

'So in thyself thyself art made away;
A mischief worse than civil home-bred strife,
Of theirs whose desperate hands themselves do
slay, 765

Or butcher-sire that reaves his son of life.
Foul-cankering rust the hidden treasure frets,
But gold that's put to use more gold begets.

'Nay then,' quoth Adon, 'you will fall again 769
Into your idle over-handled theme;

The kiss I gave you is bestow'd in vain,
And all in vain you strive against the stream;
For by this black-fac'd night, desire's foul
nurse, 773
Your treatise makes me like you worse and
worse.

'If love have lent you twenty thousand tongues,
And every tongue more moving than your
own, 776
Bewitching like the wanton mermaid's songs,
Yet from mine ear the tempting tune is blown;
For know, my heart stands armed in mine
ear,
And will not let a false sound enter there; 780

'Lest the deceiving harmony should run
Into the quiet closure of my breast;
And then my little heart were quite undone,
In his bedchamber to be barr'd of rest. 784
No, lady, no; my heart longs not to groan,
But soundly sleeps, while now it sleeps alone.

'What have you urg'd that I cannot reprove?
The path is smooth that leadeth on to danger;
I hate not love, but your device in love, 789
That lends embracements unto every stranger.
You do it for increase: O strange excuse!
When reason is the bawd to lust's abuse. 792

'Call it not love, for Love to heaven is fled,
Since sweating Lust on earth usurp'd his name;
Under whose simple semblance he hath fed
Upon fresh beauty, blotting it with blame; 796
Which the hot tyrant stains and soon be-
reaves,
As caterpillars do the tender leaves.

'Love comforteth like sunshine after rain,
But Lust's effect is tempest after sun; 800
Love's gentle spring doth always fresh remain,
Lust's winter comes ere summer half be done.
Love surfeits not, Lust like a glutton dies;
Love is all truth, Lust full of forged lies. 804

'More I could tell, but more I dare not say;
The text is old, the orator too green.
Therefore, in sadness, now I will away;
My face is full of shame, my heart of teen: 808
Mine ears, that to your wanton talk attended,
Do burn themselves for having so offended.

With this he breaketh from the sweet embrace
Of those fair arms which bound him to her
breast, 812
And homeward through the dark laund runs
apace;

Leaves Love upon her back deeply distress'd,
Look, how a bright star shooteth from the sky,
So glides he in the night from Venus' eye; 816

Which after him she darts, as one on shore
Gazing upon a late-embarked friend,
Till the wild waves will have him seen no more,
Whose ridges with the meeting clouds contend:
So did the merciless and pitchy night 821
Fold in the object that did feed her sight.

Whereat amaz'd, as one that unaware
Hath dropp'd a precious jewel in the flood, 824
Or 'stonish'd as night-wanderers often are,
Their light blown out in some mistrustful wood;
Even so confounded in the dark she lay,
Having lost the fair discovery of her way. 828

And now she beats her heart, whereat it groans,
That all the neighbour caves, as seeming
troubled,
Make verbal repetition of her moans;
Passion on passion deeply is redoubled: 832
'Ay me!' she cries, and twenty times, 'Woe,
woe!'
And twenty echoes twenty times cry so.

She marking them, begins a wailing note,
And sings extemporally a woeful ditty; 836
How love makes young men thrall and old men
dote;

How love is wise in folly, foolish-witty:
Her heavy anthem still concludes in woe,
And still the choir of echoes answer so. 840

Her song was tedious, and outwore the night,
For lovers' hours are long, though seeming
short:
If pleas'd themselves, others, they think, delight
In such like circumstance, with such like
sport: 844

Their copious stories, oftentimes begun,
End without audience, and are never done.

For who hath she to spend the night withal,
But idle sounds resembling parasites; 848
Like shrill-tongu'd tapsters answering every call,
Soothing the humour of fantastic wits?

She says, 'Tis so': they answer all, 'Tis so';
And would say after her, if she said 'No'. 852

Lo! here the gentle lark, weary of rest,
From his moist cabinet mounts up on high,
And wakes the morning, from whose silver breast
The sun ariseth in his majesty; 856
Who doth the world so gloriously behold,
That cedar-tops and hills seem burnish'd gold.

Venus salutes him with this fair good morrow:
'O thou clear god, and patron of all light, 860
From whom each lamp and shining star doth
borrow

The beauteous influence that makes him bright,
There lives a son that suck'd an earthly
mother,
May lend thee light, as thou dost lend to
other.' 864

This said, she hasteth to a myrtle grove,
Musing the morning is so much o'erworn,
And yet she hears no tidings of her love;
She hearkens for his hounds and for his horn:
Anon she hears them chant it lustily, 869
And all in haste she coasteth to the cry.

And as she runs, the bushes in the way
Some catch her by the neck, some kiss her face,
Some twine about her thigh to make her stay:
She wildly breaketh from their strict embrace,
Like a milch doe, whose swelling dugs do ache,
Hasting to feed her fawn hid in some brake.

By this she hears the hounds are at a bay; 877
Whereat she starts, like one that spies an adder
Wreath'd up in fatal folds just in his way,
The fear whereof doth make him shake and
shudder; 880
Even so the timorous yelping of the hounds
Appals her senses, and her spirit confounds.

For now she knows it is no gentle chase,
But the blunt boar, rough bear, or lion proud,
Because the cry remaineth in one place, 885
Where fearfully the dogs exclaim aloud:
Finding their enemy to be so curst,
They all strain courtesy who shall cope him
first. 888

This dismal cry rings sadly in her ear,
Through which it enters to surprise her heart;
Who, overcome by doubt and bloodless fear,
With cold-pale weakness numbs each feeling
part; 892
Like soldiers, when their captain once doth
yield,
They basely fly and dare not stay the field.

Thus stands she in a trembling ecstasy,
Till, cheering up her senses sore dismay'd, 896
She tells them 'tis a causeless fantasy,
And childish error, that they are afraid;
Bids them leave quaking, bids them fear no
more:
And with that word she spied the hunted
boar, 900

Whose frothy mouth bepainted all with red,
Like milk and blood being mingled both to-
gether,

A second fear through all her sinews spread,
Which madly hurries her she knows not
whither: 904
This way she runs, and now she will no further,
But back retires to rate the boar for murder.

A thousand spleens bear her a thousand ways,
She treads the path that she untreads again;
Her more than haste is mated with delays, 909
Like the proceedings of a drunken brain,
Full of respects, yet nought at all respecting,
In hand with all things, nought at all effect-
ing. 912

Here kennel'd in a brake she finds a hound,
And asks the weary caitiff for his master,

And there another licking of his wound,
'Gainst venom'd sores the only sovereign plas-
ter; 916
And here she meets another sadly scowling,
To whom she speaks, and he replies with
howling.

When he hath ceas'd his ill-resounding noise,
Another flap-mouth'd mourner, black and
grim, 920
Against the welkin volleys out his voice;
Another and another answer him,
Clapping their proud tails to the ground
below,
Shaking their scratch'd ears, bleeding as they
go. 924

Look, how the world's poor people are amaz'd
At apparitions, signs, and prodigies,
Whereon with fearful eyes they long have gaz'd,
Infusing them with dreadful prophecies; 928
So she at these sad sighs draws up her breath,
And, sighing it again, exclaims on Death.

'Hard-favour'd tyrant, ugly, meagre, lean,
Hateful divorce of love,—thus chides she
Death,— 932
'Grim-grinning ghost, earth's worm, what dost
thou mean
To stifle beauty and to steal his breath,
Who when he liv'd, his breath and beauty set
Gloss on the rose, smell to the violet? 936

'If he be dead, O no! it cannot be,
Seeing his beauty, thou shouldst strike at it;
O yes! it may; thou hast no eyes to see,
But hatefully at random dost thou hit. 940
Thy mark is feeble age, but thy false dart
Mistakes that aim and cleaves an infant's
heart.

'Hadst thou but bid beware, then he had spoke,
And, hearing him, thy power had lost his
power. 944
The Destinies will curse thee for this stroke;
They bid thee crop a weed, thou pluck'st a
flower.
Love's golden arrow at him should have fled,
And not Death's ebon dart, to strike him
dead. 948

'Dost thou drink tears, that thou provok'st
such weeping?
What may a heavy groan advantage thee?
Why hast thou cast into eternal sleeping 951
Those eyes that taught all other eyes to see?
Now Nature cares not for thy mortal vigour,
Since her best work is ruin'd with thy rigour.'

Here overcome, as one full of despair, 955
She vail'd her eyelids, who, like sluices, stopp'd
The crystal tide that from her two cheeks fair
In the sweet channel of her bosom dropp'd;
But through the flood-gates breaks the silver
rain,
And with his strong course opens them again.

O! how her eyes and tears did lend and borrow;
 Her eyes seen in the tears, tears in her eye;
 Both crystals, where they view'd each other's sorrow,
 Sorrow that friendly sighs sought still to dry;
 But like a stormy day, now wind, now rain,
 Sighs dry her cheeks, tears make them wet again.

Variable passions throng her constant woe,
 As striving who should best become her grief;
 All entertain'd, each passion labours so,
 That every present sorrow seemeth chief,
 But none is best; then join they all together,
 Like many clouds consulting for foul weather.

By this, far off she hears some huntsman holla;
 A nurse's song ne'er pleas'd her babe so well:
 The dire imagination she did follow
 This sound of hope doth labour to expel;
 For now reviving joy bids her rejoice,
 And flatters her it is Adonis' voice.

Whereat her tears began to turn their tide,
 Being prison'd in her eye, like pearls in glass;
 Yet sometimes falls an orient drop beside,
 Which her cheek melts, as scorning it should pass,
 To wash the foul face of the sluttish ground,
 Who is but drunken when she seemeth drown'd.

O hard-believing love! how strange it seems
 Not to believe, and yet too credulous;
 Thy weal and woe are both of them extremes;
 Despair and hope make thee ridiculous:
 The one doth flatter thee in thoughts unlikely,
 In likely thoughts the other kills thee quickly.

Now she unweaves the web that she hath wrought,
 Adonis lives, and Death is not to blame;
 It was not she that call'd him all to naught,
 Now she adds honours to his hateful name;
 She clepes him king of graves, and grave for kings,
 Imperious supreme of all mortal things.

'No, no,' quoth she, 'sweet Death, I did but jest;
 Yet pardon me, I felt a kind of fear
 Whenas I met the boar, that bloody beast,
 Which knows no pity, but is still severe;
 Then, gentle shadow,—truth I must confess,—
 I rail'd on thee, fearing my love's decease.

'Tis not my fault: the boar provok'd my tongue;
 Be wreak'd on him, invisible commander;
 'Tis he, foul creature, that hath done thee wrong;
 I did but act, he's author of my slander:
 Grief hath two tongues: and never woman yet,
 Could rule them both without ten women's wit.'

Thus hoping that Adonis is alive,
 Her rash suspect she doth extenuate;
 And that his beauty may the better thrive,
 With Death she humbly doth insinuate;
 Tells him of trophies, statues, tombs; and stories
 His victories, his triumphs, and his glories.

'O Jove!' quoth she, 'how much a fool was I,
 To be of such a weak and silly mind
 To wail his death who lives and must not die
 Till mutual overthrow of mortal kind;
 For he being dead, with him is beauty slain,
 And, beauty dead, black chaos comes again.

'Fie, fie, fond love! thou art so full of fear
 As one with treasure laden, hemm'd with thieves;

Trifles, unwitnessed with eye or ear,
 Thy coward heart with false bethinking grieves.
 Even at this word she hears a merry horn,
 Whereat she leaps that was but late forlorn.

As falcon to the lure, away she flies;
 The grass stoops not, she treads on it so light;
 And in her haste unfortunately spies
 The foul boar's conquest on her fair delight;
 Which seen, her eyes, as murder'd with the view,
 Like stars asham'd of day, themselves withdrew:

Or, as the snail, whose tender horns being hit,
 Shrinks backwards in his shelly cave with pain,
 And there, all smother'd up, in shade doth sit,
 Long after fearing to creep forth again;
 So, at his bloody view, her eyes are fled
 Into the deep dark cabins of her head:

Where they resign their office and their light
 To the disposing of her troubled brain;
 Who bids them still consort with ugly night,
 And never wound the heart with looks again;
 Who, like a king perplexed in his throne,
 By their suggestion gives a deadly groan,

Whereat each tributary subject quakes;
 As when the wind, imprison'd in the ground,
 Struggling for passage, earth's foundation shakes,
 Which with cold terror doth men's minds confound.
 This mutiny each part doth so surprise
 That from their dark beds once more leap her eyes;

And, being open'd, threw unwilling light
 Upon the wide wound that the boar had trench'd
 In his soft flank; whose wonted lily white
 With purple tears, that his wound wept, was drench'd:
 No flower was nigh, no grass, herb, leaf, or weed,
 But stole his blood and seem'd with him to bleed.

This solemn sympathy poor Venus noteth,
 Over one shoulder doth she hang her head,
 Dumbly she passions, frantically she doteth;
 She thinks he could not die, he is not dead:
 Her voice is stopp'd, her joints forget to bow,
 Her eyes are mad that they have wept till now.

Upon his hurt she looks so steadfastly,
 That her sight dazzling makes the wound seem three;
 And then she reprehends her mangling eye,
 That makes more gashes where no breach should be:

His face seems twain, each several limb is doubled;
 For oft the eye mistakes, the brain being troubled.

'My tongue cannot express my grief for one,
 And yet,' quoth she, 'behold two Adons dead!
 My sighs are blown away, my salt tears gone,
 Mine eyes are turn'd to fire, my heart to lead:
 Heavy heart's lead, melt at mine eyes' red fire!
 So shall I die by drops of hot desire.

'Alas! poor world, what treasure hast thou lost?
 What face remains alive that's worth the viewing?
 Whose tongue is music now? what canst thou boast
 Of things long since, or anything ensuing?
 The flowers are sweet, their colours fresh and trim;
 But true-sweet beauty liv'd and died with him.

'Bonnet nor veil henceforth no creature wear!
 Nor sun nor wind will ever strive to kiss you:
 Having no fair to lose, you need not fear;
 The sun doth scorn you, and the wind doth hiss you:
 But when Adonis liv'd, sun and sharp air
 Lurk'd like two thieves, to rob him of his fair:

'And therefore would he put his bonnet on,
 Under whose brim the gaudy sun would peep;
 The wind would blow it off, and, being gone,
 Play with his locks: then would Adonis weep;
 And straight, in pity of his tender years,
 They both would strive who first should dry his tears.

'To see his face the lion walk'd along
 Behind some hedge, because he would not fear him;
 To recreate himself when he hath sung,
 The tiger would be tame and gently hear him;
 If he had spoke, the wolf would leave his prey,
 And never fright the silly lamb that day.

'When he beheld his shadow in the brook,
 The fishes spread on it their golden gills;
 When he was by, the birds such pleasure took,
 That some would sing, some other in their bills
 Would bring him mulberries and ripe-red cherries.
 He fed them with his sight, they him with berries.

'But this foul, grim, and urchin-snouted boar,
 Whose downward eye still looketh for a grave,
 Ne'er saw the beauteous livery that he wore;
 Witness the entertainment that he gave:
 If he did see his face, why then I know
 He thought to kiss him, and hath kill'd himso.

'Tis true, 'tis true; thus was Adonis slain:
 He ran upon the boar with his sharp spear,
 Who did not whet his teeth at him again,
 But by a kiss thought to persuade him there;
 And nuzzling in his flank, the loving swine
 Sheath'd unaware the tusk in his soft groin.

'Had I been tooth'd like him, I must confess,
 With kissing him I should have kill'd him first;
 But he is dead, and never did he bless
 My youth with his; the more am I accurst.
 With this she falleth in the place she stood,
 And stains her face with his congealed blood.

She looks upon his lips, and they are pale;
 She takes him by the hand, and that is cold;
 She whispers in his ears a heavy tale,
 As if they heard the woeful words she told;
 She lifts the coffer-lids that close his eyes,
 Where, lo! two lamps, burnt out, in darkness lies;

Two glasses where herself herself beheld
 A thousand times, and now no more reflect;
 Their virtue lost, wherein they late excell'd,
 And every beauty robb'd of his effect:
 'Wonder of time,' quoth she, 'this is my spite,
 That, you being dead, the day should yet be light.

'Since thou art dead, lo! here I prophesy,
 Sorrow on love hereafter shall attend:
 It shall be waited on with jealousy,
 Find sweet beginning, but unsavoury end;
 Ne'er settled equally, but high or low;
 That all love's pleasure shall not match his woe.

'It shall be fickle, false, and full of fraud,
 Bud and be blasted in a breathing-while;
 The bottom poison, and the top o'erstraw'd
 With sweets that shall the truest sight beguile:
 The strongest body shall it make most weak,
 Strike the wise dumb and teach the fool to speak.

'It shall be sparing and too full of riot,
 Teaching decrepit age to tread the measures;
 The staring ruffian shall it keep in quiet,
 Pluck down the rich, enrich the poor with treasures;
 It shall be raging mad, and silly mild,
 Make the young old, the old become a child.

'It shall suspect where is no cause of fear;
 It shall not fear where it should most mistrust;
 It shall be merciful, and too severe,
 And most deceiving when it seems most just;
 Perverse it shall be, where it shows most toward,
 Put fear to valour, courage to the coward.

'Poor flower,' quoth she, 'this was thy father's
guise,
Sweet issue of a more sweet-smelling sire
For every little grief to wet his eyes:
To grow unto himself was his desire, 1180
And so 'tis thine; but know, it is as good
To wither in my breast as in his blood.

Here was thy father's bed, here in my breast;
Thou art the next of blood, and 'tis thy right:
Lo! in this hollow cradle take thy rest, 1185
My throbbing heart shall rock thee day and
night:
There shall not be one minute in an hour
Wherein I will not kiss my sweet love's
flower.' 1188

Thus weary of the world, away she hies,
And yokes her silver doves; by whose swift aid
Their mistress, mounted, through the empty
skies
In her light chariot quickly is convey'd; 1192
Holding their course to Paphos, where their
queen
Means to immure herself and not be seen.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY WRIOTHESLY

EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON AND BARON OF TICHFIELD

Your lordship's in all duty,
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

LUCIUS TARQUINIUS,—for his excessive pride surnamed Superbus,—after he had caused his own father-in-law, Servius Tullius, to be cruelly murdered, and contrary to the Roman laws and customs, not requiring or staying for the people's suffrages, had possessed himself of the kingdom, went, accompanied with his sons and other noblemen of Rome, to besiege Ardea. During which siege the principal men of the army meeting one evening at the tent of Sextus Tarquinius, the king's son, in their discourses after supper, every one commended the virtues of his own wife; among whom Collatinus extolled the incomparable chastity of his wife Lucretia. In that pleasant humour they all posted to Rome; and intending, by their secret and sudden arrival, to make trial of that which every one had before avouched, only Collatinus finds his wife,—though it were late in the night—spinning amongst her maids: the other ladies were all found dancing and revelling, or in several disports. Whereupon the noblemen yielded Collatinus the victory, and his wife the fame. At that time Sextus Tarquinius, being inflamed with Lucrece' beauty, yet smothering his passions for the present, departed with the rest back to the camp; from whence he shortly after privily withdrew himself, and was, according to his estate, royally entertained and lodged by Lucrece at Collatium. The same night he treacherously stealth into her chamber, violently ravished her, and early in the morning speedeth away. Lucrece, in this lamentable plight, hastily dispatcheth messengers, one to Rome for her father, and another to the camp for Collatine. They came, the one accompanied with Junius Brutus, the other with Publius Valerius; to the camp for Collatine. They came, the one accompanied with Junius Brutus, the other with Publius Valerius; to find finding Lucrece attired in mourning habit, demanded the cause of her sorrow. She, first taking an oath of them for her revenge, revealed the actor, and the whole manner of his dealing, and withal suddenly stabbed herself. Which done, with one consent they all vowed to root out the whole hated family of the Tarquins; and, bearing the dead body to Rome, Brutus acquainted the people with the doer and manner of the vile deed, with a bitter invective against the tyranny of the king: wherewith the people were so moved, that with one consent and a general acclamation the Tarquins were all exiled, and the state government changed from kings to consuls.

An expir'd date, cancell'd ere well begun:
Honour and beauty, in the owner's arms,
Are weakly fortress'd from a world of harms.

Beauty itself doth of itself persuade 29
The eyes of men without an orator;
What needeth then apology be made
To set forth that which is so singular? 32
Or why is Collatine the publisher
Of that rich jewel he should keep unknown
From thievish ears, because it is his own?

Perchance his boast of Lucrece' sovereignty 38
Suggested this proud issue of a king;
For by our ears our hearts oft tainted be:
Perchance that envy of so rich a thing,
Braving compare, disdainfully did sting 40
His high-pitch'd thoughts, that meaner men
Should vaunt
That golden hap which their superiors want

But some untimely thought did instigate
His all-too-timeless speed, if none of those: 4
His honour, his affairs, his friends, his state,
Neglected all, with swift intent he goes
To quench the coal which in his liver glows.
O! rash false heat, wrapp'd in repentant cold.
4 Thy hasty spring still blasts, and ne'er grow
old.