

Fidessa

I

Fertur Fortunam Fortuna favere ferenti
Fidessa fair, long live a happy maiden!
 Blest from thy cradle by a worthy mother,
 High-thoughted like to her, with bounty laden,
 Like pleasing grace affording, one and other; 4
Sweet model of thy far renownèd sire!
 Hold back a while thy ever-giving hand,
 And though these free penned lines do nought require,
 For that they scorn at base reward to stand, 8
Yet crave they most for that they beg the least
 Dumb is the message of my hidden grief,
 And store of speech by silence is increased;
 O let me die or purchase some relief! 12
Bounteous Fidessa cannot be so cruel
As for to make my heart her fancy's fuel!

II

How can that piercing crystal-painted eye,
 That gave the onset to my high aspiring. 16
 Yielding each look of mine a sweet reply,
 Adding new courage to my heart's desiring,
How can it shut itself within her ark,
 And keep herself and me both from the light, 20
 Making us walk in all misguiding dark,
 Aye to remain in confines of the night?
How is it that so little room contains it,
 That guides the orient as the world the sun, 24
 Which once obscured most bitterly complains it,
 Because it knows and rules what'er is done?
The reason is that they may dread her sight,
Who doth both give and take away their light. 28

III

Venus, and young Adonis sitting by her,
 Under a myrtle shade, began to woo him;
 She told the youngling how god Mars did try her,
 And as he fell to her, so fell she to him. 32
"Even thus," quoth she, "the wanton god embraced me!"
 And then she clasped Adonis in her arms;
 "Even thus," quoth she, "the warlike god unlaced me!"
 As if the boy should use like loving charms. 36
But he, a wayward boy, refused the offer,
 And ran away the beauteous queen neglecting
 Showing both folly to abuse her proffer,
 And all his sex of cowardice detecting. 40
O that I had my mistress at that bay,
To kiss and clip me till I ran away!

IV

Did you sometimes three German brethren see,
 Rancour 'twixt two of them so raging rife, 44
 That th' one could stick the other with his knife?
 Now if the third assaulted chance to be
By a fourth stranger, him set on the three,
 Them two 'twixt whom afore was deadly strife 48
 Made one to rob the stranger of his life;
 Then do you know our state as well as we.
Beauty and chastity with her were born,
 Both at one birth, and up with her did grow. 52
 Beauty still foe to chastity was sworn,
 And chastity sworn to be beauty's foe;
And yet when I lay siege unto her heart,
Beauty and chastity both take her part. 56

Venus, and yong Adonis sitting by her,
 Under a Myrtle shade began to woe him:
 She told the yong-ling how god Mars did trie her,
 And as he fell to her, so fell she to him.
Even thus (quoth she) the wanton god embrac'd me,
 (And then she clasp'd Adonis in her armes)
Even thus (quoth she) the warlike god unlac'd me,
 As if the boy should use like loving charmes.
But he a wayward boy, refusde her offer,
 And ran away, the beautious Queene neglecting:
Shewing both folly to abuse her proffer,
 And all his sex of cowardice detecting.
Oh that I had my mistris at that bay,
To kisse and clippe me till I ranne away!

Did you sometimes three German brethren see
 Rancor twixt two of them so raging rife,
 That th' one could stick the other with his knife?
Now if the third assaulted chance to be
 By a fourth stranger, him set on the three:
Them two twixt whom afore was deadly strife,
 Made one to rob the stranger of his life.
Then doe you know our state aswell as we,
 Beautie and Chastitie with her were borne
Both at one birth, and up with her did grow:
 Beautie still foe to Chastitie was sworne,
And Chastitie sworn to be Beauties foe:
 And yet when I lay siege unto her heart,
Beautie and Chastitie both take her part.

Fidessa

V

Arraigned, poor captive at the bar I stand,
The bar of beauty, bar to all my joys;
And up I hold my ever trembling hand,
Wishing or life or death to end annoys. 60
And when the judge doth question of the guilt,
And bids me speak, then sorrow shuts up words.
Yea, though he say, "Speak boldly what thou wilt!"
Yet my confused affects no speech affords, 64
For why? Alas, my passions have no bound,
For fear of death that penetrates so near;
And still one grief another doth confound,
Yet doth at length a way to speech appear. 68
Then, for I speak too late, the Judge doth give
His sentence that in prison I shall live.

VI

Unhappy sentence, worst of worst of pains,
To be in darksome silence, out of ken, 72
Banished from all that blisse the world contains,
And thrust from out the companies of men!
Unhappy sentence, worse than worst of deaths,
Never to see Fidessa's lovely face! 76
O better were I lose ten thousand breaths,
Than ever live in such unseen disgrace!
Unhappy sentence, worse than pains of hell,
To live in self-tormenting griefs alone; 80
Having my heart, my prison and my cell,
And there consumed without relief to moan!
If that the sentence so unhappy be,
Then what am I that gave the same to me? 84

VII

Oft have mine eyes, the agents of mine heart,
False traitor eyes conspiring my decay,
Pleaded for grace with dumb and silent art,
Streaming forth tears my sorrows to allay; 88
Moaning the wrong they do unto their lord,
Forcing the cruel fair by means to yield;
Making her 'gainst her will some grace t'afford,
And striving sore at length to win the field; 92
Thus work they means to feed my fainting hope,
And strengthened hope adds matter to each thought;
Yet when they all come to their end and scope
They do but wholly bring poor me to nought. 96
She'll never yield although they ever cry,
And therefore we must all together die.

VIII

Grief-urging guest, great cause have I to plain me,
Yet hope persuading hope expecteth grace, 100
And saith none but myself shall ever pain me;
But grief my hopes exceedeth in this case;
For still my fortune ever more doth cross me
By worse events than ever I expected; 104
And here and there ten thousand waies doth toss me,
With sad remembrance of my time neglected.
These breed such thoughts as set my heart on fire,
And like fell hounds pursue me to my death; 108
Traitors unto their sovereign lord and sire,
Unkind exactors of their father's breath,
Whom in their rage they shall no sooner kill
Than they themselves themselves unjustly spill. 112

Arraign'd poore captive at the barre I stand,
The barre of Beautie, barre to all my joyes,
And up I hold my ever-trembling hand,
Wishing or life or death to end annoyes. 60
And when the Judge doth question of the guilt,
And bids me speake, then sorrow shuts up words:
Yea though he say, speake boldly what thou wilt,
Yet my confusde affects no speech affords. 64
For why (alas) my passions have no bound,
For feare of death that penetrates so neere:
And still one grieffe another doth confound,
Yet doth at length a way to speech appeere. 68
Then (for I speake too late) the Judge doth give
His sentence that in prison I shall live.

Unhappie sentence, worst of worst of paines,
To lie in darksome silence out of ken:
Banisht from all that blisse the world contains,
And thrust from out the companies of men.
Unhappie sentence, worse then worst of deaths,
Never to see Fidessaes lovely face:
Oh better were I loose ten thousand breaths,
Then ever live in such unseene disgrace.
Unhappie sentence, worse then paines of hell,
To live in self-tormenting griefes alone:
Having my heart my prison and my cell,
And there consum'd, without reliefe to mone.
If that the sentence so unhappie be,
Then what am I that gave the same to me?

Oft have mine eyes the Agents of mine heart,
(False traytor eyes conspiring my decay)
Pleaded for grace with dumbe and silent art,
Streaming fourth teares my sorrowes to allay.
Moning the wrong they doe unto their Lord,
Forcing the cruell faire by meanes to yeeld:
Making her (gainst her will) some grace t'affoord,
And striving sore at length to winne the field.
Thus worke they meanes to feed my fainting hope,
And streghened hope ads matter to each thought:
Yet when they all come to their end and scope,
They doe but whollie bring poore me to nought.
She'l never yield, although they ever crye,
And therefore we must all together dye.

Griefe-urging guest, great cause have I to plaine me,
Yet hope perswading hope expecteth grace:
And saith none but my selfe shall ever paine me,
But grieffe my hopes exceedeth in this cace.
For still my fortune ever-more doth crosse me,
By worse events than ever I expected,
And here and there ten thousand waies doth tosse me
With sad remembrance of my time neglected:
These breeds such thoughts as set my heart on fire,
And like fell hounds pursue me to the death,
Traytors unto their Sovereigne Lord and Sire,
Unkind exactors of their fathers breath,
Whom in their rage they shall no sooner kill,
Then they themselves themselves unjustly spill.

Fidessa

IX

My spotless love that never yet was tainted,
 My loyal heart that never can be moved,
 My growing hope that never yet hath fainted,
 My constancy that you full well have proved, 116
All these consented have to plead for grace
 These all lie crying at the door of beauty;—
This wails, this sends out tears, this cries apace,
All do reward expect of faith and duty; 120
Now either thou must prove th' unkindest one,
 And as thou fairest art must cruellest be,
Or else with pity yield unto their moan,
 Their moan that ever will importune thee. 124
 Ah, thou must be unkind, and give denial,
 And I, poor I, must stand unto my trial!

X

Clip not, sweet love, the wings of my desire,
 Although it soar aloft and mount too high: 128
But rather bear with me though I aspire,
For I have wings to bear me to the sky.
 What though I mount, there is no sun but thee!
 And sith no other sun, why should I fear? 132
 Thou wilt not burn me, though thou terrify,
 And though thy brightness do so great appear.
 Dear, I seek not to batter down thy glory,
 Nor do I envy that thy hope increaseth; 136
O never think thy fame doth make me sorry!
For thou must live by fame when beauty ceaseth.
Besides, since from one root we both did spring,
 Why should not I thy fame and beauty sing? 140

XI

Winged with sad woes, why doth fair zephyr blow
 Upon my face, the map of discontent?
 Is it to have the weeds of sorrow grow
So long and thick, that they will ne'er be spent? 144
 No, fondling, no! It is to cool the fire
 Which hot desire within thy breast hath made.
 Check him but once and he will soon retire.
O but he sorrows brought which cannot fade! 148
 The sorrows that he brought, he took from thee,
 Which fair Fidessa span and thou must wear!
Yet hath she nothing done of cruelty,
But for her sake to try what thou wilt bear. 152
 Come, sorrows, come! You are to me assigned;
 I'll bear you all, it is Fidessa's mind.

XII

O if my heavenly sighs must prove annoy,
 Which are the sweetest music to my heart, 156
 Let it suffice I count them as my joy,
Sweet bitter joy and pleasant painful smart!
For when my breast is clogged with thousand cares,
That my poor loaded heart is like to break, 160
 Then every sigh doth question how it fares,
 Seeming to add their strength, which makes me weak;
Yet for they friendly are, I entertain them,
 And they too well are pleas'd with their host. 164
But I, had not Fidessa been, ere now had slain them;
 It's for her cause they live, in her they boast;
 They promise help but when they see her face;
 They fainting yield, and dare not sue for grace. 168

My spotles love that never yet was tainted,
 My loyall heart that never can be moved:
 My growing hope that never yet hath fainted,
 My constancie that you full well have proved.
 All these consented have to pleade for grace,
 These all lye crying at the doore of Beautie:
 This wailles, this sends out teares, this cries apace:
 All doe reward expect of faith and dutie.
 Now either thou must prove th' unkindest one,
 And as thou fairest art, must cruelst be:
 Or els with pitie yeeld unto their mone,
 Their mone that ever will importune thee.
 Ah thou must be unkind, and give denial,
 And I poore I must stand unto my triall.

Clip not sweet love, the wings of my desire,
 Although it soare aloft and mount too hie:
 But rather beare with me though I aspire:
 For I have wings to beare me to the skie.
 What though I mount, there is no Sunne but thee?
 And sith no other Sunne, why should I feare?
 Thou wilt not burne me though thou terrifie:
 And though thy brightnes doe so great appeare,
 Deere, I seeke not to batter downe thy glorie,
 Nor do I envie that thy hope increaseth:
 Oh never thinke thy fame doth make me sorrie,
 For thou must live by fame when beautie ceaseth.
 Besides, since from one roote we both did spring,
 Why should not I thy fame and beautie sing?

Wing'd with sad woes, why doth faire *Zephyr* blow
 Upon my face, (the map of discontent)
 Is it to have the weedes of sorrow grow
 So long and thicke, that they will nere bee spent?
 No fondling, no, it is to coole the fire,
 Which hot desire within thy breast hath made:
 Check him but once, and he will soone retire:
 Oh but he sorrowes brought, which cannot fade.
 The sorrowes that he brought he tooke from thee,
 Which faire *Fidessa* spun, and thou must weare:
 Yet hath she nothing done of crueltie,
 But (for her sake) to trie what thou wilt beare.
 Come sorrowes come, you are to me assigned,
 Ile beare you all: it is Fidessaes minde.

Oh if my heavenly sighes must prove annoy,
 Which are the sweetest musicke to my heart:
 Let it suffice I count them as my joy,
 Sweet bitter joy, and pleasant painfull smart.
 For when my breast is clogg'd with thousand cares,
 That my poore loaded heart is like to breake:
 Then every sigh doth question how it fares,
 Seeming to adde their strength: which makes me weake.
 Yet (for they friendly are) I entertaine them,
 And they too well are pleas'd with their hoast:
 But I (had not *Fidessa* been) ere now, had slaine them,
 It's for her cause they live, in her they boast.
 They promise helpe, but when they see her face,
 They fainting yeeld, and dare not sue for grace.

Fidessa

XIII

Compare me to the child that plays with fire,
Or to the fly that dieth in the flame,
Or to the foolish boy that did aspire
 To touch the glory of high heaven's frame; 172

Compare me to Leander struggling in the waves,
 Not able to attain his safety's shore,
Or to the sick that do expect their graves,
Or to the captive crying evermore; 176

Compare me to the weeping wounded hart,
Moaning with tears the period of his life,
Or to the boar that will not feel the smart,
 When he is stricken with the butcher's knife; 180

No man to these can fitly me compare;
 These live to die, I die to live in care.

Compare me to the child that plaies with fire,
 Or to the flyc that dyeth in the flame:
 Or to the foolish boy that did aspire,
 To touch the glorie of high heavens frame.
 Compare me to *Leander* struggling in the waves,
 Not able to attaine his safeties shore:
 Or to the sicke that doe expect their graves,
 Or to the captive crying ever-more.
 Compare me to the weeping wounded Hart,
 Moning with teares the period of his life:
 Or to the Bore that will not feele the smart,
 When he is striken with the butchers knife.
 No man to these can fitly me compare:
 These live to dye: I dye to live in care.

XIV

When silent sleep had closed up mine eyes,
 My watchful mind did then begin to muse; 184
 A thousand pleasing thoughts did then arise,
That sought by slights their master to abuse.

I saw, O heavenly sight! Fidessa's face,
 And fair dame nature blushing to behold it; 188
Now did she laugh, now wink, now smile apace,
 She took me by the hand and fast did hold it;
Sweetly her sweet body did she lay down by me;
 "Alas, poor wretch," quoth she, "great is thy sorrow; 192
But thou shall comfort find if thou wilt try me.
 I hope, sir boy, you'll tell me news to-morrow."
 With that, away she went, and I did wake withal;
 When ah! my honey thoughts were turned to gall. 196

When silent sleepe had closed up mine eyes,
 My watchful minde did then begin to muse:
 A thousand pleasing thoughts did then arise,
 That sought by sleights their master to abuse.
 I saw (oh heavenly sight) *Fidessaes* face,
 (And faire dame Nature blushing to behold it)
 Now did she laugh, now winke, now smile apace,
 She tooke me by the hand and fast did hold it.
 Sweetly her sweet bodie did she lay downe by me,
 Alas poore wretch (quoth she) great is thy sorrow:
 But thou shall comfort find if thou wilt trie me,
 I hope (sir boy) youle tell me newes to-morrow.
 With that away she went, and I did wake withall,
 When (ah) my hony thoughts were turn'd to gall.

XV

Care-charmer sleep! Sweet ease in restless misery!
 The captive's liberty, and his freedom's song!
 Balm of the bruised heart! Man's chief felicity!
 Brother of quiet death, when life is too too long! 200

A comedy it is, and now an history;
 What is not sleep unto the feeble mind!
 It easeth him that toils and him that's sorry;
 It makes the deaf to hear, to see the blind; 204

Ungentle sleep, thou helpst all but me!
For when I sleep my soul is vexèd most.
 It is Fidessa that doth master thee;
 If she approach, alas, thy power is lost! 208

But here she is! See how he runs amain!
 I fear at night he will not come again.

Care-charmer sleepe, sweet ease in restles miserie,
 The captives libertie, and his freedomes song:
 Balm of the bruised heart, mans chiefe felicitie,
 Brother of quiet death, when life is too too long.
 A Comedie it is, and now an Historie,
 What is not sleepe unto the feeble mind?
 It easeth him that toyles, and him that's sorrie:
 It makes the deaffe to heare, to see the blinde.
 Ungentle sleepe, thou helpst all but me,
 For when I sleepe my soule is vexed most:
 It is *Fidessa* that doth master thee,
 If she approach (alas) thy power is lost.
 But here she is: see how he runnes amaine,
 I feare at night he will not come againe.

XVI

For I have lovèd long, I crave reward;
 Reward me not unkindly, think on kindness; 212
Kindness becometh those of high regard;
 Regard with clemency a poor man's blindness;
 Blindness provokes to pity when it crieth;
 It crieth "Give!" Dear lady, shew some pity! 216
 Pity or let him die that daily dieth;
 Dieth he not oft who often sings this ditty?
This ditty pleaseth me although it choke me;
 Methinks dame Echo weepeth at my moaning, 220
Moaning the woes that to complain provoke me.
 Provoke me now no more, but hear my groaning,
 Groaning both day and night doth tear my heart,
 My heart doth know the cause and triumphs in the smart. 224

For I have loved long, I crave rewarde,
 Rewarde me not unkindlie: think on kindnes,
 Kindnes becommeth those of high regarde:
 Regard with clemencie a poore mans blindness,
 Blindnes provokes to pitie when it crieth,
 It crieth (give) deere Lady shew some pittie;
 Pittie, or let him die that daylie dieth:
 Dieth he not oft, who often sings this dittie?
 This dittie pleaseth me although it choke me,
 Me thinkes dame Eccho weepeth at my moning,
 Moning the woes, that to complaine provoke me.
 Provoke me now no more, but heare my groning;
 Groning both night and day doth teare my hart,
 My hart doth know the cause, & triumphs in the smart.

Fidessa

XVII

Sweet stroke,—so might I thrive as I must praise—
But sweeter hand that gives so sweet a stroke!
 The lute itself is sweetest when she plays.
But what hear I? A string through fear is broke! 228
 The lute doth shake as if it were afraid.
O sure some goddess holds it in her hand,
 A heavenly power that oft hath me dismayed,
Yet such a power as doth in beauty stand! 232
 Cease lute, my ceaseless suit will ne'er be heard!
 Ah, too hard-hearted she that will not hear it!
 If I but think on joy, my joy is marred;
 My grief is great, yet ever must I bear it; 236
But love 'twixt us will prove a faithful page,
 And she will love my sorrows to assuage.

XVIII

O she must love my sorrows to assuage.
O God, what joy felt I when she did smile, 240
 Whom killing grief before did cause to rage!
Beauty is able sorrow to beguile.
 Out, traitor absence! thou dost hinder me,
 And mak'st my mistress often to forget, 244
 Causing me to rail upon her cruelty,
 Whilst thou my suit injuriously dost let;
Again her presence doth astonish me,
 And strikes me dumb as if my sense were gone; 248
Oh, is not this a strange perplexity?
 In presence dumb, she hears not absent moan;
 Thus absent presence, present absence maketh,
That hearing my poor suit, she it mistaketh. 252

XIX

My pain paints out my love in doleful verse,
 The lively glass wherein she may behold it;
 My verse her wrong to me doth still rehearse,
But so as it lamenteth to unfold it. 256
 Myself with ceaseless tears my harms bewail,
 And her obdurate heart not to be moved;
 Though long-continued woes my senses fail,
 And curse the day, the hour when first I loved. 260
 She takes the glass wherein herself she sees,
 In bloody colours cruelly depainted;
 And her poor prisoner humbly on his knees,
 Pleading for grace, with heart that never fainted. 264
 She breaks the glass; alas, I cannot choose
But grieve that I should so my labour lose!

XX

Great is the joy that no tongue can express!
Fair babe new born, how much dost thou delight me! 268
But what, is mine so great? Yea, no whit less!
So great that of all woes it doth acquite me.
 It's fair Fidessa that this comfort bringeth,
 Who sorry for the wrongs by her procured, 272
Delightful tunes of love, of true love singeth,
 Wherewith her too chaste thoughts were ne'er inured.
 She loves, she saith, but with a love not blind.
 Her love is counsel that I should not love, 276
But upon virtues fix a stayèd mind.
But what! This new-coined love, love doth reprove?
 If this be love of which you make such store,
Sweet, love me less, that you may love me more! 280

Sweet stroke (so might I thrive) as I must praise,
 But sweeter hand that gives so sweet a stroke:
 The Lute it selfe is sweetest, when she plaies,
 But what heare I? a string through feare is broke.
 The Lute doth shake, as if it were afraide,
 Oh sure some Godesse holds it in her hand!
 A heavenly power that oft hath me dismaide,
 Yet such a power as doth in beautie stand.
 Cease Lute, my ceaseles suite will nere be heard:
 (Ah too hard-hearted she that will not heare it)
 If I but thinke on joy, my joy is mard,
 My grieffe is great, yet ever must I beare it.
 But love twixt us will prove a faithfull page,
 And she will love my sorrowes to assuage.

Oh she must love my sorrowes to aswauge,
 Oh God what joy felt I when she did smile?
 Whom killing grieffe before did cause to rage,
 (Beautie is able sorrow to beguile.)
 Out traytor absence, thou doest hinder me,
 And mak'st my Mistris often to forget:
 Causing me raile upon her crueltie,
 Whilst thou my suite injuriously doest let.
 Againe, her presence doth astonish me,
 And strikes me dumbe, as if my sense were gone:
 Oh is not this a strange perplexitie?
 In presence dombe: she hears not absent mone.
 Thus absent presence, present absence maketh,
 That (hearing my poore suite) she it mistaketh.

My painE paints out my love in dolefulL verse,
 (The lively glasse wherein she may behold it)
 My verse her wrong to me doth still rehearse:
 But so, as it lamenteth to unfold it.
 My selfe with ceaseles teares my harmes bewaile,
 And her obdurate heart not to be moved:
 Though long-continued woes my senses faile,
 And curse the day, the houre when first I loved.
 She takes the glasse, wherein her selfe she sees
 In bloodie colours cruelly depainted:
 And her poore prisoner humbly on his knees,
 Pleading for grace with heart that never fainted.
 She breakes the glasse; (alas I cannot choose)
 But grieve that I should so my labour loose.

Great is the joy that no tongue can expresse,
 Faire babe (new borne) how much doest thou delight me?
 But what is mine so great? yea, no whit lesse
 So great, that of all woes it doth acquite me.
 It's faire *Fidessa* that this comfort bringeth,
 Who sorrie for the wrongs by her procured,
 Delightfull tunes of love of true love singeth,
 Wherewith her too-chast thoughts were here inured.
 She loves (she saith) but with a love not blind,
 Her love is counsaile that I should not love,
 But upon vertues fixe a staid mind:
 But what? this new-coynd love, love doth reprove.
 If this be love of which you make such store,
 Sweet, love me lesse, that you may love me more.

Fidessa

XXI

He that will *Cæsar* be, or else not be—
 Who can aspire to *Cæsar's* bleeding fame,
 Must be of high resolve; but what is he
That thinks to gain a second *Cæsar's* name? 284
 Whoe'er he be that climbs above his strength,
 And climbeth high, the greater is his fall!
 For though he sit awhile, we see at length,
 His slippery place no firmness hath at all, 288
 Great is his bruise that falleth from on high.
This warneth me that I should not aspire;
 Examples should prevail; I care not, I!
 I perish must or have what I desire! 292
This humour doth with mine full well agree
 I must *Fidessa's* be, or else not be!

XXII

It was of love, ungentle gentle boy!
That thou didst come and harbour in my breast; 296
 Not of intent my body to destroy,
 And have my soul, with restless cares opprest.
But sith thy love doth turn unto my pain,
 Return to Greece, sweet lad, where thou wast born. 300
 Leave me alone my griefs to entertain,
 If thou forsake me, I am less forlorn;
 Although alone, yet shall I find more ease.
 Then see thou hie thee hence, or I will chase thee; 304
 Men highly wrongèd care not to displeas;
 My fortune hangs on thee, thou dost disgrace me,
Yet at thy farewell, play a friendly part;
 To make amends, fly to *Fidessa's* heart. 308

XXIII

Fly to her heart, hover about her heart,
 With dainty kisses mollify her heart,
 Pierce with thy arrows her obdurate heart,
 With sweet allurements ever move her heart, 312
 At midday and at midnight touch her heart,
Be lurking closely, nestle about her heart,
 With power—thou art a god!—command her heart,
 Kindle thy coals of love about her heart, 316
 Yea, even into thyself transform her heart!
 Ah, she must love! Be sure thou have her heart;
 And I must die if thou have not her heart;
 Thy bed if thou rest well, must be her heart; 320
 He hath the best part sure that hath her heart;
 What have I not, if I have but her heart!

XXIV

Striving is past! Ah, I must sink and drown,
 And that in sight of long descrièd shore! 324
 I cannot send for aid unto the town,
All help is vain and I must die therefore.
 Then poor distressed caitiff, be resolved
 To leave this earthly dwelling fraught with care; 328
 Cease will thy woes, thy corpse in earth involved,
 Thou diest for her that will no help prepare.
O see, my case herself doth now behold;
 The casement open is; she seems to speak;— 332
But she has gone! O then I dare be bold
 And needs must say she caused my heart to break.
 I die before I drown, O heavy case!
 It was because I saw my mistress' face. 336

He that will *Cæsar* be, or else not be,
 (Who can aspire to *Cæsars* bleeding fame?)
 Must be of high resolve: but what is he
 That thinkes to gaine a second *Cæsars* name.
 Who ere he be that climes above his strength,
 And climeth high, the greater is his fall:
 For though he sit awhile, we see at length
 His slipperic place no firmnes hath at all.
 Great is his bruise that falleth from on high.
 This warneth me that I should not aspire:
 Examples should prevails: I care not I,
 I perish must, or have what I desire.
 This humour doth with mine full well agree,
 I must *Fidessaes* be, or else not be.

It was of love ungentle gentle boy,
 That thou didst come and harbour in my brest:
 Not of intent my body to destroy,
 And have my soule with restles cares opprest.
 But sith thy love doth turne unto my paine,
 Returne to *Greece* (sweete lad) where thou wast borne:
 Leave me alone my griefes to entertaine,
 If thou forsake mee, I am lesse forlorn.
 Although alone, yet shall I finde more ease:
 Then see thou hie thee hence, or I will chase thee:
 Men highly wronged care not to displease:
 My fortune hangs on thee, thou doest disgrace me.
 Yet at thy farewell play a friendly part,
 To make amends, flye to *Fidessaes* hart.

Flye to her heart, hover about her heart,
 With daintie kisses mollifie her heart:
 Pierce with thy arrowes her obdurate heart,
 With sweet allurements ever move her heart.
 At midday and at midnight touch her heart,
 Be lurking closely, nestle about her heart:
 With power, (thou art a god) command her heart,
 Kindle thy coales of love about her heart,
 Yea even into thy selfe transforme her heart.
 Ah she must love, be sure thou have her heart,
 And I must dye, if thou have not her heart,
 Thy bed (if thou rest well) must be her heart:
 He hath the best part sure that hath her heart:
 What have I not, if I have but her heart?

Striving is past, ah I must sinke and drowne,
 And that in sight of long descried shore:
 I cannot send for ayd unto the towne,
 All help is vaine, and I must dye therefore.
 Then poore distressed caytive, be resolved
 To leave this earthly dwelling fraught with care:
 Cease will thy woes, thy corps in earth involved,
 Thou dyest for her that will no helpe prepare.
 Oh see: my case her selfe doth now behold,
 The casement open is, she seemes to speake:
 But she has gone: oh then I dare be bold,
 And needs must say, she causede my heart to breake.
 I dye before I drowne, oh heavie case,
 It was because I saw my mistris face.

Fidessa

XXV

Compare me to Pygmalion with his image sotted,
For, as was he, even so am I deceived.
 The shadow only is to me allotted,
 The substance hath of substance me bereaved. 340
 Then poor and helpless must I wander still
 In deep laments to pass succeeding days,
 Weltring in woes that poor and mighty kill.
O who is mighty that so soon decays! 344
 The dread Almighty hath appointed so
 The final period of all worldly things.
 Then as in time they come, so must they go;
 Death common is to beggars and to kings 348
For whither do I run beside my text?
 I run to death, for death must be the next.

XXVI

The silly bird that hastes unto the net,
 And flutters to and fro till she be taken, 352
 Doth look some food or succour there to get,
But loseth life, so much is she mistaken.
 The foolish fly that fleeth to the flame
 With ceaseless hovering and with restless flight, 356
 Is burnèd straight to ashes in the same,
 And finds her death where was her most delight
 The proud aspiring boy that needs would pry
 Into the secrets of the highest seat, 360
 Had some conceit to gain content thereby,
Or else his folly sure was wondrous great.
 These did through folly perish all and die:
 And though I know it, even so do I. 364

XXVII

Poor worm, poor silly worm, alas, poor beast!
 Fear makes thee hide thy head within the ground,
Because of creeping things thou art the least,
Yet every foot gives thee thy mortal wound. 368
But I, thy fellow worm, am in worse state,
For thou thy sun enjoyest, but I want mine.
 I live in irksome night, O cruel fate!
 My sun will never rise, nor ever shine. 372
 Thus blind of light, mine eyes misguide my feet,
 And baleful darkness makes me still afraid;
 Men mock me when I stumble in the street,
 And wonder how my young sight so decayed. 376
Yet do I joy in this, even when I fall,
That I shall see again and then see all.

XXVIII

Well may my soul, immortal and divine,
That is imprisoned in a lump of clay, 380
Breathe out laments until this body pine,
That from her takes her pleasures all away.
 Pine then, thou loathed prison of my life,
 Untoward subject of the least aggrievance! 384
O let me dye! Mortality is rife;
 Death comes by wounds, by sickness, care, and chance.
O earth, the time will come when I'll resume thee,
 And in thy bosom make my resting-place; 388
 Then do not unto hardest sentence doom me;
 Yield, yield betimes; I must and will have grace!
Richly shalt thou be entombèd, since, for thy grave,
 Fidessa, fair Fidessa, thou shalt have! 392

Compare me to *Pygmalion* with his image sotted,
 For (as was he) even so am I deceived:
 The shadow only is to me allotted,
 The substance hath of substance me bereaved.
 Then poore and helples must I wander still,
 In deepe laments to passe succeeding daies:
 Weltring in woes that poore and mightie kill,
 Oh who is mightie that so soone decaies!
 The dread almightie hath appoynted so,
 The finall period of all worldly things:
 That as in time they come, so must they goe,
 (Death common is to beggers and to kings)
 But whither doe I runne beside my text?
 I runne to death, for death must be the next.

The sillie bird that hasts unto the net,
 And flutters to and fro till she be taken,
 Doth looke some foode or succour there to get,
 But looseth life, so much is she mistaken.
 The foolish flie that flieth to the flame,
 With ceaseles hovering, and with restles flight,
 Is burnèd straight to ashes in the same,
 And findes her death, where was her most delight.
 The proude aspiring boye that needes would prie
 Into the secrets of the highest seate,
 Had some conceite to gaine content thereby,
 Or else his follie sure was wondrous great.
 These did through follie perish all and die,
 And (though I know it) even so doe I.

Poore worme, poore silly worme, (alas poore beast)
 Feare makes thee hide thy head within the groud,
 Because of creeping things thou art the least,
 Yet every foote gives thee thy mortall wound.
 But I thy fellow worme am in worse state,
 For thou thy Sunne enjoyest, but I want mine:
 I live in irksome night: oh cruell fate!
 My Sunne will never rise, nor ever shine.
 Thus blind of light, mine eyes misguide my fecte,
 And balefull darknes makes me still afraid:
 Men mocke me when I stumble in the streete,
 And wonder how my yong sight so decaide.
 Yet doe I joy in this (even when I fall)
 That I shall see againe, and then see all.

Well may my soule immortall and divine,
 That is imprison'd in a lump of clay,
 Breath out laments, untill this bodie pine:
 That from her takes her pleasures all away.
 Pine then, thou lothed prison of my life;
 Untoward subject of the least aggrievance,
 IOh let me dye: mortalitie is rife,
 Death comes by wounds, by sicknes, care & chance.
 Oh earth, the time will come when I'll resume thee,
 And in my bosome make thy resting-place:
 Then doe not unto hardest sentence doome me,
 Yeeld, yeeld betimes; I must and will have grace.
 Richly shalt thou be entomb'd, since for thy grave,
Fidessa, faire *Fidessa*, thou shalt have.

Fidessa

XXIX

Earth, take this earth wherein my spirits languish;
Spirits, leave this earth that doth in griefs retain you;
 Griefs, chase this earth that it may fade with anguish;
Spirits, avoid these furies which do pain you! 396
O leave your loathsome prison; freedom gain you;
 Your essence is divine; great is your power;
 And yet you moan your wrongs and sore complain you,
 Hoping for joy which fadeth every hour. 400
O spirits, your prison loathe and freedom gain you;
 The destinies in deep laments have shut you
 Of mortal hate, because they do disdain you,
 And yet of joy that they in prison put you. 404
Earth, take this earth with thee to be enclosed;
 Life is to me, and I to it, opposed!

XXX

Weep now no more, mine eyes, but be you drowned
 In your own tears, so many years distilled. 408
 And let her know that at them long hath frowned,
That you can weep no more although she willed;
This hap her cruelty hath her allotten,
 Who whilom was commandress of each part; 412
That now her proper griefs must be forgotten
 By those true outward signs of inward smart.
For how can he that hath not one tear left him,
 Stream out those floods that are due unto her moaning, 416
 When both of eyes and tears she hath bereft him?
O yet I'll signify my grief with groaning;
 True sighs, true groans shall echo in the air
 And say, Fidessa, though most cruel, is most fair! 420

XXXI

Tongue, never cease to sing Fidessa's praise;
Heart, however she deserve conceive the best;
Eyes, stand amazed to see her beauty's rays;
Lips, steal one kiss and be for ever blest; 424
Hands, touch that hand wherein your life is closed;
 Breast, lock up fast in thee thy life's sole treasure;
 Arms, still embrace and never be disclosed;
 Feet, run to her without or pace or measure; 428
 Tongue, heart, eyes, lips, hands, breast, arms, feet,
 Consent to do true homage to your Queen,
 Lovely, fair, gentle, wise, virtuous, sober, sweet,
 Whose like shall never be, hath never been! 432
O that I were all tongue, her praise to shew;
 Then surely my poor heart were freed from woe!

XXXII

Sore sick of late, nature her due would have,
 Great was my pain where still my mind did rest; 436
 No hope but heaven, no comfort but my grave,
 Which is of comforts both the last and least;
But on a sudden, the Almighty sent
Sweet ease to the distressed and comfortless, 440
 And gave me longer time for to repent,
 With health and strength the foes of feebleness;
Yet I my health no sooner 'gan recover,
But my old thoughts, though full of cares, retained, 444
 Made me, as erst, become a wretched lover
 Of her that love and lovers aye disdained.
 Then was my pain with ease of pain increased,
 And I ne'er sick until my sickness ceased. 448

Earth, take this earth wherein my spirits languish,
 Spirits, leave this earth that doth in griefs retain you:
 Griefs, chase this earth, that it may fade with anguish,
 Spirits, avoid these furies which doe paine you;
 Oh leave your loathsome prison; freedom gaine you;
 Your essence is divine; great is your power:
 And yet you mone your wrongs & sore coplaine you,
 Hoping for joye which fadeth every howre.
 Oh Spirits your prison loath, & freedom gaine you!
 The destinies in deepe laments have shut you
 Of mortall hate, because they doe disdain you,
 And yet of joy that they in prison put you.
 Earth, take this earth with thee to be inclosed:
 Life is to me, and I to it opposed.

Weepe now no more mine eyes, but be you drowned
 In your own teares, so many years distilled:
 And let her know that at them long hath frowned,
 That you can weep no more, although she willed.
 This hap her crueltie hath her allotten,
 Who whilom was commaundres of each part:
 That now her proper griefes must be forgotten,
 By those true outward signes of inward smart.
 For how ca he that hath not one teare left him,
 Streame out those floodes that's are due unto her moning?
 When both of eyes and teares she hath bereft him:
 Oh yet i'le signifie my grieffe with groning!
 True sighes, true grones shall eccho in the ayre,
 And say *Fidessa* (though most cruell) is most fayre.

Tongue never cease to sing *FidessaEs* praise,
 Heart (how ever she deserve) conceive the best:
 Eyes stand amaz'd to see her beautyies raies,
 Lippes steale one kisse and be for ever blest.
 Hands touch that hand wherein your life is closed,
 Brest locke up fast in thee thy lives sole treasure,
 Armes still imbrace and never be disclosed,
 Feete runne to her without or pace or measure,
 Tongue, hart, eyes, lipps, hands, brest, armes, feete,
 Consent to doe true homage to your Queene:
 Lovelic, faire, gentle, wise, vertuous, sober, sweete,
 Whose like shall never be; hath never beene,
 Oh that I were all tongue, her praise to show:
 Then surelie my poore hart were freed from woe.

Sore sicke of late, Nature her due would have,
 Great was my paine where still my minde did rest:
 No hope but heaven, no comfort but my grave,
 Which is of comforts both the last and least.
 But on a sudden th' almightie sent
 Sweet ease to the distresse and comfortlesse,
 And gave me longer time for to repent,
 With health and strength the foes of feebleness.
 Yet I my health no sooner gan recover,
 But my old thoughts (though full of cares) retained,
 Made me (as erst) become a wretched lover
 Of her, that love and lovers aye disdained.
 Then was my paine with ease of paine increased,
 And I nere sicke untill my sicknes ceased.

Fidessa

XXXIII

He that would fain Fidessa's image see,
 My face of force may be his looking-glass.
 There is she portrayed and her cruelty,
 Which as a wonder through the world must pass. 452
But were I dead, she would not be betrayed;
 It's I, that 'gainst my will, shall make it known.
 Her cruelty by me must be bewrayed,
Or I must hide my head and live alone. 456
 I'll pluck my silver hairs from out my head,
 And wash away the wrinkles of my face;
 Closely immured I'll live as I were dead,
Before she suffer but the least disgrace. 460
 How can I hide that is already known?
 I have been seen and have no face but one.

XXXIV

Fie pleasure, fie! Thou cloy'st me with delight;
Sweet thoughts, you kill me if you lower stray! 464
O many be the joys of one short night!
 Tush, fancies never can desire allay!
 Happy, unhappy thoughts! I think, and have not.
 Pleasure, O pleasing pain! Shows nought avail me! 468
Mine own conceit doth glad me, more I crave not;
Yet wanting substance, woe doth still assail me.
 Babies do children please, and shadows fools;
 Shows have deceived the wisest many a time. 472
Ever to want our wish, our courage cools.
 The ladder broken, 'tis in vain to climb.
But I must wish, and crave, and seek, and climb;
 It's hard if I obtain not grace in time. 476

XXXV

I have not spent the April of my time,
 The sweet of youth in plotting in the air,
But do at first adventure seek to climb,
 Whilst flowers of blooming years are green and fair. 480
 I am no leaving of all-withering age,
 I have not suffered many winter lours;
 I feel no storm unless my love do rage,
 And then in grief I spend both days and hours. 484
This yet doth comfort that my flower lasted
 Until it did approach my sun too near;
 And then, alas, untimely was it blasted,
So soon as once thy beauty did appear! 488
But after all, my comfort rests in this,
That for thy sake my youth decayed is.

XXXVI

O let my heart, my body, and my tongue
 Bleed forth the lively streams of faith unfeigned, 492
 Worship my saint the gods and saints among,
 Praise and extoll her fair that me hath pained!
O let the smoke of my suppressed desire,
 Raked up in ashes of my burning breast, 496
 Break out at length and to the clouds aspire,
 Urging the heavens to afford me rest;
But let my body naturally descend
 Into the bowels of our common mother, 500
 And to the very centre let it wend,
 When it no lower can, her griefs to smother!
 And yet when I so low do buried lie,
 Then shall my love ascend unto the sky. 504

He that would faine *Fidessaes* image see,
 My face of force must be his looking-glasse:
 There is she portraide and her crueltie,
 Which as a wonder through the world must passe.
 But were I dead, she would not be betraide:
 It's I that gainst my will shall make it knowne,
 Her crueltie by me must be bewraide,
 Or I must hide my head, and live alone.
 Ile plucke my silver haire from out my head,
 And wash away the wrinkles of my face:
 Closely immur'd I'll live as I were dead,
 Before she suffer but the least disgrace.
 How can I hide that is already knowne?
 I have been scene and have no face but one.

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 (Sweet thoughts you kill me if you lower stray)
 Oh many be the joyes of one short night!
 Tush, fancies never can desire allay.
 Happie unhappie thoughts: I thinke and have not
 Pleasure: oh pleasing paine! Shewes nought availe me.
 Mine own coccit doth glad me, more I crave not:
 Yet wanting substance, woe doth still assaile me.
 "Babies doe children please, and shadowes fooles:
 "Shewes have deceiv'd the wisest many a time:
 "Ever to want our wish our courage cooles:
 "The ladder broken, t'is in vaine to clime.
 But I must wish, and crave, and seeke, and clime,
 It's hard if I obtaine not grace in time.

I have not spent the April of my time,
 The sweet of youth in plotting in the aire:
 But doe at first adventure seeke to clime,
 Whil'st flowers of blooming yeares are greene and faire.
 I am no leaving of al-withering age,
 I have not suffred many winter lowres:
 I feele no storme, unlesse my Love doe rage,
 And then in grieffe I spend both daies and heures.
 This yet doth comfort that my flower lasted,
 Untill it did approach my Sunne too neere:
 And then (alas) untimely was it blasted,
 So soone as once thy beautie did appeare.
 But after all, my comfort rests in this,
 That for thy sake my youth decaied is.

Oh let my heart, my bodie and my tongue,
 Bleed forth the lively streames of faith unfained:
 Worship my saint the Gods and Saints among,
 Praise and extoll her faire that me hath pained.
 Oh let the smoake of my supprest desire
 Rak'd up in ashes of my burning brest,
 Breake out at length, and to the clowdes aspire,
 Urging the heavens t'affoord me rest.
 But let my bodie naturally descend
 Into the bowels of our common mother,
 And to the very Center let it wend:
 When it no lower can, her griefes to smother.
 And yet when I so low doe buried lie,
 Then shall my love ascend unto the skie.

Fidessa

XXXVII

Fair is my love that feedes among the lilies,
The lilies growing in that pleasant garden
Where Cupid's mount, that well beloved hill is,
And where that little god himself is warden. 508
See where my love sits in the beds of spices,
Beset all round with camphor, myrrh, and roses,
And interlac'd with curious devices,
Which her from all the world apart incloses. 512
There doth she tune her lute for her delight,
And with sweet music makes the ground to move;
Whilst I, poor I, do sit in heavy plight,
Wailing alone my unrespected love, 516
Not daring rush into so rare a place,
That gives to her, and she to it, a grace.

XXXVIII

Was never eye did see my mistress' face,
Was never ear did hear Fidessa's tongue, 520
Was never mind that once did mind her grace,
That ever thought the travail to be long.
When her I see, no creature I behold,
So plainly say these advocates of love, 524
That now do fear and now to speak are bold,
Trembling apace when they resolve to prove.
These strange effects do show a hidden power,
A majesty all base attempts reproving, 528
That glads or daunts as she doth laugh or lower;
Surely some goddess harbours in their moving
Who thus my Muse from base attempts hath raised,
Whom thus my Muse beyond compare hath praised. 532

XXXIX

My lady's hair is threads of beaten gold,
Her front the purest crystal eye hath seen,
Her eyes the brightest stars the heavens hold,
Her cheeks red roses such as seld have been; 536
Her pretty lips of red vermillion die,
Her hand of ivory the purest white,
Her blush Aurora or the morning sky,
Her breast displays two silver fountains bright 540
The spheres her voice, her grace the Graces three:
Her body is the saint that I adore;
Her smiles and favours sweet as honey be;
Her feet fair Thetis praiseth evermore. 544
But ah, the worst and last is yet behind,
For of a griffon she doth bear the mind!

XL

Injurious Fates, to rob me of my bliss,
And dispossess my heart of all his hope! 548
You ought with just revenge to punish miss,
For unto you the hearts of men are ope.
Injurious Fates, that hardened have her heart,
Yet make her face to send out pleasing smiles! 552
And both are done but to increase my smart,
And entertain my love with falsèd wiles.
Yet being when she smiles surprisèd with joy,
I fain would languish in so sweet a pain, 556
Beseeching death my body to destroy,
Lest on the sudden she should frown again.
When men do wish for death, Fates have no force;
But they, when men would live, have no remorse. 560

Faire is my love that feedes among the lillies,
The Lillies growing in that pleasant garden,
Where Cupids mount, that welbeloved hill is,
And where that little god himselfe is warden.
See where my Love sits in the beds of spices,
Beset all round with Camphere, Myrrhe, and Roses,
And interlac'd with curious devices,
Which her from all the world apart incloses.
There doth she tune her Lute for her delight,
And with sweet musick makes the ground to move,
Whil'st I (poor I) doe sit in heavie plight,
Wayling alone my unrespected love,
Not daring rush into so rare a place,
That gives to her and she to it a grace.

Faire is my love that feedes among the lillies,
The Lillies growing in that pleasant garden,
Where Cupids mount, that welbeloved hill is,
And where that little god himselfe is warden.
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There doth she tune her Lute for her delight,
And with sweet musick makes the ground to move,
Whil'st I (poor I) doe sit in heavie plight,
Wayling alone my unrespected love,
Not daring rush into so rare a place,
That gives to her and she to it a grace.

My Ladies haire is threds of beaten gold,
Her front the purest Christall eye hath scene:
Her eyes the brightest starres the heavens hold.
Her cheekes red Roses, such as seld have been:
Her pretie lips of red vermillion dye,
Her hand of yvorie the purest white:
Her blush *Aurora*, or the morning skye,
Her breast displaies two silver fountains bright,
The Spheares her voyce, her grace the Graces three,
Her bodie is the Saint that I adore,
Her smiles and favours sweet as honey bee,
Her feete faire *Thetis* praiseth evermore.
But ah the worst and last is yet behind,
For of a Gryphon she doth beare the mind.

Injurious fates to robbe me of my blisse,
And dispossesse my heart of all his hope:
You ought with just revenge to punish misse,
For unto you the hearts of men are ope.
Injurious fates that hardned have her hart,
Yet make her face to send out pleasing smiles:
And both are done but to increase my smart,
And intertaine my love with falsèd wiles.
Yet, being (when she smiles) surprisde with joy,
I faine would languish in so sweet a paine:
Beseeching death my bodie to destroy,
Lest on the sudden she should frowne againe.
When men doe wish for death, fates have no force,
But they (when men would live) have no remorse.

Fidessa

XLI

The prison I am in is thy fair face,
 Wherein my liberty enchainèd lies;
 My thoughts, the bolts that hold me in the place;
 My food, the pleasing looks of thy fair eyes. 564
Deep is the prison where I lie enclosed,
 Strong are the bolts that in this cell contain me;
 Sharp is the food necessity imposed,
 When hunger makes me feed on that which pains me. 568
Yet do I love, embrace, and follow fast,
That holds, that keeps, that discontents me most;
 And list not break, unlock, or seek to waste
 The place, the bolts, the food, though I be lost; 572
 Better in prison ever to remain,
 Than being out to suffer greater pain.

XLII

When never-speaking silence proves a wonder,
 When ever-flying flame at home remaineth, 576
 When all-concealing night keeps darkness under,
 When men-devouring wrong true glory gaineth,
 When soul-tormenting grief agrees with joy,
 When Lucifer foreruns the baleful night, 580
 When Venus doth forsake her little boy,
 When her untoward boy obtaineth sight,
 When Sisyphus doth cease to roll his stone,
 When Otus shaketh off his heavy chain, 584
 When beauty, queen of pleasure, is alone,
 When love and virtue quiet peace disdain;
 When these shall be, and I not be,
 Then will Fidessa pity me. 588

XLIII

Tell me of love, sweet Love, who is thy sire,
Or if thou mortal or immortal be?
 Some say thou art begotten by desire,
 Nourished with hope, and fed with fantasy, 592
 Engendered by a heavenly goddess' eye,
 Lurking most sweetly in an angel's face.
 Others, that beauty thee doth deify;—
O sovereign beauty, full of power and grace!— 596
But I must be absurd all this denying,
 Because the fairest fair alive ne'er knew thee.
Now, Cupid, comes thy godhead to the trying;
 'Twas she alone—such is her power—that slew me;600
 She shall be Love, and thou a foolish boy,
 Whose virtue proves thy power is but a toy.

XLIV

No choice of change can ever change my mind;
 Choiceless my choice, the choicest choice alive; 604
Wonder of women, were she not unkind,
 The pitiless of pity to deprive.
Yet she, the kindest creature of her kind,
 Accuseth me of self-ingratitude, 608
 And well she may, sith by good proof I find
 Myself had died, had she not helpful stood.
For when my sickness had the upper hand,
 And death began to show his awful face, 612
 She took great pains my pains for to withstand,
 And eased my heart that was in heavy case.
But cruel now, she scorneth what it craveth;
Unkind in kindness, murdering while she saveth. 616

The prison I am in is thy faire face,
 Wherein my libertie inchained lyes:
 My thoughts the bolts that hold me in the place,
 My foode the pleasing lookes of thy faire eyes.
 Deepe is the prison where I lye inclosed,
 Strong are the bolts that in this cell containes me:
 Sharpe is the foode necessitie imposed,
 When hunger makes me feed on that which paines me.
 Yet doe I love, imbrace, and follow fast,
 That holds, that keepes, that discontents me most:
 And list not breake, unlock, or seeke to waste
 The place, the bolts, the foode (though I be lost.)
 Better in prison ever to remaine,
 Than being out to suffer greater paine.

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 When Men-devouring wrong, true glorie gaineth:
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 When Lucifer forerunnes the balefull night,
 When Venus doth forsake her little boye,
 When her untoward boye obtaineth sight,
 When Sisyphus doth cease to roule his stone,
 When Othes shaketh off his heavie chaines:
 When Beautie Queene of pleasure is alone,
 When Love and Vertue quiet peace disdaines.
 When these shall be and I not be,
 Then will Fidessa pittie me.

Tell me of love sweete Love who is thy sire,
 Or if thou mortall or immortal be:
 Some say thou art begotten by Desire,
 Nourisht with hope, and fed with fantasie:
 Ingendered by a heavenly goddesses eye,
 Lurking most sweetely in an Angels face:
 Others, that beautie thee doth deifie,
 Oh Sovereigne beautie full of power and grace!
 But I must be absurd all this denying,
 Because the fayrest faire alive nere knew thee:
 Now Cupid comes thy godhead to the trying,
 T'was she alone (such is her power) that slew me.
 She shall be Love, and thou a foolish boye,
 Whose vertue proves thy power is but a toye.

No choice of change can ever change my minde,
 Choiceles my choice the choicest choice alive:
 Wonder of women, were she not unkinde,
 The pitiles of pitie to deprive.
 Yet she, the kindest creature of her kinde,
 Accuseth me of selfe-ingratitude:
 And well she may, sith by good prooffe I finde
 My selfe had dide, had she not helpfull stooede.
 For when my sicknes had the upper hand,
 And death began to shew his awfull face;
 She tooke great paines my paines for to withstand,
 And easde my heart that was in heavie case.
 But cruell now she skorneth what it craveth:
 Unkind in kindness, murdering while she saveth.

Fidessa

XLV

Mine eye bewrays the secrets of my heart,
 My heart unfolds his grief before her face;
 Her face—bewitching pleasure of my smart!—
 Deigns not one look of mercy and of grace. 620
 My guilty eye of murder and of treason,—
 Friendly conspirator of my decay,
 Dumb eloquence, the lover's strongest reason!—
 Doth weep itself for anger quite away, 624
 And chooseth rather not to be, than be
 Disloyal, by too well discharging duty;
 And being out, joys it no more can see
 The sugared charms of all deceiving beauty. 628
But, for the other greedily doth eye it,
 I pray you tell me, what do I get by it?

XLVI

So soon as peeping Lucifer, Aurora's star,
 The sky with golden periwigs doth spangle; 632
So soon as Phœbus gives us light from far,
So soon as fowler doth the bird entangle;
Soon as the watchful bird, clock of the morn,
 Gives intimation of the day's appearing; 636
Soon as the jolly hunter winds his horn,
 His speech and voice with custom's echo clearing;
Soon as the hungry lion seeks his prey 640
 In solitary range of pathless mountains;
Soon as the passenger sets on his way,
So soon as beasts resort unto the fountains;
So soon mine eyes their office are discharging,
 And I my griefs with greater griefs enlarging. 644

XLVII

I see, I hear, I feel, I know, I rue
 My fate, my fame, my pain, my loss, my fall,
 Mishap, reproach, disdain, a crown, her hue,
 Cruel, still flying, false, fair, funeral, 648
 To cross, to shame, bewitch, deceive, and kill
 My first proceedings in their flowing bloom.
 My worthless pen fast chained to my will,
 My erring life through an uncertain doom, 652
 My thoughts that yet in lowliness do mount,
 My heart the subject of her tyranny;
 What now remains but her severe account
 Of murder's crying guilt, foul butchery! 656
 She was unhappy in her cradle breath,
That given was to be another's death.

XLVIII

"Murder! O murder!" I can cry no longer.
 "Murder! O murder!" Is there none to aid me? 660
 Life feeble is in force, death is much stronger;
 Then let me die that shame may not upbraid me;
Nothing is left me now but shame or death.
 I fear she feareth not foul murder's guilt, 664
 Nor do I fear to lose a servile breath.
 I know my blood was given to be spilt.
 What is this life but maze of countless strays,
 The enemy of true felicity, 668
 Fitly compared to dreams, to flowers, to plays!
O life, no life to me, but misery!
 Of shame or death, if thou must one,
 Make choice of death and both are gone. 672

Mine eye bewrayes the secrets of my hart,
 My heart unfolds his grieffe before her face:
 Her face bewitching pleasure of my smart,
 Daignes not one looke of mercie and of grace.
 My guiltie eye of murder and of treason
 (Friendly conspirator of my decay,
 Dumbe eloquence the lovers strongest reason)
 Doth weepe itselفة for anger quite away,
 And chooseth rather not to be, then bee
 Disloyall, by too-well discharging dutie:
 And being out, joyes it no more can see
 The sugred charmes of all deceiving beautie.
 But (for the other greedily doth eye it)
 I pray you tell me what doe I get by it?

So soone as peeping Lucifer Auroraes starre,
 The skie with golden perewigs doth spangle,
 So soone as Phœbus gives us light from farre,
 So soone as fowler doth the bird entangle,
 Soone as the watchfull bird (clocke of the morne)
 Gives intimation of the dayes appearing,
 Soone as the jollie Hunter windes his horne
 His speech and voyce with customes Eccho clearing,
 Soone as the hungrie Lion seekes his praie,
 In solitary range of pathles mountains,
 Soone as the passenger sets on his waie,
 So soone as beastes resort unto the fountains:
 So soone mine eyes their office are discharging,
 And I my griefes with greater griefes inlarging.

I see, I heare, I feele, I know, I rue
 My fate, my fame, my paine, my losse, my fall;
 Mishap, reproach, disdaine, a crowne, her hue,
 Cruell still flying, false, faire, funerall
 To crosse, to shame, bewitch, deceive, and kill
 My first proceedings in their flowring bloome.
 My worthles pen fast chayned to my will,
 My erring life through an uncertaine doome:
 My thoughts that yet in lowlines doe mount,
 My heart the subject of her tyrannie,
 What now remains but her severe account
 Of murthers crying guilt (foule butcherie.)
 She was unhappy in her cradle breath,
 That given was to be anothers death.

Murder, oh murder! I can crie no longer,
 Murder, oh murder! is there none to ayde me?
 Life feeble is in force, death is much stronger:
 Then let me dye that shame may not upbrayd me.
 Nothing is left me now but shame or death:
 I feare she feareth not foule murthers guilt,
 Nor doe I feare to loose a servile breath,
 I know my blood was given to be spilt.
 What is this life but maze of countles strayes,
 The enemie of true felicitie:
 Fitly compar'd to dreames, to flowers, to playes?
 Oh life, no life to me but miserie!
 Of shame or death, if thou must one,
 Make choice of death and both are gone.

Fidessa

XLIX

My cruel fortunes clouded with a frown,
 Lurk in the bosom of eternal nigh;
 My climbing thoughts are basely haulèd down;
 My best devices prove but after-sight. 676
 Poor outcast of the world's exilèd room,
 I live in wilderness of deep lament;
 No hope reservèd me but a hopeless tomb,
 When fruitless life and fruitful woes are spent. 680
 Shall Phœbus hinder little stars to shine,
 Or lofty cedar mushrooms leave to grow?
 Sure mighty men at little ones repine,
 The rich is to the poor a common foe. 684
 Fidessa, seeing how the world doth go,
 Joineth with fortune in my overthrow.

L

When I the hooks of pleasure first devoured,
 Which undigested threaten now to choke me, 688
 Fortune on me her golden graces showered;
 O then delight did to delight provoke me!
Delight, false instrument of my decay,
Delight, the nothing that doth all things move, 692
 Made me first wander from the perfect way,
 And fast entangled me in the snares of love.
 Then my unhappy happiness at first began,
 Happy in that I loved the fairest fair;
 Unhappily despised, a hapless man; 696
 Thus joy did triumph, triumph did despair.
 My conquest is—which shall the conquest gain?—
 Fidessa, author both of joy and pain! 700

LI

Work, work apace, you blessed sisters three,
 In restless twining of my fatal thread!
 O let your nimble hands at once agree,
 To weave it out and cut it off with speed! 704
 Then shall my vexèd and tormented ghost
 Have quiet passage to the Elysian rest,
 And sweetly over death and fortune boast
 In everlasting triumphs with the blest. 708
But ah, too well I know you have conspired
 A lingering death for him that loatheth life,
 As if with woes he never could be tired.
For this you hide your all-dividing knife. 712
One comfort yet the heavens have assigned me;
That I must die and leave my griefs behind me.

LII

It is some comfort to the wrongèd man,
 The wronger of injustice to upbraid. 716
 Justly myself herein I comfort can,
 And justly call her an ungrateful maid.
 Thus am I pleasèd to rid myself of crime
 And stop the mouth of all-reporting fame, 720
 Counting my greatest cross the loss of time
 And all my private grief her public shame.
 Ah, but to speak the truth, hence are my cares,
 And in this comfort all discomfort resteth; 724
 My harms I cause her scandal unawares;
 Thus love procures the thing that love detesteth.
For he that views the glasses of my smart
 Must need report she hath a flinty heart. 728

My cruell fortunes clouded with a frowne,
 Lurke in the bosome of eternall night:
 My climbing thoughts are basely haled downe,
 My best devices prove but after-sight.
 Poore outcast of the worlds exiled roome,
 I live in wildernes of deepe lament:
 No hope reserv'd me but a hopeles tombe,
 When fruitles life, and fruitfull woes are spent.
 Shall Phœbus hinder little starres to shine,
 Or loftie Cedar Mushrome leave to growe?
 Sure mightie men at little ones repine,
 The rich is to the poore a common foe.
Fidessa seeing how the world doth goe,
 Joyneth with fortune in my overthrow.

When I the hookes of pleasure first devowred,
 Which undigested, threaten now to choke me,
 Fortune on me her golden graces shewred,
 Oh then delight did to delight provoke me.
 Delight, false instrument of my decay,
 Delight the nothing that doth all things move,
 Made me first wander from the perfect way,
 And fast intangled me in the snares of love.
 Then my unhappie happines (at first) began,
 Happie, in that I lov'd the fayrest faire:
 Unhappily despisde, a haples man
 Thus joy did triumph, triumph did despair.
 My conquest is which shall the conquest gaine:
Fidessa author both of joy and paine.

Worke worke apace you blessed Sisters three,
 In restles twining of my fatall threed:
 Oh let your nimble hands at once agree,
 To weave it out, and cut it off with speed.
 Then shall my vexed and tormented ghost
 Have quiet passage to the Elisian rest:
 And sweetly over death and fortune boast,
 In everlasting triumphs with the blest.
 But ah (too well I know) you have conspired
 A lingring death for him that lotheth life:
 As if with woes he never could be tyred:
 For this you hide your all-dividing knife.
 One comfort yet the heavens have assigned me,
 That I must dye and leave my griefes behind me.

It is some comfort to the wronged man,
 The wronger of injustice to upbraide:
 Justly myselfe herein I comfort can,
 And justly call her an ungrateful maide.
 Thus am I please to rid my selfe of crime,
 And stop the mouth of all-reporting fame:
 Counting my greatest crosse the losse of time,
 And all my privat griefe her publique shame.
 Ah (but to speake a truth) hence are my cares,
 And in this comfort all discomfort resteth:
 My harmes I cause (her scandale) unawares,
 Thus love procures the thing that love detesteth.
 For he that viewes the glasses of my smart
 Must needs report she hath a flintie hart.

Fidessa

LIII

I was a king of sweet content at least,
But now from out my kingdom banished;
 I was chief guest at fair dame pleasure's feast,
But now I am for want of succour famished; 732

I was a saint and heaven was my rest,
But now cast down into the lowest hell.
 Vile caitiffs may not live among the blest,
 Nor blessed men amongst cursed caitiffs dwell. 736

Thus am I made an exile of a king;
 Thus choice of meats to want of food is changed;
 Thus heaven's loss doth hellish torments bring;
 Self crosses make me from myself estranged. 740

Yet am I still the same but made another;
 Then not the same; alas, I am no other!

LIV

If great Apollo offered as a dower
 His burning throne to beauty's excellence; 744
 If Jove himself came in a golden shower
 Down to the earth to fetch fair Io thence

If Venus in the curled locks was tied
 Of proud Adonis not of gentle kind; 748
 If Tellus for a shepherd's favour died,
 The favour cruel Love to her assigned;

If Heaven's winged herald Hermes had
 His heart enchanted with a country maid; 752
 If poor Pygmalion was for beauty mad;
 If gods and men have all for beauty strayed:

I am not then ashamed to be included
 'Mongst those that love, and be with love deluded. 756

LV

O, No, I dare not! O, I may not speak!
 Yes, yes, I dare, I can, I must, I will!
 Then heart, pour forth thy complaints and do not break;
 Let never fancy manly courage kill; 760

Intreat her mildly, words have pleasing charms
 Of force to move the most obdurate heart,
 To take relenting pity of my harms,
 And with unfeignèd tears to wail my smart. 764

Is she a stock, a block, a stone, a flint?
 Hath she nor ears to hear nor eyes to see?
 If so my cries, my prayers, my tears shall stint!
 Lord! how can lovers so bewitchèd be! 768

I took her to be beauty's queen alone;
But now I see she is a senseless stone.

LVI

Is trust betrayed? Doth kindness grow unkind?
 Can beauty both at once give life and kill? 772
 Shall fortune alter the most constant mind?
Will reason yield unto rebelling will?

Doth fancy purchase praise, and virtue shame?
May show of goodness lurk in treachery? 776
 Hath truth unto herself procurèd blame?
 Must sacred muses suffer misery?

Are women woe to men, traps for their falls?
 Differ their words, their deeds, their looks, their lives? 780
 Have lovers ever been their tennis balls?
Be husbands fearful of the chastest wives?

All men do these affirm, and so must I,
 Unless Fidessa give to me the lie. 784

I was a king of sweet content at least,
 But now from out my kingdome banished:
 I was chiefe guest at faire Dame pleasures feast,
 But now I am for want of succour famished.

I was a Saint and heaven was my rest,
 But now cast downe into the lowest hell:
 Vile caytifés may not live amongst the blest,
 Nor blessed men mongst cursed caytifés dwell.

Thus am I made an exile of a king,
 Thus choice of meates to want of food is changed:
 Thus heavens losse doth hellish torments bring:
 Selfe crosses make me from my selfe estranged.

Yet am I still the same: but made another,
 Then not the same: alas I am no other.

If great *Apollo* offered as a dower
 His burning throne to Beauties excellence:
 If *Jove* himselfe came in a golden shower
 Downe to the earth to fetch faire *Io* thence:

If *Venus* in the curled locks were tied
 Of proud *Adonis* not of gentle kind:
 If *Tellus* for a shepheards favour died,
 (The favour cruell love to her assign'd)

If heavens winged Herralld *Hermes* had
 His heart enchanted with a countrie maide:
 If poore *Pygmalion* were for beautie mad:
 If gods and men have all for beautie straide,

I am not then asham'd to be included
 Mongst those that love and be with love deluded.

Oh no I dare not, oh I may not speake!
 Yes, yes, I dare, I can, I must, I will:
 Then heart powre forth thy complaints and do not breake,
 Let never fancie manly courage kill.

Intreate her mildly, words have pleasing charmes,
 Of force to move the most obdurate heart
 To take relenting pitie of my harmes,
 And with unfained teares to waile my smart.

Is she a stocke, a blocke, a stone, a flint?
 Hath she nor cares to heare, nor eyes to see?
 If so, my cries, my prayers, my teares shall stint.
 Lord how can lovers so bewitched bee

I tooke her to be beauties *Queen* alone,
 But now I see she is a senseles stone.

Is trust betraide, doth kindnes grow unkind?
 Can beautie (both at once) give life and kill?
 Shall fortune alter the most constant mind?
 Will reason yeeld unto rebelling will?

Doth fancie purchase praise, and vertue shame?
 May shew of goodnes lurke in treacherie?
 Hath truth unto her selfe procurèd blame?
 Must sacred Muses suffer miserie?

Are women woe to men, traps for their falles?
 Differ their words, their deedes, their lookes, their lives?
 Have lovers ever been their tennis-balles?
 Be husbands fearfull of the chastest wives?

All men doe these affirme, and so must I:
 Unlesse *Fidessa* give to me the lye.

Fidessa

LVII

Three playfellows—such three were never seen
 In Venus' court—upon a summer's day,
 Met altogether on a pleasant green,
 Intending at some pretty game to play. 788
 They Dian, Cupid, and Fidessa were.
 Their wager, beauty, bow, and cruelty;
 The conqueress the stakes away did bear.
 Whose fortune then was it to win all three? 792
 Fidessa, which doth these as weapons use,
 To make the greatest heart her will obey;
 And yet the most obedient to refuse
 As having power poor lovers to betray. 796
 With these she wounds, she heals, gives life and death;
More power hath none that lives by mortal breath.

LVIII

O beauty, siren! kept with Circe's rod;
 The fairest good in seem but foulest ill; 800
 The sweetest plague ordained for man by God,
 The pleasing subject of presumptuous will;
 Th' alluring object of unstayed eyes;
 Friended of all, but unto all a foe; 804
 The dearest thing that any creature buys,
 And vainest too, it serves but for a show;
 In seem a heaven, and yet from bliss exiling;
 Paying for truest service nought but pain; 808
 Young men's undoing, young and old beguiling;
 Man's greatest loss though thought his greatest gain!
 True, that all this with pain enough I prove;
 And yet most true, I will Fidessa love. 812

LIX

Do I unto a cruel tiger play,
That preys on me as wolf upon the lambs,
 Who fear the danger both of night and day
 And run for succour to their tender dams? 816
Yet will I pray, though she be ever cruel,
 On bended knee and with submissive heart.
 She is the fire and I must be the fuel;
 She must inflict and I endure the smart. 820
 She must, she shall be mistress of her will,
 And I, poor I, obedient to the same;
 As fit to suffer death as she to kill;
 As ready to be blamed as she to blame. 824
 And for I am the subject of her ire,
All men shall know thereby my love entire.

LX

O let me sigh, weep, wail, and cry no more;
Or let me sigh, weep, wail, cry more and more! 828
 Yea, let me sigh, weep, wail, cry evermore,
For she doth pity my complaints no more
 Than cruel pagan or the savage Moore;
But still doth add unto my torments more, 832
 Which grievous are to me by so much more
 As she inflicts them and doth wish them more.
 O let thy mercy, merciless, be never more!
So shall sweet death to me be welcome, more 836
 Than is to hungry beasts the grassy moor,
 As she that to affliction adds yet more,
 Becomes more cruel by still adding more!
 Weary am I to speak of this word "more;" 840
Yet never weary she, to plague me more!

Three play-fellows (such three were never scene)
 In Venus court) upon a summers day,
 Met altogether on a pleasant greene,
 Intending at some pretie game to play.
 They Dian, Cupid, and Fidessa were:
 Their wager, beautie, bow, and crueltie:
 The conqueresse the stakes away did beare,
 Whose fortune then it was to winne all three.
Fidessa, which doth these as weapons use,
 To make the greatest heart her will obey:
 And yet the most obedient to refuse,
 As having power poore lovers to betray.
 With these she wounds, she heales, gives life and death:
 More power hath none that lives by mortal breath.

O beautie Syren, kept with Cyrces rod:
 The fairest good in seeme but foulest ill:
 The sweetest plague ordain'd for man by God,
 The pleasing subject of presumptuous will:
 Th' alluring object of unstaied eyes,
 Friended of all, but unto all a foe:
 The dearest thing that any creature buyes,
 And vainest too: (it serves but for a shoe.)
 In seeme a heaven, and yet from blisse exiling,
 Paying for truest service, nought but paine:
 Young mens undoing: yong and old beguiling,
 Mans greatest losse, though thought his greatest gaine.
 True, that all this with paine enough I prove:
 And yet most true, I will Fidessa love.

Doe I unto a cruell Tyger pray,
 That praies on me as wolfe upon the Lambes?
 (Who feare the danger both of night and day,
 And runne for succour to their tender damsmes)
 Yet will I pray (though she be ever cruell)
 On bended knee, and with submissive hart:
 She is the fire, and I must be the fuell,
 She must inflict, and I endure the smart.
 She must, she shall, be mistris of her will,
 And I (poore I) obedient to the same:
 As fit to suffer death, as she to kill,
 As readie to be blam'd, as she to blame.
 And for I am the subject of her ire,
 All men shall know thereby my love intire.

Oh let me sigh, weepe, waile, and crie no more,
 Or let me sigh, weepe, waile, crie more and more:
 Yea let me sigh, weepe, waile, crie evermore:
 For she doth pitie my complaints no more,
 Then cruell Pagan, or the savadge Moore:
 But still doth adde unto my torments more,
 Which grievous are to me by so much more
 As she inflicts them, and doth wish them more.
 Oh let thy mercie (merciless) be never more!
 So shall sweet death to me be welcome, more,
 Then is to hungrie beasts the grassie moore:
 As she that to affliction ads yet more,
 Becomes more cruell, by still adding more!
 Wearie am I to speake of this word (more)
 Yet never wearie she to plague me more.

Fidessa

LXI

Fidessa's worth in time begetteth praise;
 Time, praise; praise, fame; fame, wonderment;
 Wonder, fame, praise, time, her worth do raise 844
 To highest pitch of dread astonishment.
Yet time in time her hardened heart bewrayeth
 And praise itself her cruelty dispraiseth.
 So that through praise, alas, her praise decayeth, 848
 And that which makes it fall her honour raiseth!
Most strange, yet true! So wonder, wonder still,
 And follow fast the wonder of these days;
 For well I know all wonder to fulfill 852
 Her will at length unto my will obeys.
Meantime let others praise her constancy,
And me attend upon her clemency.

LXII

Most true that I must fair Fidessa love. 856
Most true that fair Fidessa cannot love.
Most true that I do feel the pains of love.
Most true that I am captive unto love.
Most true that I deluded am with love. 860
Most true that I do find the sleights of love.
Most true that nothing can procure her love.
Most true that I must perish in my love.
Most true that she contemns the god of love. 864
Most true that he is snarèd with her love.
Most true that she would have me cease to love.
Most true that she herself alone is love.
Most true that though she hated, I would love. 868
Most true that dearest life shall end with love.
Most true that I must faire *Fidessa* love,

FINIS

*Talis apud tales, talis sub tempore tali:
Subque meo tali iudice, talis ero.*

Fidessaes worth in time begetteth praise,
 Time praise; praise fame; fame wonderment,
Wonder, fame, praise, time, her worth doe raise
 To hiest pitch of dread astonishment.
Yet time in time her hardned heart bewraieth,
 And praise it selfe her crueltie dispraiseth:
So that through praise (alas) her praise decaieeth,
 And that (which makes it fall) her honor raiseth.
Most strange: yet true, so wonder wonder still,
 And follow fast the wonder of these daies:
For well I know (all wonder to fulfill)
 Her will at length unto my will obaies.
Meane time let others praise her constancie,
And me attend upon her clemencie.

Most true that faire *Fidessa* cannot love.
Most true that I doe feele the paines of love,
Most true that I am captive unto love.
Most true that I deluded am with love,
Most true that I doe find the sleights of love.
Most true that nothing can procure her love,
Most true that I must perish in my love.
Most true that she contemns the god of love,
Most true that he is snarèd with her love.
Most true that she would have me cease to love,
Most true that she her selfe alone is Love.
Most true that though she hated I would love,
Most true that dearest life shall end with love.