

Stella is sicke, and in that sicke bed lies

Sweetnesse, that breathes and pants as oft as she:
 And grace sicke too, such fine conclusions tries,
 That sicknesse brags it selfe best graced to be.

Beauty is sicke, but sicke in so faire guise,

That in that palanesse beauties white we see,
 And ioy which is inseperate from those eyes:
Stella now learnes (strange case) to weepe in thee.

Loue moues thy paine, and like a faithfull page

As thy lookes sturre, comes vp and downe to make
 All folkes prest at thy will thy paine to asswage,

Nature with care sweates for her darlings sake,

Knowing worlds passe, ere she enough can find
 Of such heauen stuffe, to cloath so heauenly amind.

Where be those Roses gone, which sweetned so our eyes?
 Where those red cheeks, which oft with faire encrease did frame
 The height of honor in the kindly badge of shame?
 Who hath the crimson weeds stolne from my morning skies?

How did the colour vade of those vermilion dies,
 Which Nature selfe did make, and selfe engraind the same?
 I would know by what right this palenesse ouercame
 That hue, whose force my hart still vnto thraldome ties.

Galleins adoptive sonnes, who by a beaten way
 Their iudgements hackney on, the fault on sicknesse lay,
 But feeling prooffe makes me (say they) mistake it furre:

It is but loue which makes his paper perfit white,
 To write therein more fresh the story of delight,
 While beauties reddest inke *Venus* for him doth sturre.

Oh happie Thames, that didst my *Stella* beare,
 I saw thy selfe, with many a smiling line
 Vpon thy cheerefull face, ioyes liuery weare:
 While those faire planets on thy streames did shine.

The boat for ioy could not to daunce forbear,
 While wanton winds with beauties so deuine
 Rauisht, staid not, till in her golden haire
 They did themselues (ô sweetest prison) twine.

And fain those *Æols* youth there would their stay
 Haue made, but, forst by Nature still to flie,
 First did with puffing kisse those lockes display:

She so discheueld, blusht; from window I
 With sight thereof cride out; ô fair disgrace,
 Let honor selfe to thee graunt highest place.

Enuious wits what hath bene mine offence,
 That with such poysonous care my lookes you marke,
 That to each word, nay sigh of mine you harke,
 As grudging me my sorrowes eloquence?

Ah, is it not enough, that I am thence?
 Thence, so farre thence, that scarcely any sparke
 Of comfort dare come to this dungeon darke,
 Where rigours exile lockes vp all my sense?

But if I by a happy window passe,
 If I but stars vpon mine armour beare,
 Sicke, thirsty, glad (though but of empty glasse:)

Your morall notes straight my hid meaning teare,
 From out my ribs, and puffing proues that I
 Do *Stella* loue, fooles who doth it deny?

Eleventh song.

*Who is it that this darke night,
Vnderneath my window playneth?
It is one who from thy sight,
Being (ah) exild, disdayneth
Euery other vulgar light.*

*Why alas, and are you he?
Be not yet those fancies chang'd?
Deere when you find change in me,
Though from me you be estranged,
Let my chaunge to ruine be.*

*Well in absence this will dy,
Leaue to see, and leaue to wonder:
Absence sure will helpe, if I
Can learne, how my selfe to sunder
From what in my hart doth ly.*

*But time will these thoughts remoue:
Time doth worke what no-man knoweth,
Time doth as the subiect proue,
With time still the affection groweth
In the faithfull Turtle doue.*

*What if you new beauties see,
Will not they stir new affection?
I will thinke they pictures be,
(Image like of Saints perfection)
Poorely counterfeting thee.*

*But your reasons purest light,
Bids you leaue such minds to nourish?
Deere, do reason no such spite,
Neuer doth thy beauty flourish
More, then in my reasons sight.*

*But the wrongs loue beares, will make
Loue at length leaue vndertaking;
No the more fooles it do shake,
In a ground of so firme making,
Deeper still they driue the stake.*

*Peace, I thinke that some giue eare:
Come no more, least I get anger.
Blisse, I will my blisse forbear,
Fearing (sweete) you to endanger,
But my soule shall harbour thee.*

*Well, be gone, be gone, I say,
Lest that Argus eyes perceiue you,
O vniust fortunes sway,
Which can make me thus to leaue you,
And from lowts to run away.*

Vnhappie sight, and hath she vanisht by
 So neere, in so good time so free a place?
 Dead glasse doost thou thy object so imbrace,
 As what my hart still sees thou canst not spie?

I swear by her I loue and lacke, that I
 Was not in fault, who bent thy dazling race
 Onely vnto the heau'n of *Stellas* face,
 Counting but dust what in the way did lie.

But cease mine eyes, your teares do witness well,
 That you, guiltlesse thereof, your Nectar mist:
 Curst be the page from whence the bad torch fell.

Curst be the night which did your strife resist,
 Curst be the Cochman which did drive so fast,
 With no worse curse then absence makes me tast.

O absent presence *Stella* is not here;
 False flattering hope, that with so faire a face,
 Bare me in hand, that in this Orphane place,
Stella, I say my *Stella*, should appeare.

What saist thou now, where is that dainty cheere,
 Thou toldst mine eyes should helpe their famisht case?
 But thou art gone now that selfe felt disgrace,
 Doth make me most to wish my comfort neere.

But heere I do store of faire Ladies meete,
 Who may with charme of conuersation sweete,
 Make in my heauy mould new thoughts to grow:

Sure they preuaile as much with me, as he
 That bad his friend but then new maim'd, to be
 Mery with him, and not thinke of his woe.

Stella since thou so right a Princesse art
 Of all the powers which life bestowes on me,
 That ere by them ought vndertaken be,
 They first resort vnto that soueraigne part;

Sweete for a while giue respite to my hart,
 Which pants as though it still should leape to thee:
 And on my thoughts giue thy Lieftenancy
 To this great cause, which needs both vse and art.

And as a Queene, who from her presence sends
 Whom she imployes, dismisse from thee my wit,
 Till it haue wrought what thy owne will attends.

On seruants shame oft Maisters blame doth sit;
 O let not fooles in me thy workes reprove,
 And scorning say, see what it is to loue.

When sorrow (vsing mine owne fiers might)
 Melts downe his lead into my boyling brest,
 Through that darke furnace to my hart opprest,
 There shines a ioy from thee my only light;

But soone as thought of thee breeds my delight,
 And my yong soule flutters to thee his nest,
 Most rude dispaire my daily vnbidden guest,
 Clips streight my wings, streight wraps me in his night,

And makes me then bow downe my head, and say,
 Ah what doth *Phæbus* gold that wretch auaille,
 Whom iron doores do keepe from vse of day?

So strangely (alas) thy works in me preuaile,
 That in my woes for thee thou art my ioy,
 And in my ioyes for thee my only annoy.

The end of Astrophel and Stella.