

Why is my verse so barren of new pride?
 So far from variation or quicke change?
 Why with the time do I not glance aside
 To new found methods, and to compounds strange?
 Why write I still all one, euer the same,
 And keepe inuention in a noted weed,
 That euery word doth almost fel my name,
 Shewing their birth, and where they did proceed?
 O know sweet loue I alwaies write of you,
 And you and loue are still my argument:
 So all my best is dressing old words new,
 Spending againe what is already spent:
 For as the Sun is daily new and old,
 So is my loue still telling what is told,

Thy glasse will shew thee how thy beauties were,
 Thy dyall how thy pretious mynuits waste,
 The vacant leaues thy mindes imprint will beare,
 And of this booke, this learning maist thou taste.
 The wrinckles which thy glasse will truly show,
 Of mouthed graues will giue thee memorie,
 Thou by thy dyals shady stealth maist know,
 Times theeuish progresse to eternitie.
 Looke what thy memorie cannot containe,
 Commit to these waste blacks, and thou shalt finde
 Those children nurst, deliuerd from thy braine,
 To take a new acquaintance of thy minde.
 These offices, so oft as thou wilt looke,
 Shall profit thee, and much inrich thy booke.

So oft haue I inuok'd thee for my Muse,
 And found such faire assistance in my verse,
 As euery *Alien* pen hath got my vse,
 And vnder thee their poesie disperse.
 Thine eyes, that taught the dumbe on high to sing,
 And heauie ignorance aloft to flie,
 Haue added fethers to the learneds wing,

And giuen grace a double Maiestie.
Yet be most proud of that which I compile,
Whose influence is thine, and borne of thee,
In others workes thou doost but mend the stile,
And Arts with thy sweete graces graced be.
But thou art all my art, and doost aduance
As high as learning, my rude ignorance.

79

WHilst I alone did call vpon thy ayde,
My verse alone had all thy gentle grace,
But now my gracious numbers are decayde,
And my sick Muse doth giue an other place.
I grant (sweet loue) thy louely argument
Deserues the trauaile of a worthier pen,
Yet what of thee thy Poet doth inuent,
He robs thee of, and payes it thee againe,
He lends thee vertue, and he stole that word,
From thy behaiour, beautie doth he giue
And found it in thy cheeke: he can afford
No praise to thee, but what in thee doth liue.
Then thanke him not for that which he doth say,
Since what he owes thee, thou thy selfe doost pay,

80

OHow I faint when I of you do write,
Knowing a better spirit doth vse your name,
And in the praise thereof spends all his might,
To make me tounge-tide speaking of your fame.
But since your worth (wide as the Ocean is)
The humble as the proudest saile doth beare,
My sawsie barke (inferior farre to his)
On your broad maine doth wilfully appeare.
Your shallowest helpe will hold me vp a floate,
Whilst he vpon your soundlesse deepe doth ride,
Or (being wrackt) I am a worthlesse bote,
He of tall building, and of goodly pride.
Then if he thriue and I be cast away,
The worst was this, my loue was my decay.

OR I shall liue your Epitaph to make,
 Or you suruiue when I in earth am rotten,
 From hence your memory death cannot take,
 Although in me each part will be forgotten.
 Your name from hence immortall life shall haue,
 Though I (once gone) to all the world must dye,
 The earth can yeeld me but a common graue,
 When you intombed in mens eyes shall lye,
 Your monument shall be my gentle verse,
 Which eyes not yet created shall ore-read,
 And tongs to be, your beeing shall rehearse,
 When all the breathers of this world are dead,
 You still shall liue (such vertue hath my Pen)
 Where breath most breaths, euen in the mouths of men.

I Grant thou wert not married to my Muse,
 And therefore maiest without attaint ore-looke
 The dedicated words which writers vse
 Of their faire subiect, blessing euery booke.
 Thou art as faire in knowledge as in hew,
 Finding thy worth a limmit past my praise,
 And therefore art inforc'd to seeke anew,
 Some fresher stampe of the time bettering dayes.
 And do so loue, yet when they haue deuisde,
 What strained touches Rhethorick can lend,
 Thou truly faire, wert truly simpathizde,
 In true plaine words, by thy true telling friend.
 And their grosse painting might be better vs'd,
 Where cheekes need blood, in thee it is abus'd.

I Neuer saw that you did painting need,
 And therefore to your faire no painting set,
 I found (or thought I found) you did exceed,
 The barren tender of a Poets debt:
 And therefore haue I slept in your report,
 That you your selfe being extant well might show,
 How farre a moderne quill doth come to short,

Speaking of worth, what worth in you doth grow,
This silence for my sinne you did impute,
Which shall be most my glory being dombe,
For I impaire not beautie being mute,
When others would giue life, and bring a tombe.

There liues more life in one of your faire eyes,
Then both your Poets can in praise deuise.

84

WHo is it that sayes most, which can say more,
Then this rich praise, that you alone, are you,
In whose confine immured is the store,
Which should example where your equall grew,
Leane penurie within that Pen doth dwell,
That to his subiect lends not some small glory,
But he that writes of you, if he can tell,
That you are you, so dignifies his story.
Let him but copy what in you is writ,
Not making worse what nature made so cleere,
And such a counter-part shall fame his wit,
Making his stile admired euery where.

You to your beautious blessings adde a curse,
Being fond on praise, which makes your praises worse.

85

MY toung-tide Muse in manners holds her still,
While comments of your praise richly compil'd,
Reserue their Character with goulden quill,
And precious phrase by all the Muses fil'd.
I thinke good thoughts, whilst other write good wordes,
And like vnlettered clarke still crie Amen,
To euery Himne that able spirit affords,
In polisht forme of well refined pen.
Hearing you praisd, I say 'tis so, 'tis true,
And to the most of praise adde some-thing more,
But that is in my thought, whose loue to you
(Though words come hind-most) holds his ranke before,
Then others, for the breath of words respect,
Me for my dombe thoughts, speaking in effect.

VVAs it the proud full saile of his great verse,
 Bound for the prize of (all to precious) you,
 That did my ripe thoughts in my braine inhearce,
 Making their tombe the wombe wherein they grew?
 Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write,
 Aboue a mortall pitch, that struck me dead?
 No, neither he, nor his compiers by night
 Giuing him ayde, my verse astonished.
 He nor that affable familiar ghost
 Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,
 As victors of my silence cannot boast,
 I was not sick of any feare from thence.
 But when your countenance fild vp his line,
 Then lackt I matter, that infeebl'd mine.

FArewell thou art too deare for my possessing,
 And like enough thou knowst thy estimate,
 The Charter of thy worth giues thee releasing:
 My bonds in thee are all determinate.
 For how do I hold thee but by thy granting,
 And for that ritches where is my deseruing?
 The cause of this faire guift in me is wanting,
 And so my pattent back againe is sweruing.
 Thy selfe thou gau'st, thy owne worth then not knowing,
 Or mee to whom thou gau'st it, else mistaking,
 So thy great guift vpon misprision growing,
 Comes home againe, on better iudgement making.
 Thus haue I had thee as a dreame doth flatter,
 In sleepe a King, but waking no such matter.

VVHen thou shalt be disposde to set me light,
 And place my merrit in the eie of skorne,
 Vpon thy side, against my selfe ile fight,
 And proue thee virtuous, though thou art forsworne:
 With mine owne weakenesse being best acquainted,
 Vpon thy part I can set downe a story
 Of faults conceald, wherein I am attainted:

That thou in loosing me shall win much glory:
And I by this wil be a gainer too,
For bending all my louing thoughts on thee,
The iniuries that to my selfe I doe,
Doing thee vantage, duple vantage me.
Such is my loue, to thee I so belong,
That for thy right, my selfe will beare all wrong.

89

SAy that thou didst forsake mee for some falt,
And I will comment vpon that offence,
Speake of my lamenesse, and I straight will halt:
Against thy reasons making no defence.
Thou canst not (loue) disgrace me halfe so ill,
To set a forme vpon desired change,
As ile my selfe disgrace, knowing thy wil,
I will acquaintance strangle and looke strange:
Be absent from thy walkes and in my tongue,
Thy sweet beloued name no more shall dwell,
Least I (too much prophane) should do it wronge:
And haplie of our old acquaintance tell.
For thee, against my selfe ile vow debate,
For I must nere loue him whom thou dost hate.

90

Then hate me when thou wilt, if euer, now,
Now while the world is bent my deeds to crosse,
Ioyne with the spight of fortune, make me bow.
And doe not drop in for an after losse:
Ah doe not, when my heart hath scapte this sorrow,
Come in the rereward of a conquerd woe,
Giue not a windy night a rainie morrow,
To linger out a purposd ouer-throw.
If thou wilt leaue me, do not leaue me last,
When other pettie griefes haue done their spight,
But in the onset come, so shall I taste
At first the very worst of fortunes might.
And other straines of woe, which now seeme woe,
Compar'd with losse of thee, will not seeme so.

[Original content ©2015 by Dirk Jol]