And learn of him, I heartily beseech thee, 404
 To take advantage on presented joy;
 Though I were dumb, yet his proceedings teach
 thee.
 O learn to love; the lesson is but plain,
 And once made perfect, never lost again.' 408

'I know not love,' quoth he, 'nor will not know
 it,
 Unless it be a boar, and then I chase it;
 'Tis much to borrow, and I will not owe it;
 My love to love is love but to disgrace it; 412
 For I have heard it is a life in death,
 That laughs and weeps, and all but with a
 breath.

'Who wears a garment shapeless and unfinish'd?
 Who plucks the bud before one leaf put forth?
 If springing things be any jot diminish'd, 417
 They wither in their prime, prove nothing worth:
 The colt that's back'd and burden'd being
 young
 Loseth his pride and never waxeth strong. 420

'You hurt my hand with wringing; let us part,
 And leave this idle theme, this bootless chat:
 Remove your siege from my unyielding heart;
 To love's alarms it will not ope the gate: 424
 Dismiss your vows, your feigned tears, your
 flattery;
 For where a heart is hard, they make no
 battery.'

'What! canst thou talk?' quoth she, 'hast thou
 a tongue?
 O! would thou hadst not, or I had no hearing;
 Thy mermaid's voice hath done me double
 wrong; 429
 I had my load before, now press'd with bearing:
 Melodious discord, heavenly tune, harsh-
 sounding,
 Ear's deep-sweet music, and heart's deep-sore
 wounding.' 432

'Had I no eyes, but ears, my ears would love
 That inward beauty and invisible;
 Or were I deaf, thy outward parts would move
 Each part in me that were but sensible: 436
 Though neither eyes nor ears, to hear nor
 see,
 Yet should I be in love by touching thee.'

'Say, that the sense of feeling were bereft me,
 And that I could not see, nor hear, nor touch,
 And nothing but the very smell were left me,
 Yet would my love to thee be still as much;
 For from the still'tory of thy face excelling
 Comes breath perfum'd that breedeth love by
 smelling.' 444

'But O! what banquet wert thou to the taste,
 Being nurse and feeder of the other four;
 Would they not wish the feast might ever last,
 And bid Suspicion double-lock the door, 448
 Lest Jealousy, that sour unwelcome guest,
 Should, by his stealing in, disturb the feast?'

Once more the ruby-colour'd portal open'd,
 Which to his speech did honey passage yield;
 Like a red morn, that ever yet betoken'd 453
 Wrack to the seaman, tempest to the field,
 Sorrow to shepherds, woe unto the birds,
 Gusts and foul flaws to herdmen and to herds.

This ill presage advisedly she marketh: 457
 Even as the wind is hush'd before it raineth,
 Or as the wolf doth grin before he barketh,
 Or as the berry breaks before it staineth, 460
 Or like the deadly bullet of a gun,
 His meaning struck her ere his words begun.

And at his look she flatly falleth down,
 For looks kill love and love by looks reviveth;
 A smile recures the wounding of a frown; 465
 But blessed bankrupt, that by love so thriveth!
 The silly boy, believing she is dead,
 Claps her pale cheek, till clapping makes it
 red; 468

And all-amaz'd brake off his late intent,
 For sharply he did think to reprehend her,
 Which cunning love did wittily prevent:
 Fair fall the wit that can so well defend her! 472
 For on the grass she lies as she were slain,
 Till his breath breatheth life in her again.

He wrings her nose, he strikes her on the cheeks,
 He bends her fingers, holds her pulses hard, 476
 He chafes her lips; a thousand ways he seeks
 To mend the hurt that his unkindness marr'd:
 He kisses her; and she, by her good will,
 Will never rise, so he will kiss her still. 480

The night of sorrow now is turn'd to day:
 Her two blue windows faintly she up-heaveth,
 Like the fair sun, when in his fresh array
 He cheers the morn and all the world reliev-
 eth: 484
 And as the bright sun glorifies the sky,
 So is her face illumin'd with her eye;

Whose beams upon his hairless face are fix'd,
 As if from thence they borrow'd all their shine.
 Were never four such lamps together mix'd, 489
 Had not his clouded with his brows' repine;
 But hers, which through the crystal tears gave
 light,
 Shone like the moon in water seen by night.

'O! where am I?' quoth she, in earth or
 heaven, 493
 Or in the ocean drench'd, or in the fire?
 What hour is this? or morn or weary even?
 Do I delight to die, or life desire? 496
 But now I liv'd, and life was death's annoy;
 But now I died, and death was lively joy.

'O! thou didst kill me; kill me once again:
 Thy eyes' shrewd tutor, that hard heart of
 thine, 500
 Hath taught them scornful tricks and such dis-
 dain
 That they have murder'd this poor heart of mine;
 And these mine eyes, true leaders to their
 queen,
 But for thy piteous lips no more had seen. 504

'Long may they kiss each other for this cure!
 O! never let their crimson liveries wear;
 And as they last, their verdure still endure,
 To drive infection from the dangerous year: 508
 That the star-gazers, having writ on death,
 May say, the plague is banish'd by thy breath.

'Pure lips, sweet seals in my soft lips imprinted,
 What bargains may I make, still to be sealing?
 To sell myself I can be well contented, 513
 So thou wilt buy and pay and use good dealing;

Which purchase if thou make, for fear of slips
 Set thy seal-manual on my wax-red lips. 516

'A thousand kisses buys my heart from me;
 And pay them at thy leisure, one by one.
 What is ten hundred touches unto thee?
 Are they not quickly told and quickly gone? 520
 Say, for non-payment that the debt should
 double,
 Is twenty hundred kisses such a trouble?'

'Fair queen,' quoth he, 'if any love you owe me,
 Measure my strangeness with my unripe
 years: 524
 Before I know myself, seek not to know me;
 No fisher but the ungrown fry forbears:
 The mellow plum doth fall, the green sticks
 fast,
 Or being early pluck'd is sour to taste. 528

'Look! the world's comforter, with weary gait,
 His day's hot task hath ended in the west;
 The owl, night's herald, shrieks, 'tis very late;
 The sheep are gone to fold, birds to their nest,
 And coal-black clouds that shadow heaven's
 light 533
 Do summon us to part and bid good night.

'Now let me say good night, and so say you;
 If you will say so, you shall have a kiss.' 536
 'Good night,' quoth she; and ere he says adieu,
 The honey fee of parting tender'd is:
 Her arms do lend his neck a sweet embrace;
 Incorporate then they seem, face grows to
 face.

Till, breathless, he disjoin'd, and backward drew
 The heavenly moisture, that sweet coral mouth,
 Whose precious taste her thirsty lips well knew,
 Whereon they surfeit, yet complain on drouth:
 He with her plenty press'd, she faint with
 dearth, 545
 Their lips together glu'd, fall to the earth.

Now quick desire hath caught the yielding prey,
 And glutton-like she feeds, yet never filleth; 548
 Her lips are conquerors, his lips obey,
 Paying what ransom the insulter willet;
 Whose vulture thought doth pitch the price
 so high,
 That she will draw his lips' rich treasure dry.

And having felt the sweetness of the spoil, 553
 With blindfold fury she begins to forage;
 Her face doth reek and smoke, her blood doth
 boil,
 And careless lust stirs up a desperate courage;
 Planting oblivion, beating reason back, 557
 Forgetting shame's pure blush and honour's
 wrack.

Hot, faint, and weary, with her hard embracing,
 Like a wild bird being tam'd with too much
 handling, 560
 Or as the fleet-foot roe that's tir'd with chasing,
 Or like the froward infant still'd with dandling,
 He now obeys, and now no more resisteth,
 While she takes all she can, not all she listeth.

What wax so frozen but dissolves with temper-
ing, 565
And yields at last to every light impression?
Things out of hope are compass'd oft with
venturing,
Chiefly in love, whose leave exceeds commis-
sion: 568
Affection faints not like a pale-fac'd coward,
But then woos best when most his choice is
froward.

When he did frown, O! had she then gave
over, 571
Such nectar from his lips she had not suck'd.
Foul words and frowns must not repel a lover;
What though the rose have prickles, yet 'tis
pluck'd:
Were beauty under twenty locks kept fast,
Yet love breaks through and picks them all
at last. 576

For pity now she can no more detain him;
The poor fool prays her that he may depart:
She is resolv'd no longer to restrain him, 579
Bids him farewell, and look well to her heart,
The which, by Cupid's bow she doth protest,
He carries thence incaged in his breast.

'Sweet boy,' she says, 'this night I'll waste in
sorrow,
For my sick heart commands mine eyes to
watch. 584
Tell me, Love's master, shall we meet to-mor-
row?
Say, shall we? shall we? wilt thou make the
match?'
He tells her, no; to-morrow he intends
To hunt the boar with certain of his friends.

'The boar!' quoth she; whereat a sudden pale,
Like lawn being spread upon the blushing rose,
Usurps her cheeks, she trembles at his tale, 591
And on his neck her yoking arms she throws:
She sinketh down, still hanging by his neck,
He on her belly falls, she on her back.

Now is she in the very lists of love,
Her champion mounted for the hot encounter:
All is imaginary she doth prove, 597
He will not manage her, although he mount her;
That worse than Tantalus' is her annoy,
To clip Elysium and to lack her joy. 600

Even as poor birds, deceiv'd with painted grapes,
Do surfeit by the eye and pine the maw,
Even so she languisheth in her mishaps,
As those poor birds that helpless berries saw.
The warm effects which she in him finds
missing, 605
She seeks to kindle with continual kissing.

But all in vain; good queen, it will not be:
She hath assay'd as much as may be prov'd; 608
Her pleading hath deserv'd a greater fee;
She's Love, she loves, and yet she is not lov'd.
'Fie, fie!' he says, 'you crush me; let me go;
You have no reason to withhold me so.' 612

'Thou hadst been gone,' quoth she, 'sweet boy,
ere this,
But that thou told'st me thou wouldst hunt the
boar.
O! be advis'd; thou know'st not what it is
With javelin's point a churlish swine to gore,
Whose tushes never sheath'd he whetteth
still, 617
Like to a mortal butcher, bent to kill.

'On his bow-back he hath a battle set
Of bristly pikes, that ever threat his foes; 620
His eyes like glow-worms shine when he doth
fret;
His snout digs sepulchres where'er he goes;
Being mov'd, he strikes whate'er is in his way,
And whom he strikes his crooked tushes
slay. 624

'His brawny sides, with hairy bristles arm'd,
Are better proof than thy spear's point can
enter;
His short thick neck cannot be easily harm'd;
Being ireful, on the lion he will venture: 628
The thorny brambles and embracing bushes,
As fearful of him part, through whom he
rushes.

'Alas! he nought esteems that face of thine,
To which Love's eyes pay tributary gazes; 632
Nor thy soft hands, sweet lips, and crystal eyne,
Whose full perfection all the world amazes;
But having thee at vantage, wondrous dread!
Would root these beauties as he roots the
mead. 636

'O! let him keep his loathsome cabin still;
Beauty hath nought to do with such foul fiends:
Come not within his danger by thy will;
They that thrive well take counsel of their
friends. 640
When thou didst name the boar, not to dis-
semble,
I fear'd thy fortune, and my joints did tremble.

'Didst thou not mark my face? was it not
white? 643
Saw'st thou not signs of fear lurk in mine eye?
Grew I not faint? And fell I not downright?
Within my bosom, whereon thou dost lie,
My boding heart pants, beats, and takes no
rest,
But, like an earthquake, shakes thee on my
breast. 648

'For where Love reigns, disturbing Jealousy
Doth call himself Affection's sentinel;
Gives false alarms, suggesteth mutiny,
And in a peaceful hour doth cry "Kill, kill!" 652
Distempering gentle Love in his desire,
As air and water do abate the fire.

'This sour informer, this bate-breeding spy,
This canker that eats up Love's tender spring, 657
This carry-tale, dissentionous Jealousy,
That sometime true news, sometime false doth
bring,
Knocks at my heart, and whispers in mine ear
That if I love thee, I thy death should fear:

'And more than so, presenteth to mine eye 661
The picture of an angry-chafing boar,
Under whose sharp fangs on his back doth lie
An image like thyself, all stain'd with gore; 664
Whose blood upon the fresh flowers being
shed
Doth make them droop with grief and hang
the head.

'What should I do, seeing thee so indeed,
That tremble at the imagination? 668
The thought of it doth make my faint heart
bleed,
And fear doth teach it divination:
I prophesy thy death, my living sorrow, 671
If thou encounter with the boar to-morrow.

'But if thou needs wilt hunt, be rul'd by me;
Uncouple at the timorous flying hare,
Or at the fox which lives by subtilty,
Or at the roe which no encounter dare: 676
Pursue these fearful creatures o'er the downs,
And on thy well-breath'd horse keep with thy
hounds.

'And when thou hast on foot the purblind hare,
Mark the poor wretch, to overshoot his troubles
How he outruns the winds, and with what
care 681
He cranks and crosses with a thousand doubles:
The many musits through the which he goes
Are like a labyrinth to amaze his foes. 684

'Sometime he runs among a flock of sheep,
To make the cunning hounds mistake their
smell,
And sometime where earth-delving conies keep,
To stop the loud pursuers in their yell, 688
And sometime sorteth with a herd of deer;
Danger deviseth shifts; wit waits on fear:

'For there his smell with others being mingled,
The hot scent-snuffing hounds are driven to
doubt, 692
Ceasing their clamorous cry till they have singled
With much ado the cold fault cleanly out;
Then do they spend their mouths: Echo re-
plies,
As if another chase were in the skies. 696

'By this, poor Wat, far off upon a hill,
Stands on his hinder legs with listening ear,
To hearken if his foes pursue him still:
Anon their loud alarums he doth hear; 700
And now his grief may be compared well
To one sore sick that hears the passing-bell.

'Then shalt thou see the dew-bedabbled wretch
Turn, and return, indenting with the way; 704
Each envious briar his weary legs doth scratch,
Each shadow makes him stop, each murmur
stay:

For misery is trodden on by many,
And being low never reliev'd by any. 708

'Lie quietly, and hear a little more;
Nay, do not struggle, for thou shalt not rise:

To make thee hate the hunting of the boar,
Unlike myself thou hear'st me moralize, 712
Applying this to that, and so to so;
For love can comment upon every woe.

'Where did I leave?' 'No matter where,' quoth
he;
'Leave me, and then the story aptly ends: 716
The night is spent,' 'Why, what of that?' quoth
she.

'I am,' quoth he, 'expected of my friends;
And now 'tis dark, and going I shall fall.'
'In night,' quoth she, 'desire sees best of all.'

'But if thou fall, O! then imagine this, 721
The earth, in love with thee, thy footing trips,
And all is but to rob thee of a kiss.
Rich preys make true men thieves; so do thy
lips 724
Make modest Dian cloudy and forlorn,
Lest she should steal a kiss and die forsworn.

'Now of this dark night I perceive the reason:
Cynthia for shame obscures her silver shine, 728
Till forging Nature be condemn'd of treason,
For stealing moulds from heaven that were
divine;
Wherein she fram'd thee in high heaven's
despite, 731
To shame the sun by day and her by night.

'And therefore hath she brib'd the Destinies,
To cross the curious workmanship of nature,
To mingle beauty with infirmities,
And pure perfection with impure defeature; 736
Making it subject to the tyranny
Of mad mischances and much misery;

'As burning fevers, agues pale and faint,
Life-poisoning pestilence and frenzies wood, 740
The marrow-eating sickness, whose attaint
Disorder breeds by heating of the blood;
Surfeits, imposthumes, grief, and damn'd
despair,
Swear nature's death for framing thee so fair.

'And not the least of all these maladies 745
But in one minute's fight brings beauty under:
Both favour, savour, hue, and qualities,
Whereat the impartial gazer late did wonder,
Are on the sudden wasted, thaw'd and
done, 749
As mountain-snow melts with the mid-day
sun.

'Therefore, despite of fruitless chastity,
Love-lacking vestals and self-loving nuns, 752
That on the earth would breed a scarcity
And barren dearth of daughters and of sons,
Be prodigal: the lamp that burns by night
Dries up his oil to lend the world his light.

'What is thy body but a swallowing grave, 757
Seeming to bury that posterity
Which by the rights of time thou needs must have,
If thou destroy them not in dark obscurity? 760
If so, the world will hold thee in disdain,
Sith in thy pride so fair a hope is slain.