

With how sad steps, ô Moone, thou climb'st the skies,
 How silently, and with how wan a face.
 What may it be, that euen in heau'nly place
 That busie archer his sharpe arrowes tries?

Sure, if that long with *Loue* acquainted eyes
 Can iudge of *Loue*, thou feel'st a Louers case;
 I reade it in thy lookes; thy languisht grace
 To me that feel the like, thy state descries.

Then eu'n of fellowship, ô Moone, tell me
 Is constant *Loue* deem'd there but want of wit?
 Are Beauties there as proud as here they be?

Do they aboue loue to be lou'd, and yet
 Those Louers scorne whom that *Loue* doth possesse?
 Do they call *Vertue* there ungratefulnesse?

Morpheus the liuely sonne of deadly sleepe,
 Witnesse of life to them that liuing die:
 A Prophet oft, and oft an historie,
 A Poet eke, as humours fly or creepe,

Since thou in me so sure a power doest keepe,
 That neuer I with close vp sense do lie,
 But by thy worke (my *Stella*) I descrie,
 Teaching blind eyes both how to smile and weepe.

Vouchsafe of all acquaintance this to tell,
 Whence hast thou Iuorie, Rubies, pearle and gold,
 To shew her skin, lips, teeth, and head so well?

Foole, answers he, no *Indes* such treasures hold,
 But from thy heart, while my sire charmeth thee,
 Sweet *Stellas* image I do steale to mee.

I might, vnhappy word, ô me, I might,
And then would not, or could not see my blisse:
Till now wrapt in a most infernall night,
I find how heau'nly day wretch I did misse.

Heart rent thy selfe, thou doest thy selfe but right,
No louely *Paris* made thy *Hellen* his:
No force, no fraud, robd thee of thy delight,
Nor Fortune of thy fortune author is:

But to my selfe my selfe did giue the blow,
While too much wit (forsooth) so troubled me,
That I respects for both our sakes must show:

And yet could not by rising Morne foresee
How fair a day was neare, ô punisht eyes,
That I had bene more foolish or more wise.

Come let me write, and to what end? to ease
A burthned heart, how can words ease, which are
The glasses of thy dayly vexing care?
Oft cruell fights well pictured forth do please.

Art not asham'd to publish thy disease?
Nay, that may breed my fame, it is so rare:
But will not wise men thinke thy words fond ware?
Then be they close, and so none shall displease.

What idler thing, then speake and not be hard?
What harder thing then smart, and not to speake?
Peace foolish wit, with wit my wit is mard.

Thus write I while I doubt to write, and wreake
My harmes on Inks poore losse, perhaps some find
Stellas great powrs, that so confuse my mind.

What may words say, or what may words not say,
 Where truth it selfe must speake like flatterie?
 Within what bounds can one his liking stay,
 Where Nature doth with infinite agree?

What *Nestors* counsell can my flames alay,
 Since Reason selfe doth blow the cole in me?
 And ah what hope, that hope should once see day,
 Where *Cupid* is sworne page to Chastity?

Honour is honour'd, that thou doest possesse
 Him as thy slave, and now long needy Fame
 Doth euen grow rich, naming my *Stellas* name.

Wit learnes in thee perfection to expresse,
 Not thou by praise, but praise in thee is raisde:
 It is a praise to praise, when thou art praisde.

Stella, whence doth this new assault arise,
 A conquerd golden ransackt heart to winne?
 Whereto long since through my long battred eyes,
 Whole armies of thy beauties entred in.

And there long since, *Loue* thy Lieutenant lies,
 My forces razde, thy banners raisd within:
 Of conquest, do not these effects suffice,
 But wilt now warre vpon thine owne begin?

With so sweete voice, and by sweete Nature so
 In sweetest strength, so sweetly skild withall,
 In all sweete stratagemes, sweete Arte can show,

That not my soule, which at thy foot did fall,
 Long since, forc'd by thy beames, but stone nor tree
 By Sences priuiledge, can scape from thee.

My mouth doth water, and my breast doth swell,
My tongue doth itch, my thoughts in labour be:
Listen then Lordings with good eare to me,
For of my life I must a riddle tell.

Toward *Auroras* Court a Nymph doth dwell,
Rich in all beauties which mans eye can see:
Beauties so farre from reach of words, that we
Abase her praise, saying she doth excell:

Rich in the treasure of deseru'd renowne,
Rich in the riches of a royall heart,
Rich in those gifts which giue th'eternall crowne;

Who though most rich in these and euerie part,
Which make the patents of true worldly blisse,
Hath no misfortune, but that Rich she is.

This night while sleepe begins with heauy wings
 To hatch mine eyes, and that vnbitted thought
 Doth fall to stray, and my chiefe powres are brought
 To leaue the scepter of all subject things.

The first that straight my fancy's error brings
 Vnto my mind, is *Stellas* image, wrought
 By *Loues* own selfe, but with so curious drought,
 That she, me thinks, not onely shines but sings.

I start, looke, hearke, but what in closde vp sence
 Was held, in opend sence it flies away,
 Leauing me nought but wailing eloquence:

I seeing better sights in sights decay,
 Cald it anew, and wooed sleepe againe:
 But him her host that vnkind guest had slaine.

Come sleepe, ô sleepe, the certaine knot of peace,
 The baiting place of wit, the balme of woe,
 The poore mans wealth, the prisoners release,
 Th' indifferent Iudge betweene the high and low;

With shield of prooffe shield me from out the prease
 Of those fierce darts, dispaire at me doth throw:
 Oh make in me those ciuill warres to cease;
 I will good tribute pay if thou do so:

Take thou of me smooth pillowes, sweetest bed,
 A chamber deafe to noise, and blind to light;
 A rosie garland, and a wearie hed:

And if these things, as being thine by right,
 Moue not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me
 Liuelier then else-where *Stellas* image see.

As good to write as for to lie and grone,
O *Stella* deare, how much thy power hath wrought,
That hast my mind, none of the basest, brought
My still kept course, while other sleepe to mone.

Alas, if from the height of Vertues throne,
Thou canst vouchsafe the influence of a thought
Vpon a wretch, that long thy grace hath sought;
Weigh then how I by thee am ouerthrowne.

And then, thinke thus, although thy beautie be
Made manifest by such a victorie,
Yet noblest Conquerours do wreckes auoid.

Since then thou hast so farre subdued me,
That in my heart I offer still to thee,
O do not let thy temple be destroyd.

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