

Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis



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'Vilia miretur vulgus; mihi flavus Apollo Pocula Castalia plena ministret aqua.'	0.1 0.2
TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE HENRY WRIOTHESLY, EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON, AND BARON OF TICHFIELD.	0.3 0.4 0.5
RIGHT HONORABLE, I KNOW not how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolished lines to your lordship, nor how the world will censure me for choosing so strong a prop to support so weak a burden only, if your honour seem but pleased, I account myself highly praised, and vow to take advantage of all idle hours, till I have honoured you with some graver labour. But if the first heir of my invention prove deformed, I shall be sorry it had so noble a god-father, and never after ear so barren a land, for fear it yield me still so bad a harvest. I leave it to your honourable survey, and your honour to your heart's content; which I wish may always answer your own wish and the world's hopeful expectation.	0.6 0.7 0.8 0.9 0.10 0.11 0.12 0.13 0.14 0.15
Your honour's in all duty, WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.	0.16 0.17
Even as the sun with purple-colour'd face Had ta'en his last leave of the weeping morn, Rose-cheek'd Adonis hied him to the chase; Hunting he loved, but love he laugh'd to scorn; Sick-thoughted Venus makes amain unto him, And like a bold-faced suitor 'gins to woo him.	1 2 3 4 5 6
'Thrice-fairer than myself,' thus she began, 'The field's chief flower, sweet above compare, Stain to all nymphs, more lovely than a man, More white and red than doves or roses are; Nature that made thee, with herself at strife, Saith that the world hath ending with thy life.	7 8 9 10 11 12
'Vouchsafe, thou wonder, to alight thy steed, And rein his proud head to the saddle-bow; If thou wilt deign this favour, for thy meed A thousand honey secrets shalt thou know: Here come and sit, where never serpent hisses, And being set, I'll smother thee with kisses;	13 14 15 16 17 18

Venus and Adonis

'And yet not cloy thy lips with loathed satiety, 19
But rather famish them amid their plenty, 20
Making them red and pale with fresh variety, 21
Ten kisses short as one, one long as twenty: 22
A summer's day will seem an hour but short, 23
Being wasted in such time-beguiling sport.' 24

With this she seizeth on his sweating palm, 25
The precedent of pith and livelihood, 26
And trembling in her passion, calls it balm, 27
Earth's sovereign salve to do a goddess good: 28
Being so enraged, desire doth lend her force 29
Courageously to pluck him from his horse. 30

Over one arm the lusty courser's rein, 31
Under her other was the tender boy, 32
Who blush'd and pouted in a dull disdain, 33
With leaden appetite, unapt to toy; 34
She red and hot as coals of glowing fire, 35
He red for shame, but frosty in desire. 36

The studded bridle on a ragged bough 37
Nimbly she fastens:--O, how quick is love!-- 38
The steed is stalled up, and even now 39
To tie the rider she begins to prove: 40
Backward she push'd him, as she would be thrust, 41
And govern'd him in strength, though not in lust. 42

So soon was she along as he was down, 43
Each leaning on their elbows and their hips: 44
Now doth she stroke his cheek, now doth he frown, 45
And 'gins to chide, but soon she stops his lips; 46
And kissing speaks, with lustful language broken, 47
'If thou wilt chide, thy lips shall never open.' 48

He burns with bashful shame: she with her tears 49
Doth quench the maiden burning of his cheeks; 50
Then with her windy sighs and golden hairs 51
To fan and blow them dry again she seeks: 52
He saith she is immodest, blames her 'miss; 53
What follows more she murders with a kiss. 54

Even as an empty eagle, sharp by fast, 55
Tires with her beak on feathers, flesh and bone, 56
Shaking her wings, devouring all in haste, 57
Till either gorge be stuff'd or prey be gone; 58
Even so she kissed his brow, his cheek, his chin, 59
And where she ends she doth anew begin. 60

Venus and Adonis

Forced to content, but never to obey, 61
Panting he lies and breatheth in her face; 62
She feedeth on the steam as on a prey, 63
And calls it heavenly moisture, air of grace; 64
Wishing her cheeks were gardens full of flowers, 65
So they were dew'd with such distilling showers. 66

Look, how a bird lies tangled in a net, 67
So fasten'd in her arms Adonis lies; 68
Pure shame and awed resistance made him fret, 69
Which bred more beauty in his angry eyes: 70
Rain added to a river that is rank 71
Perforce will force it overflow the bank. 72

Still she entreats, and prettily entreats, 73
For to a pretty ear she tunes her tale; 74
Still is he sullen, still he lours and frets, 75
'Twixt crimson shame and anger ashy-pale: 76
Being red, she loves him best; and being white, 77
Her best is better'd with a more delight. 78

Look how he can, she cannot choose but love; 79
And by her fair immortal hand she swears, 80
From his soft bosom never to remove, 81
Till he take truce with her contending tears, 82
Which long have rain'd, making her cheeks all wet; 83
And one sweet kiss shall pay this countless debt. 84

Upon this promise did he raise his chin, 85
Like a dive-dapper peering through a wave, 86
Who, being look'd on, ducks as quickly in; 87
So offers he to give what she did crave; 88
But when her lips were ready for his pay, 89
He winks, and turns his lips another way. 90

Never did passenger in summer's heat 91
More thirst for drink than she for this good turn. 92
Her help she sees, but help she cannot get; 93
She bathes in water, yet her fire must burn: 94
'O, pity,' 'gan she cry, 'flint-hearted boy! 95
'Tis but a kiss I beg; why art thou coy? 96

'I have been woo'd, as I entreat thee now, 97
Even by the stern and direful god of war, 98
Whose sinewy neck in battle ne'er did bow, 99
Who conquers where he comes in every jar; 100
Yet hath he been my captive and my slave, 101
And begg'd for that which thou unask'd shalt have. 102

Venus and Adonis

'Over my altars hath he hung his lance, 103
His batter'd shield, his uncontrolled crest, 104
And for my sake hath learn'd to sport and dance, 105
To toy, to wanton, dally, smile and jest, 106
Scorning his churlish drum and ensign red, 107
Making my arms his field, his tent my bed. 108

'Thus he that overruled I oversway'd, 109
Leading him prisoner in a red-rose chain: 110
Strong-tempered steel his stronger strength obey'd, 111
Yet was he servile to my coy disdain. 112
O, be not proud, nor brag not of thy might, 113
For mastering her that foil'd the god of fight! 114

'Touch but my lips with those fair lips of thine,-- 115
Though mine be not so fair, yet are they red-- 116
The kiss shall be thine own as well as mine. 117

What seest thou in the ground? hold up thy head: 118
Look in mine eye-balls, there thy beauty lies; 119
Then why not lips on lips, since eyes in eyes? 120
'Art thou ashamed to kiss? then wink again, 121
And I will wink; so shall the day seem night; 122
Love keeps his revels where they are but twain; 123
Be bold to play, our sport is not in sight: 124
These blue-vein'd violets whereon we lean 125
Never can blab, nor know not what we mean. 126

'The tender spring upon thy tempting lip 127
Shows thee unripe; yet mayst thou well be tasted: 128
Make use of time, let not advantage slip; 129
Beauty within itself should not be wasted: 130
Fair flowers that are not gather'd in their prime 131
Rot and consume themselves in little time. 132

'Were I hard-favour'd, foul, or wrinkled-old, 133
Ill-nurtured, crooked, churlish, harsh in voice, 134
O'erworn, despised, rheumatic and cold, 135
Thick-sighted, barren, lean and lacking juice, 136
Then mightst thou pause, for then I were not for thee 137
But having no defects, why dost abhor me? 138

'Thou canst not see one wrinkle in my brow; 139
Mine eyes are gray and bright and quick in turning: 140
My beauty as the spring doth yearly grow, 141
My flesh is soft and plump, my marrow burning; 142
My smooth moist hand, were it with thy hand felt, 143
Would in thy palm dissolve, or seem to melt. 144

Venus and Adonis

'Bid me discourse, I will enchant thine ear,	145
Or, like a fairy, trip upon the green,	146
Or, like a nymph, with long dishevell'd hair,	147
Dance on the sands, and yet no footing seen:	148
Love is a spirit all compact of fire,	149
Not gross to sink, but light, and will aspire.	150
'Witness this primrose bank whereon I lie;	151
These forceless flowers like sturdy trees support me;	152
Two strengthless doves will draw me through the sky,	153
From morn till night, even where I list to sport me:	154
Is love so light, sweet boy, and may it be	155
That thou shouldst think it heavy unto thee?	156
'Is thine own heart to thine own face affected?	157
Can thy right hand seize love upon thy left?	158
Then woo thyself, be of thyself rejected,	159
Steal thine own freedom and complain on theft.	160
Narcissus so himself himself forsook,	161
And died to kiss his shadow in the brook.	162
'Torches are made to light, jewels to wear,	163
Dainties to taste, fresh beauty for the use,	164
Herbs for their smell, and sappy plants to bear:	165
Things growing to themselves are growth's abuse:	166
Seeds spring from seeds and beauty breedeth beauty;	167
Thou wast begot; to get it is thy duty.	168
'Upon the earth's increase why shouldst thou feed,	169
Unless the earth with thy increase be fed?	170
By law of nature thou art bound to breed,	171
That thine may live when thou thyself art dead;	172
And so, in spite of death, thou dost survive,	173
In that thy likeness still is left alive.'	174
By this the love-sick queen began to sweat,	175
For where they lay the shadow had forsook them,	176
And Titan, tired in the mid-day heat,	177
With burning eye did hotly overlook them;	178
Wishing Adonis had his team to guide,	179
So he were like him and by Venus' side.	180
And now Adonis, with a lazy spright,	181
And with a heavy, dark, disliking eye,	182
His louring brows o'erwhelming his fair sight,	183
Like misty vapours when they blot the sky,	184
Souring his cheeks cries 'Fie, no more of love!	185
The sun doth burn my face: I must remove.'	186

Venus and Adonis

'Ay me,' quoth Venus, 'young, and so unkind?	187
What bare excuses makest thou to be gone!	188
I'll sigh celestial breath, whose gentle wind	189
Shall cool the heat of this descending sun:	190
I'll make a shadow for thee of my hairs;	191
If they burn too, I'll quench them with my tears.	192
'The sun that shines from heaven shines but warm,	193
And, lo, I lie between that sun and thee:	194
The heat I have from thence doth little harm,	195
Thine eye darts forth the fire that burneth me;	196
And were I not immortal, life were done	197
Between this heavenly and earthly sun.	198
'Art thou obdurate, flinty, hard as steel,	199
Nay, more than flint, for stone at rain relenteth?	200
Art thou a woman's son, and canst not feel	201
What 'tis to love? how want of love tormenteth?	202
O, had thy mother borne so hard a mind,	203
She had not brought forth thee, but died unkind.	204
'What am I, that thou shouldst contemn me this?	205
Or what great danger dwells upon my suit?	206
What were thy lips the worse for one poor kiss?	207
Speak, fair; but speak fair words, or else be mute:	208
Give me one kiss, I'll give it thee again,	209
And one for interest, if thou wilt have twain.	210
'Fie, lifeless picture, cold and senseless stone,	211
Well-painted idol, image dun and dead,	212
Statue contenting but the eye alone,	213
Thing like a man, but of no woman bred!	214
Thou art no man, though of a man's complexion,	215
For men will kiss even by their own direction.'	216
This said, impatience chokes her pleading tongue,	217
And swelling passion doth provoke a pause;	218
Red cheeks and fiery eyes blaze forth he wrong;	219
Being judge in love, she cannot right her cause:	220
And now she weeps, and now she fain would speak,	221
And now her sobs do her intendments break.	222
Sometimes she shakes her head and then his hand,	223
Now gazeth she on him, now on the ground;	224
Sometimes her arms infold him like a band:	225
She would, he will not in her arms be bound;	226
And when from thence he struggles to be gone,	227
She locks her lily fingers one in one.	228

Venus and Adonis

'Fondling,' she saith, 'since I have hemm'd thee here	229
Within the circuit of this ivory pale,	230
I'll be a park, and thou shalt be my deer;	231
Feed where thou wilt, on mountain or in dale:	232
Graze on my lips; and if those hills be dry,	233
Stray lower, where the pleasant fountains lie.	234
Within this limit is relief enough,	235
Sweet bottom-grass and high delightful plain,	236
Round rising hillocks, brakes obscure and rough,	237
To shelter thee from tempest and from rain	238
Then be my deer, since I am such a park;	239
No dog shall rouse thee, though a thousand bark.'	240
At this Adonis smiles as in disdain,	241
That in each cheek appears a pretty dimple:	242
Love made those hollows, if himself were slain,	243
He might be buried in a tomb so simple;	244
Foreknowing well, if there he came to lie,	245
Why, there Love lived and there he could not die.	246
These lovely caves, these round enchanting pits,	247
Open'd their mouths to swallow Venus' liking.	248
Being mad before, how doth she now for wits?	249
Struck dead at first, what needs a second striking?	250
Poor queen of love, in thine own law forlorn,	251
To love a cheek that smiles at thee in scorn!	252
Now which way shall she turn? what shall she say?	253
Her words are done, her woes are more increasing;	254
The time is spent, her object will away,	255
And from her twining arms doth urge releasing.	256
'Pity,' she cries, 'some favour, some remorse!'	257
Away he springs and hasteth to his horse.	258
But, lo, from forth a copse that neighbors by,	259
A breeding jennet, lusty, young and proud,	260
Adonis' trampling courser doth espy,	261
And forth she rushes, snorts and neighs aloud:	262
The strong-neck'd steed, being tied unto a tree,	263
Breaketh his rein, and to her straight goes he.	264
Imperiously he leaps, he neighs, he bounds,	265
And now his woven girths he breaks asunder;	266
The bearing earth with his hard hoof he wounds,	267
Whose hollow womb resounds like heaven's thunder;	268
The iron bit he crusheth 'tween his teeth,	269
Controlling what he was controlled with.	270

Venus and Adonis

His ears up-prick'd; his braided hanging mane	271
Upon his compass'd crest now stand on end;	272
His nostrils drink the air, and forth again,	273
As from a furnace, vapours doth he send:	274
His eye, which scornfully glisters like fire,	275
Shows his hot courage and his high desire.	276
Sometime he trots, as if he told the steps,	277
With gentle majesty and modest pride;	278
Anon he rears upright, curvets and leaps,	279
As who should say 'Lo, thus my strength is tried,	280
And this I do to captivate the eye	281
Of the fair breeder that is standing by.'	282
What reckoneth he his rider's angry stir,	283
His flattering 'Holla,' or his 'Stand, I say'?	284
What cares he now for curb or pricking spur?	285
For rich caparisons or trapping gay?	286
He sees his love, and nothing else he sees,	287
For nothing else with his proud sight agrees.	288
Look, when a painter would surpass the life,	289
In limning out a well-proportion'd steed,	290
His art with nature's workmanship at strife,	291
As if the dead the living should exceed;	292
So did this horse excel a common one	293
In shape, in courage, colour, pace and bone.	294
Round-hoof'd, short-jointed, fetlocks shag and long,	295
Broad breast, full eye, small head and nostril wide,	296
High crest, short ears, straight legs and passing strong,	297
Thin mane, thick tail, broad buttock, tender hide:	298
Look, what a horse should have he did not lack,	299
Save a proud rider on so proud a back.	300
Sometime he scuds far off and there he stares;	301
Anon he starts at stirring of a feather;	302
To bid the wind a base he now prepares,	303
And whether he run or fly they know not whether;	304
For through his mane and tail the high wind sings,	305
Fanning the hairs, who wave like feather'd wings.	306
He looks upon his love and neighs unto her;	307
She answers him as if she knew his mind:	308
Being proud, as females are, to see him woo her,	309
She puts on outward strangeness, seems unkind,	310
Spurns at his love and scorns the heat he feels,	311
Beating his kind embracements with her heels.	312

Venus and Adonis

Then, like a melancholy malcontent, 313
He veils his tail that, like a falling plume, 314
Cool shadow to his melting buttock lent: 315
He stamps and bites the poor flies in his fume. 316
His love, perceiving how he is enraged, 317
Grew kinder, and his fury was assuaged. 318

His testy master goeth about to take him; 319
When, lo, the unback'd breeder, full of fear, 320
Jealous of catching, swiftly doth forsake him, 321
With her the horse, and left Adonis there: 322
As they were mad, unto the wood they hie them, 323
Out-stripping crows that strive to over-fly them. 324

All swoln with chafing, down Adonis sits, 325
Banning his boisterous and unruly beast: 326
And now the happy season once more fits, 327
That love-sick Love by pleading may be blest; 328
For lovers say, the heart hath treble wrong 329
When it is barr'd the aidance of the tongue. 330

An oven that is stopp'd, or river stay'd, 331
Burneth more hotly, swelleth with more rage: 332
So of concealed sorrow may be said; 333
Free vent of words love's fire doth assuage; 334
But when the heart's attorney once is mute, 335
The client breaks, as desperate in his suit. 336

He sees her coming, and begins to glow, 337
Even as a dying coal revives with wind, 338
And with his bonnet hides his angry brow; 339
Looks on the dull earth with disturbed mind, 340
Taking no notice that she is so nigh, 341
For all askance he holds her in his eye. 342

O, what a sight it was, wistly to view 343
How she came stealing to the wayward boy! 344
To note the fighting conflict of her hue, 345
How white and red each other did destroy! 346
But now her cheek was pale, and by and by 347
It flash'd forth fire, as lightning from the sky. 348

Now was she just before him as he sat, 349
And like a lowly lover down she kneels; 350
With one fair hand she heaveth up his hat, 351
Her other tender hand his fair cheek feels: 352
His tenderer cheek receives her soft hand's print, 353
As apt as new-fall'n snow takes any dint. 354

Venus and Adonis

O, what a war of looks was then between them! 355
Her eyes petitioners to his eyes suing; 356
His eyes saw her eyes as they had not seen them; 357
Her eyes woo'd still, his eyes disdain'd the wooing: 358
And all this dumb play had his acts made plain 359
With tears, which, chorus-like, her eyes did rain. 360

Full gently now she takes him by the hand, 361
A lily prison'd in a gaol of snow, 362
Or ivory in an alabaster band; 363
So white a friend engirts so white a foe: 364
This beauteous combat, wilful and unwilling, 365
Show'd like two silver doves that sit a-billing. 366

Once more the engine of her thoughts began: 367
'O fairest mover on this mortal round, 368
Would thou wert as I am, and I a man, 369
My heart all whole as thine, thy heart my wound; 370
For one sweet look thy help I would assure thee, 371
Though nothing but my body's bane would cure thee! 372

'Give me my hand,' saith he, 'why dost thou feel it?' 373
'Give me my heart,' saith she, 'and thou shalt have it: 374
O, give it me, lest thy hard heart do steel it, 375
And being steel'd, soft sighs can never grave it: 376
Then love's deep groans I never shall regard, 377
Because Adonis' heart hath made mine hard.' 378

'For shame,' he cries, 'let go, and let me go; 379
My day's delight is past, my horse is gone, 380
And 'tis your fault I am bereft him so: 381
I pray you hence, and leave me here alone; 382
For all my mind, my thought, my busy care, 383
Is how to get my palfrey from the mare.' 384

Thus she replies: 'Thy palfrey, as he should, 385
Welcomes the warm approach of sweet desire: 386
Affection is a coal that must be cool'd; 387
Else, suffer'd, it will set the heart on fire: 388
The sea hath bounds, but deep desire hath none; 389
Therefore no marvel though thy horse be gone. 390

'How like a jade he stood, tied to the tree, 391
Servilely master'd with a leathern rein! 392
But when he saw his love, his youth's fair fee, 393
He held such petty bondage in disdain; 394
Throwing the base thong from his bending crest, 395
Enfranchising his mouth, his back, his breast. 396

Venus and Adonis

'Who sees his true-love in her naked bed,	397
Teaching the sheets a whiter hue than white,	398
But, when his glutton eye so full hath fed,	399
His other agents aim at like delight?	400
Who is so faint, that dare not be so bold	401
To touch the fire, the weather being cold?	402
'Let me excuse thy courser, gentle boy;	403
And learn of him, I heartily beseech thee,	404
To take advantage on presented joy;	405
Though I were dumb, yet his proceedings teach thee;	406
O, learn to love; the lesson is but plain,	407
And once made perfect, never lost again.'	408
I know not love,' quoth he, 'nor will not know it,	409
Unless it be a boar, and then I chase it;	410
'Tis much to borrow, and I will not owe it;	411
My love to love is love but to disgrace it;	412
For I have heard it is a life in death,	413
That laughs and weeps, and all but with a breath.	414
'Who wears a garment shapeless and unfinish'd?	415
Who plucks the bud before one leaf put forth?	416
If springing things be any jot diminish'd,	417
They wither in their prime, prove nothing worth:	418
The colt that's back'd and burden'd being young	419
Loseth his pride and never waxeth strong.	420
'You hurt my hand with wringing; let us part,	421
And leave this idle theme, this bootless chat:	422
Remove your siege from my unyielding heart;	423
To love's alarms it will not ope the gate:	424
Dismiss your vows, your feigned tears, your flattery;	425
For where a heart is hard they make no battery.'	426
'What! canst thou talk?' quoth she, 'hast thou a tongue?	427
O, would thou hadst not, or I had no hearing!	428
Thy mermaid's voice hath done me double wrong;	429
I had my load before, now press'd with bearing:	430
Melodious discord, heavenly tune harshsounding,	431
Ear's deep-sweet music, and heart's deep-sore wounding.	432
'Had I no eyes but ears, my ears would love	433
That inward beauty and invisible;	434
Or were I deaf, thy outward parts would move	435
Each part in me that were but sensible:	436
Though neither eyes nor ears, to hear nor see,	437
Yet should I be in love by touching thee.	438

Venus and Adonis

'Say, that the sense of feeling were bereft me, 439
And that I could not see, nor hear, nor touch, 440
And nothing but the very smell were left me, 441
Yet would my love to thee be still as much; 442
For from the stillitory of thy face excelling 443
Comes breath perfumed that breedeth love by 444
smelling. 445

'But, O, what banquet wert thou to the taste, 446
Being nurse and feeder of the other four! 447
Would they not wish the feast might ever last, 448
And bid Suspicion double-lock the door, 449
Lest Jealousy, that sour unwelcome guest, 450
Should, by his stealing in, disturb the feast?' 451

Once more the ruby-colour'd portal open'd, 452
Which to his speech did honey passage yield; 453
Like a red morn, that ever yet betoken'd 454
Wreck to the seaman, tempest to the field, 455
Sorrow to shepherds, woe unto the birds, 456
Gusts and foul flaws to herdmen and to herds. 457

This ill presage advisedly she marketh: 458
Even as the wind is hush'd before it raineth, 459
Or as the wolf doth grin before he barketh, 460
Or as the berry breaks before it staineth, 461
Or like the deadly bullet of a gun, 462
His meaning struck her ere his words begun. 463

And at his look she flatly falleth down, 464
For looks kill love and love by looks reviveth; 465
A smile recures the wounding of a frown; 466
But blessed bankrupt, that by love so thriveth! 467
The silly boy, believing she is dead, 468
Claps her pale cheek, till clapping makes it red; 469

And all amazed brake off his late intent, 470
For sharply he did think to reprehend her, 471
Which cunning love did wittily prevent: 472
Fair fall the wit that can so well defend her! 473
For on the grass she lies as she were slain, 474
Till his breath breatheth life in her again. 475

He wrings her nose, he strikes her on the cheeks, 476
He bends her fingers, holds her pulses hard, 477
He chafes her lips; a thousand ways he seeks 478
To mend the hurt that his unkindness marr'd: 479
He kisses her; and she, by her good will, 480
Will never rise, so he will kiss her still. 481

Venus and Adonis

The night of sorrow now is turn'd to day:	482
Her two blue windows faintly she up-heaveth,	483
Like the fair sun, when in his fresh array	484
He cheers the morn and all the earth relieveth;	485
And as the bright sun glorifies the sky,	486
So is her face illumined with her eye;	487
Whose beams upon his hairless face are fix'd,	488
As if from thence they borrow'd all their shine.	489
Were never four such lamps together mix'd,	490
Had not his clouded with his brow's repine;	491
But hers, which through the crystal tears gave light,	492
Shone like the moon in water seen by night.	493
'O, where am I?' quoth she, 'in earth or heaven,	494
Or in the ocean drench'd, or in the fire?	495
What hour is this? or morn or weary even?	496
Do I delight to die, or life desire?	497
But now I lived, and life was death's annoy;	498
But now I died, and death was lively joy.	499
'O, thou didst kill me: kill me once again:	500
Thy eyes' shrewd tutor, that hard heart of thine,	501
Hath taught them scornful tricks and such disdain	502
That they have murder'd this poor heart of mine;	503
And these mine eyes, true leaders to their queen,	504
But for thy piteous lips no more had seen.	505
'Long may they kiss each other, for this cure!	506
O, never let their crimson liveries wear!	507
And as they last, their verdure still endure,	508
To drive infection from the dangerous year!	509
That the star-gazers, having writ on death,	510
May say, the plague is banish'd by thy breath.	511
'Pure lips, sweet seals in my soft lips imprinted,	512
What bargains may I make, still to be sealing?	513
To sell myself I can be well contented,	514
So thou wilt buy and pay and use good dealing;	515
Which purchase if thou make, for fear of slips	516
Set thy seal-manual on my wax-red lips.	517
'A thousand kisses buys my heart from me;	518
And pay them at thy leisure, one by one.	519
What is ten hundred touches unto thee?	520
Are they not quickly told and quickly gone?	521
Say, for non-payment that the debt should double,	522
Is twenty hundred kisses such a trouble?	523

Venus and Adonis

'Fair queen,' quoth he, 'if any love you owe me, 524
Measure my strangeness with my unripe years: 525
Before I know myself, seek not to know me; 526
No fisher but the ungrown fry forbears: 527
The mellow plum doth fall, the green sticks fast, 528
Or being early pluck'd is sour to taste. 529

'Look, the world's comforter, with weary gait, 530
His day's hot task hath ended in the west; 531
The owl, night's herald, shrieks, "'Tis very late;'
The sheep are gone to fold, birds to their nest, 533
And coal-black clouds that shadow heaven's light 534
Do summon us to part and bid good night. 535

'Now let me say 'Good night,' and so say you; 536
If you will say so, you shall have a kiss.' 537
'Good night,' quoth she, and, ere he says 'Adieu,' 538
The honey fee of parting tender'd is: 539
Her arms do lend his neck a sweet embrace; 540
Incorporate then they seem; face grows to face. 541

Till, breathless, he disjoin'd, and backward drew 542
The heavenly moisture, that sweet coral mouth, 543
Whose precious taste her thirsty lips well knew, 544
Whereon they surfeit, yet complain on drouth: 545
He with her plenty press'd, she faint with dearth 546
Their lips together glued, fall to the earth. 547

Now quick desire hath caught the yielding prey, 548
And glutton-like she feeds, yet never filleth; 549
Her lips are conquerors, his lips obey, 550
Paying what ransom the insulter willeth; 551
Whose vulture thought doth pitch the price so high, 552
That she will draw his lips' rich treasure dry: 553

And having felt the sweetness of the spoil, 554
With blindfold fury she begins to forage; 555
Her face doth reek and smoke, her blood doth boil, 556
And careless lust stirs up a desperate courage, 557
Planting oblivion, beating reason back, 558
Forgetting shame's pure blush and honour's wrack. 559

Hot, faint, and weary, with her hard embracing, 560
Like a wild bird being tamed with too much handling, 561
Or as the fleet-foot roe that's tired with chasing, 562
Or like the froward infant still'd with dandling, 563
He now obeys, and now no more resisteth, 564
While she takes all she can, not all she listeth. 565

Venus and Adonis

What wax so frozen but dissolves with tempering, 566
And yields at last to every light impression? 567
Things out of hope are compass'd oft with venturing, 568
Chiefly in love, whose leave exceeds commission: 569
Affection faints not like a pale-faced coward, 570
But then woos best when most his choice is froward. 571

When he did frown, O, had she then gave over, 572
Such nectar from his lips she had not suck'd. 573
Foul words and frowns must not repel a lover; 574
What though the rose have prickles, yet 'tis pluck'd: 575
Were beauty under twenty locks kept fast, 576
Yet love breaks through and picks them all at last. 577

For pity now she can no more detain him; 578
The poor fool prays her that he may depart: 579
She is resolved no longer to restrain him; 580
Bids him farewell, and look well to her heart, 581
The which, by Cupid's bow she doth protest, 582
He carries thence incaged in his breast. 583

'Sweet boy,' she says, 'this night I'll waste in sorrow, 584
For my sick heart commands mine eyes to watch. 585
Tell me, Love's master, shall we meet to-morrow? 586
Say, shall we? shall we? wilt thou make the match?' 587
He tells her, no; to-morrow he intends 588
To hunt the boar with certain of his friends. 589

'The boar!' quoth she; whereat a sudden pale, 590
Like lawn being spread upon the blushing rose, 591
Usurps her cheek; she trembles at his tale, 592
And on his neck her yoking arms she throws: 593
She sinketh down, still hanging by his neck, 594
He on her belly falls, she on her back. 595

Now is she in the very lists of love, 596
Her champion mounted for the hot encounter: 597
All is imaginary she doth prove, 598
He will not manage her, although he mount her; 599
That worse than Tantalus' is her annoy, 600
To clip Elysium and to lack her joy. 601

Even as poor birds, deceived with painted grapes, 602
Do surfeit by the eye and pine the maw, 603
Even so she languisheth in her mishaps, 604
As those poor birds that helpless berries saw. 605
The warm effects which she in him finds missing 606
She seeks to kindle with continual kissing. 607

Venus and Adonis

But all in vain; good queen, it will not be: 608
She hath assay'd as much as may be proved; 609
Her pleading hath deserved a greater fee; 610
She's Love, she loves, and yet she is not loved. 611
'Fie, fie,' he says, 'you crush me; let me go; 612
You have no reason to withhold me so.' 613

'Thou hadst been gone,' quoth she, 'sweet boy, ere this, 614
But that thou told'st me thou wouldst hunt the boar. 615
O, be advised! thou know'st not what it is 616
With javelin's point a churlish swine to gore, 617
Whose tushes never sheathed he whetteth still, 618
Like to a mortal butcher bent to kill. 619

'On his bow-back he hath a battle set 620
Of bristly pikes, that ever threat his foes; 621
His eyes, like glow-worms, shine when he doth fret; 622
His snout digs sepulchres where'er he goes; 623
Being moved, he strikes whate'er is in his way, 624
And whom he strikes his cruel tushes slay. 625

'His brawny sides, with hairy bristles arm'd, 626
Are better proof than thy spear's point can enter; 627
His short thick neck cannot be easily harm'd; 628
Being ireful, on the lion he will venture: 629
The thorny brambles and embracing bushes, 630
As fearful of him, part, through whom he rushes. 631

'Alas, he nought esteems that face of thine, 632
To which Love's eyes pay tributary gazes; 633
Nor thy soft hands, sweet lips and crystal eyne, 634
Whose full perfection all the world amazes; 635
But having thee at vantage,--wondrous dread!-- 636
Would root these beauties as he roots the mead. 637

'O, let him keep his loathsome cabin still; 638
Beauty hath nought to do with such foul fiends: 639
Come not within his danger by thy will; 640
They that thrive well take counsel of their friends. 641
When thou didst name the boar, not to dissemble, 642
I fear'd thy fortune, and my joints did tremble. 643

'Didst thou not mark my face? was it not white? 644
Saw'st thou not signs of fear lurk in mine eye? 645
Grew I not faint? and fell I not downright? 646
Within my bosom, whereon thou dost lie, 647
My boding heart pants, beats, and takes no rest, 648
But, like an earthquake, shakes thee on my breast. 649

Venus and Adonis

'For where Love reigns, disturbing Jealousy 650
Doth call himself Affection's sentinel; 651
Gives false alarms, suggesteth mutiny, 652
And in a peaceful hour doth cry 'Kill, kill!' 653
Distempering gentle Love in his desire, 654
As air and water do abate the fire. 655

'This sour informer, this bate-breeding spy, 656
This canker that eats up Love's tender spring, 657
This carry-tale, dissentious Jealousy, 658
That sometime true news, sometime false doth bring, 659
Knocks at my heat and whispers in mine ear 660
That if I love thee, I thy death should fear: 661

'And more than so, presenteth to mine eye 662
The picture of an angry-chafing boar, 663
Under whose sharp fangs on his back doth lie 664
An image like thyself, all stain'd with gore; 665
Whose blood upon the fresh flowers being shed 666
Doth make them droop with grief and hang the head. 667

'What should I do, seeing thee so indeed, 668
That tremble at the imagination? 669
The thought of it doth make my faint heart bleed, 670
And fear doth teach it divination: 671
I prophesy thy death, my living sorrow, 672
If thou encounter with the boar to-morrow. 673

'But if thou needs wilt hunt, be ruled by me; 674
Uncouple at the timorous flying hare, 675
Or at the fox which lives by subtlety, 676
Or at the roe which no encounter dare: 677
Pursue these fearful creatures o'er the downs, 678
And on thy well-breath'd horse keep with thy 679
hounds. 680

'And when thou hast on foot the purblind hare, 681
Mark the poor wretch, to overshoot his troubles 682
How he outruns the wind and with what care 683
He cranks and crosses with a thousand doubles: 684
The many musets through the which he goes 685
Are like a labyrinth to amaze his foes. 686

'Sometime he runs among a flock of sheep, 687
To make the cunning hounds mistake their smell, 688
And sometime where earth-delving conies keep, 689
To stop the loud pursuers in their yell, 690
And sometime sorteth with a herd of deer: 691
Danger deviseth shifts; wit waits on fear: 692

Venus and Adonis

'For there his smell with others being mingled,	693
The hot scent-snuffing hounds are driven to doubt,	694
Ceasing their clamorous cry till they have singled	695
With much ado the cold fault cleanly out;	696
Then do they spend their mouths: Echo replies,	697
As if another chase were in the skies.	698
'By this, poor Wat, far off upon a hill,	699
Stands on his hinder legs with listening ear,	700
To harken if his foes pursue him still:	701
Anon their loud alarms he doth hear;	702
And now his grief may be compared well	703
To one sore sick that hears the passing-bell.	704
'Then shalt thou see the dew-bedabbled wretch	705
Turn, and return, indenting with the way;	706
Each envious brier his weary legs doth scratch,	707
Each shadow makes him stop, each murmur stay:	708
For misery is trodden on by many,	709
And being low never relieved by any.	710
'Lie quietly, and hear a little more;	711
Nay, do not struggle, for thou shalt not rise:	712
To make thee hate the hunting of the boar,	713
Unlike myself thou hear'st me moralize,	714
Applying this to that, and so to so;	715
For love can comment upon every woe.	716
'Where did I leave?' 'No matter where,' quoth he,	717
'Leave me, and then the story aptly ends:	718
The night is spent.' 'Why, what of that?' quoth she.	719
'I am,' quoth he, 'expected of my friends;	720
And now 'tis dark, and going I shall fall.'	721
'In night,' quoth she, 'desire sees best of all	722
'But if thou fall, O, then imagine this,	723
The earth, in love with thee, thy footing trips,	724
And all is but to rob thee of a kiss.	725
Rich preys make true men thieves; so do thy lips	726
Make modest Dian cloudy and forlorn,	727
Lest she should steal a kiss and die forsworn.	728
'Now of this dark night I perceive the reason:	729
Cynthia for shame obscures her silver shine,	730
Till forging Nature be condemn'd of treason,	731
For stealing moulds from heaven that were divine;	732
Wherein she framed thee in high heaven's despite,	733
To shame the sun by day and her by night.	734

Venus and Adonis

'And therefore hath she bribed the Destinies	735
To cross the curious workmanship of nature,	736
To mingle beauty with infirmities,	737
And pure perfection with impure defeature,	738
Making it subject to the tyranny	739
Of mad mischances and much misery;	740
'As burning fevers, agues pale and faint,	741
Life-poisoning pestilence and frenzies wood,	742
The marrow-eating sickness, whose attaint	743
Disorder breeds by heating of the blood:	744
Surfeits, imposthumes, grief, and damn'd despair,	745
Swear nature's death for framing thee so fair.	746
'And not the least of all these maladies	747
But in one minute's fight brings beauty under:	748
Both favour, savour, hue and qualities,	749
Whereat the impartial gazer late did wonder,	750
Are on the sudden wasted, thaw'd and done,	751
As mountain-snow melts with the midday sun.	752
'Therefore, despite of fruitless chastity,	753
Love-lacking vestals and self-loving nuns,	754
That on the earth would breed a scarcity	755
And barren dearth of daughters and of sons,	756
Be prodigal: the lamp that burns by night	757
Dries up his oil to lend the world his light.	758
'What is thy body but a swallowing grave,	759
Seeming to bury that posterity	760
Which by the rights of time thou needs must have,	761
If thou destroy them not in dark obscurity?	762
If so, the world will hold thee in disdain,	763
Sith in thy pride so fair a hope is slain.	764
'So in thyself thyself art made away;	765
A mischief worse than civil home-bred strife,	766
Or theirs whose desperate hands themselves do slay,	767
Or butcher-sire that reaves his son of life.	768
Foul-cankering rust the hidden treasure frets,	769
But gold that's put to use more gold begets.'	770
'Nay, then,' quoth Adon, 'you will fall again	771
Into your idle over-handled theme:	772
The kiss I gave you is bestow'd in vain,	773
And all in vain you strive against the stream;	774
For, by this black-faced night, desire's foul nurse,	775
Your treatise makes me like you worse and worse.	776

Venus and Adonis

'If love have lent you twenty thousand tongues,	777
And every tongue more moving than your own,	778
Bewitching like the wanton mermaid's songs,	779
Yet from mine ear the tempting tune is blown	780
For know, my heart stands armed in mine ear,	781
And will not let a false sound enter there;	782
'Lest the deceiving harmony should run	783
Into the quiet closure of my breast;	784
And then my little heart were quite undone,	785
In his bedchamber to be barr'd of rest.	786
No, lady, no; my heart longs not to groan,	787
But soundly sleeps, while now it sleeps alone.	788
'What have you urged that I cannot reprove?	789
The path is smooth that leadeth on to danger:	790
I hate not love, but your device in love,	791
That lends embracements unto every stranger.	792
You do it for increase: O strange excuse,	793
When reason is the bawd to lust's abuse!	794
'Call it not love, for Love to heaven is fled,	795
Since sweating Lust on earth usurp'd his name;	796
Under whose simple semblance he hath fed	797
Upon fresh beauty, blotting it with blame;	798
Which the hot tyrant stains and soon bereaves,	799
As caterpillars do the tender leaves.	800
'Love comforteth like sunshine after rain,	801
But Lust's effect is tempest after sun;	802
Love's gentle spring doth always fresh remain,	803
Lust's winter comes ere summer half be done;	804
Love surfeits not, Lust like a glutton dies;	805
Love is all truth, Lust full of forged lies.	806
'More I could tell, but more I dare not say;	807
The text is old, the orator too green.	808
Therefore, in sadness, now I will away;	809
My face is full of shame, my heart of teen:	810
Mine ears, that to your wanton talk attended,	811
Do burn themselves for having so offended.'	812
With this, he breaketh from the sweet embrace,	813
Of those fair arms which bound him to her breast,	814
And homeward through the dark laund runs apace;	815
Leaves Love upon her back deeply distress'd.	816
Look, how a bright star shooteth from the sky,	817
So glides he in the night from Venus' eye.	818

Venus and Adonis

Which after him she darts, as one on shore 819
Gazing upon a late-embarked friend, 820
Till the wild waves will have him seen no more, 821
Whose ridges with the meeting clouds contend: 822
So did the merciless and pitchy night 823
Fold in the object that did feed her sight. 824

Whereat amazed, as one that unaware 825
Hath dropp'd a precious jewel in the flood, 826
Or stonish'd as night-wanderers often are, 827
Their light blown out in some mistrustful wood, 828
Even so confounded in the dark she lay, 829
Having lost the fair discovery of her way. 830

And now she beats her heart, whereat it groans, 831
That all the neighbour caves, as seeming troubled, 832
Make verbal repetition of her moans; 833
Passion on passion deeply is redoubled: 834
'Ay me!' she cries, and twenty times 'Woe, woe!' 835
And twenty echoes twenty times cry so. 836

She marking them begins a wailing note 837
And sings extemporally a woeful ditty; 838
How love makes young men thrall and old men dote; 839
How love is wise in folly, foolish-witty: 840
Her heavy anthem still concludes in woe, 841
And still the choir of echoes answer so. 842

Her song was tedious and outwore the night, 843
For lovers' hours are long, though seeming short: 844
If pleased themselves, others, they think, delight 845
In such-like circumstance, with suchlike sport: 846
Their copious stories oftentimes begun 847
End without audience and are never done. 848

For who hath she to spend the night withal 849
But idle sounds resembling parasites, 850
Like shrill-tongued tapsters answering every call, 851
Soothing the humour of fantastic wits? 852
She says "'Tis so:' they answer all "'Tis so;'
And would say after her, if she said 'No.' 854

Lo, here the gentle lark, weary of rest, 855
From his moist cabinet mounts up on high, 856
And wakes the morning, from whose silver breast 857
The sun ariseth in his majesty; 858
Who doth the world so gloriously behold 859
That cedar-tops and hills seem burnish'd gold. 860

Venus and Adonis

Venus salutes him with this fair good-morrow: 861
'O thou clear god, and patron of all light, 862
From whom each lamp and shining star doth borrow 863
The beauteous influence that makes him bright, 864
There lives a son that suck'd an earthly mother, 865
May lend thee light, as thou dost lend to other.' 866

This said, she hasteth to a myrtle grove, 867
Musing the morning is so much o'erworn, 868
And yet she hears no tidings of her love: 869
She hearkens for his hounds and for his horn: 870
Anon she hears them chant it lustily, 871
And all in haste she coasteth to the cry. 872

And as she runs, the bushes in the way 873
Some catch her by the neck, some kiss her face, 874
Some twine about her thigh to make her stay: 875
She wildly breaketh from their strict embrace, 876
Like a milch doe, whose swelling dugs do ache, 877
Hasting to feed her fawn hid in some brake. 878

By this, she hears the hounds are at a bay; 879
Whereat she starts, like one that spies an adder 880
Wreathed up in fatal folds just in his way, 881
The fear whereof doth make him shake and shudder; 882
Even so the timorous yelping of the hounds 883
Appals her senses and her spirit confounds. 884

For now she knows it is no gentle chase, 885
But the blunt boar, rough bear, or lion proud, 886
Because the cry remaineth in one place, 887
Where fearfully the dogs exclaim aloud: 888
Finding their enemy to be so curst, 889
They all strain courtesy who shall cope him first. 890

This dismal cry rings sadly in her ear, 891
Through which it enters to surprise her heart; 892
Who, overcome by doubt and bloodless fear, 893
With cold-pale weakness numbs each feeling part: 894
Like soldiers, when their captain once doth yield, 895
They basely fly and dare not stay the field. 896

Thus stands she in a trembling ecstasy; 897
Till, cheering up her senses all dismay'd, 898
She tells them 'tis a causeless fantasy, 899
And childish error, that they are afraid; 900
Bids them leave quaking, bids them fear no more:-- 901
And with that word she spied the hunted boar, 902

Venus and Adonis

Whose frothy mouth, bepainted all with red, 903
Like milk and blood being mingled both together, 904
A second fear through all her sinews spread, 905
Which madly hurries her she knows not whither: 906
This way runs, and now she will no further, 907
But back retires to rate the boar for murder. 908

A thousand spleens bear her a thousand ways; 909
She treads the path that she untreads again; 910
Her more than haste is mated with delays, 911
Like the proceedings of a drunken brain, 912
Full of respects, yet nought at all respecting; 913
In hand with all things, nought at all effecting. 914

Here kennell'd in a brake she finds a hound, 915
And asks the weary caitiff for his master, 916
And there another licking of his wound, 917
'Gainst venom'd sores the only sovereign plaster; 918
And here she meets another sadly scowling, 919
To whom she speaks, and he replies with howling. 920

When he hath ceased his ill-resounding noise, 921
Another flap-mouth'd mourner, black and grim, 922
Against the welkin volleys out his voice; 923
Another and another answer him, 924
Clapping their proud tails to the ground below, 925
Shaking their scratch'd ears, bleeding as they go. 926

Look, how the world's poor people are amazed 927
At apparitions, signs and prodigies, 928
Whereon with fearful eyes they long have gazed, 929
Infusing them with dreadful prophecies; 930
So she at these sad signs draws up her breath 931
And sighing it again, exclaims on Death. 932

'Hard-favour'd tyrant, ugly, meagre, lean, 933
Hateful divorce of love,'--thus chides she Death,-- 934
'Grim-grinning ghost, earth's worm, what dost thou mean 935
To stifle beauty and to steal his breath, 936
Who when he lived, his breath and beauty set 937
Gloss on the rose, smell to the violet? 938

'If he be dead,--O no, it cannot be, 939
Seeing his beauty, thou shouldst strike at it:-- 940
O yes, it may; thou hast no eyes to see, 941
But hatefully at random dost thou hit. 942
Thy mark is feeble age, but thy false dart 943
Mistakes that aim and cleaves an infant's heart. 944

Venus and Adonis

'Hadst thou but bid beware, then he had spoke, 945
And, hearing him, thy power had lost his power. 946
The Destinies will curse thee for this stroke; 947
They bid thee crop a weed, thou pluck'st a flower: 948
Love's golden arrow at him should have fled, 949
And not Death's ebon dart, to strike dead. 950

'Dost thou drink tears, that thou provokest such weeping? 951
What may a heavy groan advantage thee? 952
Why hast thou cast into eternal sleeping 953
Those eyes that taught all other eyes to see? 954
Now Nature cares not for thy mortal vigour, 955
Since her best work is ruin'd with thy rigour.' 956

Here overcome, as one full of despair, 957
She vail'd her eyelids, who, like sluices, stopt 958
The crystal tide that from her two cheeks fair 959
In the sweet channel of her bosom dropt; 960
But through the flood-gates breaks the silver rain, 961
And with his strong course opens them again. 962

O, how her eyes and tears did lend and borrow! 963
Her eyes seen in the tears, tears in her eye; 964
Both crystals, where they view'd each other's sorrow, 965
Sorrow that friendly sighs sought still to dry; 966
But like a stormy day, now wind, now rain, 967
Sighs dry her cheeks, tears make them wet again. 968

Variable passions throng her constant woe, 969
As striving who should best become her grief; 970
All entertain'd, each passion labours so, 971
That every present sorrow seemeth chief, 972
But none is best: then join they all together, 973
Like many clouds consulting for foul weather. 974

By this, far off she hears some huntsman hollo; 975
A nurse's song ne'er pleased her babe so well: 976
The dire imagination she did follow 977
This sound of hope doth labour to expel; 978
For now reviving joy bids her rejoice, 979
And flatters her it is Adonis' voice. 980

Whereat her tears began to turn their tide, 981
Being prison'd in her eye like pearls in glass; 982
Yet sometimes falls an orient drop beside, 983
Which her cheek melts, as scorning it should pass, 984
To wash the foul face of the sluttish ground, 985
Who is but drunken when she seemeth drown'd. 986

Venus and Adonis

O hard-believing love, how strange it seems	987
Not to believe, and yet too credulous!	988
Thy weal and woe are both of them extremes;	989
Despair and hope makes thee ridiculous:	990
The one doth flatter thee in thoughts unlikely,	991
In likely thoughts the other kills thee quickly.	992
Now she unweaves the web that she hath wrought;	993
Adonis lives, and Death is not to blame;	994
It was not she that call'd him, all-to naught:	995
Now she adds honours to his hateful name;	996
She clepes him king of graves and grave for kings,	997
Imperious supreme of all mortal things.	998
'No, no,' quoth she, 'sweet Death, I did but jest;	999
Yet pardon me I felt a kind of fear	1000
When as I met the boar, that bloody beast,	1001
Which knows no pity, but is still severe;	1002
Then, gentle shadow,--truth I must confess,--	1003
I rail'd on thee, fearing my love's decease.	1004
"Tis not my fault: the boar provoked my tongue;	1005
Be wreak'd on him, invisible commander;	1006
'Tis he, foul creature, that hath done thee wrong;	1007
I did but act, he's author of thy slander:	1008
Grief hath two tongues, and never woman yet	1009
Could rule them both without ten women's wit.'	1010
Thus hoping that Adonis is alive,	1011
Her rash suspect she doth extenuate;	1012
And that his beauty may the better thrive,	1013
With Death she humbly doth insinuate;	1014
Tells him of trophies, statues, tombs, and stories	1015
His victories, his triumphs and his glories.	1016
'O Jove,' quoth she, 'how much a fool was I	1017
To be of such a weak and silly mind	1018
To wail his death who lives and must not die	1019
Till mutual overthrow of mortal kind!	1020
For he being dead, with him is beauty slain,	1021
And, beauty dead, black chaos comes again.	1022
'Fie, fie, fond love, thou art so full of fear	1023
As one with treasure laden, hemm'd thieves;	1024
Trifles, unwitnessed with eye or ear,	1025
Thy coward heart with false bethinking grieves.'	1026
Even at this word she hears a merry horn,	1027
Whereat she leaps that was but late forlorn.	1028

Venus and Adonis

As falcon to the lure, away she flies; 1029
The grass stoops not, she treads on it so light; 1030
And in her haste unfortunately spies 1031
The foul boar's conquest on her fair delight; 1032
Which seen, her eyes, as murder'd with the view, 1033
Like stars ashamed of day, themselves withdrew; 1034

Or, as the snail, whose tender horns being hit, 1035
Shrinks backward in his shelly cave with pain, 1036
And there, all smother'd up, in shade doth sit, 1037
Long after fearing to creep forth again; 1038
So, at his bloody view, her eyes are fled 1039
Into the deep dark cabins of her head: 1040

Where they resign their office and their light 1041
To the disposing of her troubled brain; 1042
Who bids them still consort with ugly night, 1043
And never wound the heart with looks again; 1044
Who like a king perplexed in his throne, 1045
By their suggestion gives a deadly groan, 1046

Whereat each tributary subject quakes; 1047
As when the wind, imprison'd in the ground, 1048
Struggling for passage, earth's foundation shakes, 1049
Which with cold terror doth men's minds confound. 1050
This mutiny each part doth so surprise 1051
That from their dark beds once more leap her eyes; 1052

And, being open'd, threw unwilling light 1053
Upon the wide wound that the boar had trench'd 1054
In his soft flank; whose wonted lily white 1055
With purple tears, that his wound wept, was drench'd: 1056
No flower was nigh, no grass, herb, leaf, or weed, 1057
But stole his blood and seem'd with him to bleed. 1058

This solemn sympathy poor Venus noteth; 1059
Over one shoulder doth she hang her head; 1060
Dumbly she passions, frantically she doteth; 1061
She thinks he could not die, he is not dead: 1062
Her voice is stopt, her joints forget to bow; 1063
Her eyes are mad that they have wept til now. 1064

Upon his hurt she looks so steadfastly, 1065
That her sight dazzling makes the wound seem three; 1066
And then she reprehends her mangling eye, 1067
That makes more gashes where no breach should be: 1068
His face seems twain, each several limb is doubled; 1069
For oft the eye mistakes, the brain being troubled. 1070

Venus and Adonis

'My tongue cannot express my grief for one, 1071
And yet,' quoth she, 'behold two Adons dead! 1072
My sighs are blown away, my salt tears gone, 1073
Mine eyes are turn'd to fire, my heart to lead: 1074
Heavy heart's lead, melt at mine eyes' red fire! 1075
So shall I die by drops of hot desire. 1076

'Alas, poor world, what treasure hast thou lost! 1077
What face remains alive that's worth the viewing? 1078
Whose tongue is music now? what canst thou boast 1079
Of things long since, or any thing ensuing? 1080
The flowers are sweet, their colours fresh and trim; 1081
But true-sweet beauty lived and died with him. 1082

'Bonnet nor veil henceforth no creature wear! 1083
Nor sun nor wind will ever strive to kiss you: 1084
Having no fair to lose, you need not fear; 1085
The sun doth scorn you and the wind doth hiss you: 1086
But when Adonis lived, sun and sharp air 1087
Lurk'd like two thieves, to rob him of his fair: 1088

'And therefore would he put his bonnet on, 1089
Under whose brim the gaudy sun would peep; 1090
The wind would blow it off and, being gone, 1091
Play with his locks: then would Adonis weep; 1092
And straight, in pity of his tender years, 1093
They both would strive who first should dry his tears. 1094

'To see his face the lion walk'd along 1095
Behind some hedge, because he would not fear him; 1096
To recreate himself when he hath sung, 1097
The tiger would be tame and gently hear him; 1098
If he had spoke, the wolf would leave his prey 1099
And never fright the silly lamb that day. 1100

'When he beheld his shadow in the brook, 1101
The fishes spread on it their golden gills; 1102
When he was by, the birds such pleasure took, 1103
That some would sing, some other in their bills 1104
Would bring him mulberries and ripe-red cherries; 1105
He fed them with his sight, they him with berries. 1106

'But this foul, grim, and urchin-snouted boar, 1107
Whose downward eye still looketh for a grave, 1108
Ne'er saw the beauteous livery that he wore; 1109
Witness the entertainment that he gave: 1110
If he did see his face, why then I know 1111
He thought to kiss him, and hath kill'd him so. 1112

Venus and Adonis

"Tis true, 'tis true; thus was Adonis slain: 1113
He ran upon the boar with his sharp spear, 1114
Who did not whet his teeth at him again, 1115
But by a kiss thought to persuade him there; 1116
And nuzzling in his flank, the loving swine 1117
Sheathed unaware the tusk in his soft groin. 1118

'Had I been tooth'd like him, I must confess, 1119
With kissing him I should have kill'd him first; 1120
But he is dead, and never did he bless 1121
My youth with his; the more am I accurst.' 1122
With this, she falleth in the place she stood, 1123
And stains her face with his congealed blood. 1124

She looks upon his lips, and they are pale; 1125
She takes him by the hand, and that is cold; 1126
She whispers in his ears a heavy tale, 1127
As if they heard the woeful words she told; 1128
She lifts the coffer-lids that close his eyes, 1129
Where, lo, two lamps, burnt out, in darkness lies; 1130

Two glasses, where herself herself beheld 1131
A thousand times, and now no more reflect; 1132
Their virtue lost, wherein they late excell'd, 1133
And every beauty robb'd of his effect: 1134
'Wonder of time,' quoth she, 'this is my spite, 1135
That, thou being dead, the day should yet be light. 1136

'Since thou art dead, lo, here I prophesy: 1137
Sorrow on love hereafter shall attend: 1138
It shall be waited on with jealousy, 1139
Find sweet beginning, but unsavoury end, 1140
Ne'er settled equally, but high or low, 1141
That all love's pleasure shall not match his woe. 1142

'It shall be fickle, false and full of fraud, 1143
Bud and be blasted in a breathing-while; 1144
The bottom poison, and the top o'erstraw'd 1145
With sweets that shall the truest sight beguile: 1146
The strongest body shall it make most weak, 1147
Strike the wise dumb and teach the fool to speak. 1148

'It shall be sparing and too full of riot, 1149
Teaching decrepit age to tread the measures; 1150
The staring ruffian shall it keep in quiet, 1151
Pluck down the rich, enrich the poor with treasures; 1152
It shall be raging-mad and silly-mild, 1153
Make the young old, the old become a child. 1154

Venus and Adonis

'It shall suspect where is no cause of fear; 1155
It shall not fear where it should most mistrust; 1156
It shall be merciful and too severe, 1157
And most deceiving when it seems most just; 1158
Perverse it shall be where it shows most toward, 1159
Put fear to valour, courage to the coward. 1160

'It shall be cause of war and dire events, 1161
And set dissension 'twixt the son and sire; 1162
Subject and servile to all discontents, 1163
As dry combustious matter is to fire: 1164
Sith in his prime Death doth my love destroy, 1165
They that love best their loves shall not enjoy.' 1166

By this, the boy that by her side lay kill'd 1167
Was melted like a vapour from her sight, 1168
And in his blood that on the ground lay spill'd, 1169
A purple flower sprung up, chequer'd with white, 1170
Resembling well his pale cheeks and the blood 1171
Which in round drops upon their whiteness stood. 1172

She bows her head, the new-sprung flower to smell, 1173
Comparing it to her Adonis' breath, 1174
And says, within her bosom it shall dwell, 1175
Since he himself is reft from her by death: 1176
She crops the stalk, and in the breach appears 1177
Green dropping sap, which she compares to tears. 1178

'Poor flower,' quoth she, 'this was thy fathers guise-- 1179
Sweet issue of a more sweet-smelling sire-- 1180
For every little grief to wet his eyes: 1181
To grow unto himself was his desire, 1182
And so 'tis thine; but know, it is as good 1183
To wither in my breast as in his blood. 1184

'Here was thy father's bed, here in my breast; 1185
Thou art the next of blood, and 'tis thy right: 1186
Lo, in this hollow cradle take thy rest, 1187
My throbbing heart shall rock thee day and night: 1188
There shall not be one minute in an hour 1189
Wherein I will not kiss my sweet love's flower.' 1190

Thus weary of the world, away she hies, 1191
And yokes her silver doves; by whose swift aid 1192
Their mistress mounted through the empty skies 1193
In her light chariot quickly is convey'd; 1194
Holding their course to Paphos, where their queen 1195
Means to immure herself and not be seen. 1196
