

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

For like a child that some faire booke doth find,  
With guilded leaues or colourd Velume playes,  
Or at the most on some fine picture stayes,  
But neuer heeds the fruit of writers mind:

So when thou saw'st in Natures cabinet  
*Stella*, thou straight lookst babies in her eyes,  
In her cheekes pit thou didst thy pitfould set:

And in her breast bopeepe or couching lyes,  
Playing and shining in each outward part:  
But, foole, seekst not to get into her hart.

*Cupid*, because thou shin'st in *Stellas* eyes,  
 That from her lockes, thy dauces none scapes free,  
 That those lips sweld, so full of thee they bee,  
 That her sweete breath makes oft thy flames to rise,

That in her breast thy pap well sugred lies,  
 That her Grace gracious makes thy wrongs, that she  
 What words so ere she speake perswades for thee,  
 That her cleare voyce lifts thy fame to the skies.

Thou countest *Stella* thine, like those whose powers  
 Having got up a breach by fighting well,  
 Crie, Victorie, this faire day all is ours.

Oh no, her heart is such a Cittadell,  
 So fortified with wit, stor'd with disdain,  
 That to win it, is all the skill and paine.

Phoebus was Iudge betweene *Ioue*, *Mars*, and *Loue*,  
 Of those three gods, whose armes the fairest were:  
*Ioves* golden shield did Eagle sables beare,  
 Whose talents held young *Ganimed* aboute:

But in Vert field *Mars* bare a golden speare,  
 Which through a bleeding heart his point did shoue:  
 Each had his creast, *Mars* carried *Venus* gloue,  
*Ioue* on his helme the thunderbolt did reare.

*Cupid* then smiles, for on his crest there lies  
*Stellas* faire haire, her face he makes his shield,  
 Where roses gueuls are borne in silver field.

*Phoebus* drew wide the curtaines of the skies,  
 To blaze these last, and sware deuoutly then,  
 The first, thus matcht, were scantly Gentlemen.

Alas haue I not paine enough my friend,  
 Vpon whose breast a fiercer Gripe doth tire,  
 Then did on him who first stale downe the fire,  
 While *Loue* on me doth all his quiuer spend,

But with your Rubarb words you must contend,  
 To grieue me worse, in saying that Desire  
 Doth plunge my wel-form'd soule euen in the mire  
 Of sinfull thoughts, which do in ruine end?

If that be sinne which doth the maners frame,  
 Well staid with truth in word and faith of deed,  
 Readie of wit and fearing nought but shame:

If that be sinne which in fixt hearts doth breed  
 A loathing of all loose vnchastitie,  
 Then *Loue* is sinne, and let me sinfull be.

You that do search for euerie purling spring,  
 VWhich from the ribs of old *Parnassus* flowes,  
 And everie floure not sweet perhaps, which growes  
 Neare thereabouts, into your Poesie wring.

You that do Dictionaries methode bring  
 Into your rimes, running in ratling rowes;  
 You that poore *Petrarchs* long deceased woes,  
 VWith new-borne sighes and denisend wit do sing,

You take wrong waies those far-fet helpes be such,  
 As do bewray a want of inward tuch:  
 And sure at length stolne goods do come to light.

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

In nature apt to like when I did see  
 Beauties, which were of manie Carrets fine,  
 My boiling sprites did thither soone incline,  
 And, Loue, I thought that I was full of thee:

But finding not those restlesse flames in me,  
 Which others said did make their soules to pine:  
 I thought those babes of some pinnes hurt did whine,  
 By my soule iudging what Loue's paine might be.

But while I thus with this Lyon plaid,  
 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 haue speld,  
 I now haue learn'd Loue right, and learn'd euen so,  
 As who by being poisond doth poison know.

His mother deare *Cupid* offended late,  
 Because that *Mars* growne slacker in her loue,  
 With pricking shot he did not throughly moue  
 To keepe the pace of their first louing state.

The boy refusde for feare of *Marses* hate,  
 Who threatened stripes, if he his wrath did proue:  
 But she in chafe him from her lap did shoue,  
 Brake bow, brake shafts, while *Cupid* weeping sate:

Till that his grandame Nature pittying it,  
 Of *Stellas* browes made him two better bowes,  
 And in her eyes of arrowes infinit.

O how for ioy he leapes, ô how he crowes,  
 And straight therewith like wags new got to play,  
 Fals to shrewd turnes, and I was in his way.

With what sharpe checkes I in my selfe am shent,  
When into Reasons audite I do go:  
And by iust counts my selfe a banckrout know  
Of all those goods, which heau'n to me haue lent:

Vnable quite to pay euen Natures rent,  
Which vnto it by birthright I do ow:  
And which is worse, no good excuse can show,  
But that my wealth I haue most idly spent.

My youth doth waste, my knowledge brings forth toyes,  
My wit doth striue those passions to defend,  
Which for reward spoile it with vaine annoyes.

I see my course to loose my selfe doth bend:  
I see and yet no greater sorrow take,  
Then that I loose no more for *Stellas* sake.

On *Cupids* bow how are my heart-strings bent,  
 That see my wracke, and yet embrace the same?  
 When most I glorie, then I feele most shame:  
 I willing run, yet while I run, repent.

My best wits still their owne disgrace inuent:  
 My verie inke turnes straight to *Stellas* name;  
 And yet my words, as them my pen doth frame,  
 Auise themselues that they are vainely spent.

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

O let me prop my mind yet in his growth,  
 And not in Nature, for best fruits vnfit:  
 Scholler, saith *Loue*, bend hitherward your wit.

Flie, fly, my friends, I haue my death wound; fly,  
See there that boy, that murthring boy I say,  
Who like a theefe, hid in darke bush doth ly,  
Till bloudie bullet get him wrongfull pray.

So Tyran he no fitter place could spie,  
Nor so faire leuell in so secret stay,  
As that sweete blacke which vailes the heau'nly eye:  
There himselfe with his shot he close doth lay.

Poor passenger, passe now thereby I did,  
And staid pleasd with the prospect of the place,  
While that blacke hue from me the bad guest hid:

But straight I saw motions of lightning grace,  
And then descried the glistring of his dart:  
But ere I could flie thence, it pierc'd my heart.

[Original content ©2015 by Dirk Jol]