

SONNET. LXXI.

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

SONNET. LXXII.

Oft when my spirit doth spread her bolder winges,
In mind to mount vp to the purest sky:
it down is weighd with thought of earthly things
and clogd with burden of mortality,
Where when that souerayne beauty it doth spy,
resembling heauens glory in her light:
drawne with sweet pleasures bayt, it back doth fly,
and vnto heauen forgets her former flight.
There my fraile fancy fed with full delight,
doth bath in blisse and mantleth most at ease:
ne thinks of other heauen, but how it might
her harts desire with most contentment please.
Hart need not wish none other happinesse,
but here on earth to haue such heuens blisse.

SONNET. LXXIII.

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

SONNET. LXXIII.

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

SONNET. LXXV.

ONE day I wrote her name vpon the strand,
but came the waues and washed it a way:
agayne I wrote it with a second hand,
but came the tyde, and made my paynes his pray.
Vayne man, sayd she, that doest in vaine assay,
a mortall thing so to immortalize.
for I my selue shall lyke to this decay,
and eek my name bee wyped out lykewize.
Not so, (quod I) let baser things deuize,
to dy in dust, but you shall liue by fame:
my verse your vertues rare shall eternize,
and in the heuens wryte your glorious name.
Where whenas death shall all the world subdew,
our loue shall liue, and later life renew.

SONNET. LXXVI.

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

SONNET. LXXVII.

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

SONNET. LXXVIII.

Lackynge my loue I go from place to place,
lyke a young fawne that late hath lost the hynd:
and seeke each where, where last I sawe her face,
whose ymage yet I carry fresh in mynd.
I seeke the fields with her late footing fynd,
I seeke her bowre with her late presence deckt,
yet nor in field nor bowre I her can fynd:
yet field and bowre are full of her aspect,
But when myne eyes I thereunto direct,
they ydly back returne to me agayne,
and when I hope to see theyr trew obiect,
I fynd my selfe but fed with fancies vayne.
Ceasse then myne eyes, to seeke her selfe to see,
and let my thoughts behold her selfe in mee:

SONNET. LXXIX.

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

SONNET. LXXX.

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

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