VENUS AND ADONIS.

BY

WILLIAM SHAKSPERE
SHAKSPERE'S

VENUS AND ADONIS.

THE FIRST QUARTO,
1593,

FROM THE UNIQUE ORIGINAL IN THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY, OXFORD.

A FAC-SIMILE IN PHOTO-LITHOGRAPHY
BY
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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
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VENUS AND ADONIS.

INTRODUCTION.

When we take up our Shakspere, and after reading say, Hamlet, turn to Venus and Adonis, we cannot but be conscious of an entire and total change, a change not so much in degree of poetical accomplishment as in the whole attitude of mind. Now we are far too likely, on observing it, to be simply astonished, startled, shocked if you will, and then to let the matter drop, to toss it aside with a natural but uncritical carelessness, as if the thing were of no consequence, or were an inexplicable paradox. Nothing is quite inexplicable if we will give our minds to the task of finding it out; and surely it is but due to our devotion to Shakspere to let nothing which concerns him seem to us trivial or of no account. The link between Venus and Hamlet is slight, indeed almost non-existent, if we consider simply these two works, the play and the poem, by themselves. But I think that if we look at them in their true light, as two steps in a ladder, or rather two moments in a growth, we shall see that there is no rude severance between the two, as we in our hasty unmethodical and uncritical manner are so ready to imagine, but a strict relationship and correspondence, if not to one another, at least to the poet who wrote them both, the one when he was less than thirty, and the other at perhaps forty. But to see them in their true light we must look at the circumstances of the case. We must study each in relation to its milieu; and to do so we must first cast aside that common conception of Shakspere in which he poses sublimely, with a magnificent vagueness, independent of time and place and the common conditions of life, as a sort of glorified godhead, an abstraction; as if he had been, not merely the greatest poet among men, but also hardly a man at all. Shakspere, like every great artist—poet, painter, or musician—was not less, but more, influenced than others, by the tendencies of his
age and his surroundings; for a great artist, especially in early life, is above all things receptive. The question, then, to ask ourselves, on considering a poem such as *Venus and Adonis*, the early and strange work of a great poet, is this: Under what circumstances was it produced? What influences, moral and artistic, of the surrounding society would seem likely to sway the course of its writer? It is this question, or these questions, that I shall try to answer.

When Shakspere left his beautiful woodland valley home of Stratford—close and quiet among its streams and meadows, where as a child he might

"Lie in fields and look  
Along the ground through the blown grass,  
And wonder where the city was,  
Far out of sight, whose broil and bale  
They told [him] then for a child’s tale"—

left it and came to the city, not a child then, but a young man of some two-and-twenty, seeking employment among the players, he would find himself in the midst of a strangely constituted society, a swarming medley of vice and valour, grime and splendour, finikin daintiness and brutal coarseness; everywhere a vigorous stirring of life and striking out of literature, with all the evils consequent on such an awakening, flourishing on this hand and on that. The Renaissance, or new birth of the modern world—that sudden Samson-like uprising of the slumbering intellect, growing feeble and dreamy in the bonds of the Middle Ages, on the lap of a sanctimonious lulling Dalilah, the Church—first in Italy, with Petrarch and the humanists, with coins and medals and manuscripts and the ruins of old Rome for teachers, then, gradually, one by one, in the other nations: in Germany, with a revolt against this revolt, the Reformation: in France with Ronsard and Marot and the Huguenots; arose in England, with the growing prosperity, the increased comfort and leisure of life, and the new manners and metres introduced from Italy by the courtly travelled poets, Wyatt, Surrey, Sackville, toward the end of the reign of the Eighth Henry. The interminable epic measures, the prolix storytelling in verse of Lydgate’s *Falles of Princes* and *Storie of Thebes*, the flowing verses of a monk, sitting, one can fancy, in the sun, and pouring out with neither stint nor selection the heaped-up stores of what the Middle
Ages deemed learning—all this, the delight of his age, was passed over and forgotten, and a new speech was growing up and a new spirit. Poets began to comprehend that art has its laws and limits, that there is such a thing as elegance, selection of choice epithets and orderly arrangement of parts. The sonnet was introduced, new metres practised, undreamt-of refinements attempted. Poets who had "tasted the sweete and stately measures and stile of the Italian Poesie," "novices newly crept out of the schooless of Dante, Arioste, and Petrarch,"* added a new grace and a new life to English poetry: a life that was vigorous perhaps only as a growth, a grace that had much falseness, make-believe and triviality about it. But this was only a beginning; and it grew. Not a straight and orderly growth, but a flood of life that overburst its banks and swept over-land like a torrent, breaking out and turning aside, now here, now there, with a wilful and uncheckable wildness. This fresh-found elegance, which was indeed so real and right a thing, caricatured itself. A freak of fantastic speech, refining upon refinement, and doubling in and out upon itself with the shining sinuosity of a snake—that which we usually call Euphuism,† from the pre-eminent fame of Lyly's admired book—twisted and tortured the poor English language no doubt cruelly, and ran into the most laughable eccentricities; yet it was a sign of life, a riot of imagination young and untamed, waiting the bit. Sidney's Arcadia, for instance, with all its profusion of brocade and dainty dresses, its hollow puppets (sighing shepherd-princes and smirking shepherdess-queens) inside them; with all its intolerable preciousness and affectation, its timeless and tuneless allegorising and parable-playing, is yet (let us remember) not the effete languor spasmodically jerking of an exhausted age, but the heyday blood of a new era. Moulded by this Renaissance influence—alike good and bad, life-giving and affected—two schools of poetry were formed, each at once connected and divided. The one, which we may indicate by perhaps its notablest product—

† Dr. Landmann has shown, in the New Shakspere Society's Translations, 1884, that it was rather Gongorism, got from the Spanish author Gongora. Mr. Sydney L. Lee traces the beginning of the movement in Lord Berners, about 1532.
Marlowe’s *Hero and Leander*, written at I know not what date before 1593—was frankly amorous and pagan; the other, which culminated in Spenser’s *Faerie Queene* (the first three Books appeared in 1590) was allegorical, dreamy and fantastic. In effect, the two were often mingled; both alike were held in high esteem, and formed together the body of book-read poetry.

But the Renaissance had another gift for England, and a greater, than Italianised poetry: the Drama. I call it a gift of the Renaissance, for the Renaissance was a world-wide re-awakening, not a mere revival of learning among a few Italian humanists. The Renaissance in England was properly the birth of the Drama; but the birth of the Drama was not possible till some facility in the ordinary verse-writing had been attained; nor was it at first generally recognised, I imagine, by the ingenious rhyming poets and their patrons, to be at all the superior thing that it was. The Drama, born in the universities, and due mainly to a scholastic desire on the part of Latin scholars to revive, or at least to imitate, the tragedy and comedy of antiquity, as known to them in the comedies of Plautus and the tragedies of Seneca, became almost immediately the darling of the people, well nigh weary of the buffoonery and inanity of the Mysteries and Moralities which had sufficed for the delight of the priest-ridden minds of the Middle Ages; weary of these, but trained and accustomed by them to take pleasure in a show in action. From the time that the trundling measures of *Ralph Royster Doyster* were laughed or lilted out on (may be) an Eton stage, and the chopped prose, with a gasp at the end of every ten syllables, of *Gorboduc* solemnised the Christmas merrymaking of the benchers of the Inner Temple, the modern drama was an accomplished fact, and *Othello* a possibility. A possibility, but a possibility of the future; a fact, but only in germ. When Shakspere came to London (in 1586 or thereabout) the drama was loved, hated and despised with an equal fervour. Ten years before, an angry cleric had asked in the course of a sermon: “Will not a filthy play, with the blast of a trumpet, sooner call thither a thousand, than an hour’s tolling of the bell bring to the sermon an hundred?” The people flocked into inn-yards, and stood for hours on the stones, while a
handful of actors played out on a rough scaffold under the
gallery the delectable medley of *King Cambises* ("For I
must speak in passion, and I will do it in King Cambyses' 
vein"); or it might be a story of the Fall of Troy, a pseudo-
classic comedy newly rendered from the Italian, a jumble of 
English history or a patchwork *rifacimento* of some
mythologic tale. With the growth of the taste, theatrical
accommodation grew: in 1576-7 the first theatre was built, 
and was called "The Theatre;" the "Curtaine" was in
existence in 1577, and in 1596 followed the "Blackfriars." 
Into these rough buildings—the "Blackfriars" was con-
structed out of ordinary dwelling-rooms, "The Theatre"
was mainly of wood—a motley audience, rude, boisterous,
free of speech and action to an inconceivable extent, 
crowded day by day; the common people thronged the pit,
the elegant folk sat on the stage. The passion for the 
 drama became universal; Puritans protested in vain; a 
dose of blood and horrors, or a dainty mess of scurrility, 
was worth all the sermons. But a pamphlet war raged 
between Puritan and player; and the Puritan attributed to 
the player all the wickedness that we owe to Adam. Nor 
was he entirely wrong. The player was at least no *better*
than his patrons, we may be sure; and it is a significant 
fact that these latter, very far from likely to be squeamish,
looked down on the players with a contempt that may not 
have been without its reasons. Into such society was 
Shakspere entered.

Now the question is, Was not the poem *Venus and 
Adonis*, published in 1593, after seven years life in London,
a likely, natural, nay almost necessary outcome of his 
position and surroundings, and of the ideas of poetry then 
in vogue? It is not at all necessary to believe that the
poem was literally "the first heir of his invention;" com-
posed long before its dedication to Lord Southampton, and 
before any of his plays had been written. In the first case 
it would be a false start; in the other, a deflection; and it 
is not difficult to see why the writing it would still be 
natural, even though Shakspere had already written, as is 
generally thought, four or five fine plays. At first sight it 
seems incredible that in a time which we are accustomed to 
think of as a time of plays, a poet whose genius was 
essentially dramatic, and who is known to us almost entirely
as a writer of plays, should have thought it worth his while to turn aside from his proper path and his proper task of playwriting, in order to compose a poem which to our modern notions might have been just as well left unwritten. But a closer consideration of the case will show us, I think, reasons enough.

Shakspeare took the impress of his age. The popular taste of his time was of course dramatic; and when Shakspeare began to write for the stage, he had a large number of models before him; this in subject, that in treatment, this other in style. It was not merely "Marlowe's mighty line" that taught Shakspeare—the glorious and Titanic speech of that forerunner of our poet, whose splendour and volume of sound Shakspeare himself failed at first to equal. Before Marlowe and beside him there were dramatists, insignificant by themselves, who together had nevertheless formed a certain tradition, made possible a certain style and manner; so that in his early plays Shakspeare was fully under the impression of contemporary ideas. Lyly, the introducer and populariser of the fashion of Euphuism, had himself made a laughable take-off of pedantic affectation in his Endimion, published in 1591, but most probably not written later than 1589; and it is very possible that the Sir Topias of his play suggested Don Adriano de Armado of Love's Labours Lost. Gascoigne's free translation from Ariosto's Suppositi, the comedy of The Supposes, played in 1566, was just the thing to put Shakspeare in the way of his Comedy of Errors and the other "mistaken identity" plays; while there is no need to look later than the time which produced Peele's Arraignment of Paris (1584), and other such pastorals and interludes, for a suggestion around which Shakspeare's exuberant fancy could play freely at will—for a faint foreshadowing of the delicate daintiness of The Midsummer Night's Dream, or of some parts perhaps of The Two Gentlemen of Verona. I do not press these particular points: I merely wish to show, from the evidence of those early plays which may have preceded Venus and Adonis, that Shakspeare was still in that period of probation, of brilliant working in set ways, which is usually gone through by every great artist; that he had not yet attained complete independence of spirit, complete freedom from tradition and fashion and contemporary in-
fluence. And I would further say, that just as in his plays he reflected contemporary fashions, glorified; so in his poems he was content again to reflect, alike glorified, that other literary mode which competed with the drama, and in some ways distanced it—the species of poetry of which I have spoken, the mythological and Italianised. For this was in truth the style of poetry which the literary leaders of the beau monde approved, and which everyone, I suppose, players and playwriters even, thought to be in itself a more important thing, a more grave and serious and ambitious attempt than the plays which were written but not printed, and which pleased the people. The drama, as Emerson well pointed out, had "become, by all chances, a national interest—by no means conspicuous, so that some great scholar would have thought of treating it in an English history—but not a whit less considerable because it was cheap, and of no account, like a baker's shop" (Repr. Men: Shakespeare). Or, as I might venture to express it for my argument, although it had become a national interest, yet, in current estimation, it was cheap, and of no account. Thus we can easily imagine that Shakspere would be attracted to this esteemed style of poetry, which was printed and published in books, dedicated showily to noblemen, and laid (I suppose) on the drawing-room tables of the fashionable folk who affected literature; attracted by the style itself per se, and also by the chance that it seemed to afford of a finer fame and reputation than he could get by the plays which cobblers paid their pennies to come and see.

Looking round on the mass of narrative, descriptive or lyrical poetry which the Renaissance movement from Henry VIII.'s time onward had brought into vogue, what models of poetical writing would Shakspere find in his way; what causes or influences, in himself or in them, would incline him to this choice or that, amongst styles, subjects, modes and manners of esteemed verse-writing? It was natural, in the first place, that he should look for his subjects to Italy; either to the Latin classics or the modern Italian literature. Before 1593 most of the classic poets had been translated into English; their direct influence on the English literature of the time was therefore naturally great. Besides, the modern Italian revival of paganism
and re-discovery of antiquity had penetrated deeply into
the English mind; "It was paganism," says Taine, "which
reigned at the Court of England." In 1570 Ascham com-
plained in his *Schoolmaster*, "These bee the enchantments
of Circes, brought out of Italie to marre mens maners in
England: much, by example of ill life, but more by pre-
ceptes of fonde bookes of late translated out of Italian
into English . . . . . . . There be moe of these ungracious
bookes set out in Printe wythin these fewe monethes,
than have bene sene in England many score yeares
before . . . . . . . Then they have in more reverence
the triumphes of Petrarche: than the Genesis of Moses:
They make more account of Tullies offices than S. Paules
epistles: of a tale in Bocace than a storie of the Bible."
Shakspere would read at school, and afterwards probably
in Arthur Golding's† translation (1567), Ovid's *Metamor-
phoses*, a poet and a work of poetry both, one would think,
very congenial to the Renaissance spirit. He would read
the amorous and pseudo-classic sonnets and stanzas, com-
plaints and tales and elaborate fancy-weavings, in which
the wit of the day expended itself, to no very great purpose
mainly; the one most notable exception being Marlowe's
*Hero and Leander*, which, though not published till 1598,
Shakspere may very possibly have seen before the death
of its writer in 1593. Side by side with these, he would
also read the fantasies of pure wonder-working imagination,
the chivalric and fanciful allegories which find their cul-
mination and their glorification in the *Faerie Queene*, the
first three books of which were published in 1590, and
written still earlier. These two schools, to which I have
referred above—the Latin amorous and the Italian fantastic
—would both come before Shakspere's view, either
affording him a chance of fashionable rhyming, a chance
of reputation among the wits and scholars of the day.
He chose the former; and it is not difficult to account for
his doing so.

For what tolerance could Shakspere, full of strong
vigour of soul and passionately in love with life, find or

* The *Schoolmaster*, ed. Arber, 1870, bk. i., p. 78 et passim. The
i., p. 241-5.

† This is the same who finished Sir Sydney's rendering of Philippe de
Mornay's *Traité de la Vérité de la Religion Chrétienne*. 
feel for the altogether lifeless symbolism and romantic unreality which make up the sweet and strange dreams of the mild Spenser; dreams acting themselves lengthily out in a land whose faint sunshining was not of this world, whose flowers were never breathed on by the winds of the earth’s ocean, whose sternest realities are but shadows of mortal life? Spenser’s poetry is a revolt, a recoil, from the wicked and bloody world he saw about him, from “the godless, muscular lustiness of Marlowe, Greene, and Peele,” as Vernon Lee tells us in her picturesque essay on “The School of Boiardo.”* But Shakspere could never share this sensitive estrangement from any possible world, good or bad; could never take refuge, even for poetical phrase-making, in the most exquisite Spenserian unrealties. He required, as a stay and guide to his imagination, a basis of actuality; his world, even of fairies, must be wooded with English forests and clumped over by English clowns; and the “men and women fashioned by his fancy” must be real flesh-and-blood men and women, and not ghosts of moods and morals. Turning aside from Spenser and his Ariosto, he found in the mythological or legendary school of Marlowe at least life, passion, fire; something about which he could let his imagination play without complete severance from the world and human nature. For look at the Hero and Leander of the poet whom Drayton’s finest lines praise rightly:—

“Next Marlowe, bathed in the Thespian springs,
Had in him those brave transluinar things
That the first poets had; his raptures were
All fire and air, which made his verses clear;
For that fine madness still he did retain,
Which rightly should possess a Poet’s brain.”

Marlowe’s splendid fragment, piously finished by George Chapman as well as he could, has an idealised actuality about it, very far removed from the remoteness of Spenser’s attempt at actualising ideality. Out of the Greek poem of Musaeus—supposed then to be the oldest poem in existence—Marlowe, with his sinewy strength of style and his gorgeous fancy, made a living love-tale, at once cruelly realistic and dauntlessly sublime. He never suffers us to forget that he has translated Ovid’s Amores; but that, perhaps, at the

* Euphorion, Fisher Unwin, 1884, vol. ii., p. 114; and see from p. 113 to 117.
time, was no matter. Elizabethan society, as I have said, was not squeamish; and Shakspere, when, having chosen his style and school, he sought after a seemly tale, turned to the well-thronged store-house of "Venus' Clerk," and lighted on the tale of Venus and Adonis. If Shakspere really had read Hero and Leander it is quite possible that three lines of the poem may have haunted his memory and led to his choice:

"The men of wealthy Sestos every year,
For his sake whom their goddess held so dear,
Rose-cheek'd Adonis, kept a solemn feast."

Any way, it was on this edifying subject that he made his poem, and the poem was extremely popular. 

_Venus and Adonis_ was published in 1593, by Richard Field, and sold at the sign of the White Greyhound, in St. Paul's Churchyard. It was entered in the Stationers' Register in 1603; "xviii. Aprilis: Richard Field, Assigned ouer to Master Harrison senior 25 Junij 1594: Entred for his copie vnder th[e h]andes of the Archbissop of Canterbury and master warden Stirrop a booke intituled VENUS AND ADONIS . . . vjd." (Arber's Transcript, ii., 630). In 1594 a second edition was called for; another in 1595, another in 1599, again in 1600, and twice in 1602: nor was its popularity exhausted at Shakspere's death in 1616.† It is almost needless to quote the continually-quoted words of Meres, in his _Palladis Tamia_ (1598):—"As the soule of Euphorbus was thought to live in Pythagoras, so the sweete wittie soule of Ovid liues in mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakespeare, witness his Venus and Adonis, his Lucrece, his sugred Sonnets among his private friends." A similar tone, indeed a very echo of it, is observable in the lines (quoted in Mr. Furnivall's Introduction to the Leopold Shakspere) from "A Rembrance of Some English Poets" (1598):


† The Facc-simile which follows is from the unique original Quarto in the Bodleian Library. As to succeeding editions, Q2 is printed from Q1, Q3 from Q2, Q4 from Q3, Q5 and 6 from Q4. Sir Chas. Isham's copy of 1599 will now be Q4, the old Q4 becoming Q5, and so on. _Venus_ is the only Quarto, besides _Lucrece_, which contains a signed Dedication by Shakspere, and, like _Lucrece_, was very likely supervised in its printing by Shakspere himself. His name, being attached to the Dedication, is not on the title-page.
"And Shakespeare thou, whose honey-flowing Vaine,
(Plaing the World) thy Praises doth obtaine;
Whose Venus, and whose Lureee (sweete and chaste),
Thy Name in fame’s immortal Bookc have plaet.
Line ever you! at least, in fame line ever!
Well may the Bodye die; but Fame dies nener."

A chance allusion to the poem in Thomas Heywood’s Fair Maid of the Exchange (also quoted by Mr. Furnivall)—"I never read anything but Venus and Adonis"—shows, if anything still more convincingly, the firm hold which it had of the public mind. And, as nothing is so great a tribute to a poet as imitation on the part of another,* we may well claim, I think, the Shepherd’s Song of Venus and Adonis, contributed to England’s Helicon (1600) by the devout Catholic Henry Constable, as another evidence of the esteem in which Shakspere’s poem was held: for I at least can make nothing of Constable’s tripping little lines save as the most open and definite imitation, in miniature, of the earlier poet’s large and glowing picture. This free plagiarism by Constable, his frank acceptance of the story of Venus and Adonis as an unexceptionable theme for poetry, is to me a stronger testimony than any other to the licence which even the most careful poets of the day allowed themselves. It is this same Constable who went into exile for his religious faith, and on returning stealthily to England was imprisoned for many years in the Tower; who wrote the devoutest “Spiritual Sonnets,” in which he prayed to the Virgin Mary with the passion of a lover to his lady. If Shakspere wrote his poem for reputation, he gained his end. It was Venus and Adonis that made his fame.

Let us look at it a little more closely. The story itself (Ovid,† Met. x. 9, 10) is well known; but I may give a few

- Marston’s poem of Pigmalion’s Image (1598), with its evident echoes of Venus and Adonis, is by some thought to be an imitation, by some a parody. It is quite as likely to be the former, as Mr. Furnivall suggests (Leopold Shakspere, p. xxxii-iii.)

† The indebtedness of Shakspere to Ovid, throughout the poem, has been carefully pointed out by Professor Spencer Baynes in the third of his articles on “What Shakspere learnt at School” (Fraser’s Magazine, May, 1880). “In his narrative,” says Professor Baynes, “he has borrowed not only from Ovid’s account of the same story, but from other fables, especially from those of Salmasis in the fourth book, and from the graphic picture of the hunting in Calydon, contained in the eighth book of the ‘Metamorphoses.’” Professor Baynes’ collation of lines in Shakspere and Ovid proves almost beyond question that Shakspere’s “small Latin” was at least enough for the reading of Ovid. See, on Venus and Adonis, p. 629-632 of Fraser.
lines from the beautiful episode in Keats's *Endymion*, in which the pith of the old story is exquisitely and delicately given, as only Keats could give it. The words come from a certain "feathered lyrist," or winged Cupid, watching the sleeping Adonis in the myrtle-walled magical chamber among the faery woods.

"I need not any hearing tire
By telling how the sea-born goddess pined
For a mortal youth, and how she strove to bind
Him all in all unto her doting self.
Who would not be so prison'd? but, fond elf,
He was content to let her amorous plea
Faint through his careless arms; content to see
An unseized heaven dying at his feet;
Content, O fool! to make a cold retreat,
When on the pleasant grass such love, lovelorn,
Lay sorrowing; when every tear was born
Of diverse passion; when her lips and eyes
Were closed in sullen moisture, and quick sighs
Came vex'd and pettish through her nostrils small.
Hush! no exclaim—yet, justly might'st thou call
Curses upon his head.—I was half glad,
But my poor mistress went distraught and mad,
When the boar tusk'd him: so away she flew
To Jove's high throne, and by her plainings drew
Immortal tear-drops down the thunderer's beard;
Whereon it was decreed he should be rear'd
Each summer-time to life."  

Shakspere, following his model, ends with the death of Adonis, and that divinely passionate and potent curse on love, which might be inscribed as a motto over the poetry of Young England and Young Italy of to-day, uttered by the desperate goddess over the slain body of Adonis. This is the subject. But what shall I say of Shakspere's manner of treating it?

Genius has its audacity, and is withal easily complaisant, to begin with, to the modes of the day. The speech of Shakspere's day was very outspoken, even with the most circumspect; and Shakspere, as I have shown, was thrown into necessarily the most reckless and dissolute set, the players, men who had no reputation to keep up, and many of whom were no better than they were thought to be. Does not Shakspere himself say (Sonnet cxii.):

* *Endymion, bk. ii., l. 457-478. M. Leconte de Lisle, in his *Poèmes Antiques* (Lemere, in-12, p. 242) has a delicately carved little cameo on "The Return of Adonis."
"O, for my sake do you with fortune chide,
The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
That did not better for my life provide
Than public means, which public manners breeds.
Thence comes it that my name receives a brand,
And almost thence my nature is subdued
To what it works in, like the dyer's hand:
Pity me then, and wish I were renew'd."

The poem is simply the natural result of the various conditions which I have tried to indicate: it is the work of a young man, of perfervid imagination and intense life and passion, living the ignoble life of a player, instigated possibly by fast fashionable acquaintances (such as the Earl of Southampton, to whom the poem is dedicated), and desirous on his own account to follow a current literary vogue. One can forsee that he will exceed his models, not merely in the good, but equally in the bad qualities which must inevitably result from the misused good. Shakspere's splendour of imagination, wasted on this mean stuff, infused into it an extraordinary passionateness, and a sensuality glorified and yet intensified. The analytical power which gave him the minute detail of his subsequent psychology—that crowded succession of delicate touches by which he painted throbbingly alive and bare to its recesses the human soul—diverted from its proper function, turned from psychological into physiological, becomes here a mass of too distinct detail, which is simply gross. And as Shakspere could never do a thing by halves, so into this poem he flung himself with his whole heart and the full fire and heat of his ardent imagination. It is a genuine breath of the early Renaissance spirit: it is Renaissance in its audacity, its shamelessness, its glowing and throbbing colour, as of a canvas of Correggio or Titian: a neo-pagan product, splendid and sensual, an immature maturity from which, in any time but Shakspere's, we should have augured only a succession of similar pictures, each more worthless than the last, the vice living where the poetry died off. But this is the author of Hamlet! Yes, and it is quite credible. Venus and Adonis was but a deflection, an experiment, a concession: the early excess of a strong genius not yet grown to maturity, swayed by forces whose full import he does not fully understand, the Renaissance forces which finally built up the English drama, but which at first seemed instinct only with the pagan riot of humanist Italy. Like
Goethe and Schiller, Shakspere had his "Sturm und Drang Periode;" like them he achieved fame by it; like them he passed out of it and beyond it; and just as we forget the Robbers in Wallenstein, and Werther in Wilhelm Meister, so when we read Hamlet our mind’s vision is seldom crossed by Venus and Adonis.

There are passages in the poem—we need not disguise it—which, after all allowances have been made (and these, I think, explain and excuse much), we cannot excuse; we can but regret them. But there is something more in the poem, something better, than this Latin licence; in especial, a vein of moral reflectiveness, which we seek in vain to find in Ovid, together with an "outdoor poetry" which is purely English and entirely admirable. As Professor Baynes remarks in the third of his papers on "What Shakspere learnt at School":—"While contemplating the lower passion steadily in all its force and charm, he has at the same time the larger vision which enables him to see through and beyond it, the reflective insight to measure its results, and to estimate with remorseless accuracy its true worth." That this occasional and tardy morality, or intellectual recognition of the real folly of the passion exhibited, makes very much difference to the tone of the poem, cannot, I think, be maintained. It is undoubtedly true, it is decidedly artistic, its possible presence sharply divides the modern poet and his world from the world of the Roman poet, but its moral influence on the poem itself is an influence purely external and apart: the heart of the poet is with Venus, if his head respects Adonis. The important thing to note is, that a sense of moral fitness being here present, though only as an adjunct or appendage, and by no means as a guiding principle, this quality, strengthened with the experience and the growing calmness of years, may in time become a guiding principle, and prompt to quite other kinds of work.

The "outdoor poetry" which I signalled as the second remarkable merit of the poem, has the minuteness of a professed landscape-painter, yet it is never mere landscape. Always artistically subordinate to the main action, always a background, an accompaniment of light and shade, an arrangement of harmonious dots and dashes, it adds to the interest of the two tragical and passionate figures in the
foreground, the interest of a land and sky in sympathy with them. It was not in Ovid that the poet found these things. The skies, morning-red for a stormy day (453) cloud-thronged for foul weather (972), blotted by misty vapours (181), or hushed before the rushing of the rain (458); the night-wanderers in the woods (825), the lark waking back into its shell (1033), the caterpillars' trail on the leaves (798), the rain and wind-vext day (965), the hounds (913-924), the horse (259-324), the hare and hounds (669-708); all these (and more on every page), sometimes with a delicate touch, sometimes in an elaborate description, reveal the country-bred, country-knowing and country-loving Will Shakspere of Stratford.* Such minute truth to fact could only be the result of actual personal observation of the closest kind; while in the art with which apparently prosaic details are glorified into poetry, we see the early workings of the genius of Shakspere, so ethereal, yet so little indefinite.

In the language of Venus and Adonis, as in that of Shakspere's early plays, there is everywhere the suggestion of a struggle, ending in a compromise, between naturalness and the affectation which passed as art. The

"Wild waves
Whose ridges with the meeting clouds contend,"

of line 820 come to us in company with "the sun with purple-coloured face" of line 1: by the side of pleadings of genuine human passion, words straight from the heart, with a heart's heat in them and a heart's directness, march in neat order the antitheses and allegories of the dominant Euphuism or Gongorism. A natural and inextinguishable force and freedom fight hard against the cramping affectation: neither as yet has the mastery, though nature seems like to be too strong and too wilful for bonds. The metre, no more than the language, has attained the free felicity into which Shakspere gradually grew; the lines are strong and sonorous, sweet and musical—musical always, but with something of a measured music, a too consciously measured music about them; not yet musical, as flowers are beautiful, by natural growth. Every line, almost,

* "Such lines as those about the eagle flapping, 'shaking its wings,' l. 57, over its food, send us still to the Zoological Gardens to verify."—(F. J. F., Leopold Shakspere).
has a pause in sense at the end of its due five feet; far more pauses than in the *Lucrece* of next year, though it must be remembered that the seven-line metre of the latter is more likely to carry on the sense from line to line (in its fourth and fifth) than the six-line metre of *Venus*. With the greater metrical freedom of *Lucrece* comes too more of keen worldly reflection, more restraint, and in a few parts more dramatic likelihood (as the servant in 1270), but on the whole, in real poetical power, splendid in its excess, I cannot think it the equal of the earlier poem.

Nor could it have equalled it in popularity: there were only five editions of *Lucrece* during Shakspere's lifetime, as against eight of *Venus.* Perhaps it was the lesser success of his second poem that drove Shakspere back to his right employment, the drama. Perhaps the mood was exhausted: perhaps his end had been gained. *Venus and Adonis* had brought him into reputation with the wits as a poet amongst those "who are most passionate to bewail and bemoane the perplexities of Love;" and the further fame of *Romeo and Juliet*, most commonly placed about this period, though I should like to believe it was written after, and not before *Venus and Adonis*—the latter the dross, the former the pure fire-tried gold—had probably confirmed Shakspere in his henceforth unbroken devotion to the drama. I say unbroken, because the sonnets, printed in 1609, and perhaps then without the poet's consent, were no doubt written at various periods in Shakspere's life, for his own pleasure merely, and that of his friends; while *The Passionate Pilgrim* of 1598 is certainly a pirate's trick, and very improbably includes anything by Shakspere, beyond the two unprinted sonnets (I., II.) and the sonnets and song from *Love's Labours Lost* (III., V., XVI.). Shakspere was gaining strength, gaining independence, gaining judgment. The author of *Venus and Adonis* was on the way to become the author of *Hamlet*, the great dramatic mirrorer, the great moral teacher, of his own and every age. For between these two, so unlike that the contrast startles us, there is a period of growth, not a gulf of severance; a passage of years, during which unripeness may become ripe, and passion be mellowed into wisdom.

* In 1594, 1598, 1600, 1607, 1616.
† In 1593, 1594, 1596, 1599, 1600, 1602a, 1602b.
In *Venus and Adonis* we see the author of *Hamlet*, young; in *Hamlet* we see the author of *Venus and Adonis*, grown older and grown wiser. Can we expect that the two should be similar? could we wish it? The chambers of the House of Life are not of one even whiteness, the pure unbroken whiteness of whitewash; they are coloured with divers colours, they are hung with the arras woven of dreams and deeds, and the picturings upon the walls of the chambers of the House of Life are many.

**Arthur Symons.**

The present Fac-simile is from the unique original in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

In previous Fac-similes the letters c and e, r and t, f and s, are occasionally difficult to distinguish, from the type of the original being battered. In all such cases it may be safely assumed that the letter which should be right, is meant. In 2 Henry IV., IV. iii. 45, p. 58, last line, "hooke-nosoe," should be "hook-nosle," the upright of the d unluckily failed to print. Henceforth, all sheets will be passed for press by the Editor as well as the Lithographer.

*Troilus and Cressida* is partly on the stone; *Richard II.*, Qo. 1, will be put on forthwith.—F.J.F.
VENVS
AND ADONIS

Vilia miretur vulgus: mibi stans Apollo
Pocula Castaliaplena ministret aqua.

LONDON
Imprinted by Richard Field, and are to be sold at
the signe of the white Greyhound in
Paules Church-yard.
1593.
TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE
Henrie VVriothesley, Earle of Southampton,
and Baron of Titchfield.

Right Honourable, I know not how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolisht lines to your Lordship, nor how the worlde will censure mee for choosing so strong a proppe to support so weeake a burthen, onelye if your Honour seeme but pleased, I account my selfe highly praised, and vowe to take advantage of all idle houres, till I haue honoured you with some grafuer labour. But if the first heire of my inuention prooue deformed, I shall be sorry it had so noble a god-father: and never after eare so barren a land, for feare it yeeldme still so bas a harvest, I leave it to your Honourable suruey, and your Honor to your hearts content which I wish may alwaies ansuere your owne wish, and the worlds hopefull expectation.

Your Honors in all dutie,

William Shakespeare.
VENUS AND ADONIS.

Ev'n as the sunne with purple-colour'd face,
Had tane his last leave of the weeping morn,
Rose-cheek'd Adonis hied him to the chase,
Hunting he loud, but lour'd he laught to scorn:
   Sick-thoughted Venus makes amain vn to him,
   And like a bold face'd suter giness to woo him.

Thrice fairer then my selfe, (thus she began)
The fields chiefe flower, sweet above compare,
Staine to all Nimphs, more louely then a man,
More white, and red, then dores, or roses are:
   Nature that made thee with her selfe at strife,
   Saith that the world hath ending with thy life.

Vouchsafe thou wonder to alight thy steed,
And raine his proud head to the saddle bow,
If thou wilt daine this favor, for thy meed
A thousand honie secrets shalt thou know:
   Here come and sit, where never serpent hisses,
   And being set, Ile smother thee with kisses.

B
VENUS AND ADONIS.

And yet not cloy thy lips with loth'd lascivie,
But rather famish them amid their plentie,
Making them red, and pale, with fresh varietie:
Ten kisses short as one, one long as twentieth:
A sommers day will seeme an houre but short,
Being wafted in such time-beguiling sport.

With this she ceazeth on his sweating palme,
The president of pith, and liuelyhood,
And trembling in her passion, calls it balme,
Earth's soueraigne value, to do a goddesse good,
Being so enrag'd, desire doth lend her force,
Couragiously to plucke him from his horse.

Over one arme the lustie coursers raine,
Under her other was the tender boy,
Who bluht, and powted in a dull disdaine,
With leaden appetite, vnapt to toy,
She red, and hot, as coles of glowing fier,
Hered for shame, but frostie in desier.

The studded bridle on a ragged bough,
Nimbly she fastens, (o how quicke is love!)
The steed is stalled vp, and euen now,
To tie the rider she begins to proove:
Backward she pusht him, as she would be thrust,
And gouernd him in strenght though not in lust.
VENVS AND ADONIS.

So soone was she along, as he was downe,
Each leaning on their elbowes and their hips:
Now doth she stroke his cheek, now doth he frown,
And gins to chide, but soone she stops his lips,
And kissing speaks, with lustfultul language broken,
If thou wilt chide, thy lips shall neuer open.

He burnes with bashfull shame, she with her teares
Doth quench the maiden burning of his cheekes,
Then with her windie sighes, and golden heares,
To fan, and blow them drie againe the sekekes.
He faith, she is immodest, blames her misle,
What followes more, she murthers with a kiffe.

Euen as an emptie Eagle sharpe by fast,
Tires with her beake on feathers, flesh, and bone,
Shaking her wings, deuouring all in haste,
Till either gorge be full, or pray be gone:
Euen so she kiss his brow, his cheeke, his chin,
And where she ends, she doth anew begin.

Forst to content, but neuer to obey,
Panting he lies, and breatheth in her face.
She feedeth on the steame, as on a pray,
And calls it heauenly moisture, aire of grace,
Wishing her cheeks were gardens full of flowers,
So they were dew'd with such distilling showers.
VENVS AND ADONIS.

Looke how a bird lyes tangled in a net,
So fastned in her armes Adonis lyes,
Pure shame and aw'd resistance made him fret,
Which bred more beautie in his angrie eyes:
Raine added to a riuier that is ranke,
Perforce will force it ouerflow the banke.

Still she intreats, and prettily intreats,
For to a prettie eare she tunes her tale.
Still is he fullein, still he lowres and frets,
Twixt crimson shame, and anger ashie pale,
Being red she loues him best, and being white,
Her best is betterd with a more delight.

Looke how he can, she cannot chuse but loue,
And by her faire immortall hand she sweares,
From his soft bosome neuer to remoue,
Till he take truce with her contending teares,
Which log haue raind, making her cheeks al wet,
And one sweet kisse shal pay this compleisse debt.

Vpon this promise did he raise his chin,
Like a duedapper peering through a waue,
Who being lookt on, ducks as quickly in:
So offers he to giue what she did craue,
But when her lips were readie for his pay,
He winks, and turns his lips another way. Neuer
VENUS AND ADONIS.

Neuer did passenger in sommers heat,
More thirst for drinke, then she for this good turne,
Her helpe she sees, but helpe she cannot get,
She bathes in water, yet her fire must burne:

Oh pitie gan she crie, flint-hearted boy,
Tis but a kisie I begge, why art thou coy ?

I haue bene wooed as I intreat thee now,
Euen by the sterne, and direfull god of warre,
VWhose sinowie necke in battell nere did bow,
VWho conquers where he comes in euerie iarre,

Yet hath he bene my captiue, and my flaeue,
And begd for that which thou vnaskt shalt haue.

Ouer my Altars hath he hong his launce,
His battred shield, his vncontrolled crest,
And for my sake hath learnd to sport, and daunce,
To toy, to wanton, dallie, smile, and iest,

Scorning his churlish drumme, and ensigne red,
Making my armes his field, his tent my bed.

Thus he that ouer-ruld, I ouer-swayed,
Leading him prisoner in a red rose chaine,
Strong-temperd steele his stronger strength obeyed.
Yet was he servile to my coy disdaine,

Oh be not proud, nor brag not of thy might,
For maistring her that foyled the god of fight.

B iiij
VENVS AND ADONIS.

Touch but my lips with those faire lips of thine,
Though mine be not so faire, yet are they red,
The kisse shalbe thine owne as well as mine,

V Vhat feest thou in the ground? hold vp thy head,
   Looke in mine ey-bals, there thy beautie lyes,
Then why not lips on lips, since eyes in eyes?

Art thou asham'd to kisse? then winke againe,
And I will winke, so shall the day seeme night.
Looke keepes his reuels where there are but twaine:
Be bold to play, our sport is not in fight,
   These blew-veind violets whereon we leane,
   Neuer can blab, nor know not what we meane.

The tender spring vpon thy tempting lip,
Shewes thee vnripe; yet maist thou well be tafted,
Make vs of time, ler not advantage slip,

Beautie within it selfe should not be wasted,
   Faire flowers that are not gathered in their prime,
   Rot, and consume them selues in little time.

V Vere I hard-fauourd, foule, or wrinkled old,
Il-nurtur'd, crooked, churlish, harsh in voice,
Ore-worne, despised, reumatique, and cold,

Thick-sighted, barren, leane, and lacking iuyce;
   The mightst thou pause, for the I were not for thee,
But hauing no defects, why doest abhor me?

Thou
VENVS AND ADONIS.

Thou canst not see one wrinkle in my brow,
Mine eyes are grey, and bright, & quicke in turning:
My beautie as the spring doth yearelie grow,
My flesh is soft, and plumpe, my marrow burning,
   My smooth moist hand, were it with thy hand felt,
   Would in thy palme dissolue, or seeme to melt.

Bid me discourse, I will inchaunt thine eare,
Or like a Fairie, trip vpon the greene,
Or like a Nymph, with long disheueled heare,
Daunce on the sands, and yet no footing seene.
   Love is a spirit all compact of fire,
   Not grosse to sinke, but light, and will aspire.

Vvitnesse this Primrose banke whereon I lie,
These forceleffe flowers like sturdy trees support me:
Two streghtles doues will draw me through the skie,
From morn till night, even where I lift to sport me.
   Is love so light sweet boy, and may it be,
   That thou should thinke it heauie unto thee?

Is thine owne heart to thine owne face affected?
Can thy right hand ceaze love upon thy left?
Then woo thy selfe, be of thy selfe rejected:
Steale thine owne freedome, and complaine on thee.
   Narcissus so him selfe him selfe forsooke,
   And died to kisse his shadow in the brooke.
VENUS AND ADONIS.

Torches are made to light, jewels to weare,
Dainties to tast, fresh beautie for the ufe,
Herbes for their smell, and lappie plants to beare.

Things growing to them selues, are growths abuse,
Seeds spring fro seeds, & beauty breedeth beauty,
Thou waft begot, to get it is thy duty.

Upon the earths increase why shouldst thou feed,
Unlesse the earth with thy increase be fed?
By law of nature thou art bound to breed,
That thine may liue, when thou thy selfe art dead:

And so in spite of death thou dost suruiue,
In that thy likeness still is left aliue.

By this the loue-ficke Queene began to sweate,
For where they lay the shadow had forlooke them,
And Titan tired in the midday heate,

With burning eye did hotly ouer-looke them,
Wishing Adonis had his teame to guide,
So he were like him, and by Venus side.

And now Adonis with a lazie sprite,
And with a beaute, darke, disliking eye,
His lowring browes ore-whelming his faire sight,
Likd mistie vapors when they blot the skie,

So wring his cheekes, cries, fie, no more of loue,
The sunne doth burne my face I must remoue.

Ay, me,
VENUS AND ADONIS.

Ay, me, (quoth Venus) young, and so vnkinde,
What bare excuses makst thou to be gon?
Ile sigh celestiall breath, whose gentle winde,
Shall coole the heate of this descending sun:
Ile make a shadow for thee of my heares,
If they burn too, Ile quench them with my teares.

The sun that shines from heauen, shines but warme,
And lo I lyse betweene that sunne, and thee:
The heate I haue from thence doth little harme,
Thine eye darts forth the fire that burneth me,
And were I not immortall, life were done,
Betweene this heauenly, and earthly sunne.

Art thou obdurate, flintie, hard as steele?
Nay more then flint, for stone at raine relenteth:
Art thou a womanes Ionne and canst not seele
What tis to loue, how want of loue tormenteth?
O had thy mother borne so hard a minde,
She had not brought forth thee, but died vnkind.

What am I that thou shouldst contemne me this?
Or what great danger, dwells upon my sute?
What were thy lips the worse for one poore kis?
Speake faire, but speake faire words, or else be mute:
Give me one kisse, Ile giue it thee againe,
And one for intrest, if thou wilt haue twaine.
VENVS AND ADONIS.

Fie, liueless picture, cold, and fenecelesse stone,
Well painted idoll, image dull, and dead,
Statüe contenting but the eye alone,
Thing like a man, but of no woman bred:
    Thou art no man, though of a mans complexion,
    For men will kiffe euen by their owne direction.

This said, impatience chokes her pleading tongue,
And swelling passion doth prouoke a pause,
Red cheeks, and ferie eyes blaze forth her wrong:
Being Judge in loue, she cannot right her caufe.
    And now she weeps, & now she faine would speake
    And now her sobs do her intendments breake.

Sometime she shakes her head, and then his hand,
Now gazeth she on him, now on the ground;
Sometime her armes infold him like a band,
She would, he will not in her armes be bound:
    And when from thence he strugles to be gone,
    She locks her lillie fingers one in one.

Fondling, she faith, since I haue hemd thee here
Within the circuit of this iuorie pale,
Ile be a parke, and thou shalt be my deare:
Feed where thou wilt, on mountaine, or in dale;
    Graze on my lips, and if those hills be drie,
    Stray lower, where the pleafant fountaines lie.

Within
Venus and Adonis.

V Vitin this limit is relieve inough,
Sweet botome grass, and high delightfull plaine,
Round rising hillocks, brakes obscure, and rough,
To shelter thee from tempest, and from raine:
    Then be my deare, since I am such a parke,
    No dog shal rowze thee, though a thousand bark.

At this Adonis smiles as in disdaine,
That in each cheeke appears a prettie dimple;
Loue made those hollowes, if him selfe were slaine,
He might be buried in a tombe so simple,
    Foreknowing well, if there he came to lie,
    
V Why there loue liu'd, & there he could not die.

These louely caues, these round enchanting pits,
Opend their mouthes to swallow Venus liking:
Being mad before, how doth she now for wits?
Strucke dead at first, what needs a second striking?
    Poore Queene of loue, in thine owne law forlorn,
    To loue a cheeke that smiles at thee in scorne.

Now which way shall she turne? what shall she say?
Her words are done, her woes the more increasong,
The time is spent, her obieqet will away,
And from her twining armes doth vrge releasong:
    Pitie she cries, some fauour, some remorse,
    Away he springs, and hasteth to his horse.
VENUS AND ADONIS.

But lo from forth a copp's that neighbors by,
A breeding lennet, lustie, young, and proud,
Adonis trampling Courser doth espy:
And forth the rushes, shorts, and neighs aloud.

The strong-neckt steed being tied vnto a tree,
Breaketh his raine, and to her straight goes hec.

Imperiously he leaps, he neighs, he bounds,
And now his wouen girthes he breaks asunder,
The bearing earth with his hard hoofe he wounds,
Whose hollow wombe resounds like heauens thun-
The yron bit he crusheth tweene his teeth, (der,
Controlling what he was controlled with.

His eares vp prickt, his braided hanging mane
Vpon his compaft crest now stand on end,
His nostrils drinke the aire, and forth againe
As from a fornace, vapors doth he send:

His eye which scornfully glisters like esire,
Shewes his hote courage, and his high desire.

Sometime he trots, as if he told the steps,
VWith gentle maieftie, and modest pride,
Anon he reres vpright, curuets, and leaps,
As who should say, lo thus my strengthe is tride.

And this I do, to captiuate the eye,
Of the faire breeder that is standing by.

VVhat
VENVS AND ADONIS.

What recketh he his riders angrie spurre,
His flattering holla, or his stand, I say,
What cares he now, for curbe, or pricking spurre,
For rich caparisons, or trappings gay:
   He sees his love, and nothing else he sees,
   For nothing else with his proud sight agrees.

Looke when a Painter would surpass the life,
In limming out a well proportioned steed,
His Art with Natures workmanship at strife,
As if the dead the living should exceed:
   So did this Horse excell a common one,
   In shape, in courage, colour, pace and bone.

Round hooft, short joynted, fetlocks shag, and long,
Broad breast, full eye, small head, and nostrill wide,
High creft, short cares, straight legs, & passing stræg,
Thin mane, thicke taile, broad buttock, tender hide:
   Looke what a Horse should haue, he did not lack,
   Saue a proud rider on so proud a back.

Sometime he scuds farre off, and there he stares,
Anon he starts, at sturring of a feather:
To bid the wind a base he now prepares,
And where he runne, or fly, they know not whether:
   For through his mane, & taile, the high wind sings,
   Fanning the haires, who waue like feathred wings.
VENUS AND ADONIS.

He lookes vpon his loue, and neighes vnto her,
She answers him, as if she knew his minde,
Being proud as females are, to see him woo her,
She puts on outward strangenesse, seemes vnkinde:
Spurnes at his loue, and scorns the heat he feeles,
Beating his kind embracements with her heeles.

Then like a melancholy malcontent,
He vailles his tale that like a falling plume,
Coole shadow to his melting buttocke lent,
He stamps, and bites the poore flies in his sume:
His loue perceiuing how he was inrag'd,
Grew kinder, and his furie was affwag'd.

His trestie maister goeth about to take him,
VWhen lo the vnbackt breeder full of feare,
Jealous of catching, swiftly doth forfake him,
VWith her the Horfe, and left Adonis there:
As they were mad vnto the wood they hie them,
Out stripping crowes, that strieue to ouersfly them.

All swolne with chafing, downe Adonis sits,
Banning his boystrous, and vnruuly beast;
And now the happie season once more fits
That loues icke loue, by pleading may be blest:
For louers say, the heart hath treble wrong,
VWhen it is bard the aydance of the tongue.
VENVS AND ADONIS.

An Ouen that is ftopt, or riuier fayd,
Burneth more hotly, swelleth with more rage:
So of concealed forrow may be fayd,
Free vent of words loues fier doth affwage,
But when the hearts atturren[y once is mute,
The client breakes, as desperat in his sute.

He sees her comming, and begins to glow:
Euen as a dying coale reuiues with winde,
And with his bonnet hides his angrie brow,
Lookes on the dull earth with disturbed minde:
Taking no notice that she is fo nye,
For all askance he holds her in his eye.

O what a figh[t it was wiffly to view,
How she came ftealing to the wayward boy,
To note the fighting conflict of her hew,
How white and red, ech other did destroy:
But now her cheeke was pale, and by and by
It flasht forth fire, as lightning from the skie.

Now was she iuft before him as he fat,
And like a lowly louer downe she kneecles,
VWith one faire hand she heaueth vp his hat,
Her other tender hand his faire cheeke feeles:
His tenderer cheeke, receiues her soft hands print,
As apt, as new falne snow takes any dint.
VENVS AND ADONIS.

Oh what a war of lookes was then betweene them,
Her eyes petitioners to his eyes suing,
His eyes saw her eyes, as they had not seen them,
Her eyes wooed still, his eyes disdain'd the wooing:
And all this dumb play had his acts made plain,
With tears which Chorus-like her eyes did rain.

Full gently now she takes him by the hand,
A lillie prisond in a gaile of snow,
Or Iuorie in an allablaste band,
So white a friend, ingirts so white a fo:
This beautious combat willfull, and vnwilling,
Showed like two siluer doues that fit a billing.

Once more the engin of her thoughts began,
O fairest mourer on this mortall round,
Would thou wert as I am, and I a man,
My heart all whole as thine, thy heart my wound,
For one sweet looke thy helpe I would assure thee,
Thogh nothing but my bodies bane wold cure thee

Give me my hand (faith he,) why dost thou seele it?
Give me my heart (faith she,) and thou shalt haue it.
O give it me lest thy hard heart do steele it,
And being steeled, soft sighes can never graue it.
Then loues deepe grones, I neuer shall regard,
Because Adonis heart hath made mine hard.

For
VENVS AND ADONIS.

For shame he cries, let go, and let me go,
My days delight is past, my horse is gone,
And tis your fault I am bereft him so,
I pray you hence, and leave me here alone,
   For all my mind, my thought, my busie care,
   Is how to get my palfrey from the mare.

Thus she replies, thy palfrey as he should,
VWelcomes the warme approach of sweet desire,
Affection is a coale that must be coold,
Else sufferd it will set the heart on fire,
   The sea hath bounds, but deepe desire hath none,
   Therefor no maruell though thy horse be gone.

How like a iade he stood tied to the tree,
S eruilly maisterd with a leathern e raine,
Bnt when he saw his loue, his youths faire fee,
He held such pettie bondage in disdaine:
   Throwing the base thong from his bending crest,
   Enfranchising his mouth, his backe, his brest.

VWho sees his true-loue in her naked bed,
Teaching the sheets a whiter hew then white,
But when his glutton eye so full hath fed,
His other agents ayme at like delight?
VWho is so faint that dares not be so bold,
   To touch the fier the weather being cold?

D
VENVS AND ADONIS.

Let me excuse thy courser gentle boy,
And learne of him I heartily beseech thee,
To take advantage on presented joy,
Though I were dube,yet his proceedings teach thee
O learne to loue, the lesson is but plaine,
And once made perfect, neuer lost againe.

I know not loue (quoth he) nor will not know it,
Vnlesse it be a Boare,and then I chase it,
Tis much to borrow, and I will not owe it,
My loue to loue, is loue, but to disgrace it,
For I haue heard, it is a life in death,
That laughs and weeps, and all but with a breath.

VWho weares a garment shapelesse and vnfinisht?
VWho plucks the bud before one leafe put forth?
If springing things be anie iot diminishing,
They wither in their prime, proue nothing worth,
The colt that's backt and burthend being yong,
Loseth his pride, and neuer waxeth strong.

You hurt my hand with wringing,let vs part,
And leaue this idle theame, this bootlesse chat,
Remoue your siege from my vnyeelding hart,
To loues allarmes it will not ope the gate,
Dismisse your vows,your fained tears,your flattery,
For where a heart is hard they make no battre.
VENUS AND ADONIS.

What canst thou talke (quoth she) hast thou a tong?
O would thou hadst not, or I had no hearing, Thy marmades voice hath done me double wrong, I had my lode before, now prest with bearing, Mellodious discord, heauenly tune harsh sounding, Eares deep sweet musik, & harts deep sore wounding

Had I no eyes but eares, my eares would loue, That inward beautie and invisible, Or were I deafe, thy outward parts would moue Ech part in me, that were but sensible, Though neither eyes, nor eares, to heare nor see, Yet should I be in loue, by touching thee.

Say that the fence of feeling were bereft me, And that I could not see, nor heare, nor touch, And nothing but the verie smell were left me, Yet would my loue to thee be still as much, For frō the stillitorie of thy face excelling, Coms breath perfumd, that breedeth loue by smel-

But oh what banquet wert thou to the taft, Being nourse, and feeder of the other soure, Would they not wish the feast might ever last, And bid suspition double looke the dore; Left jealousie that sower vnwelcome guest, Should by his stealing in disturbe the feast?

Dij
VENUS AND ADONIS.

Once more the rubi-coloured portall opend,
Which to his speech did honie passage yeeld,
Like a red mornethat euer yet betokend,
Vvracke to the sea-man, tempest to the field:
Sorrow to shepherds, wot unto the birds,
Gusts, and soule flawes, to heardmen, & to herds.

This ill prelange aduisedly she marketh,
Euen as the wind is husht before it raineth:
Or as the wolfe doth grin before he barketh:
Or as the berrie breakes before it staineth:
Or like the deadly bullet of a gun:
His meaning strucke her ere his words begun.

And at his looke she flatly falleth downe,
For lookes kill loue, and loue by lookes reuiueth,
A smile recures the wounding of a frowne,
But blessed bankrout that by loue so thriueth.
The sillie boy beleeuing she is dead,
Claps her pale cheeke, till clapping makes it red.

And all amaz'd, brake off his late intent,
For sharply he did thinke to reprehend her,
VVhich cunning loue did wittily preuent,
Faire-fall the wit that can so well defend her:
For on the grasse she lyes as she were slaine,
Till his breath breatheth life in her againe.

He
VENUS AND ADONIS.

He wrings her nose, he strikes her on the cheekes,
He bends her fingers, holds her pulses hard,
He chases her lips, a thousand wayes he seeks,
To mend the hurt, that his vnkindnesse mard,
He kisses her, and she by her good will,
Will never rise, so he will kiss her still.

The night of sorrow now is turn'd to day,
Her two blew windowes faintly she vpheaueth,
Like the faire sunne when in his fresh array,
He cheers the morn, and all the earth releeueth:
    And as the bright sunne glorifies the skie:
    So is her face illumind with her eye.

Whose beames upon his haireless face are fixt,
As if from thence they borrowed all their shine,
Were never foure such lamps, together mixt,
Had not his clouded with his browes repine.
    But theirs, which through the cristal tears gaulight,
Shone like the Moone in water scene by night.

O where am I (quoth she,) in earth or heauen,
Or in the Ocean drencht, or in the fire:
What hour is this, or morn, or wearie euen,
Do I delight to die or life desire?
    But now I liu'd, and life was deaths annoy,
    But now I dy'de, and death was liuely joy.

D iiij
VENVS AND ADONIS.

O thou didst kill me, kill me once again,
Thy eyes shrowd tutor, that hard heart of thine,
Hath taught them scornfull tricks, & such disdain,
That they have murdered this poor heart of mine,
And these mine eyes true leaders to their queen,
But for thy pitieous lips no more had seen.

Long may they kiss each other for this cure,
Oh neuer let their crimson liueries wear,
And as they last, their verdour still endure,
To drive infection from the dangerous yeare:
That the star-gazers having writ on death,
May say, the plague is banisht by thy breath.

Pure lips, sweet seals in my soft lips imprinted,
What bargains may I make still to be sealing?
To sell my selfe I can be well contented,
So thou wilt buy, and pay, and use good dealing,
Which purchase if thou make, for feare of slips,
Set thy seal manuell; on my wax-red lips.

A thousand kisses buyes my heart from me,
And pay them at thy leisure, one by one,
What is ten hundred touches vnto thee,
Are they not quickly told, and quickly gone?
Say for non-paimet, that the debt should double,
Is twentie hundred kisses such a trouble?

Faire
VENVS AND ADONIS.

Faire Queene (quoth he) if anie loue you owe me,
Measure my strangenesse with my vnripe yeares,
Before I know my selfe, seeke not to know me,
No fishe but the vngrowne frie forbeares,
The mellow plum doth fall, the greene sticks fast,
Or being early pluckt, is fower to taft.

Looke the worlds comforter with wearie gate,
His dayes hot taske hath ended in the west,
The owle (nights herald) shrecks, tis verie late,
The sheepe are gone to fold, birds to their nest,
And cole-black clouds, that shadow heauens light,
Do summon vs to part, and bid good night.

Now let me say goodnight, and so say you,
If you will say so, you shall have a kis;
Goodnight (quoth she) and ere he sayes adue,
The honie fee of parting tendred is,
Her armes do lend his necke a sweet imbrace,
Incorporate then they seeme, face growes to face.

Till breathlesse he disjoynd, and backward drew,
The heauenly moisture that sweet corall mouth,
VWhose precious taft, her thirstie lips well knew,
VWherewith they suffret, yet complaine on drouth,
Ho with her plentie pret, she faint with dearth,
Their lips together glewed, fall to the earth.
VENUS AND ADONIS.

Now quicke desire hath caught the yeelding pray,
And gluttonlike she feeds, yet neuer filleth,
Her lips are conquerers, his lips obay,
Paying what ranosome the insolter willeth:

VWhose vultur thought doth pitch the price so hie,
That she will draw his lips rich treasure drie.

And hauing felt the sweetnesse of the spoile,
With blind fold furie she begins to forrage,
Her face doth reeke, & smoke, her blood doth boile,
And carelesse lust stirs vp a desperat courage,
Planting obliuion, beating reason backe,
Forgetting shames pure blush, & honors wracke.

Hot, faint, and wearie, with her hard imbracing,
Like a wild bird being tam'd with too much handling,
Or as the fleet-foot Roe that's tyr'd with chaising,
Or like the froward infant stild with dandling:

He now obayes, and now no more resisteth,
VWhile she takes all she can, not all she listeth.

VWhat waxe so frozen but dissolues with tempring,
And yeelds at last to euerie light impression?
Things out of hope, are compast oft with ventring,
Chiefly in loue, whose leaue exceeds commissioun:

Affection faints not like a pale-fac'd coward,
But the woes best, whe most his choice is froward.
VENUS AND ADONIS.

When he did frowne, ò had she then gave ouer,
Such nectar from his lips she had not suckt,
Foule wordes, and frownes, must not repell a louer,
What though the rose haue prickles, yet tis pluckt?
Were beautie vnder twentie locks kept faft,
Yet loue breaks through, & picks them all at laft.

For pittie now she can no more detaine him,
The poore foole praieth her that he may depart,
She is resolu'd no longer to restraine him,
Bids him farewell, and looke well to her hart,
   The which by Cupids bow she doth proteft,
   He carries thence incaged in his brest.

Sweet boy she saies, this night ile waft in sorrow,
For my sick heart commands mine eyes to watch,
Tell me loues maister, shall we meete to morrow,
Say, shall we, shall we, wilt thou make the match?
   He tell's her no, to morrow he intends,
   To hunt the boare with certaine of his frends.

The boare ( quothe she ) whereat a suddain pale,
Like lawne being spread vpon the blushing rose,
Vsurpeth her cheeke, she trembles at his tale,
And on his neck her yoaking armes she throwes.
   She sinketh downe, still hanging by his necke,
   He on her belly fall's, she on her bace.
VENUS AND ADONIS.

Now is she in the verie lift of loue,
Her champion mounted for the hot incounter,
All is imaginarie she doth prove,
He will not mannage her, although he mount her,
    That worse then Tantalus is her annoy,
To clip Elizium, and to lacke her joy.

Euen so poore birds deceiu'd with painted grapes,
Do surfeet by the eye, and pine the maw:
Euen so she languisheth in her mishaps,
As those poore birds that helpleffe berries saw,
    The warme effects which she in him finds missing,
She seekes to kindle with continuall killing.

But all in vaine,good Queene, it will not bee,
She hath assai'd as much as may be prou'd,
Her pleading hath deseru'd a greater fee,
She's loue; she loues, and yet she is not lou'd,
    Fie, fie, he saies, you crush me, let me go,
You haue no reason to withhold me so.

Thou hadst bin gone(quoth she)sweet boy ere this,
But that thou toldst me, thou woldst hunt the boare,
Oh be aduis'd, thou know'st nor what it is,
VWith iauelings point a churlish swine to goare,
    VWhose tushes never sheathed, he wheteth still,
Like to a mortall butcher bent to kill.

On
VENVS AND ADONIS.

On his bow-backe, he hath a battell set,
Of brisly pikes that euer threat his foes,
His eyes like glow-wormes shine when he doth fret
His snout digs sepulchers where ere he goes,
   Being mou’d he strikes, what ere is in his way,
   And whom he strikes, his crooked rushes slay.

His brawnie sides with hairie bristles armed,
Are better proofe then thy speares point can enter,
His short thick necke cannot be easly harmed,
Being irefull, on the lyon he will venter,
   The thornie brambles, and imbracing bushes,
   As fearefull of him part, through whom he rushes.

Alas, he naught esteems that face of thine,
To which loves eyes pays tributarie gazes,
Nor thy soft handes, sweet lips, and christall eime,
Whose full perfection all the world amazes,
   But haung thee at vantage (wondrous dread!)
   Wold roote these beauties, as he root’s the mead.

Oh let him keep his loathsome cabin still,
Beautie hath naught to do with such foule fiends,
Come not within his danger by thy will,
They that thrive well, take counsell of their friends,
   When thou didst name the boare, not to dissemble
   I feared thy fortune, and my joynts did tremble.

Ejj
VENVS AND ADONIS.

Didst thou not marke my face, was it not white?
Sawest thou not signes of feare lurke in mine eye?
Grew I not faint, and fell I not downe right?

Within my bosome whereon thou doest lye,
My boding heart, pants, beats, and takes no rest,
But like an earthquake, shakes thee on my brest.

For where loue raignes, disturbing iealousie,
Doth call him selfe affections centinell,
Giues false alarmes, suggesteth mutinie,
And in a peacefull houre doth crie, kill, kill,
Distempring gentle loue in his desire,
As aire, and water do abate the fire.

This fower informer, this bate-breeding spie,
This canker that eates vp loues tender spring,
This carry-tale, dissentitious iealousie,
That somtime true newes, somtime false doth bring,
Knocks at my heart, and whispers in mine care,
That if I loue thee, I thy death should feare.

And more then so, presenteth to mine eye,
The picture of an angrie chafing boare,
Vnder whose sharpe fangs, on his backe doth lye,
An image like thy selfe, all staynd with goare,
Whose blood vpon the fresh flowers being shed,
Doth make the droop with grief, & hang the hed.
VENVS AND ADONIS.

What should I do, seeing thee so indeed?
That tremble at th'imagination,
The thought of it doth make my faint heart bleed,
And fear doth teach it divination;
   I prophesie thy death, my living sorrow,
   If thou encounter with the boare to morrow.

But if thou needs wilt hunt, be ruled by me,
Uncouple at the timerous flying hare,
Or at the foxe which liues by subtiltie,
Or at the Roe which no encounter dare:
   Pursue these fearfull creatures o're the downes,
   And on thy wel breathd horse keep with thy houds

And when thou haft on foote the purblind hare,
Marke the poore wretch to ouer-shut his troubles,
How he outruns the wind, and with what care,
He crankes and croses with a thousand doubles,
   The many musits through the which he goes,
   Are like a laberinth to amaze his foes.

Sometime he runnes among a flocke of sheepe,
To make the cunning hounds mistake their smell,
And sometime where earth-deluing Conies keepe,
To stop the loud pursuers in their yell:
   And sometime forteth with a heard of deare,
   Danger deuiseth shifts, wit waites on saire.
VENVS AND ADONIS.

For there his smell with others being mingled,
The hot sent-snuffling hounds are driven to doubt,
Ceasing their clamorous cry, till they have singled

With much ado the cold fault cleanly out,
Then do they spend their mouth's, echo replies,
As if another chase were in the skies.

By this poor warf farre off vpon a hill,
Stands on his hinder-legs with lightning care,
To hearken if his foes pursue him still,

Anon their loud alarums he doth heare,

And now his griefe may be compared well,

To one fore fickle, that heares the passing bell.

Then shalt thou see the dew-bedabbled wretch,
Turne, and returne, indenting with the way,
Ech envious brier, his wearie legs do scratch,

Ech shadow makes him stop, ech murmur stay,

For miserie is troden on by manie,

And being low, neuer releue'd by anie.

Lye quietly, and heare a little more,
Nay do not struggle, for thou shalt not rise,
To make thee hate the hunting of the bore,

Unlike my selfe thou hearest me moralize,

Applying this to that, and so to so,

For loue can comment vpon euery wo.
VENVS AND ADONIS.

VWhere did I leaue? no matter where (quoth he)  
Leaue me, and then the storie aptly ends,  
The night is spent; why what of that (quoth she ?)  
I am (quoth he) expected of my friends,  
    And now tis darke, and going I shall fall.  
    In night (quoth she) desire sees best of all.

But if thou fall, oh then imagine this,  
The earth in loue with thee, thy footing trips,  
And all is but to rob thee of a kis,  
Rich prayes make true-men thecues: so do thy lips  
    Make modest Dyan, cloudie and forlorne,  
    Left she should steale a kisse and die forsworne.

Now of this darke night I perceiue the reason,  
Cinthia for shame, obscures her siluer shine,  
Till forging nature be condemn'd of treason,  
For stealing moulds from heauen, that were diuine,  
    VVherin she fram'd thee, in hie heauens despight,  
    To shame the sunne by day, and her by night.

And therefore hath she brib'd the destinies,  
To croffe the curious workmanship of nature,  
To mingle beautie with infirmities,  
And pure perfection with impure defeature,  
    Making it subject to the tyrannie,  
    Of mad mischances, and much miserie.
VENVS AND ADONIS.

As burning seauers, agues pale, and faint,
Life-poysoning pestilence, and frendzies wood,
The marrow-eating sicknesse whose attaint,
Disorder breeds by heating of the blood,
   Surfets, impostumes, grieve, and damnd dispaire,
   Sweare natures death, for framing thee so faire.

And not the least of all these maladies,
But in one minutes fight brings beautie vnder,
Both fauour, fauour, hew, and qualities,
VWhereat the th'impartiall gazer late did wonder,
   Are on the sudden wasted, thawed, and donne,
   As mountain snow melts with the midday sonne.

Therefore despight of fruitlesse chastitie,
Loue-lacking vestals, and selse-louing Nuns,
That on the earth would breed a scarcitie,
And barraine dearth of daughters, and of suns;
   Be prodigall, the lampe that burnes by night,
   Dries vp his oyle, to lend the world his light.

VWhat is thy bodie but a swallowing grave,
Seeming to burie that posteritie,
VWhich by the rights of time thou needs must haue,
If thou destroy them not in darke obscuritie?
   If so the world will hold thee in disdain,
   Sith in thy pride, so faire a hope is slaine.
VENUS AND ADONIS.

So in thy selfe, thy selfe art made away,
A mischiefe worse then ciuill home-bred strife,
Or theirs whose desperat hands them selues do slay,
Or butcher fire, that reaues his sonne of life:
   Foule cankring rust, the hidden treasure frets,
   But gold that's put to vse more gold begets.

Nay then (quoth Adon) you will fall againe,
Into your idle ouer-handled theame,
The kiffe I gaue you is bestow'd in vaine,
And all in vaine you striue against the streame,
   For by this black-fac't night, desiers foule nourse,
   Your treatise makes me like you, worse & worse.

If loue haue lent you twentie thousand tongues,
And euery tongue more mouing then your owne,
Bewitching like the wanton Marmaids songs,
Yet from mine eare the tempting tune is blowne,
   For know my heart stands armed in mine eare,
   And will not let a false sound enter there.

Left the deceiuing harmonie should ronne,
Into the quiet closure of my brest,
And then my little heart were quite vndone,
In his bed-chamber to be bard of rest,
   No Ladie no, my heart longs not to groane,
   But soundly sleepe, while now it sleepe alone.
VENVS AND ADONIS.

VWhat haue you vrg'd, that I can not reprou?  
The path is smooth that leadeth on to danger,
I hate not loue, but your deuise in loue,
That lends embracements unto euery stranger,
    You do it for increas, ô Straunge excuse!
VVhen reason is the bawd to lufts abuse.

Call it not loue, for loue to heauen is fled,
Since sweating luft on earth vsurpt his name,
Vnder whose simple semblance he hath fed,
VVpon fresh beautie, blotting it with blame;
    Which the hot tyrant staines, & soone bereaues:
    As Caterpillers do the tender leuaes.

Loue comforteth like sun-shine after raine,
But lufts effect is tempeste after sunne,
Loues gentle spring doth always fresh remaine,
Lufts winter comes, ere somer halfe be donne:
    Loue scures not, luft like a glutton dies:
    Loue is all truth, luft full of forged lies.

More I could tell, but more I dare not say,
The text is old, the Orator too greene,
Therefore in sadnesse, now I will away,
My face is full of shame, my heart of teene,
    Mine eares that to your wanton talke attended,
Do burne them selues, for hauing so offended.
VVith
VENVS AND ADONIS.

With this he breaketh from the sweet embrace,
Of those faire armes which bound him to her brest,
And homeward through the dark lawnd runs apace,
Leaues love vpon her backe, deeply distrest,
   Looke how a bright star shooteth from the skye;
   So glides he in the night from Venus eye.

Which after him she darts, as one on shore
Gazing vpon a late embarked friend,
Till the wilde waues will haue him seene no more,
Whose ridges with the meeting cloudes contend:
   So did the merciless,e and pitchie night,
   Fold in the object that did feed her light.

Whereat amazed as one that vnaware,
Hath dropt a precious iewell in the flood,
Or stonieft, as night wandrers often are,
Their light blowne out in some mistrustfull wood;
   Euen so confounded in the dark she lay,
   Hauing lost the faire discoverie of her way.

And now she beats her heart, whereat it grones,
That all the neighbour caues as seeming troubled,
Make verball repetition of her mones,
Passion on passion, deeply is redoubled,
   Ay me, she cries, and twentie times wo, wo,
   And twentie ecchoes, twentie times crie so,
VENVS AND ADONIS.

She marking them, begins a wailing note,
And sings extemporally a wofull dittie,
How love makes yong-men thrall, & old men dote,
How love is wise in folly, foolish wittie:
   Her heauie antheme still concludes in wo,
   And still the quier of ecohoes answer so.

Her song was tedious, and out-wore the night,
For louers houres are long, though seeming short,
If pleased themselves, others they thinke delight,
In such like circumstance, with such like sport:
   Their copious stories oftertimes begunne,
   End without audience, and are neuer donne.

For who hath she to spend the night withall,
But idle sounds resembling paratits?
Like shrill-tongu'd Tapsters answering euerie call,
Soothing the humor of fantastique wits,
   She sayes tis so, they answer all tis so,
   And would say after her, if she said no.

Lo here the gentle larke wearie of rest,
From his moyst cabinet mounts vp on hie,
And wakes the morning, from whose siluer brest,
The sunne ariseth in his maiestie,
   VWho doth the world so gloriously behold,
   That Ceador tops and hils, seeme burnisht gold.
   Venus
VENUS AND ADONIS.

Venus salutes him with this faire good morrow,
Oh thou cleare god, and patron of all light,
From whom each lamp, and shining star doth borrow,
The beauteous influence that makes him bright,
There liues a sonne that suckt an earthly mother,
May lend thee light, as thou doest lend to other.

This sayd, she hasteth to a mirtle grous,
Musing the morning is so much ore-worne,
And yet she heares no tidings of her loue;
She barkens for his hounds, and for his horne,
Anon she heares them chaunt it lustily,
And all in hast she coafteth to the cry.

And as she runnes, the bushes in the way,
Some catch her by the necke, some kisse her face,
Some twin'd about her thigh to make her stay,
She wildly breaketh from their strict imbrace,
Like a milch Doe, whose swelling dugs do ake,
Hafting to feed her fawne, hid in some brake,

By this she heares the hounds are at a bay,
Whereat she starts like one that spies an adder,
VVeath'd vp in fatal folds iust in his way,
The feare whereof doth make him shake, & shudder,
Euen so the timerous yelping of the hounds,
Appals her senses, and her spirit confounds.

F iiij.
VENVS AND ADONIS.

For now she knowes it is no gentle chafe,
But the blunt boare, rough beare, or lyon proud,
Because the crie remaineth in one place,
Where fearfully the dogs exclaime aloud,
Finding their enemie to be so curst,
They all straine curst he who shall cope him first.

This dismall crie rings sadly in her care,
Through which it enters to surprise her hart,
Who overcome by doubt, and bloodlesse feare,
With cold-pale weakenesse, numbs ech feeling part,
Like soldiers when their captain once doth yeeld,
They basely flye, and dare not stay the field.

Thus stands she in a trembling extasie,
Till cheering vp her senses all dismayd,
She tells them tis a causlesse fantastie,
And childish error that they are affrayd,
Bids the leave quaking, bids them feare no more,
And with that word, she spide the hunted boare.

Whose frothie mouth bepainted all with red,
Like milke, & blood, being mingled both together,
A second feare through all her sinewes spred,
Which madly hurries her, she knowes not whither,
This way she runs, and now she will no further,
But backe retires, to rate the boare for murther.

A
VENVS AND ADONIS.

A thousand spleenes beare her a thousand wayes,
She treads the path, that she vntreads againe;
Her more then haft, is mated with delayes,
Like the proceedings of a drunken braine,
    Full of respects, yet naught at all respecting,
    In hand with all things, naught at all effecting.

Here kenneld in a brake, she finds a hound,
And asks the wearie caitiffe for his maister,
And there another licking of his wound,
Gainst venimd sores, the onely soueraigne plaister.
    And here she meets another, sadly skowling,
    To whom she speaks, & he replies with howling.

When he hath ceaft his ill resounding noise,
Another flapmouthd mourner, blacke, and grim,
Against the welkin, volies out his voyce,
Another, and another, answer him,
    Clapping their proud tailes to the ground below,
    Shaking their scratcht-eares, bleeding as they go.

Looke how, the worlds poore people are amazed,
At apparitions, signes, and prodigies,
Whereon with feareful eyes, they long haue gazed,
Infusing them with dreadfull prophecies;
    So she at these sad signes, drawes vp her breath,
    And sighing it againe, exclames on death.
VENVS AND ADONIS.

Hard favour'd tyrant, ougly, meagre, leane,
Hatefull diuorce of loue, (thus chides the death)
Grim-grinning ghost, earths-worme what dost thou
To stifle beautie, and to steale his breath? (meane?
Who when he liu'd, his breath and beautie set
Glosse on the rose, smell to the violet.

If he be dead, o no, it cannot be,
Seeing his beautie, thou shouldst strike at it,
Oh yes, it may, thou hast no eyes to see,
But hatefully at random doest thou hit,
Thy marke is feeble age, but thy false dart,
Mistakes that aime, and cleaues an infants hart.

Hadst thou but bid beware, then he had spoke,
And hearing him, thy power had lost his power,
The destinies will curse thee for this stroke,
They bid thee crop a weed, thou pluckst a flower,
Loves golden arrow at him should have fled,
And not deaths ebon dart to strike him dead.

Dost thou drink tears, that thou prouok'st such wea-
VWhat may a heauie grone aduantage thee? (ping,
VWhy haft thou cast into eternall sleeping,
Those eyes that taught all other eyes to see?
Now nature cares not for thy mortall vigour,
Since her best worke is ruin'd with thy rigour.

Here
VENUS AND ADONIS.

Here overcome as one full of dispair,
She vailed her eye-lids, who like fluces stopt
The christall tide, that from her two cheeks faire,
In the sweet channell of her bosome dropt.
   But through the floud-gates breaks the siluer rain,
   And with his strong course opens them againe.

O how her eyes, and teares, did lend, and borrow,
Her eye seene in the teares, teares in her eye,
Both christals, where they viewd ech others sorrow:
Sorrow, that friendly sighs sought still to drye,
   But like a stormie day, now wind, now raine,
Sighs drie her cheeks, tears make the wet againe.

Variable passions throng her constant wo,
As striuing who should best become her grieze,
All entertayned, ech passion labours so,
That euerie present sorrow seemeth chiefe,
   But none is best, then ioyne they all together,
   Like many clouds, consulting for soule weather.

By this farre off, she heares some huntsman hallow,
A nourses song nere pleas'd her babe so well,
The dyre imagination she did follow,
This sound of hope doth labour to expell,
   For now reuiving ioy bids her reioyce,
   And flatters her, it is Adonis voyce.

G
VENUS AND ADONIS.

Whereat her teares began to turne their tide,
Being prifond in her eye: like pearles in glasse,
Yet sometimes falls an orient drop beside,
Which her cheeke melts, as scorning it should passe.
To wash the soule face of the sluttish ground,
Who is but dronken when she seemeth drownd.

O hard believing luyre how strange it seemes!
Not to believe, and yet too credulous:
Thy weale, and wo, are both of them extreames,
Despaire, and hope, makes thee ridiculous.
The one doth flatter thee in thoughts unlikely,
In likely thoughts the other kills thee quickly.

Now she vnweaues the web that she hath wrought,
Adonis liues, and death is not to blame:
It was not she that cald him all to nought;
Now she ads honours to his hatefull name.
She clepes him king of graues, & graue for kings,
Imperious supreme of all mortall things.

No, no, quoth she, sweet death, I did but jest,
Yet pardon me, I felt a kind of feare
When as I met the boare, that bloodie beast,
Which knowes no pitie but is still feuere,
Then gentle shadow (truth I must confess)
I rayld on thee, fearing my loues deceffe.

Tis
VENVS AND ADONIS.

Tis not my fault, the Bore provok't my tong,
Be wreak't on him (inuissible commaundr)
Tis he soule creature, that hath done thee wrong,
I did but act, he's author of thy slauder
Greece hath two tongues, and neuer woman yet,
Could rule them both, without ten womens wit.

Thus hoping that Adonis is alieue,
Her rash suspect she doth extenuate,
And that his beautie may the better thriue,
VWith death she humbly doth insinuate.
	Tels him of trophies, statues, tombes, and stories,
	His victories, his triumphs, and his glories.

O loue quoth the, how much a foole was I,
To be of such a weake and sillie mind,
To waile his death who liues, and must not die,
Till mutuall overthow of mortall kind?
	For he being dead, with him is beautie slaine,
	And beautie dead, blacke Chaos comes againe.

Fy, fy, fond loue, thou art as full offeare,
As one with treasure laden, hem'd with theuces,
Trifles vnwitnessed with eye, or eare,
Thy coward heart with salse bethinking greeues.
	Euen at this word the heares a merry horne,
	VWhereat the leaps, that was but late forlorne.

G 2
VENUS AND ADONIS.

As Faulcons to the lure, away she flies,
The grasse floops not, she treads on it so light,
And in her haft, unfortunately spies,
The soule boares conquest, on her faire delight,
\[V\] Which scene, her eyes are murdred with the view,
Like stars a sham'd of day, themselfues withdrew.

Or as the snaile, whose tender hornes being hit,
Shrinks backward in his shellie caue with paine,
And, there all smoothred vp, in shade doth sit,
Long after fearing to creepe forth againe:
\[S\]o at his bloody view her eyes are fled,
Into the deep-darke cabbins of her head.

\[V\]Where they resigne their office, and their light,
To the disposing of her troubled braine,
\[V\]Who bids them still consort with ougly night,
And neuer wound the heart with lookes againe,
\[V\]Who like a king perplexed in his throne,
By their suggestion, giues a deadly groane.

\[V\]Whereat ech tributarie subiect quakes,
As when the wind imprison'd in the ground,
Struggling for passagge, earths foundation shakes,
which with cold terror, doth mens minds confound:
\[T\]his mutinie ech part doth so surprize,
\[T\]hat fro their dark beds once more leap her eies.
And
VENVS AND ADONIS.

And being opend, threw unwilling light,
Upon the wide wound, that the boare had trencht
In his soft flanke, whose wonted lillie white
With purple tears that his wound wept, had drecht.
No floure was nigh, no grasse, hearb, leaf, or weed,
But stole his blood, and seemed with him to bleed.

This solemne sympathie, poore Venus noteth,
Ouer one shouder doth she hang her head,
Dumblie she passions, frantikely she doteth,
She thinkes he could not die, he is not dead,
   Her voice is stoppt, her joyns forget to bow,
   Her eyes are mad, that they haue wept till now.

Upon his hurt she lookes so stedfastly,
That her sight dazling, makes the wound seem three,
And then she reprehends her mangling eye,
That makes more gashes, where no breach shuld be:
   His face seems twain, ech feuerall lim is doubled,
   For oft the eye mistakes, the brain being troubled

My tongue cannot expresse my griefe for one,
And yet (quoth she) behold two Adons dead,
My sighes are blowne away, my salt teares gone,
Mine eyes are turn'd to fire, my heart to lead,
   Heauie hearts lead melt at mine eyes red fire,
So shall I die by drops of hot desire.
VENUS AND ADONIS.

Alas poore world what treasure haft thou loft,
V Vhat face remains a live that's worth the viewing?
V Whose tongue is musick now? what caft thou boaft,
Of things long since, or any thing infuing?
The flowers are sweet, their colours fresh, and trim,
But true sweet beautie liu'd, and die'd with him.

Bonnet, nor vaile henceforth no creature weare,
Nor sunne, nor wind will euer strife to kiss e you,
Hauing no faire to lose, you need not feare,
The sun doth skorne you, & the wind doth hisse you.
But when Adonis liu'de, sunne, and sharpe aire,
Lurkt like two theeeues, to rob him of his faire.

And therefore would he put his bonnet on,
Vnder whose brim the gaudie sunne would peepe,
The wind would blow it off, and being gon,
Play with his locks, then would Adonis weepe.
And straight in pittie of his tender yeares, (teares.
The y both would strife who firft should drie his

To see his face the Lion walkt along,
Behind some hedge, because he would not fear him:
To recreate himself when he hath song,
The Tygre would be tame, and gently heare him.
If he had spoke, the wolfe would leaue his praiue,
And never fright the sillie lambe that daie.

when
VENVS AND ADONIS.

When he beheld his shadow in the brooke,
The fishes spread on it their golden gils,
When he was by the birds such pleasure tooke,
That some would sing, some other in their bills
Would bring him mulberries & ripe-red cherries,
He fed them with his sight, they him with berries.

But this foule, grim, and vrch in-snowted Boare,
Whose downward eye still looketh for a graue:
Ne're saw the beautious liuerie that he wore,
Witness the entertainment that he gaue.
If he did see his face, why then I know,
He thought to kisse him, and hath kild him so.

Tis true, tis true, thus was Adonis slaine,
He ran vpon the Boare with his harp speare,
Who did not whet his teeth at him againe,
But by a kisse thought to persuade him there.
And nusling in his flank the loving swine,
Sheath'd vnaware the tuske in his soft groine.

Had I bin tooth'd like him I must confesse,
With kissing him I should haue kild him first,
But he is dead, and never did he blesse
My youth with his, the more am I accurst.
With this she falleth in the place she stood,
And stains her face with his congealed bloud.
VENVS AND ADONIS.

She lookes vpon his lips, and they are pale,
She takes him by the hand, and that is cold,
She whispers in his eares a heauie tale,
As if they heard the wofull words she told:
She lifts the coffer-lids that close his eyes,
V Vhere lo, two lamps burnt out in darknesse lies.

Two glasses where her selfe, her selfe beheld
A thousand times, and now no more reflect,
Their vertue lost, wherein they late exceld,
And euerie beautie rob'd of his effect;
V Wonder of time (quoth she) this is my spight,
That thou being dead, the day shuld yet be light.

Since thou art dead, lo here I prophecie,
Sorrow on loue hereafter shall attend:
It shall be wayted on with iealousie,
Find sweet beginning, but vnfaуorie end.
Nere setled equally, but high or lo,
That all loues pleasure shall not match his wo.

It shall be fickle, false, and full of fraud,
Bud, and be blasted, in a breathing while,
The bottome poyson, and the top ore-strawd
V V with sweets, that shall the truest sight beguile,
The strongest bodie shall it make most weake,
Strike the wise dube, & teach the foole to speake.

It
VENUS AND ADONIS.

It shall be sparing, and too full of ryror,
Teaching decrepit age to tread the measures,
The staring ruffian shall it keepe in quiet,
Pluck down the rich, inrich the poore with treasures,
   It shall be raging mad, and fillie milde,
   Make the yoong old, the old become a childe.

It shall suspect where is no cause of feare,
It shall not feare where it should most mistrust,
It shall be mercifull, and too seueare,
And most deceiving, when it seemes most iust,
   Peruerse it shall be, where it showes most toward,
   Put feare to valour, courage to the coward.

It shall be cause of warre, and dire euents,
And set dissention twixt the sonne, and fire,
Subiect, and servill to all discontentes:
As drie combustious matter is to fire,
   Sith in his prime, death doth my loue destroy,
   They that loue beft, their loues shall not enioy.

By this the boy that by her side laie kild,
VVas melted like a vapour from her sight,
And in his blood that on the ground laie spild,
A purple floure sproung vp, checkred with white,
   Resembling well his pale cheekes, and the blood,
VVhich in round drops, vp o their whitenesse stooed.

H
VENUS AND ADONIS.

She bowes her head, the new-prong floure to smel,

Comparing it to her Adonis breath,

And saies within her bosome it shall dwell,

Since he himselfe is rest from her by death;

She crop's the stalke, and in the breach appeares,

Green-dropping sap, which she copares to teares.

Poore floure (quoth she) this was thy fathers guise,

Sweet issue of a more sweet smelling fire,

For euerie little griece to wet his eies,

To grow vnto himselfe was his desire;

And so tis thine, but know it is as good,

To wither in my brest, as in his blood.

Here was thy fathers bed, here in my brest,

Thou art the next of blood, and tis thy right.

Lo in this hollow cradle take thy rest,

My throbbing hart shall rock thee day and night;

There shall not be one minute in an houre,

VWherein I wil not kisse my sweet loues floure.

Thus weary of the world, away she hies,

And yokes her silver doues, by whose swift aide,

Their mistresse mounted through the emptie skies,

In her light chariot, quickly is conuaid;

Holding their course to Paphos, where their queen,

Meanes to immure her selfe, and not be seen.

FINIS