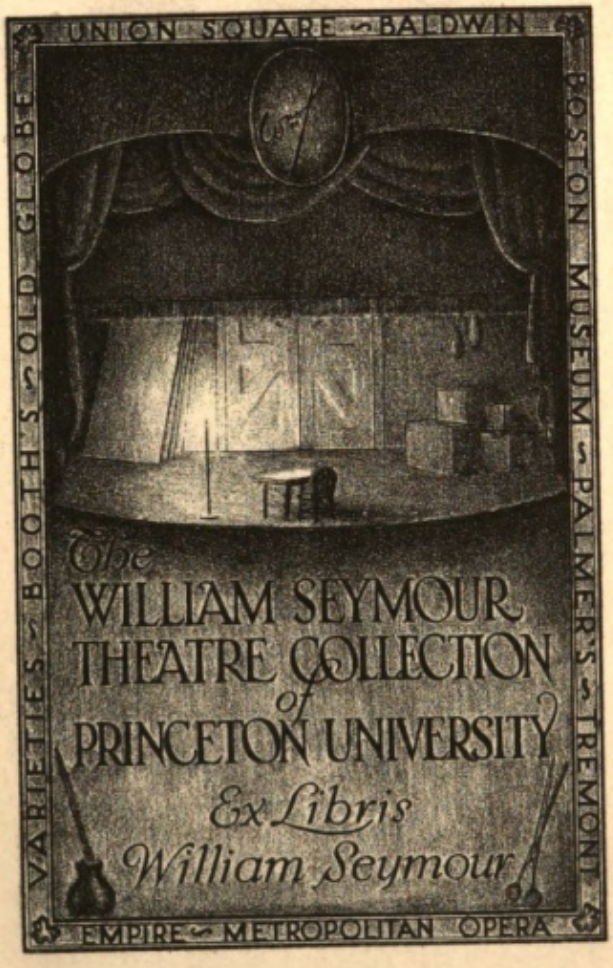

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ROMEO AND JULIET.

THE TRAGICAL HISTORY

OF

ROMEUS AND JULIET;

A POEM BY ARTHUR BROOKE:

AND

THE NOVEL

OF

RHOMEO AND JULIETTA,

FROM W. PAYNTER'S PALACE OF PLEASURE.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION.

LONDON:

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LONG ACRE.

The goodly hystory of the true and constant love betweene

RHOMEO AND JULIETTA.

(Reprinted from the second volume of Paynter's Palace of Pleasure.)

INTRODUCTION.

THE present publication consists of two portions—the one a poem, by Arthur Brooke—the other a prose narrative, by William Paynter. The first purports to be a translation from Bandello: the second is a literal version of a story in Belleforest's "*Histoires Tragiques.*" It will be more convenient to speak of them separately.

Only two copies of the earliest edition of the poem by Brooke are known; one at Oxford, in Malone's Collection, from which our re-impression has been made; and the other at Cambridge, among Capel's books. The latter is defective in the preliminary matter, wanting the prose address "To the Reader;" so that the only known perfect exemplar is in the Bodleian Library. Our heartiest acknowledgments are due to the Rev. Dr. Bandinell, for the very kind assistance he afforded in collating our transcript, by which means some glaring and important errors, committed by Malone in his reprint (first given in his "Supplement," 1780, i, 276) have been corrected, and the work is now presented to the reader as nearly as possible as it issued from the press of Richard Tottell, in 1562. It consists of eighty-four numbered leaves, besides four of introduction. We have not thought it right to correct even the obvious errors of the early press, in order that the poem might be read in its most genuine state: thus, on p. 17, l. 28, the word "befylde" occurs, instead of *defylde*: on p. 69, l. 10, we meet with "tempted" for *tempered*, &c. It was again entered by Tottell on the books of the Stationers' Company in 1582; but if any such edition were published, we have never had an opportunity of examining it. It was reprinted by R. Robinson in 1587, with

the following explanatory addition to the title, which Ritson supposed to be the first title (Bibliogr. Poet. 144) "contayning in it a rare example of true constancie, with the subtill counsells and practises of an old fryer, and their ill event." "A new ballad of Romeo and Juliett" was entered on the Stationers' books in 1596, by Edward White, but no copy of it is known, and it was probably a different and a shorter publication. Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" was first printed in 1597, and it has been conjectured by Malone that it was written in the preceding year: it is therefore possible, though not probable, that White, in the indefinite language of the time, meant the play when he called it a "ballad," and that he wished to establish some prior claim to the publication of Shakespeare's tragedy.

It will be observed, that on the title page of Brooke's poem, the story is said to have been "written first in Italian by Bandell," as if Brooke had versified the novel as he found it in Bandello; but such is by no means the case, for he much more closely follows the authority which we shall presently see that Paynter employed a few years afterwards. However, he is not at all faithful to any preceding narrative that has ever been pointed out, or that we have been able to consult: the truth is, that Brooke's poem reads more like an original work than a translation, though in the body of it he several times (in imitation of the romance-writers of Italy) speaks of his author, and inserts such expressions as "the written story saith." In some places Brooke writes as if in the character of a minstrel, addressing a listening auditory:—

> "If any man be here whom love hath clad with care,
> To him I speake," &c.

It is a production of singular beauty for the time, full of appropriate and graceful imagery, and although the similes and other figures may now and then be a little too highly wrought, or not quite in the best taste, it places Brooke, in this style

of writing, above any known competitor. Bernard Garter's "Tragicall and true History, which happened betwene two English Lovers," (printed by R. Tottell in 1565) was composed in decided imitation of Arthur Brooke's "Romeus and Juliet," perhaps in consequence of the success of it, but it is inferior in every poetical quality. Those who have hitherto spoken of Brooke's poem, have not spoken of it as it deserves; and the commentators on Shakespeare seem scarcely to have ventured (even if they had formed) an opinion upon its merits. Here and there the author employs a few archaisms, such as "gleade" for *fire*, "blyn" for *cease*, &c.; but in general the tale is told with much simplicity, and the descriptions are sometimes elaborately minute, and afford very striking and graceful pictures. One of these, in a single couplet, may be quoted from p. 45, where Romeo and Juliet, in their grief at his banishment, are standing together:—

> "But on his brest her hed doth joylesse Juliet lay,
> And on her slender necke his chyn doth ruthfull Romeus stay;"

which would afford an excellent and a touching subject for any modern artist with taste and talent for illustration. It is, at all events, much more pleasing and poetical than Dante's simile in his *Inferno*, Canto xxix, where he likens two weeping lovers, leaning against each other, to two pans reared up to drain at a cottage door. Brooke's versification consists, throughout, of alternate lines of twelve and fourteen syllables, a measure that was frequently thus divided, for the convenience of printing:—

> "There is beyonde the Alps
> a towne of auntient fame,
> Whose bright renoune yet shineth cleare,
> Verona men it name."

In our impression, as the width of the page would allow it, the lines are printed at length. It will be found that the author was partial to double rhimes, which he introduces without constraint, and with considerable judgment, in order

to lighten the weight of monosyllabic terminations. In this and some other respects he writes likes a practised versifier, and in the introductory lines "to the Reader" he tells us that he had composed other works "in divers kindes of style," adding,

> "The eldest of them, loe,
> I offer to the stake; my youthfull woorke, &c."

The whole passage reads as if Brooke intended by it to apologise for the imperfections of an early production, which, later in life, he thought fit to publish.

How old he might be in 1562 we have no means of knowing; but he tells us himself, on p. 31 of our reprint, where he speaks in his own person, that he was unmarried. He was dead in 1563: in that year came out, "An Agreement of sundry places of Scripture," collected by Arthur Brooke, and in some verses prefixed, and subscribed Thomas Brooke, we are informed that the author had perished by shipwreck. George Turberville, among his "Epitaphes and Epigrammes," 1567, has one "On the death of Maister Arthur Brooke, drownde in passing to Newhaven." That it was the same Arthur Brooke cannot be doubted, because Turberville mentions the story of "Romeus and Juliet" as a proof that the person who was drowned "for metre did excel." This epitaph supplies the only certain evidence that "The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet" was by Brooke; for, as our readers will perceive, the title-page merely states "and nowe in Englishe by Ar. Br."

All it is necessary to say of William Paynter, and of his portion of the following work, may be put in a shorter compass. He was Clerk of the Armoury (Lansd. MS., No. 5) to Queen Elizabeth, not long after she came to the throne; and he published "The goodly hystory of the true and constant love betweene Rhomeo and Julietta," as part of "the second tome" of his "Palace of Pleasure," a collection of stories derived from various sources, ancient and modern.

He dates the dedication of this "second tome," the 4th of November 1567, five years after Brooke's poem had appeared, and "two years almost" after the first tome of "The Palace of Pleasure" had been published. Paynter's novel, as we have already stated, is a literal translation from Belleforest's "*Histoires Tragiques, extraictes des Œuvres de Bandel, et mises en langue Françoise, les six premières par Pierre Boaistuau, &c. et les suyvantes par François Belleforest;*" and as it forms the third history in that collection, it follows that it was *mis en langue Françoise* by Boisteau, and not by Belleforest. It is there called *Histoire de deux Amans, dont l'un mourut de venin, l'autre de tristesse;* but it differs from Bandello in more respects than amplification: in his work it forms the ninth novel of the second part, and is entitled *La sfortunata morte di dui infelicissimi Amanti, che l'uno di veleno, e l'altro di dolore morirono.*

The original narrator of the story of Romeo and Juliet, as far as has yet been ascertained, was Luigi da Porto, of Vincenza, who died in 1529, and whose novel was not printed until six years afterwards in Venice. It was reprinted in 1539, and again in 1553, and obtained great notoriety. Whence Luigi da Porto derived his materials is uncertain, but Douce (Illustrations of Shakespeare, ii, 198) has pointed out a strong resemblance between some of the chief incidents in Romeo and Juliet and those in the Greek romance of Xenophon of Ephesus, called "The Love-adventures of Abrocomas and Anthia." It is pretty clear, however, that Bandello borrowed from Luigi da Porto, and we are quite sure that Boisteau followed Bandello (varying the conclusion), and that Paynter translated Boisteau. Boisteau asserts, that in his day the remembrance of the incidents was so recent, *qu'a peine en sont essuiez les yeux de ceux qui ont veu ce piteux spectacle;* which Paynter thus renders:—"The memory whereof to thys day is so wel known at Verona, as unneths their blubbred eyes be yet dry, that saw and beheld that lamentable sight." This assertion seems to have been merely

gratuitous on the part of Boisteau, for Bandello says nothing of the kind, knowing, perhaps, how much older the story really was than such a statement would lead readers to imagine. Bandello merely observes, *verrò à dirvi un pietoso caso ed infortunio grandissimo, che à dui nobilissimi amanti avenne.* Paynter was only a servile copyist of his French original, and there is certainly little grace or ease of style to recommend his translation. Unlike Brooke, Paynter invented and added nothing.

It was natural, therefore, that Shakespeare, when he took up the story of Romeo and Juliet as a fit subject for the stage, should turn from Paynter's hard, cold, and dry narrative to Brooke's more attractive and interesting poem. To those who read the play with an eye to the two pieces now reprinted, it will be evident that Shakespeare was more indebted to Brooke than to Paynter, and Malone has thus enumerated his reasons for thinking so.

"1. In the poem, the Prince of Verona is called *Escalus:* so also in the play. In Paynter's translation from Boisteau, he is named *Signor Escala,* and sometimes Lord Bartholomew of *Escala.* 2. In Paynter's novel, the family of Romeo are called the *Montesches:* in the poem and in the play, the *Montagues.* 3. The messenger employed by friar Lawrence to carry a letter to Romeo, to inform him when Juliet would awake from her trance, is in Paynter's translation called *Anselme:* in the poem and in the play, friar *John* is employed in this business. 4. The circumstance of Capulet's writing down the names of the guests whom he invites to supper is found in the poem and in the play, but is not mentioned by Paynter; nor is it found in the original Italian novel. 5. The residence of the Capulets in the original and in Paynter is called *Villa Franca:* in the poem and in the play, *Freetown.* 6. Several passages of Romeo and Juliet appear to have been formed on hints furnished by the poem, of which no traces are found either in Paynter's novel, or in Boisteau, or in the original; and several expressions are

borrowed from thence, which will be found in their proper places." (Malone's Shakespeare, by Boswell, vi, 3.)

These "proper places" are, of course, the notes to Malone's edition of Romeo and Juliet, and it is needless to repeat them here. The result is to render it pretty clear that Shakespeare made comparatively little use of Paynter's version, while his obligations to Brooke were numerous and considerable.

To what degree our great dramatist might also be indebted to some earlier and now lost tragedy must be matter of mere conjecture. One point is quite certain from Arthur Brooke's address "to the Reader," viz. that prior to 1562 the subject had been brought upon the English stage: his words are the more remarkable, because he gives extraordinary commendation to the piece, and the excellence of his own work shews that he must have been a competent judge. "Though (he says) I saw the same argument lately set foorth on stage with more commendation then I can looke for, being there much better set forth then I have, or can dooe." Thus we see that there was not only a play, but, in the estimation of Brooke, a good play, upon the history of Romeo and Juliet in the very commencement of the reign of Elizabeth; for the term "lately," would scarcely warrant us in going back beyond the year 1558. This fact furnishes the strongest evidence of the popularity of the incidents, even before Brooke made use of them; and the possibility that Shakespeare availed himself, in 1596, of the work of some older playwright is considered in "The History of English Dramatic Poetry and the Stage," ii, 416.

It ought be mentioned that, two years before Paynter published his translation, what may be called "the argument" of it was thus stated by T. Peend, or Delapeend, in his "Pleasant Fable of Hermaphroditus and Salmacis," 1565:—"A noble mayden of the cytye Verona, in Italye, whyche loved Romeus, eldest sonne of the Lorde Montesche, and beinge

pryvely maryed togyther, he at last poysoned hymselfe for love of her. She, for sorowe of his deathe, slewe selfe in the same tombe with hys dagger." This is inserted by way of explanation of a passage in the poem, in which the names "Juliet and Romeus" are introduced.

In truth, the story must have been very familiar to every body long before Shakespeare thought fit to adopt it for the company to which he belonged. One early notice of it, three-and-twenty years older than the date of the first edition of "Romeo and Juliet," is to be found in a volume of such extreme rarity, that only a single copy of it (and that imperfect at the end) is known to remain. It is called "A right excellent and pleasant Dialogue betwene Mercury and a Souldier," 8vo, 1574; and there the author, Barnabe Rich, informs us that "the pittifull history of Romeus and Julietta" was represented upon tapestry, as if it were then not an uncommon subject for that species of domestic illustration. The next allusion to it is in "The Gorgeous Gallery of Gallant Inventions," 1578; and in the following year we find it spoken of in "A poor Knight his Palace of private Pleasure;" while Stanyhurst, in his Epitaph at the end of his hexametrical translation of "The first foure bookes of Virgils Æneis," 1582, places Juliet in the same line with Dido and Cleopatra. The last instance to which it is necessary to allude is contained in Melbancke's "Philotimus—the Warre betwixt Nature and Fortune," 1583.

It will be observed that Brooke, Paynter, and Shakespeare all conclude the story in the same manner: Juliet does not wake from her trance in the tomb until Romeo is dead; but in Luigi da Porto's narrative, and in Bandello's novel founded upon it, she recovers her senses in time to hear him speak, and to see him expire: instead of stabbing herself with his dagger, she dies, as it were, of a broken heart, on the body of her lover.

THE TRAGICALL HIS
torye of Romeus and Iuliet, writ-
ten first in Italian by Bandell,
and nowe in Englishe by
Ar. Br.

In ædibus Richardi Tottelli.
Cum Privilegio.

B

TO THE READER.

THE God of all glorye created universallye all creatures, to sette forth his prayse, both those whiche we esteme profitable in use and pleasure, and also those, whiche we accompte noysome, and lothsome. But principally he hath appointed man, the chiefest instrument of his honour, not onely, for ministryng matter thereof in man himselfe: but aswell in gatheryng out of other, the occasions of publishing Gods goodnes, wisdome, & power. And in like sort, everye dooyng of man hath by Goddes dyspensacion some thynge, whereby God may, and ought to be honored. So the good doynges of the good, & the evill actes of the wicked, the happy successe of the blessed, and the wofull procedinges of the miserable, doe in divers sorte sound one prayse of God. And as eche flower yeldeth hony to the bee: so every exaumple ministreth good lessons to the well disposed mynde. The glorious triumphe of the continent man upon the lustes of wanton fleshe, incourageth men to honest restraynt of wyld affections, the shamefull and wretched endes of such, as have yelded their libertie thrall to fowle desires, teache men to withholde them selves from the hedlong fall of loose dishonestie. So, to lyke effect, by sundry meanes, the good mans exaumple byddeth men to be good, and the evill mans mischefe, warneth men not to be evyll. To this good ende, serve all ill endes, of yll begynnynges. And to this ende (good Reader) is this tragicall matter written, to describe unto thee a coople of unfortunate lovers, thralling themselves to unhonest desire, neglecting the authoritie and advise of parents and frendes,

conferring their principall counsels with dronken gossyppes, and superstitious friers (the naturally fitte instrumentes of unchastitie) attemptyng all adventures of peryll, for thattaynyng of their wished lust, usyng auriculer confession (the kay of whoredome, and treason) for furtheraunce of theyr purpose, abusyng the honorable name of lawefull mariage, to cloke the shame of stolne contractes, finallye, by all meanes of unhonest lyfe, hastyng to most unhappye deathe. This president (good Reader) shalbe to thee, as the slaves of Lacedemon, oppressed with excesse of drinke, deformed and altered from likenes of men, both in mynde, and use of body, were to the free borne children, so shewed to them by their parentes, to thintent to rayse in them an hatefull lothyng of so filthy beastlynes. Hereunto if you applye it, ye shall deliver my dooing from offence, and profit your selves. Though I saw the same argument lately set foorth on stage with more commendation, then I can looke for: (being there much better set forth then I have or can dooe) yet the same matter penned as it is, may serve to lyke good effect, if the readers do brynge with them lyke good myndes, to consider it, which hath the more incouraged me to publishe it, suche as it is. Ar. Br.

TO THE READER.

AMID the desert rockes, the mountaine beare
Bringes forth unformd, unlyke herselfe, her yonge;
Nought els but lumpes of fleshe, withouten heare,
In tract of time, her often lycking tong
Geves them such shape, as doth, ere long, delight
The lookers on; or, when one dogge doth shake
With moosled mouth the joyntes too weake to fight,
Or, when upright he standeth by his stake,
(A noble creast,) or wylde in savage wood,
A dosyn dogges one holdeth at a baye,
With gaping mouth, and stayned jawes with blood;
Or els, when from the farthest heavens, they
The lode starres are, the wery pilates marke,
In stormes to gyde to haven the tossed barke;—
Right so my muse
Hath now, at length, with travell long, brought forth
Her tender whelpes, her divers kindes of style,
Such as they are, or nought, or little woorth,
Which carefull travell and a longer whyle
May better shape. The eldest of them loe,
I offer to the stake; my youthfull woorke,
Which one reprochefull mouth might overthrowe:
The rest (unlickt as yet) a whyle shall lurke,
Tyll Tyme geve strength, to meete and match in fight
With Slaunder's whelpes. Then shall they tell of stryfe,
Of noble tryumphes, and deedes of martial might,
And shall geve rules of chast and honest lyfe.
The whyle, I pray, that ye with favour blame,
Or rather not reprove the laughing game
Of this thy muse.

THE ARGUMENT.

LOVE hath inflamed twayne by sodayn sight,
And both do graunt the thing that both desyre;
They wed in shrift by counsell of a frier;
Yong Romeus clymes fayre Juliets bower by night.
Three monthes he doth enioy his cheefe delight:
By Tybalt's rage, provoked unto yre,
He payeth death to Tybalt for his hyre.
A banisht man, he scapes by secret flight:
New mariage is offred to his wyfe:
She drinkes a drinke that seemes to reve her breath;
They bury her, that sleping yet hath lyfe.
Her husband heares the tydinges of her death;
He drinkes his bane; and she, with Romeus knyfe,
When she awakes, her selfe (alas) she sleath.

ROMEUS AND IULIET.

THERE is beyonde the Alps, a towne of auncient fame,
Whose bright renoune yet shineth cleare, Verona men it name;
Bylt in an happy time, bylt on a fertile soyle:
Maynteined by the heavenly fates, and by the townish toyle.
The fruitefull hilles above, the pleasant vales belowe,
The silver streame with chanel depe, that through the towne doth flow;
The store of springes that serve for use, and eke for ease:
And other moe commodities, which profite may and please;
Eke many certayne signes of thinges betyde of olde,
To fyll the houngry eyes of those that curiously beholde;
Doe make this towne to be preferde above the rest
Of Lumbard townes, or at the least compared with the best.
In which whyle Escalus as prince alone did raigne,
To reache rewarde unto the good, to paye the lewde with payne,
Alas (I rewe to thinke) an heavy happe befell:
Which Boccace skant (not my rude tonge) were able forth to tell.
Within my trembling hande, my penne doth shake for feare,
And, on my colde amased head, upright doth stand my heare.
But sith shee doth commaunde, whose hest I must obaye,
In moorning verse, a woful chaunce to tell I will assaye.
Helpe, learned Pallas, helpe, ye Muses with your art,
Helpe, all ye damned feends to tell of joyes retournd to smart.
Help eke ye sisters three, my skillesse pen tindyte:
For you it causd which I (alas) unable am to wryte.

There were two auncient stockes, which Fortune high did place
Above the rest, indewd with welth, and nobler of their race,
Loved of the common sort, loved of the prince alike,
And like unhappy were they both, when Fortune list to strike.
Whose prayse with equal blast, Fame in her trumpet blew;
The one was cliped Capelet, and thother Montagew.
A wonted use it is, that men of likely sorte,
(I wot not by what furye forsd) envye eche others porte.

So these, whose egall state bred envye pale of hew,
And then of grudging envyes roote, blacke hate and rancor grewe.
As of a little sparke, oft ryseth mighty fyre,
So of a kyndled sparke of grudge, in flames flashe oute theyr yre:
And then theyr deadly foode, first hatchd of trifling stryfe,
Did bathe in bloud of smarting woundes; it reved breth and lyfe.
No legend lye I tell, scarce yet theyr eyes be drye,
That did behold the grisly sight, with wet and weping eye.
But when the prudent prince, who there the scepter helde,
So great a new disorder in his common weale behelde;
By jentyl meane he sought, their choler to asswage;
And by perswasion to appease, their blameful furious rage.
But both his woords and tyme, the prince hath spent in vayne:
So rooted was the inward hate, he lost his buysy payne.
When frendly sage advise, ne gentyll woords avayle;
By thondring threats, and princely powre their courage gan he quayle.
In hope that when he had the wasting flame supprest,
In time he should quyte quench the sparks that boornd within their brest.

Now whylst these kyndreds do remayne in this estate,
And eche with outward frendly shew dooth hyde his inward hate:
One Romeus, who was of race a Montague,
Upon whose tender chyn, as yet no manlyke beard there grewe,
Whose beauty and whose shape so farre the rest dyd stayne:
That from the cheefe of Veron youth he greatest fame dyd gayne,
Hath founde a mayde so fayre (he found so foule his happe)
Whose beauty, shape, and comely grace, did so his heart entrappe,
That from his owne affayres, his thought she did remove;
Onely he sought to honor her, to serve her and to love.
To her he writeth oft, oft messengers are sent,
At length (in hope of better spede) himselfe the lover went;
Present to pleade for grace, which absent was not founde:
And to discover to her eye his new receaved wounde.
But she that from her youth was fostred evermore
With vertues foode, and taught in schole of wisdomes skilfull lore:
By aunswere did cutte of thaffections of his love,
That he no more occasion had so vayne a sute to move.

So sterne she was of chere, (for all the payne he tooke)
That, in reward of toyle, she would not geve a frendly looke.
And yet how much she did with constant minde retyre:
So much the more his fervent minde was prickt fourth by desyre.
But when he many monthes, hopelesse of his recure,
Had served her, who forced not what paynes he did endure:
At length he thought to leave Verona, and to prove
If chaunge of place might chaunge awaye his ill-bestowed love;
And speaking to himselfe, thus gan he make his mone:
"What booteth me to love and serve a fell unthankfull one,
Sith that my humble sute and labour sowede in vayne,
Can reape none other fruite at all but scorne and proude disdayne?
What way she seekes to goe, the same I seeke to runne:
But she the path wherein I treade, with spedy flight doth shunne.
I can not live, except that nere to her I be;
She is ay best content when she is farthest of from me.
Wherfore henceforth I will farre from her take my flight;
Perhaps mine eye once banished by absence from her sight,
This fyre of myne, that by her pleasant eyne is fed,
Shall little and little weare away, and quite at last be ded."
But whilest he did decree this purpose still to kepe,
A contrary repugnant thought sanke in his breast so depe:
That douteful is he now which of the twayne is best:
In syghs, in teares, in plainte, in care, in sorrow and unrest,
He mones the daye, he wakes the long and wery night;
So deepe hath love with pearcing hand, ygrav'd her bewty bright
Within his brest, and hath so mastred quite his hart:
That he of force must yeld as thrall;—no way is left to start.
He can not staye his steppe, but forth still must be ronne,
He languisheth and melts awaye, as snow against the sonne.
His kyndred and alyes do wonder what he ayles,
And eche of them in friendly wyse his heavy hap bewayles.
But one emong the rest, the trustiest of his feeres,
Farre more than he with counsel fild, and ryper of his yeeres,
Gan sharply him rebuke, such love to him he bare:
That he was felow of his smart, and partner of his care.
"What meanst thou Romeus (quoth he) what doting rage
Dooth make thee thus consume away the best parte of thine age,

In seking her that scornes, and hydes her from thy sight,
Not forsing all thy great expence, ne yet thy honor bright,
Thy teares, thy wretched lyfe, ne thine unspotted truth,
Which are of force (I weene) to move the hardest hart to ruthe.
Now for our frendships sake, and for thy health I pray;
That thou hencefoorth become thine owne;—O give no more away
Unto a thankeles wight thy precious free estate:
In that thou lovest such a one, thou seemst thy selfe to hate.
For she doth love els where (and then thy time is lorne)
Or els (what bootest thee to sue) Loves court she hath forsworne.
Both yong thou art of yeres, and high in Fortunes grace:
What man is better shapd than thou? who hath a swetter face?
By painfull studies meane, great learning hast thou wonne:
Thy parentes have none other heyre, thou art theyr onely sonne.
What greater griefe (trowst thou?) what wofull dedly smart
Should so be able to distraine thy seely fathers hart?
As in his age to see thee plonged deepe in vyce,
When greatest hope he hath to heare thy vertues fame arise.
What shall thy kinsmen thinke, thou cause of all their ruthe?
Thy dedly foes do laugh to skorne thy yll employed youth.
Wherfore my counsell is, that thou henceforth beginne
To knowe and flye the errour which to long thou livedst in.
Remove the veale of love, that keepes thine eyes so blynde,
That thou ne canst the ready path of thy forefathers fynde.
But if unto thy will so much in thrall thou art,
Yet in some other place bestowe thy witles wandring hart.
Choose out some worthy dame, her honor thou and serve,
Who will geve eare to thy complaint, and pitty ere thou sterve.
But sow no more thy paynes in such a barrayne soyle:
As yeldes in harvest time no crop, in recompence of toyle.
Ere long the townishe dames together will resort:
Some one of bewty, favour, shape, and of so lovely porte,
With so fast fixed eye, perhaps thou mayst beholde:
That thou shalt quite forget thy love, and passions past of olde."

The yong mans lystning eare receivde the holesome sounde,
And reasons truth yplanted so, within his head had grounde;
That now with healthy coole ytempred is the heate,
And piecemeale weares away the greefe that erst his heart dyd freate.

To his approved frend a solemne othe he plight,
At every feast ykept by day, and banquet made by night,
At pardons in the churche, at games in open streate,
And every where he would resort where ladies wont to meete;
Eke should his savage heart like all indifferently,
For he would view and judge them all with unallured eye.
How happy had he been, had he not been forsworne;
But twyse as happy had he been, had he been never borne.
For ere the moone could thrise her wasted hornes renew,
False Fortune cast for him, poor wretch, a myschiefe newe to brewe.
The wery winter nightes restore the Christmas games,
And now the season doth invite to banquet townish dames.
And fyrst in Capels house, the chiefe of all the kyn
Sparth for no cost, the wonted use of banquets to begyn.
No Lady fayre or fowle was in Verona towne,
No knight or gentleman of high or lowe renowne;
But Capilet himselfe hath byd unto his feast,
Or by his name in paper sent, appoynted as a geast.
Yong damsels thether flocke, of bachelers a rowte,
Not so much for the banquets sake, as bewties to searche out.
But not a Montagew would enter at his gate,
For as you heard, the Capilets, and they were at debate.
Save Romeus, and he, in maske with hydden face:
The supper done, with other five did prease into the place.
When they had maskd a while, with dames in courtly wise,
All did unmaske, the rest did shew them to theyr ladies eyes;
But bashfull Romeus with shamefast face forsooke
The open prease, and him withdrew into the chambers nooke.
But brighter then the sunne, the waxen torches shone:
That maugre what he could, he was espyd of every one.
But of the women cheefe, theyr gasing eyes that threwe
To woonder at his sightly shape and bewties spotles hewe;
With which the heavens him had and nature so bedect,
That Ladies thought the fayrest dames were fowle in his respect.
And in theyr head besyde, an other woonder rose,
How he durst put himselfe in throng among so many foes.
Of courage stoute they thought his cumming to procede:
And women love an hardy hart as I in stories rede.

The Capilets disdayne the presence of theyr foe,
Yet they suppresse theyr styrred yre, the cause I doe not knowe:
Perhaps toffend theyr gestes the courteous knights are loth,
Perhaps they stay from sharpe revenge, dreadyng the Princes wroth.
Perhaps for that they shamd to exercise theyr rage:
Within their house, gainst one alone, and him of tender age.
They use no taunting talke, ne harme him by theyre deede:
They neyther say, what makst thou here, ne yet they say God speede.
So that he freely might the Ladies view at ease:
And they also behelding him, their chaunge of fansies please.
Which Nature had hym taught to doe with such a grace,
That there was none but joyed at his being there in place.
With upright beame he wayd the bewty of eche dame,
And judgd who best, and who next her, was wrought in natures frame.
At length he saw a mayd, right fayre of perfect shape,
Which Theseus or Paris would have chosen to their rape.
Whom erst he never sawe, of all she pleasde him most;
Within himselfe he sayd to her, thou justly mayst thee boste
Of perfit shapes renoune, and beauties sounding prayse,
Whose like ne hath, ne shalbe seene, ne liveth in our dayes.
And whilset he fixd on her his partiall perced eye,
His former love, for which of late he ready was to dye,
Is nowe as quite forgotte, as it had never been:
The proverbe saith, unminded oft are they that are unseene.
And as out of a planke a nayle a nayle doth drive,
So novell love out of the minde the auncient love doth rive.
This sodain kindled fyre in time is wox so great,
That onely death and both theyr blouds might quench the fiery heate.
When Romeus saw himselfe in this new tempest tost,
Where both was hope of pleasant port, and daunger to be lost:
He doubtefull, skasely knew what countenance to keepe;
In Lethies floud his wonted flames were quenchd and drenched deepe.
Yea he forgets himselfe, ne is the wretch so bolde
To aske her name, that without force hath him in bondage folde.
Ne how tunloose his bondes doth the poore foole devise,
But onely seeketh by her sight to feede his houngry eyes:
Through them he swalloweth downe loves sweete empoysonde baite:
How surely are the wareles wrapt by those that lye in wayte?

So is the poyson spred throughout his bones and vaines,
That in a while (alas the while) it hasteth deadly paines.
Whilst Juliet (for so this gentle damsell hight)
From syde to syde on every one dyd cast about her sight:
At last her floting eyes were ancored fast on him,
Who for her sake dyd banishe health and fredome from eche limme.
He in her sight did seeme to passe the rest as farre
As Phœbus shining beames do passe the brightnes of a starre.
In wayte laye warlike Love with golden bowe and shaft,
And to his eare with steady hand the bowstring up he raft.
Till now she had escapde his sharpe inflaming darte:
Till now he listed not assaulte her yong and tender hart.
His whetted arrow loosde, so touchd her to the quicke,
That through the eye it strake the hart, and there the hedde did sticke.
It booted not to strive, for why, she wanted strength;
The weaker aye unto the strong of force must yeld, at length.
The pomps now of the feast her heart gyns to despyse;
And onely joyeth when her eyen meete with her lovers eyes.
When theyr new smitten heartes had fed on loving gleames:
Whilst, passing too and fro theyr eyes, ymingled were theyr beames.
Eche of these lovers gan by others lookes to knowe,
That frendship in their brest had roote, and both would have it grow.
When thus in both theyr harts had Cupide made his breache:
And eche of them had sought the meane to end the warre by speache,
Dame Fortune did assent theyr purpose to advaunce:
With torche in hand a comly knight did fetch her foorth to daunce;
She quit herselfe so well, and with so trim a grace,
That she the cheefe prayse wan that night from all Verona race.
The whilst our Romeus a place had warely wonne,
Nye to the seate where she must sit, the daunce once beyng donne.
Fayre Juliet tourned to her chayre with pleasant cheere,
And glad she was her Romeus approched was so neere.
At thone syde of her chayre her lover Romeo,
And on the other syde there sat one cald Mercutio;
A courtier that eche where was highly had in pryce,
For he was coorteous of his speche, and pleasant of devise.
Even as a lyon would emong the lambes be bolde,
Such was emong the bashfull maydes, Mercutio to beholde.

With frendly gripe he ceasd fayre Juliets snowish hand:
A gyft he had that Nature gave him in his swathing band,
That frosen mountayne yse was never halfe so cold,
As were his handes, though nere so neer the fire he did them holde.
As soone as had the knight the vyrgins right hand raught,
Within his trembling hand her left hath loving Romeus caught.
For he wist well himselfe for her abode most payne,
And well he wist she lovd him best, unles she list to fayne.
Then she with slender hand his tender palm hath prest;
What joy, trow you, was graffed so in Romeus cloven brest?
The soodain sweete delight had stopped quite his tong,
Ne can he claime of her his right, ne crave redresse of wrong.
But she espyd straight waye, by chaunging of his hewe
From pale to red, from red to pale, and so from pale anewe;
That vehment love was cause, why so his tong dyd stay,
And so much more she longde to heare what Love could teach him saye.
When she had longed long, and he long held his peace,
And her desire of hearing him, by sylence did encrease,
At last, with trembling voyce and shamefast chere, the mayde
Unto her Romeus tournde her selfe, and thus to him she sayde:
O blessed be the time of thy arrivall here:
But ere she could speake forth the rest, to her Love drewe so nere:
And so within her mouth, her tong he glewed fast,
That no one woord could scape her more, then what already past.
In great contented ease the yong man straight is rapt:
What chaunce (q' he) unware to me O lady mine is hapt?
That geves you worthy cause, my cumming here to blisse?
Fayre Juliet was come agayne unto her selfe by this:
Fyrst ruthfully she lookd, then sayd with smylyng chere:
Mervayle no whit my heartes delight, my only knight and fere,
Mercutious ysy hande had all to frozen myne,
And of thy goodness thou agayne hast warmed it with thyne.
Whereto with stayed brow, gan Romeus to replye
If so the Gods have graunted me suche favour from the skye,
That by my being here some service I have donne
That pleaseth you I am as glad, as I a realme had wonne.
O wel bestowed tyme, that hath the happy hyre,
Which I woulde wysh if I might have, my wished harts desire.

For I of God woulde crave, as pryse of paynes forpast,
To serve, obey, and honor you, so long as lyfe shall last:
As proofe shall teache you playne, if that you like to trye
His faltles truth, that nill for ought unto his ladye lye.
But if my tooched hand have warmed yours some dele,
Assure your self the heat is colde, which in your hand you fele,
Compard to suche quick sparks and glowing furious gleade
As from your bewties pleasant eyne, Love caused to proceade;
Which have to set on fyre eche feling parte of myne,
That lo, my mynde doeth melt awaye, my utwerd parts doe pyne.
And but you helpe all whole, to ashes shall I toorne;
Wherefore (alas) have ruth on him, whom you do force to boorne.
Even with his ended tale, the torches daunce had ende,
And Juliet of force must part from her new chosen frend.
His hand she clasped hard, and all her partes did shake,
When laysureles with whispring voyce thus did she aunswer make:
You are no more your owne (deare friend) then I am yours
(My honour saved) prest tobay your will, while life endures.
Lo, here the lucky lot that sild true lovers finde,
Eche takes away the others hart, and leaves the owne behinde.
A happy life is love if God graunt from above,
That hart with hart by even waight doo make exchaunge of love.
But Romeus gone from her, his hart for care is colde;
He hath forgot to ask her name that hath his hart in holde.
With forged careles cheere, of one he seekes to knowe,
Both how she hight, and whence she camme, that him enchaunted so.
So hath he learnd her name, and knowth she is no geast,
Her father was a Capilet, and master of the feast.
Thus hath his foe in choyse to geve him life or death,
That scarsely can his wofull brest keepe in the lively breath.
Wherefore with piteous plaint feerce Fortune doth he blame,
That in his ruth and wretched plight doth seek her laughing game.
And he reproveth love, cheefe cause of his unrest,
Who ease and freedome hath exilde out of his youthfull brest.
Twyse hath he made him serve, hopeles of his rewarde;
Of both the ylles to choose the lesse, I weene the choyse were harde.
Fyrst to a ruthlesse one he made him sue for grace,
And now with spurre he forceth him to ronne an endles race.

Amyd these stormy seas one ancor doth him holde,
He serveth not a cruell one, as he had done of olde.
And therefore is content, and chooseth still to serve:
Though hap should sweare that guerdonles the wretched wight should sterve.
The lot of Tantalus is Romeus like to thine;
For want of foode amid his foode, the myser still doth pine.
As carefull was the mayde what way were best devise
To learne his name, that intertaind her in so gentle wise;
Of whome her hart received so deepe so wyde a wound.
An auncient dame she calde to her, and in her eare gan rounde:
This old dame in her youth had nurst her with her mylke,
With slender nedel taught her sow, and how to spin with silke.
What twayne are those (quoth she) which prease unto the doore,
Whose pages in their hand doe beare, two torches light before?
And then as eche of them had of his houshold name,
So she him named yet once agayne the yong and wyly dame.
And tell me who is he with vysor in his hand,
That yender doth in masking weede besyde the window stand.
His name is Romeus (said shee) a Montagewe,
Whose Fathers pryde first styrd the strife which both your housholdes rewe.
The woord of Montagew her joyes did overthrow,
And straight in steade of happy hope, despayre began to growe.
What hap have I quoth she, to love my fathers foe?
What, am I wery of my wele? what, do I wishe my woe?
But though her grievouse paynes distraind her tender hart,
Yet with an outward shewe of joye she cloked inward smart;
And of the courtlyke dames her leave so courtly tooke,
That none dyd gesse the sodain change by changing of her looke,
Then at her mothers hest to chamber she her hyde,
So well she faynde, mother ne nurce, the hidden harme descride.
But when she should have slept as wont she was, in bed,
Not halfe a winke of quiet slepe could harber in her hed.
For loe, an hugy heape of dyvers thoughtes arise,
That rest have banisht from her hart, and slumber from her eyes.
And now from side to side she tosseth and she turnes,
And now for feare she shevereth, and now for love she burnes.

And now she lykes her choyse, and now her choyse she blames,
And now eche houre within her head a thousand fansyes frames.
Sometime in mynde to stop amyd her course begonne,
Sometime she vowes, what so betyde, that tempted race to ronne.
Thus dangers dred and love within the mayden fought:
The fight was feerce, continuyng long by their contrary thought.
In tourning mase of love she wandreth too and fro,
Then standeth doutful what to doe, last, overprest with woe.
How so her fansies cease, her teares did never blyn,
With heavy cheere and wringed hands thus doth her plaint begyn.
Ah sily foole (quoth she) ycought in soottill snare:
Ah wretched wench, bewrapt in woe! ah caytife clad with care.
Whence come these wandring thoughtes to thy unconstant brest?
By straying thus from raysons lore, that reve thy wonted rest.
What if his suttel brayne to fayne have taught his tong,
And so the snake that lurkes in grasse thy tender hart hath stong?
What if with frendly speache the traytor lye in wayte?
As oft the poysond hooke is hid, wrapt in the pleasant bayte?
Oft under cloke of truth hath Falshod served her lust;
And toornd theyr honor into shame, that did so slightly trust.
What, was not Dido so, a crouned queene, defamd?
And eke, for such an heynous cryme, have men not Theseus blamd?
A thousand stories more, to teache me to beware,
In Boccace and in Ovids bookes too playnely written are.
Perhaps, the great revenge he cannot woorke by strength,
By suttel sleight (my honor staynde) he hopes to worke at length.
So shall I seeke to finde my fathers foe, his game;
So I befylde Report shall take her trompe of blacke defame,
Whence she with puffed cheeke shall blowe a blast so shrill
Of my disprayse, that with the noyse Verona shall she fill.
Then I, a laughing stocke through all the towne becomme,
Shall hide my selfe, but not my shame, within an hollow toombe.
Straight underneth her foote she treadeth in the dust
Her troublesom thought, as wholy vaine, ybred of fond distrust.
No, no, by God above, I wot it well, quoth shee,
Although I rashely spake before, in no wise can it bee,
That where such perfet shape with pleasant bewty restes,
There crooked craft and trayson blacke should be appoynted gestes.

Sage writers say, the thoughts are dwelling in the eyne;
Then sure I am, as Cupid raignes, that Romeus is myne.
The tong the messenger eke call they of the mynd;
So that I see he loveth me, shall I then be unkynd?
His faces rosy hew I saw full oft to seeke;
And straight againe it flashed foorth, and spread in eyther cheeke.
His fixed heavenly eyne that through me quyte did perce
His thoughts unto my hart, my thoughts thei semed to rehearce.
What ment his foltring tunge in telling of his tale?
The trembling of his joynts, and eke his cooller waxen pale?
And whilst I talke with him, him self he hath exylde
Out of himself (as seemed me) ne was I sure begylde.
Those arguments of love Craft wrate not in his face,
But Natures hande, when all deceyte was banishd out of place.
What other certayn signes seke I of his good wil?
These doo suffice; and stedfast I will love and serve him still,
Till Attropos shall cut my fatall thread of lyfe,
So that he mynde to make of me his lawful wedded wyfe.
For so perchaunce this new aliance may procure
Unto our houses such a peace as ever shall endure."
Oh how we can perswade our self to what we like,
And how we can diswade our mynd, if ought our mynd mislyke.
Weake arguments are stronge, our fansies streyght to frame
To pleasing things, and eke to shonne, if we mislyke the same.
The mayde had scarsely yet ended the wery warre,
Kept in her heart by striving thoughtes, when every shining starre
Had payd his borowed light, and Phœbus spred in skies
His golden rayes, which seemd to say, now time it is to rise.
And Romeus had by this forsaken his wery bed,
Where restles he a thousand thoughts had forged in his hed.
And while with lingring step by Juliets house he past,
And upwards to her windowes high his gredy eyes did cast:
His love that looked for him there gan he straight espie.
With pleasant cheere eche greeted is; she followeth with her eye
His parting steppes, and he oft looketh backe againe,
But not so oft as he desyres; warely he doth refrayne.
What life were like to love, if dred of jeopardy
Ysowered not the sweete; if love were free from jelosy.

But she more sure within, unseene of any wight,
When so he comes, lookes after him till he be out of sight.
In often passing so, his busy eyes he threw,
That every pane and tooting hole the wily lover knew.
In happy houre he doth a garden plot espye,
From which, except he warely walke, men may his love descrye;
For lo, it fronted full upon her leaning place,
Where she is wont to shew her heart by cheerefull frendly face.
And lest the arbors might theyr secret love bewraye,
He doth keepe backe his forward foote from passing there by daye;
But when on earth the Night her mantel blacke hath spred,
Well armd he walketh foorth alone, ne dreadfull foes doth dred.
Whom maketh Love not bold, naye whom makes he not blynde?
He reveth daungers dread oft times out of the loves minde.
By night he passeth here a weeke or two in vayne;
And for the missing of his marke his griefe hath hym nye slaine.
And Juliet that now doth lacke her hearts releefe:
Her Romeus pleasant eyen (I mean) is almost dead for greefe.
Ech day she chaungeth howres (for lovers keepe an howre)
When they are sure to see theyr love, in passing by their bowre.
Impacient of her woe, she hapt to leane one night
Within her windowe, and anon the moone did shine so bright
That she espyde her love: her hart revived sprang;
And now for joy she clappes her handes, which erst for woe she wrang.
Eke Romeus, when he sawe his long desired sight,
His moorning cloke of mone cast off, hath clad him with delight.
Yet dare I say, of both that she rejoyced more:
His care was great, hers twise as great was all the time before;
For whilst she knew not why he dyd himselfe absent,
Ay douting both his health and life, his death she dyd lament.
For love is fearefull oft where is no cause of feare,
And what love feares, that love laments, as though it chaunced weare.
Of greater cause alway is greater woorke ybred;
While he nought douteth of her helth, she dreads lest he be ded.
When onely absence is the cause of Romeus smart,
By happy hope of sight agayne he feedes his faynting hart.
What woonder then if he were wrapt in lesse annoye?
What marvel if by sodain sight she fed of greater joye?

His smaller greefe or joy no smaller love doo prove;
Ne, for she passed him in both, did she him passe in love:
But eche of them alike dyd burne in equall flame,
The welbeloving knight and eke the welbeloved dame.
Now whilst with bitter teares her eyes as fountaynes ronne,
With whispering voyce, ybroke with sobs, thus is her tale begonne:
Oh Romeus (of your life) too lavas sure you are,
That in this place, and at thys tyme, to hasard it you dare.
What if your dedly foes, my kynsmen, saw you here?
Lyke lyons wylde, your tender partes asonder would they teare.
In ruth and in disdayne, I, wery of my life,
With cruell hand my moorning hart would perce with bloudy knyfe.
For you, myne own, once dead, what joy should I have heare?
And eke my honor staynde, which I then lyfe doe holde more deare.
Fayre lady myne, dame Juliet, my lyfe (quod he)
Even from my byrth committed was to fatall sisters three.
They may in spyte of foes draw foorth my lively threed;
And they also, who so sayth nay, a sonder may it shreed.
But who, to reave my life, his rage and force would bende,
Perhaps should trye unto his payne how I it could defende.
Ne yet I love it so, but alwayes, for your sake,
A sacrifice to death I would my wounded corps betake.
If my mishappe were such, that here, before your sight,
I should restore agayne to death, of lyfe my borrowde light,
This one thing and no more my parting sprite would rewe,
That part he should before that you by certaine trial knew
The love I owe to you, the thrall I languish in,
And how I dread to loose the gayne which I doe hope to win:
And how I wishe for lyfe, not for my propre ease,
But that in it you might I love, you honor, serve and please,
Tyll dedly pangs the sprite out of the corps shall send:
And thereupon he sware an othe, and so his tale had ende.
Now love and pitty boyle in Juliets ruthfull brest;
In windowe on her leaning arme her weary hed doth rest:
Her bosome bathd in teares, to witnes inward payne,
With dreary chere to Romeus thus aunswered she agayne:
Ah my deere Romeus, keepe in these woords, (quod she)
For lo, the thought of such mischaunce already maketh me

For pitty and for dred welnigh to yelde up breath;
In even ballance peysed are my life and eke my death.
For so my heart is knitte, yea, made one selfe with yours,
That sure there is no greefe so small, by which your mynde endures,
But as you suffer payne, so I doe beare in part
(Although it lessens not your greefe) the halfe of all your smart.
But these thinges overpast, if of your health and myne
You have respect, or pitty ought my teery weeping eyen,
In few unfained woords your hidden mynd unfolde,
That as I see your pleasant face, your heart I may beholde.
For if you doe intende my honor to defile,
In error shall you wander still, as you have done this whyle:
But if your thought be chaste, and have on vertue ground,
If wedlocke be the ende and marke which your desire hath found,
Obedience set aside, unto my parentes dewe,
The quarell eke that long agoe betwene our housholdes grewe,
Both me and myne I will all whole to you betake,
And following you where so you goe, my fathers house forsake.
But if by wanton love and by unlawfull sute
You thinke in ripest yeres to plucke my maydenhods dainty frute,
You are begylde; and now your Juliet you beseekes
To cease your sute, and suffer her to live emong her likes.
Then Romeus, whose thought was free from fowle desyre,
And to the top of vertues haight did worthely aspyre,
Was fild with greater joy then can my pen expresse,
Or, till they have enjoyd the like, the hearers hart can gesse.
And then with joyned hands, heavd up into the skies,
He thankes the Gods, and from the heavens for vengeance downe he cries,
If he have other thought but as his Lady spake;
And then his looke he toornd to her, and thus did aunswer make:
Since, lady, that you like to honor me so much
As to accept me for your spouse, I yeld my selfe for such.
In true witnes wherof, because I must depart,
Till that my deede do prove my woord, I leave in pawne my hart.
Tomorrow eke bestimes, before the sunne arise,
To Fryer Lawrence will I wende, to learne his sage advise.

He is my gostly syre, and oft he hath me taught
What I should doe in things of wayght, when I his ayde have sought.
And at this selfe same houre, I plyte you here my fayth,
I will be here (if you think good) to tell you what he sayth.
She was contented well; els favour found he none
That night, at lady Juliets hand, save pleasant woordes alone.
This barefoote fryer gyrt with cord his grayish weede,
For he of Frauncis order was, a fryer as I reede.
Not as the most was he, a grosse unlearned foole,
But doctor of divinitie proceded he in schoole.
The secretes eke he knew in Natures woorkes that loorke;
By magiks arte most men supposd that he could wonders woorke.
Ne doth it ill beseeme devines those skils to know,
If on no harmefull deede they do such skilfulnes bestow;
For justly of no arte can men condemne the use,
But right and reasons lore crye out agaynst the lewd abuse.
The bounty of the fryer and wisdom hath so wonne
The townes folks herts, that welnigh all to fryer Lawrence ronne,
To shrive them selfe; the olde, the young, the great and small;
Of all he is beloved well, and honord much of all.
And, for he did the rest in wisdome farre exceede,
The prince by him (his counsell cravde) was holpe at time of neede.
Betwixt the Capilets and him great frendship grew,
A secret and assured frend unto the Montegue.
Loved of this yong man more then any other geste,
The frier eke of Verone youth aye liked Romeus best;
For whom he ever hath in time of his distres,
(As erst you heard) by skilfull lore found out his harmes redresse.
To him is Romeus gonne, ne stayth he till the morowe;
To him he paynteth all his case, his passed joy and sorow.
How he hath her espyde with other dames in daunce,
And how that first to talke with her himselfe he did advaunce;
Their talke and change of lookes he gan to him declare,
And how so fast by fayth and troth they both ycoupled are,
That neither hope of lyfe, nor dred of cruel death,
Shall make him false his fayth to her, while lyfe shall lend him breath.

And then with weping eyes he prayes his gostly syre
To further and accomplish all theyr honest hartes desire.
A thousand doutes and moe in thold mans hed arose,
A thousand daungers like to come the olde man doth disclose,
And from the spousall rites he readeth him refrayne,
Perhaps he shalbe bet advisde within a weeke or twayne.
Advise is banishd quite from those that followe love,
Except advise to what they like theyr bending mynd do move.
As well the father might have counseld him to stay
That from a mountaines top thrown downe is falling halfe the way,
As warne his frend to stop amyd his race begonne,
Whom Cupid with his smarting whip enforceth foorth to ronne.
Part wonne by earnest sute, the fryer doth graunt at last;
And part, because he thinkes the stormes, so lately overpast,
Of both the housholdes wrath, this mariage might apease;
So that they should not rage agayne, but quite for ever cease.
The respite of a day he asketh to devyse
What way were best, unknowne, to ende so great an enterprise.
The wounded man that now doth dedly paines endure,
Scarce pacient tarieth whilst his leeche doth make the salve to cure:
So Romeus hardly graunts a short day and a night,
Yet nedes he must, els must he want his onely hearts delight.
You see that Romeus no time or payne doth spare;
Thinke, that the whilst fayre Juliet is not devoyde of care.
Yong Romeus powreth foorth his hap and his mishap
Into the friers brest; but where shall Juliet unwrap
The secretes of her hart? to whom shall she unfolde
Her hidden burning love, and eke her thought and cares so colde.
The nurce of whom I spake, within her chaumber laye,
Upon the mayde she wayteth still; to her she doth bewray
Her new received wound, and then her ayde doth crave,
In her, she saith, it lyes to spill, in her, her life to save.
Not easely she made the froward nurce to bowe,
But wonne at length with promest hyre, she made a solemne vowe
To do what she commaundes, as handmayd of her hest;
Her mistres secrets hide she will, within her covert brest.
To Romeus she goes, of him she doth desyre
To know the meane of mariage, by councell of the fryre.

On Saterday, quod he, if Juliet come to shrift,
She shalbe shrived and maried; how lyke you, noorse, this drift?
Now by my truth (quod she) God's blessing have your hart,
For yet in all my life I have not heard of such a part.
Lord, how you yong men can such crafty wiles devise,
If that you love the daughter well, to bleare the mothers eyes.
An easy thing it is with cloke of holines
To mocke the sely mother, that suspecteth nothing lesse.
But that it pleased you to tell me of the case,
For all my many yeres perhaps I should have found it scarse.
Now for the rest let me and Juliet alone;
To get her leave, some feate excuse I will devise anone;
For that her golden lockes by sloth have been unkempt,
Or for unwares some wanton dreame the youthfull damsell drempt,
Or for in thoughts of love her ydel time she spent,
Or otherwise within her hart deserved to be shent.
I know her mother will in no case say her nay;
I warrant you, she shall not fayle to come on Saterday.
And then she sweares to him, the mother loves her well;
And how she gave her sucke in youth, she leaveth not to tell.
A prety babe (quod she) it was when it was yong;
Lord how it could full pretely have prated with it tong!
A thousand times and more I laid her on my lappe,
And clapt her on the buttocke soft, and kist where I did clappe.
And gladder then was I of such a kisse forsooth,
Then I had been to have a kisse of some olde lechers mouth.
And thus of Juliets youth began this prating noorse,
And of her present state to make a tedious long discoorse.
For though he pleasure tooke in hearing of his love,
The message aunswer seemed him to be of more behove.
But when these beldams sit at ease upon theyr tayle,
The day and eke the candle light before theyr talke shall fayle.
And part they say is true, and part they do devise,
Yet boldly do they chat of both, when no man checkes theyr lyes.
Then he vj crownes of gold out of his pocket drew,
And gave them her; a slight reward (quod he) and so adiew.
In seven yeres twise tolde she had not bowd so lowe
Her crooked knees, as now they bowe: she sweares she will bestowe

Her crafty wit, her time, and all her busy payne,
To helpe him to his hoped blisse; and, cowring downe agayne,
She takes her leave, and home she hyes with spedy pace;
The chaumber doore she shuts, and then she saith with smyling face;
Good newes for thee, my gyrle, good tydinges I thee bring.
Leave off thy woonted song of care, and now of pleasure sing.
For thou mayst hold thy selfe the happiest under sonne,
That in so little while so well so worthy a knight hast woone.
The best yshapde is he, and hath the fayrest face,
Of all this towne, and there is none hath halfe so good a grace:
So gentle of his speche, and of his counsell wise:
And still with many prayses more she heaved him to the skies.
Tell me els what, (quod she) this evermore I thought;
But of our mariage, say at once, what aunswer have you brought?
Nay, soft, quoth she, I feare your hurt by sodain joye;
I list not play quod Juliet, although thou list to toye.
How glad, trow you, was she, when she had heard her say,
No farther of then Saterday differred was the day.
Againe, the auncient nurce doth speake of Romeus,
And then (said she) he spake to me, and then I spake him thus.
Nothing was done or said that she hath left untolde,
Save onely one that she forgot, the taking of the golde.
There is no losse, quod she, (sweete wench) to losse of time,
Ne in thine age shalt thou repent so much of any crime.
For when I call to mynde my former passed youth,
One thing there is which most of all doth cause my endles ruth.
At sixtene yeres I first did choose my loving feere,
And I was fully ripe before, (I dare well say) a yere.
The pleasure that I lost, that yere so overpast,
A thousand times I have bewept, and shall, while life doth last.
In fayth it were a shame, yea sinne it were, ywisse
When thou mayst live in happy joy, to set light by thy blisse.
She that this mornyng could her mistres mynde disswade,
Is now becomme an oratresse, her lady to perswade.
If any man be here whom love hath clad with care,
To him I speake; if thou wilt speede, thy purse thou must not spare,
Two sortes of men there are, seeld welcome in at doore,
The welthy sparing nigard, and the sutor that is poore.

For glittring gold is woont by kynd to moove the hart;
And often times a slight rewarde doth cause a more desart.
Ywritten have I red, I wot not in what booke,
There is no better way to fishe then with a golden hooke.
Of Romeus these two doe sitte and chat awhyle,
And to them selfe they laugh how they the mother shall begyle.
A feate excuse they finde, but sure I know it not,
And leave for her to goe to shrift on Saterday she got.
So well this Juliet, this wily wench dyd know
Her mothers angry houres, and eke the true bent of her bowe.
The Saterday betimes, in sober weed yclad,
She tooke her leave, and forth she went with visage grave and sad.
With her the nurce is sent, as brydle of her lust,
With her the mother sendes a mayde almost of equall trust.
Betwixt her teeth the bytte the Jenet now hath cought,
So warely eke the vyrgin walkes, her mayde perceiveth nought.
She gaseth not in churche on yong men of the towne,
Ne wandreth she from place to place, but straight she kneleth downe
Upon an alters step, where she devoutly prayes,
And there upon her tender knees the wery lady stayes;
Whilst she doth send her mayde the certain truth to know,
If fryer Lawrence laysure had to heare her shrift, or no.
Out of his shriving place he commes with pleasant cheere;
The shamefast mayde with bashfull brow to himward draweth neere.
Some great offence (q' he) you have committed late,
Perhaps you have displeasd your frend by geving him a mate.
Then turning to the nurce and to the other mayde,
Go, heare a masse or two, quod he which straight way shalbe sayde.
For, her confession heard, I will unto you twayne
The charge that I receivd of you restore to you agayne.
What, was not Juliet, trow you, right well apayde?
That for this trusty fryre hath chaungde her yong mistrusting mayde?
I dare well say, there is in all Verona none,
But Romeus, with whom she would so gladly be alone.
Thus to the fryers cell they both foorth walked bin;
He shuts the doore as soone as he and Juliet were in.

But Romeus, her frend, was entred in before,
And there had wayted for his love, two howers large and more.
Eche minute seemde an howre, and every howre a day,
Twixt hope he lived and despayre of cumming or of stay.
Now wavering hope and feare are quite fled out of sight,
For, what he hopde he hath at hande, his pleasant cheefe delight.
And joyfull Juliet is healde of all her smart,
For now the rest of all her parts have found her straying hart.
Both theyr confessions first the fryer hath heard them make,
And then to her with lowder voyce thus fryer Lawrence spake:
Fayre lady Juliet, my gostly doughter deere,
As farre as I of Romeus learne, who by you standeth here,
Twixt you it is agreed, that you shalbe his wyfe,
And he your spouse in steady truth, till death shall end your life.
Are you both fully bent to kepe this great behest?
And both the lovers said, it was theyr onely harts request.
When he did see theyr myndes in linkes of love so fast,
When in the prayse of wedlocks state somme skilfull talke was past.
When he had told at length the wife what was her due,
His duety eke by gostly talke the youthfull husband knew;
How that the wife in love must honor and obay,
What love and honor he doth owe, and dette that he must pay.
The woords pronounced were which holy church of olde
Appointed hath for mariage, and she a ring of golde
Received of Romeus; and then they both arose.
To whom the frier then said: Perchaunce apart you will disclose,
Betwixt your selfe alone, the bottome of your hart;
Say on at once, for time it is that hence you should depart.
Then Romeus said to her, (both loth to parte so soone)
Fayre lady, send to me agayne your nurce this after noone.
Of corde I will bespeake a ladder by that time;
By which, this night, while other sleepe, I will your windowe clime.
Then we will talke of love and of our olde dispayres,
And then with longer laysure had dispose our great affaires.

These said, they kisse, and then part to theyr fathers house,
The joyfull bryde unto her home, to his eke goth the spouse;
Contented both, and yet both uncontented still,
Till Night and Venus child geve leave the wedding to fulfill.

The painfull souldiour, sore ybet with wery warre,
The merchant eke that nedefull things doth dred to fetch from farre,
The ploughman that for doute of feerce invading foes,
Rather to sit in ydle ease then sowe his tilt hath chose,
Rejoyce to heare proclaymd the tydinges of the peace;
Not pleasurd with the sound so much; but, when the warres do cease,
Then ceased are the harmes which cruel warre bringes foorth:
The merchant then may boldly fetch his wares of precious woorth;
Dredelesse the husband man doth till his fertile feeld.
For welth, her mate, not for her selfe, is peace so precious held:
So lovers live in care, in dread, and in unrest,
And dedly warre by striving thoughts they kepe within their brest:
But wedlocke is the peace whereby is freedome wonne
To do a thousand pleasant thinges that should not els be donne.
The newes of ended warre these two have hard with joy,
But now they long the fruite of peace with pleasure to enjoy.
In stormy wind and wave, in daunger to be lost,
Thy stearles ship (O Romeus) hath been long while betost;
The seas are now appeasd, and thou, by happy starre,
Art comme in sight of quiet haven; and, now the wrackfull barre
Is hid with swelling tyde, boldly thou mayst resort
Unto thy wedded ladies bed, thy long desyred port.
God graunt, no follies mist so dymme thy inward sight,
That thou do misse the chanel that doth leade to thy delight.
God graunt, no daungers rocke, ylurking in the darke,
Before thou win the happy port, wracke thy seabeaten barke.
A servant Romeus had, of woord and deede so just,
That with his life (if nede requierd) his master would him trust.
His faithfulnes had oft our Romeus proved of olde;
And therefore all that yet was done unto his man he tolde.
Who straight, as he was charged, a corden ladder lookes,
To which he hath made fast two strong and crooked yron hookes.
The bryde to send the nurce at twylight fayleth not,
To whom the bridegroome yeven hath the ladder that he got.
And then to watch for him appointeth her an howre,
For, whether Fortune smyle on him, or if she list to lowre,
He will not misse to come to his appoynted place,
Where wont he was to take by stelth the view of Juliets face.

How long these lovers thought the lasting of the day,
Let other judge that woonted are lyke passions to assay:
For my part, I do gesse eche howre seemes twenty yere:
So that I deeme, if they might have (as of Alcume we heare)
The sunne bond to theyr will, if they the heavens might gyde,
Black shade of night and doubled darke should straight all over hyde.
Thappointed howre is comme; he, clad in rich araye,
Walkes toward his desyred home: good fortune gyde his way.
Approching nere the place from whence his hart had life,
So light he wox, he lept the wall, and there he spyde his wife,
Who in the windowe watcht the cumming of her lorde;
Where she so surely had made fast the ladder made of corde,
That daungerles her spouse the chaumber window climes,
Where he ere then had wisht himselfe above ten thousand times.
The windowes close are shut; els looke they for no gest;
To light the waxen quariers, the auncient nurce is prest,
Which Juliet had before prepared to be light,
That she at pleasure might beholde her husbands bewty bright.
A carchef white as snowe ware Juliet on her hed,
Such as she wonted was to weare, attyre meete for the bed.
As soone as she hym spyde, about his necke she clong,
And by her long and slender armes a great while there she hong.
A thousand times she kist, and him unkist agayne,
Ne could she speake a woord to him, though would she nere so fayne.
And like betwixt his armes to faynt his lady is;
She fettes a sigh and clappeth close her closed mouth to his:
And ready then to sownde, she looked ruthfully,
That loe, it made him both at once to live and eke to dye.
These piteous painfull panges were haply overpast,
And she unto her selfe agayne retorned home at last.
Then, through her troubled brest, even from the farthest part,
An hollow sigh, a messenger she sendeth from her hart.
O Romeus, quoth she, in whome all vertues shyne,
Welcome thou art into this place, where from these eyes of myne
Such teary streames dyd flowe, that I suppose welny
The source of my bitter teares is altogether drye.
Absence so pynde my heart, which on thy presence fed,
And of thy safetie and thy health so much I stood in dred.

But now what is decreed by fatall desteny,
I force it not; let Fortune do and death their woorst to me.
Full recompensd am I for all my passed harmes,
In that the Gods have granted me to claspe thee in myne armes.
The chrystall teares began to stand in Romeus eyes,
When he unto his ladies woordes gan aunswere in this wise:
Though cruell Fortune be so much my dedly foe,
That I ne can by lively proofe cause thee (fayre dame) to knowe
How much I am by love enthralled unto thee,
Ne yet what mighty powre thou hast, by thy desert, on me,
Ne tormentes that for thee I did ere this endure,
Yet of thus much (ne will I fayne) I may thee well assure;
The least of many paynes which of thy absence sprong,
More paynefully then death it selfe my tender hart hath wroong.
Ere this, one death had reft a thousand deathes away,
But lyfe prolonged was by hope of this desyred day;
Which so just tribute payes of all my passed mone,
That I as well contented am as if my selfe alone
Did from the ocean reigne unto the sea of Inde.
Wherfore now let us wipe away old cares out of our mynde:
For, as the wretched state is now redrest at last,
So is it skill behinde our backe the cursed care to cast.
Since Fortune of her grace hath place and time assinde,
Where we with pleasure may content our uncontented minde,
In Lethes hyde we deepe all greefe and all annoy,
Whilst we do bath in blisse, and fill our hungry harts with joye.
And, for the time to comme, let be our busy care
So wisely to direct our love, as no wight els be ware;
Lest envious foes by force despoyle our new delight,
And us throwe backe from happy state to more unhappy plight.
Fayre Juliet began to aunswere what he sayde,
But foorth in hast the old nurce stept, and so her aunswere stayde.
Who takes not time (quoth she) when time well offred is,
An other time shall seeke for tyme, and yet of time shall misse.
And when occasion serves, who so doth let it slippe,
Is worthy sure (if I might judge) of lashes with a whippe.
Wherfore if eche of you hath harmde the other so,
And eche of you hath been the cause of others wayled woe,

Loe here a fielde (she shewd a fieldbed ready dight)
Where you may, if you list, in armes revenge your selfe by fight.
Whereto these lovers both gan easely assent,
And to the place of mylde revenge with pleasant cheere they went,
Where they were left alone, the nurce is gone to rest:
How can this be? they restles lye, ne yet they feele unrest.
I graunt that I envie the blisse they lived in;
O that I might have found the like, I wish it for no sin,
But that I might as well with pen their joyes depaynt,
As heretofore I have displayd their secret hidden playnt.
Of shyvering care and dred I have felt many a fit,
But Fortune such delight as theyrs dyd never graunt me yet.
By proofe no certain truth can I unhappy write,
But what I gesse by likelihod, that dare I to endite.
The blyndfold goddesse that with frowning face doth fraye,
And from theyr seate the mighty kinges throwes downe with hed-
long sway,
Begynneth now to turne to these her smyling face;
Nedes must they tast of great delight, so much in Fortunes grace.
If Cupid, god of love, be god of pleasant sport,
I think, O Romeus, Mars himselfe envies thy happy sort.
Ne Venus justly might (as I suppose) repent,
If in thy stead (O Juliet) this pleasant time she spent.
This passe they foorth the night, in sport, in joly game;
The hastines of Phoebus steeds in great despyte they blame.
And now the vyrgins fort hath warlike Romeus got,
In which as yet no breache was made by force of canon shot,
And now in ease he doth possesse the hoped place:
How glad was he, speake you, that may your lovers parts embrace.
The mariage thus made up, and both the parties pleasd,
The nigh approche of dayes retoorne these seely foles diseasd.
And for they might no while in pleasure passe theyr time,
Ne leysure had they much to blame the hasty mornings crime,
With frendly kisse in armes of her his leave he takes,
And every other night, to come, a solemne othe he makes,
By one selfe meane, and eke to come at one selfe howre:
And so he doth, till Fortune list to sawse his sweete with sowre.

But who is he that can his present state assure?
And say unto himselfe, thy joyes shall yet a day endure?
So wavering fortunes whele, her chaunges be so straunge;
And every wight ythralled is by Fate unto her chaunge:
Who raignes so over all, that eche man hath his part,
(Although not aye, perchaunce, alike) of pleasure and of smart.
For after many joyes some feele but little paine,
And from that little greefe they toorne to happy joy againe.
But other somme there are, that living long in woe,
At length they be in quiet ease, but long abide not so;
Whose greefe is much increast by myrth that went before,
Because the sodayne chaunge of thinges doth make it seeme the more.
Of this unlucky sorte our Romeus is one,
For all his hap turnes to mishap, and all his myrth to mone.
And joyfull Juliet an other leafe must toorne;
As wont she was (her joyes bereft), she must begin to moorne.
The summer of their blisse doth last a month or twayne,
But winters blast with spedy foote doth bring the fall agayne.
Whom glorious Fortune erst had heaved to the skies,
By envious Fortune overthrowne, on earth now groveling lyes.
She payd theyr former greefe with pleasures doubled gayne,
But now, for pleasures usery, tenfolde redoubleth payne.
The prince could never cause those housholds so agree,
But that some sparcles of their wrath as yet remaining bee;
Which lye this while raked up in ashes pale and ded,
Till tyme do serve that they agayne in wasting flame may spred.
At holiest times, men say, most heynous crimes are donne;
The morowe after Easter day the mischiefe new begonne.
A band of Capilets did meete (my hart it rewes)
Within the walles, by Pursers gate, a band of Montagewes.
The Capilets as cheefe a yong man have chose out,
Best exercisd in feates of armes, and noblest of the rowte,
Our Juliets unkles sonne, that cliped was Tibalt;
He was of body tall and strong, and of his courage halt.
They neede no trumpet sounde to byd them geve the charge,
So lowde he cryde with strayned voyce and mouth outstretched large:

Now, now (quod he) my friends, our selfe so let us wreake,
That of this dayes revenge and us our childrens heyres may speake.
Now once for all let us their swelling pryde asswage;
Let none of them escape alive. Then he with furious rage,
And they with him, gave charge upon theyr present foes,
And then forthwith a skyrmishe great upon this fray arose.
For, loe the Montagewes thought shame away to flye,
And rather then to live with shame, with prayse did choose to dye.
The woordes that Tybalt usd to styre his folke to yre,
Have in the brestes of Montagewes kindled a furious fyre.
With Lyons hartes they fight, warely themselfe defende;
To wound his foe, his present wit and force eche one doth bend.
This furious fray is long on eche side stoutly fought,
That whether part had got the woorst, full doutfull were the thought.
The noyse hereof anon throughout the towne doth flye,
And partes are taken on every side; both kindreds thether hye.
Here one doth graspe for breth, his frend bestrideth him;
And he hath lost a hand, and he another maymed lim:
His leg is cutte whilst he strikes at an other full,
And who he would have thrust quite through, hath cleft his cracked skull.
Theyr valiant harts forbode theyr foote to geve the grounde;
With unappauled cheere they tooke full deepe and doutfull wounde.
Thus foote by foote long while, and shield to shield set fast,
One foe doth make another faynt, but makes him not agast.
And whilst this noyse is rife in every townes mans eare,
Eke, walking with his frendes, the noyse doth wofull Romeus heare.
With spedy foote he ronnes unto the fray apace;
With him, those fewe that were with him he leadeth to the place.
They pittie much to see the slaughter made so greate,
That wetshod they might stand in blood on eyther side the streate.
Part frendes (said he) part frendes, helpe, frendes, to part the fray,
And to the rest, enough, (he cryes) now time it is to staye.
Gods farther wrath you styrre, beside the hurt you feele,
And with this new uprore confounde all this our common wele.
But they so busy are in fight, so egar and feerce,
That through theyr eares his sage advise no leysure had to pearce.

Then lept he in the throng, to part and barre the blowes
As well of those that were his frendes, as of his dedly foes.
As soone as Tybalt had our Romeus espyde,
He threw a thrust at him that would have past from side to side;
But Romeus ever went (douting his foes) well armde,
So that the sword (kept out by mayle) had nothing Romeus harmde.
Thou doest me wrong (quoth he) for I but part the fraye;
Not dread, but other waighty cause my hasty hand doth stay.
Thou art the cheefe of thine, the noblest eke thou art,
Wherfore leave of thy malice now, and helpe these folke to parte.
Many are hurt, some slayne, and some are like to dye:
No, coward, traytor boy (q' he) straight way I mynd to trye,
Whether thy sugred talke, and tong so smothely fylde,
Against the force of this my sword shall serve thee for a shylde.
And then, at Romeus hed a blow he strake so hard,
That might have clove him to the brayne but for his cunning ward.
It was but lent to him that could repay agayne:
And geve him death for interest, a well forborne gayne.
Right as a forest bore, that lodged in the thicke,
Pinched with dog, or els with speare ypricked to the quicke,
His bristles stiffe upright upon his backe doth set,
And in his fomy mouth his sharp and crooked tuskes doth whet;
Or as a lyon wylde, that rampeth in his rage,
His whelpes bereft, whose fury can no weaker beast asswage;
Such seemed Romeus in every others sight,
When he him shope, of wrong receavde tavenge himself by fight.
Even as two thunderboltes throwne downe out of the skye,
That through the ayre, the massy earth, and seas, have power to flye;
So met these two, and while they chaunge a blow or twayne,
Our Romeus thrust him through the throte, and so is Tybalt slayne.
Loe here the ende of those that styrre a dedly stryfe:
Who thyrsteth after others death, himselfe hath lost his life.
The Capilets are quaylde by Tybalts overthrowe,
The courage of the Mountagewes by Romeus sight doth growe.
The townes men waxen strong, the Prince doth send his force;
The fray hath end. The Capilets do bring the brethles corce
Before the prince, and crave that cruell dedly payne
May be the guerdon of his falt, that hath their kinsman slaine.

The Montagewes do pleade theyr Romeus voyde of falt;
The lookers on do say, the fight begonne was by Tybalt.
The prince doth pawse, and then geves sentence in a while,
That Romeus, for sleying him, should goe into exyle.
His foes would have him hangde, or sterve in prison strong;
His frendes do think (but dare not say) that Romeus hath wrong.
Both housholds straight are charged on payne of losing lyfe,
Theyr bloudy weapons layd aside, to cease the styrred stryfe.
This common plage is spred through all the towne anon,
From side to syde the towne is fild with murmour and with mone.
For Tybalts hasty death bewayled was of somme,
Both for his skill in feates of armes, and for, in time to comme
He should (had this not chaunced) been riche and of great powre,
To helpe his frendes, and serve the state; which hope within a howre
Was wasted quite, and he, thus yelding up his breath,
More than he holpe the towne in lyfe, hath harmde it by his death.
And other somme bewayle (but ladies most of all)
The lookeles lot by Fortunes gylt that is so late befall,
(Without his falt) unto the seely Romeus;
For whilst that he from natife land shall live exyled thus,
From heavenly bewties light and his well shaped parts,
The sight of which was wont (faire dames) to glad your youthfull harts,
Shall you be banishd quite, and tyll he do retoorne,
What hope have you to joy, what hope to cease to moorne?
This Romeus was borne so much in heavens grace,
Of Fortune and of Nature so beloved, that in his face
(Beside the heavenly bewty glistring ay so bright,
And seemely grace that wonted so to glad the seers sight)
A certain charme was graved by Natures secret arte,
That vertue had to draw to it the love of many a hart.
So every one doth wish to beare a parte of payne,
That he released of exyle might straight retorne agayne.
But how doth moorne emong the moorners Juliet?
How doth she bathe her brest in teares? what depe sighes doth she fet?
How doth she tear her heare? her weede how doth she rent?
How fares the lover hearing of her lovers banishment?

How wayles she Tybalts death, whom she had loved so well?
Her hearty greefe and piteous plaint, cunning I want to tell.
For delving depely now in depth of depe despayre,
With wretched sorowes cruell sound she fils the empty ayre;
And to the lowest hell downe falles her heavy crye,
And up unto the heavens haight her piteous plaint doth flye.
The waters and the woods of sighes and sobs resounde,
And from the hard resounding rockes her sorowes do rebounde.
Eke from her teary eyne downe rayned many a showre,
That in the garden where she walkd might water herbe and flowre.
But when at length she saw her selfe outraged so,
Unto her chaumber straight she hide; there, overcharged with wo,
Upon her stately bed her painfull parts she threw,
And in so wondrous wise began her sorowes to renewe,
That sure no hart so hard (but it of flint had byn,)
But would have rude the pitious plaint that she did languishe in.
Then rapt out of her selfe, whilst she on every side
Did cast her restles eye, at length the windowe she espide,
Through which she had with joy seene Romeus many a time,
Which oft the ventrous knight was wont for Juliets sake to clyme.
She cryde, O cursed windowe, acurst be every pane,
Through which (alas) to sone I raught the cause of life and bane,
If by thy meane I have some slight delight receaved,
Or els such fading pleasure as by Fortune straight was reaved,
Hast thou not made me pay a tribute rigorous?
Of heaped greefe and lasting care? and sorowes dolorous?
That these my tender partes, which nedeful strength do lacke
To beare so great unweldy lode upon so weake a backe,
Opprest with waight of cares and with these sorowes rife,
At length must open wide to death the gates of lothed lyfe;
That so my wery sprite may somme where els unlode
His deadly lode, and free from thrall may seeke els where abrode;
For pleasant quiet ease and for assured rest,
Which I as yet could never finde but for my more unrest?
O Romeus, when first we both acquainted were,
When to thy paynted promises I lent my listning eare,
Which to the brinkes you fild with many a solemne othe,
And I them judgde empty of gyle, and fraughted full of troth,

I thought you rather would continue our good will,
And seeke tappease our fathers strife, which daily groweth still.
I little wend you would have sought occasion how
By such an heynous act to breake the peace and eke your vowe;
Whereby your bright renoune all whole yclipsed is,
And I unhappy, husbandles, of cumfort robde and blisse.
But if you did so much the blood of Capels thyrst,
Why have you often spared mine? myne might have quencht it first.
Since that so many times and in so secret place,
(Where you were wont with vele of love to hyde your hatreds face,)
My doutful lyfe hath hapt by fatall dome to stand
In mercy of your cruell hart, and of your bloudy hand.
What? seemd the conquest which you got of me so small?
What? seemd it not enough that I, poore wretch, was made your thrall?
But that you must increase it with that kinsmans blood,
Which for his woorth and love to me, most in my favour stood?
Well, goe hencefoorth els where, and seeke an other whyle
Some other as unhappy as I, by flattery to begyle.
And, where I comme, see that you shonne to shew your face,
For your excuse within my hart shall finde no resting place.
And I that now, too late, my former fault repent,
Will so the rest of wery life with many teares lament.
That soone my joyceles corps shall yeld up banishd breath,
And where on earth it restles lived, in earth seeke rest by death.
These sayde, her tender hart, by payne oppressed sore,
Restraynd her teares, and forced her tong to keepe her talke in store;
And then as still she was, as if in sownd she lay,
And then agayne, wroth with herselfe, with feeble voyce gan say:
Ah cruell murthering tong, murthrer of others fame,
How durst thou once attempt to tooch the honor of his name?
Whose dedly foes doe yelde him dewe and erned prayse;
For though his freedome be bereft, his honor not decayes.
Why blamst thou Romeus for sleying of Tybalt,
Since he is gyltles quite of all, and Tibalt beares the falt?
Whether shall he (alas) poore banishd man, now flye?
What place of succor shall he seeke beneth the starry skye?

Synce she pursueth him, and him defames by wrong,
That in distres should be his fort, and onely rampier strong.
Receive the recompence, O Romeus, of thy wife,
Who, for she was unkind her selfe, doth offer up her lyfe,
In flames of yre, in sighes, in sorow and in ruth,
So to revenge the crime she did commit against thy truth.
These said, she could no more ; her senses all gan fayle,
And dedly panges began straight way her tender hart assayle ;
Her limmes she stretched forth, she drew no more her breath :
Who had been there might well have seene the signes of present death.
The nurce that knew no cause why she absented her,
Did doute lest that some sodain greefe too much tormented her.
Eche where but where she was, the carefull beldam sought,
Last, of the chamber where she lay she haply her bethought ;
Where she with piteous eye her nurce child did beholde,
Her limmes stretched out, her utward parts as any marble colde.
The nurce supposde that she had payde to death her det,
And then, as she had lost her wittes, she cryed to Juliet :
Ah my dere hart (quoth she) how greeveth me thy death ?
Alas what cause hast thou thus soone to yelde up living breath ?
But while she handled her, and chafed every part,
She knew there was some sparke of life by beating of her hart,
So that a thousand times she cald upon her name ;
There is no way to helpe a traunce but she hath tryde the same :
She openeth wide her mouth, she stoppeth close her nose,
She bendeth downe her brest, she wringes her fingers and her toes,
And on her bosome colde she layeth clothes hot ;
A warmed and a holesome juyce she powreth downe her throte.
At length doth Juliet heave fayntly up her eyes,
And then she stretcheth forth her arme, and then her nurce she spyes.
But when she was awakde from her unkindly traunce,
Why dost thou trouble me (quoth she) what drave thee (with mischaunce)
To come to see my sprite forsake my brethles corce ?
Goe hence, and let me dye, if thou have on my smart remorse.
For who would see her frend to live in dedly payne ?
Alas, I see my greefe begoone for ever will remayne.

Or who would seeke to live, all pleasure being past?
My myrth is donne, my moorning mone for ay is like to last.
Wherfore since that there is none other remedy,
Comme gentle death, and ryve my hart at once, and let me dye.
The nurce with tricling teares, to witnes inward smart,
With holow sigh fetchd from the depth of her appauled hart,
Thus spake to Juliet, yclad with ougly care;
Good lady myne, I do not know what makes you thus to fare;
Ne yet the cause of your unmeasurde heavines.
But of this one I you assure, for care and sorowes stresse,
This hower large and more I thought (so god me save)
That my dead corps should wayte on yours to your untimely grave.
Alas, my tender nurce, and trusty frend, (quoth she)
Art thou so blinde that with thine eye thou canst not easely see
The lawfull cause I have to sorow and to moorne,
Since those the which I hyld most deere, I have at once forlorne.
Her nurce then aunswered thus, Me thinkes it fits you yll
To fall in these extremities that may you gyltles spill.
For when the stormes of care and troubles do aryse,
Then is the time for men to know the foolish from the wise.
You are accounted wise, a foole am I your nurce;
But I see not how in like case I could behave me wurse.
Tibalt your frend is ded; what, weene you by your teares
To call him backe agayne? thinke you that he your crying heares?
You shall perceve the falt (if it be justly tryde)
Of his so sodayn death was in his rashnes and his pryde.
Would you that Romeus him selfe had wronged so,
To suffer himselfe causeless to be outraged of his foe?
To whom in no respect he ought a place to geve?
Let it suffice to thee, fayre dame, that Romeus doth live,
And that there is good hope that he, within a while,
With greater glory shalbe calde home from his hard exile,
How well yborn he is, thy selfe I know canst tell,
By kindred strong, and well alyed, of all beloved well.
With patience arme thy selfe, for though that Fortunes cryme,
Without your falt, to both your greefes, depart you for a time.
I dare say, for amendes of all your present payne,
She will restore your owne to you, within a month or twayne,

With such contented ease as never erst you had;
Wherefore rejoyce a while in hope, and be ne more so sad.
And that I may discharge your hart of heavy care,
A certaine way I have found out, my paynes ne will I spare,
To learne his present state, and what in time to comme
He mindes to doe; which knowne by me, you shall know all and somme.
But that I dread the whilst your sorowes will you quell,
Straight would I hye where he doth lurke, to frier Lawrence cell.
But if you gyn eftsones (as erst you did) to moorne,
Whereto goe I, you will be ded, before I thence retoorne.
So I shall spend in wast my time and busy payne.
So unto you (your life once lost) good aunswere commes in vayne;
So shall I ridde my selfe with this sharpe pointed knife,
So shall you cause your parents deere wax wery of theyr life;
So shall your Romeus (despysing lively breath)
With hasty foote (before his time) ronne to untimely death.
Where if you can a while by reason rage suppresse,
I hope at my retorne to bring the salve of your distresse.
Now choose to have me here a partner of your payne,
Or promesse me to feede on hope till I retorne agayne.
Her mistres sendes her forth, and makes a grave behest
With reasons rayne to rule the thoughts that rage within her brest.
When hugy heapes of harmes are heapd before her eyes,
Then vanish they by hope of scape; and thus the lady lyes
Twixt well assured trust, and doubtfull lewd dispayre:
Now blacke and ougly be her thoughts; now seeme they white and fayre.
As oft in summer tide blacke cloudes do dimme the sonne,
And straight againe in clearest skye his restles steedes do ronne;
So Juliets wandring mynd yclouded is with woe,
And by and by her hasty thought the woes doth overgoe.
But now is tyme to tell, whilst she was tossed thus,
What windes did drive or haven did hold her lover Romeus.
When he had slayne his foe that gan this dedly strife,
And saw the furious fray had ende by ending Tybalts life,
He fled the sharpe revenge of those that yet did live,
And doubting much what penal doome the troubled prince myght gyve,

He sought some where unseene to lurke a little space,
And trusty Lawrence secret cell he thought the surest place.
In doutfull happe ay best a trusty frend is tride;
The frendly fryer in this distresse doth graunt his frend to hyde.
A secret place he hath, well seeled round about,
The mouth of which so close is shut, that none may finde it out;
But roome there is to walke, and place to sitte and rest,
Beside a bed to sleape upon, full soft and trimly drest.
The flowre is planked so, with mattes it is so warme,
That neither wind nor smoky damps have powre him ought to harme.
Where he was wont in youth his fayre frendes to bestowe,
There now he hydeth Romeus, whilst forth he goeth to knowe
Both what is sayd and donne, and what appoynted payne
Is published by trumpets sound; then home he hyes agayne.
By this unto his cell the nurce with spedy pace
Was comme the nerest way; she sought no ydel resting place.
The fryer sent home the newes of Romeus certain helth,
And promesse made (what so befell) he should that night by stelth
Comme to his wonted place, that they in nedefull wise
Of theyr affayres in time to comme might thorowly devyse.
Those joyfull newes the nurce brought home with mery joy;
And now our Juliet joyes to thinke she shall her love enjoye.
The fryer shuts fast his doore, and then to him beneth,
That waytes to heare the doutefull newes of life or els of death.
Thy hap quoth he, is good, daunger of death is none,
But thou shalt live, and doe full well, in spite of spitefull fone.
This onely payne for thee was erst proclaymde aloude,
A banishd man, thou mayst thee not within Verona shroude.
These heavy tidinges heard, his golden lockes he tare,
And like a frantike man hath torne the garmentes that he ware.
And as the smitten deere in brakes is waltring found,
So waltreth he, and with his brest doth beate the troden grounde.
He rises eft, and strikes his head against the wals,
He falleth downe againe, and lowde for hasty death he cals.
Come spedy death (quoth he) the readiest leache in love,
Since nought can els beneth the sunne the ground of griefe remove,

Of lothsome life breake downe the hated staggering stayes,
Destroy, destroy at once the lyfe that faintly yet decayes.
But you (fayre dame) in whome dame Nature dyd devise
With cunning hand to woorke that might seeme wondrous in our eyes,
For you, I pray the Gods, your pleasures to increase,
And all mishap, with this my death, for evermore to cease.
And mighty Jove with speede of justice bring them lowe,
Whose lofty pryde (without our gylt) our blisse doth overblowe.
And Cupide graunt to those theyr spedy wrongs redresse,
That shall bewayle my cruell death and pity her distresse.
Therewith a cloude of sighes he breathd into the skies,
And two great streames of bitter teares ran from his swollen eyes.
These thinges the auncient fryre with sorow saw and heard,
Of such begynning eke the ende the wise man greatly feard.
But loe, he was so weake by reason of his age,
That he ne could by force represse the rigour of his rage.
His wise and frendly woordes he speaketh to the ayre,
For Romeus so vexed is with care, and with dispayre,
That no advice can perce his close forstopped eares,
So now the fryer doth take his part in shedding ruthfull teares.
With colour pale and wan, with armes full hard yfold,
With wofull cheere his wayling frend he standeth to beholde.
And then our Romeus with tender handes ywrong,
With voyce with plaint made horce, w' sobs, and with a foltring tong,
Renewd with novel mone the dolours of his hart;
His outward dreery cheere bewrayde his store of inward smart,
Fyrst Nature did he blame, the author of his lyfe,
In which his joyes had been so scant, and sorowes aye so ryfe;
The time and place of byrth he fiersly did reprove,
He cryed out (with open mouth) against the starres above:
The fatall sisters three, he said had done him wrong,
The threed that should not have been sponne, they had drawne foorth too long.
He wished that he had before this time been borne,
Or that as soone as he wan light, his life he had forlorne.
His nurce he cursed, and the hand that gave him pappe,
The midwife eke with tender grype that held him in her lappe;

And then did he complaine on Venus cruell sonne,
Who led him first unto the rockes which he should warely shonne:
By meane wherof he lost both lyfe and libertie,
And dyed a hundred times a day, and yet could never dye.
Loves troubles hasten long, the joyes he gives are short;
He forceth not a lovers payne, theyr ernest is his sport.
A thousand thinges and more I here let passe to write
Which unto love this wofull man dyd speake in great despite.
On Fortune eke he raylde, he calde her deafe, and blynde,
Uinconstant, fond, deceitfull, rashe, unruthfull, and unkynd.
And to him selfe he layd a great part of the falt,
For that he slewe and was not slayne, in fighting with Tibalt.
He blamed all the world, and all he did defye,
But Juliet for whom he lived, for whom eke would he dye.
When after raging fits appeased was his rage,
And when his passions (powred forth) gan partly to asswage,
So wisely did the fryre unto his tale replye,
That he straight cared for his life, that erst had care to dye.
Art thou quoth he a man? thy shape saith, so thou art;
Thy crying, and thy weping eyes denote a womans hart.
For manly reason is quite from of thy mynd outchased,
And in her stead affections lewd and fancies highly placed:
So that I stoode in doute, this howre (at the least)
If thou a man or woman wert, or els a brutish beast.
A wise man in the midst of troubles and distres
Still standes not wayling present harme, but seeks his harmes redres.
As when the winter flawes with dredfull noyse arise,
And heave the fomy swelling waves up to the starry skyes,
So that the broosed barke in cruell seas betost,
Dispayreth of the happy haven, in daunger to be lost,
The pylate bold at helme, cryes, mates strike now your sayle,
And tornes her stemme into the waves that strongly her assayle;
Then driven hard upon the bare and wracke full shore,
In greater daunger to be wract then he had been before,
He seeth his ship full right against the rocke to ronne,
But yet he dooth what lyeth in him the perilous rocke to shonne;
Sometimes the beaten boate, by cunning government,
The ancors lost, the cables broke, and all the tackle spent,

The roder smitten of, and over boord the mast,
Doth win the long desyred porte, the stormy daunger past:
But if the master dread, and overprest with woe
Begin to wring his handes, and lets the gyding rodder goe,
The ship rents on the rocke, or sinketh in the deepe,
And eke the coward drenched is: So, if thou still beweepe
And seke not how to helpe the chaunges that do chaunce,
Thy cause of sorow shall increase, thou cause of thy mischaunce.
Other account thee wise, proove not thy selfe a foole;
Now put in practise lessons learnd of old in wisdomes schoole.
The wise man saith, beware thou double not thy payne,
For one perhaps thou mayst abyde, but hardly suffer twayne.
As well we ought to seeke thinges hurtfull to decrease,
As to endevor helping thinges by study to increase.
The prayse of trew fredom in wisdomes bondage lyes,
He winneth blame whose deedes be fonde, although his woords be wise.
Sickenes the bodies gayle, greefe, gayle is of the mynd;
If thou canst scape from heavy greefe, true fredome shalt thou finde.
Fortune can fill nothing so full of hearty greefe,
But in the same a constant mynd finds solace and releefe.
Vertue is alwayes thrall to troubles and annoye,
But wisdome in adversitie findes cause of quiet joye.
And they most wretched are that know no wretchednes,
And afther great extremity mishaps ay waxen lesse.
Like as there is no weale but wastes away somtime,
So every kynd of wayled woe will weare away in time.
If thou wilt master quite the troubles that the spill,
Endevor first by reasons help to master witles will.
A sondry medson hath eche sondry faynt disease,
But pacience, a common salve, to every wound geves ease.
The world is alway full of chaunces and of chaunge,
Wherefore the chaunge of chaunce must not seem to a wise man straunge.
For tickel Fortune doth, in chaunging, but her kind,
But all her chaunges cannot chaunge a steady constant minde.
Though wavering Fortune toorne from thee her smyling face,
And sorow seeke to set him selfe in banishd pleasures place,

Yet may thy marred state be mended in a while,
And she eftsones that frowneth now, with pleasant cheere shall smyle.
For as her happy state no long whyle standeth sure,
Even so the heavy plight she brings, not alwayes doth endure.
What nede so many woordes to thee that art so wyse?
Thou better canst advise thy selfe, then I can thee advyse.
Wisdome, I see, is vayne, if thus in time of neede
A wise mans wit unpractised doth stand him in no steede.
I know thou hast some cause of sorow and of care,
But well I wot thou hast no cause thus frantikly to fare.
Affections foggy mist thy febled sight doth blynde;
But if that reasons beames agayne might shine into thy mynde,
If thou wouldst view thy state with an indifferent eye,
I thinke thou wouldst condemne thy plaint, thy sighing, and thy crye.
With valiant hand thou madest thy foe yeld up his breth,
Thou hast escapd his sword and eke the lawes that threatten death.
By thy escape thy frendes are fraughted full of joy,
And by his death thy deadly foes are laden with annoy.
Wilt thou with trusty frendes of pleasure take some part?
Or els to please thy hatefull foes be partner of theyr smart?
Why cryest thou out on love? why doest thou blame thy fate?
Why dost thou so crye after death? thy life why dost thou hate?
Dost thou repent the choyce that thou so late didst choose?
Love is thy Lord; thou oughest obay and not thy prince accuse.
For thou hast found (thou knowst) great favour in his sight,
He graunted thee, at thy request, thy onely hartes delight.
So that the gods envyde the blisse thou livedst in;
To geve to such unthankefull men is folly and a sin.
Me thinkes I heare thee say, the cruell banishment
Is onely cause of thy unrest; onely thou dost lament
That from thy natife land and frendes thou must depart,
Enforsd to flye from her that hath the keping of thy hart:
And so opprest with waight of smart that thou dost feele,
Thou dost complaine of Cupides brand, and Fortunes turning wheele.
Unto a valiant hart there is no banishment,
All countreys are his native soyle beneath the firmament.
As to the fish the sea, as to the fowle the ayre,
So is like pleasant to the wise eche place of his repayre.

Though froward fortune chase thee hence into exyle,
With doubled honor shall she call thee home within a whyle.
Admyt thou shouldst abyde abrode a year or twayne,
Should so short absence cause so long and eke so greevous payne?
Though thou ne mayst thy frendes here in Verona see,
They are not banishd Mantua, where safely thou mast be.
Thether they may resort, though thou resort not hether,
And there in suretie may you talke of your affayres together.
Yea, but this while (alas) thy Juliet must thou misse,
The onely piller of thy helth, and ancor of thy blisse.
Thy hart thou leavest with her, when thou dost hence depart,
And in thy brest inclosed bearst her tender frendly hart.
But if thou rew so much to leave the rest behinde,
With thought of passed joyes content thy uncontented mynde;
So shall the mone decrease wherwith thy mynd doth melt,
Compared to the heavenly joyes which thou hast often felt.
He is too nyse a weakeling that shrinketh at a showre,
And he unworthy of the sweete, that tasteth not the sowre.
Call now agayne to mynde thy first consuming flame;
How didst thou vainely burne in love of an unloving dame?
Hadst thou not welnigh wept quite out thy swelling eyne?
Did not thy parts, fordoon with payne, languishe away and pyne?
Those greefes and others like were happly overpast,
And thou in haight of Fortunes wheele well placed at the last!
From whence thou art now falne, that, raysed up agayne,
With greater joy a greater while in pleasure mayst thou raygne.
Compare the present while with times ypast before,
And thinke that fortune hath for thee great pleasure yet in store.
The whilst, this little wrong receive thou paciently,
And what of force must nedes be done, that doe thou willingly.
Foly it is to feare that thou canst not avoyde,
And madnes to desyre it much that cannot be enjoyde.
To geve to Fortune place, not ay deserveth blame,
But skill it is, according to the times thy selfe to frame.
Whilst to this skilfull lore he lent his listning eares,
His sighes are stopt, and stopped are the conduits of his teares.
As blackest cloudes are chaced by winters nimble winde,
So have his reasons chaced care out of his carefull mynde.

As of a morning fowle ensues an evening fayre,
So banisht hope returneth home to banish his despayre.
Now is affections veale removed from his eyes,
He seeth the path that he must walke, and reson makes him wise.
For very shame the blood doth flashe in both his cheekes,
He thankes the father for his lore, and farther ayde he seekes,
He sayth, that skilles youth for counsell is unfitte,
And anger oft with hastines are joind to want of witte;
But sound advise aboundes in heddes with horish heares,
For wisdom is by practise wonne, and perfect made by yeares.
But aye from this time forth his ready bending will
Shalbe in awe and governed by fryer Lawrence skill.
The governor is nowe right carefull of his charge,
To whom he doth wisely discoorse of his affaires at large.
He telles him how he shall depart the towne unknowne,
Both mindful of his frendes safetie, and carefull of his owne
How he shall gyde him selfe, how he shall seeke to winne
The frendship of the better sort, how warely to crepe in
The favour of the Mantuan prince, and how he may
Appease the wrath of Escalus, and wipe the fault away;
The choller of his foes by gentle meanes tasswage,
Or els by force and practises to bridle quite theyr rage:
And last he chargeth hym at his appointed howre
To goe with manly mery cheere unto his ladies bowre,
And there with holesome woordes to salve her sorowes smart,
And to revive (if nede require) her faint and dying hart.
The old mans woords have fild with joy our Romeus brest,
And eke the old wives talke hath set our Juliets hart at rest.
Whereto may I compare (o lovers) this your day?
Like dayes the painefull mariners are woonted to assay;
For, beat with tempest great, when they at length espye
Some little beame of Phœbus light, that perceth through the skie,
To cleare the shadowde earth by clearenes of his face,
They hope that dreadles they shall ronne the remnant of their race;
Yea they assure them selfe, and quite behynd theyr backe
They cast all doute, and thanke the gods for scaping of the wracke;
But straight the boysterous windes with greater fury blowe,
And over boord the broken mast the stormy blastes doe throwe;

The heavens large are clad with cloudes as darke as hell,
And twise as hye the striving waves begin to roare and swell;
With greater daungers dred the men are vexed more,
In greater perill of their life then they had been before.
The golden sonne was gonne to lodge him in the west,
The full moone eke in yonder south had sent most men to rest;
When restles Romeus and restles Juliet
In woonted sort, by woonted meane, in Juliets chamber met.
And from the windowes top downe had he leaped scarce,
When she with armes outstretched wide so hard did him embrace,
That welnigh had the sprite (not forced by dedly force)
Flowne unto death, before the time abandoning the corce,
Thus muete stood they both the eight part of an howre,
And both would speake, but neither had of speaking any powre;
But on his brest her hed doth joylesse Juliet lay,
And on her slender necke his chyn doth ruthfull Romeus stay.
Theyr scalding sighes ascende, and by theyr cheekes downe fall
Their trickling teares, as christall cleare, but bitterer far then gall.
Then he, to end the greefe which both they lived in,
Did kysse his love, and wisely thus hys tale he dyd begin:
My Juliet, my love, my onely hope and care,
To you I purpose not as now with length of woords declare
The diversenes and eke the accidents so straunge
Of frayle unconstant Fortune, that delyteth still in chaunge;
Who in a moment heaves her frendes up to the height
Of her swift turning slippery wheele, then fleetes her frendship straight.
O wondrous change, even with the twinkling of an eye
Whom erst her selfe had rashly set in pleasant place so hye,
The same in great despyte downe hedlong doth she throwe,
And while she treades, and spurneth at the lofty state laid lowe,
More sorow doth she shape within an howers space,
Than pleasure in an hundred yeres; so geyson is her grace.
The proofe wherof in me (alas) too plaine apperes,
Whom tenderly my carefull frendes have fosterd with my feers,
In prosperous hygh degree, mayntayned so by fate,
That (as your selfe did see) my foes envyde my noble state.

One thing there was I did above the rest desire,
To which as to the soveraigne good by hope I would aspyre.
Thol by our mariage meane we might within a while
(To worke our perfect happines) our parentes reconsile:
That safely so we might, (not stopt by sturdy strife)
Unto the boundes that God hath set, gyde forth our pleasant lyfe.
But now (alack) too soone my blisse is overblowne,
And upside downe my purpose and my enterprise are throwne.
And driven from my frendes, of straungers must I crave,
(O graunt it God) from daungers dread that I may suertie have.
For loe, henceforth I must wander in landes unknowne,
(So hard I finde the princes doome) exyled from myne owne.
Which thing I have thought good, to set before your eyes,
And to exhort you now to prove your selfe a woman wise,
That paciently you beare my absent long abod,
For what above by fatall doomes decreed is, that God—"
And more than this to say, it seemed, he was bent,
But Juliet in dedly greefe, with brackish teares besprent,
Brake of his tale begonne, and whilst his speche he stayde,
These selfe same wordes, or like to these, with dreery cheere she saide:
Why Romeus can it be, thou hast so hard a hart?
So farre removed from ruth? so farre from thinking on my smart?
To leave me thus alone (thou cause of my distresse)
Beseged with so great a campe of mortall wretchednesse,
That every hower now, and moment in a day,
A thousand times Death bragges, as he would reave my lyfe away?
Yet such is my mishap, (O cruell destenye)
That still I live, and wish for death, but yet can never dye:
So that just cause I have to thinke (as seemeth me)
That froward Fortune did of late with cruell Death agree
To lengthen lothed life, to pleasure in my payne,
And tryumph in my harme, as in the greatest hoped gayne.
And thou the instrument of Fortunes cruell will,
Without whose ayde she can no way her tyrant lust fulfill:
Art not a whit ashamde (as farre as I can see)
To cast me of, when thou hast culd the better part of me.
Whereby (alas) to soone, I, seely wretch, do prove,
That all the auncient sacred laws of friendship and of love

Are quelde and quenched quite, since he, on whom alway
My cheefe hope and my steady trust was woonted still to stay,
For whom I am becomme unto myself a foe,
Disdayneth me, his stedfast frend, and skornes my frendship so.
Nay Romeus, nay, thou mayst of two thinges choose the one,
Either to see thy castaway, as soone as thou art gone,
Hedlong to throw her selfe downe from the windowes haight,
And so to breake her slender necke with all the bodies waight,
Or suffer her to be companion of thy payne,
Where so thou goe (Fortune thee gyde), till thou retoorne agayne.
So wholy into thine transformed is my hart,
That even as oft as I do thinke that thou and I shall part,
So oft (me thinkes) my lyfe withdrawes it selfe awaye,
Which I retayne to no end els but to the end I may,
In spite of all thy foes, thy present partes enjoey,
And in distres to beare with thee the halfe of thine annoye.
Wherefore, in humble sort (Romeus) I make request,
If ever tender pity yet were lodgde in gentle brest,
O, let it now have place to rest within thy hart;
Receave me as thy servant, and the fellow of thy smart:
Thy absence is my death, thy sight shall geve me lyfe.
But if perhaps thou stand in dred to leade me as a wyfe,
Art thou all counsellesse? canst thou no shift devise?
What letteth but in other weede I may my selfe disguyse?
What, shall I be the first? hath none done so ere this,
To scape the bondage of theyr frendes? thy selfe can aunswer, yes.
Or dost thou stand in doute that I thy wife ne can
By service pleasure thee as much as may thy hyred man?
Or is my loyalte of both accompted lesse?
Perhaps thou fearst lest I for gayne forsake thee in distresse.
What, hath my bewty now no powre at all on you,
Whose brightnes, force, and praise, somtime up to the skyes you blew?
My teares, my frendship and my pleasures donne of olde,
Shall they be quite forgote in dede?"—When Romeus dyd behold
The wildnes of her looke, her cooler pale and ded,
The woorst of all that might betyde to her, he gan to dred;
And once agayne he dyd in armes his Juliet take,
And kist her with a loving kysse, and thus to her he spake:

"Ah Juliet, (quoth he) the mistres of my hart,
For whom (even now) thy servant doth abyde in dedly smart,
Even for the happy dayes which thou desyrest to see,
And for the fervent frendships sake that thou dost owe to mee,
At once these fansies vayne out of thy mynd roote out,
Except, perhaps, unto thy blame, thou fondly go about
To hasten foorth my death, and to thine owne to ronne,
Which Natures law and wisdoms lore teache every wight to shonne.
For, but thou change thy mynde, (I do foretell the end)
Thou shalt undoo thyselfe for aye, and me thy trusty frende.
For why, thy absence knowne, thy father wil be wroth,
And in his rage no narowly he will pursue us both,
That we shall trye in vayne to scape away by flight,
And vainely seeke a loorking place to hyde us from his sight.
Then we, found out and caught, quite voyde of strong defence,
Shall cruelly be punished for thy departure hence;
I as a ravishor, thou as a careles childe,
I as a man who doth defile, thou as a mayde defilde;
Thinking to leade in ease a long contented life,
Shall short our dayes by shamefull death: but, if (my loving wife)
Thou banish from thy mynde two foes that counsell hath,
(That wont to hinder sound advise) rashe hastines and wrath;
If thou be bend tobay the love of reasons skill,
And wisely by her princely powre suppresse rebelling will,
If thou our safetie seeke, more then thine owne delight,
Since suerty standes in parting, and thy pleasures growe of sight,
Forbeare the cause of joy, and suffer for a while,
So shall I safely live abrode, and safe torne from exile:
So shall no slaunders blot thy spotles life destayne,
So shall thy kinsmen be unstyrd, and I exempt from payne.
And thinke thou not, that aye the cause of care shall last;
These stormy broyles shall overblowe, much like a winters blast.
For Fortune chaungeth more than fickel fantasie;
In nothing Fortune constant is save in unconstancie.
Her hasty ronning wheele is of a restles coorse,
That turnes the clymers hedlong downe, from better to the woorse,
And those that are beneth she heaveth up agayne:
So we shall rise to pleasures mount, out of the pit of payne.

Ere fowre monthes overpasse, such order will I take,
And by my letters and my frendes such meanes I mynd to make,
That of my wandring race ended shalbe the toyle,
And I cald home with honor great unto my native soyle.
But if I be condemnd to wander still in thrall,
I will returne to you (mine owne) befall what may befall.
And then by strength of frendes, and with a mighty hand,
From Verone will I cary thee into a forein lande,
Not in mans weede disguisd, or as one scarcely knowne,
But as my wife and only feere, in garment of thyne owne.
Wherfore represse at once the passions of thy hart,
And where there is no cause of greefe, cause hope to heale thy smart.
For of this one thing thou mayst well assured bee,
That nothing els but onely death shall sunder me from thee.
The reasons that he made did seeme of so great waight,
And had with her such force, that she to him gan aunswere straight:
Deere Syr, nought els wish I but to obay your will;
But sure where so you go, your hart with me shall tary still,
As signe and certaine pledge, tyll here I shall you see,
Of all the powre that over you your selfe did graunt to me;
And in his stead take myne, the gage of my good will.—
One promesse crave I at your hand, that graunt me to fulfill;
Fayle not to let me have, at fryer Lawrence hand,
The tydinges of your health, and how your doutfull case shall stand.
And all the wery whyle that you shall spend abrode,
Cause me from time to time to knowe the place of your abode.
His eyes did gushe out teares, a sigh brake from his brest,
When he did graunt and with an othe did vowe to kepe the hest.
Thus these two lovers passe away the wery night,
In payne and plaint, not (as they wont) in pleasure and delight.
But now (somewhat too soone) in farthest east arose
Fayre Lucifer, the golden starre that lady Venus chose;
Whose course appoynted is with spedy race to ronne,
A messenger of dawning daye, and of the rysing sonne.
Then freshe Aurora with her pale and silver glade
Did cleare the skyes, and from the earth had chased ougly shade.
When thou ne lookest wide, ne closely dost thou winke,
When Phœous from our hemysphere in westerne wave doth sinke,

What cooller then the heavens do shew unto thine eyes,
The same, (or like) saw Romeus in farthest esterne skyes.
As yet he saw no day, ne could he call it night,
With equall force decreasing darke fought with increasing light.
Then Romeus in armes his lady gan to folde,
With frendly kisse, and ruthfully she gan her knight beholde.
With solemne othe they both theyr sorowfull leave do take;
They sweare no stormy troubles shall theyr steady frendship shake.
Then carefull Romeus agayne to cell retoornes,
And in her chaumber secretly our joyles Juliet moornes.
Now hugy cloudes of care, of sorrow, and of dread,
The clearnes of their gladsome harts hath wholy overspread.
When golden crested Phœbus bosteth him in skye,
And under earth, to scape revenge, his dedly foe doth flye,
Then hath these lovers day an ende, theyr night begonne,
For eche of them to other is as to the world the sunne.
The dawning they shall see, ne sommer any more,
But blackfaced night with winter rough (ah) beaten over sore.
The wery watch discharged did hye them home to slepe,
The warders, and the skowtes were chargde theyr place and coorse to keepe,
And Verone gates awyde the porters had set open,
When Romeus had of hys affayres with frier Lawrence spoken,
Warely he walked forth, unknowne of frend or foe,
Clad like a merchant venterer, from top even to the toe.
He spurd apace, and came, withouten stop or stay,
To Mantua gates, where lighted downe, he sent his man away
With woords of comfort to his olde afflicted syre;
And straight, in mynd to sojorne there, a lodgeing doth he hyre,
And with the nobler sort he doth himselfe acquaynt,
And of his open wrong receaved the duke doth heare his plaint.
He practiseth by frends for pardon of exyle;
The whilst, he seeketh every way his sorowes to begyle.
But who forgets the cole that burneth in his brest?
Alas his cares denye his hart the sweete desyred rest;
No time findes he of myrth, he findes no place of joye,
But every thing occasion geves of sorow and annoye.

For when in toorning skyes the heavens lampes are light,
And from the other hemysphere fayre Phœbus chaceth night,
When every man and beast hath rest from painfull toyle,
Then in the brest of Romeus his passions gyn to boyle.
Then doth he wet with teares the cowche whereon he lyes,
And then his sighes the chamber fill, and out aloude he cries
Against the restles starres in rolling skyes that raunge,
Against the fatall sisters three, and Fortune full of chaunge.
Eche night a thousand times he calleth for the day,
He thinketh Titans restles stedes of restines do stay;
Or that at length they have some bayting place found out,
Or (gyded yll) have lost theyr way and wandred farre about.
Whyle thus in ydel thoughts the wery time he spendeth,
The night hath end, but not with night the plaint of night he endeth.
Is he accompanied? is he in place alone?
In cumpany he wayles his harme, apart he maketh mone:
For if his feeres rejoyce, what cause hath he to joy,
That wanteth still his cheefe delight, while they theyr loves enjoy?
But if with heavy cheere they shewe their inward greefe,
He wayleth most his wretchednese that is of wretches cheefe.
When he doth heare abrode the praise of ladies blowne,
Within his thought he scorneth them, and doth preferre his owne.
When pleasant songes he heares, wheile others do rejoyce,
The melody of musike doth styrre up his mourning voyce.
But if in secret place he walke some where alone,
The place itselfe and secretnes redoubleth all his mone.
Then speakes he to the beastes, to fethered fowles and trees,
Unto the earth, the cloudes, and to what so beside he sees.
To them he shewth his smart, as though they reason had,
Eche thing may cause his heavines, but nought may make him glad,
And (wery of the day) agayne he calleth night,
The sunne he curseth, and the howre when fyrst his eyes saw light.
And as the night and day their course do enterchaunge,
So doth our Romeus nightly cares for cares of day exchaunge.
In absence of her knight the lady no way could
Kepe trewse betwene her greefes and her, though nere so fayne
she would;

And though with greater payne she cloked sorowes smart,
Yet did her paled face disclose the passions of her hart.
Her sighing every howre, her weping every where,
Her recheles heede of meate, of slepe, and wearing of her geare,
The carefull mother markes; then of her helth afrayde,
Because the greefes increased still, thus to her child she sayde:
Deere daughter, if you shoulde long languishe in this sort,
I stand in doute that over soone your sorowes will make short
Your loving fathers life and myne, that love you more
Than our owne propre breth and lyfe. Brydel henceforth therfore
Your greefe and payne, yourselfe on joy your thought to set,
For time it is that now you should our Tybalts death forget.
Of whom since God hath claymd the lyfe that was but lent,
He is in blisse, ne is there cause why you should thus lament?
You can not call him backe with teares and shrikinges shrill:
It is a falt thus still to grudge at Gods appoynted will.
The seely soule hath now no longer powre to fayne,
No longer could she hyde her harme, but aunswered thus agayne,
With heavy broken sighes, with visage pale and ded:
Madame, the last of Tybalts teares a great while since I shed;
Whose spring hath been ere this so laded out by me,
That empty quite and moystureless I gesse it now to be.
So that my payned hart by conduites of the eyne
No more henceforth (as wont it was) shall gush forth dropping bryne.
The wofull mother knew not what her daughter ment,
And loth to vexe her childe by woordes, her peace she warely hent.
But when from howre to howre, from morow to the morow,
Still more and more she saw increast her daughters wonted sorow,
All meanes she sought of her and houshold folk to know
The certain roote whereon her greefe and booteless mone doth growe.
But lo, she hath in vayne her time and labour lore,
Wherfore without all measure is her hart tormented sore.
And sith her selfe could not fynd out the cause of care,
She thought it good to tell the syre how yll his childe did fare.
And when she saw her time, thus to her feere she sayde:
Syr, if you marke our daughter well, the countenance of the mayde,
And how she fareth since that Tybalt unto death
(Before his time, forst by his foe) did yeld his living breath,

Her face shall seeme so chaunged, her doynges eke so straunge,
That you will greatly wonder at so great and sodain chaunge.
Not onely she forbeares her meate, her drinke, and sleepe,
But now she tendeth nothing els but to lament and weepe.
No greater joy hath she, nothing contentes her hart
So much, as in the chaumber close to shut her selfe apart:
Where she doth so torment her poore afflicted mynde,
That much in daunger standes her lyfe, except somme helpe we fynde.
But (out alas) I see not how it may be founde,
Unlesse that fyrst we might fynd whence her sorowes thus abounde.
For though with busy care I have employde my wit,
And used all the wayes I knew to learne the truth of it,
Neither extremitie ne gentle meanes could boote;
She hydeth close within her brest her secret sorowes roote.
This was my fyrst conceite, that all her ruth arose
Out of her coosin Tybalts death, late slayne of dedly foes;
But now my hart doth hold a new repugnant thought;
Some greater thing, not Tybalts death, this chaunge in her hath wrought.
Her selfe assured me that many dayes agoe
She shed the last of Tybalts teares; which woord amasd me so
That I then could not gesse what thing els might her greeve:
But now at length I have bethought me; and I doe beleve
The onely crop and roote of all my daughters payne
Is grudgeing envies faynt disease: perhaps she doth disdayne
To see in wedlocke yoke the most part of her feeres,
Whilst onely she unmaried doth lose so many yeres.
And more perchaunce she thinkes you mynd to kepe her so;
Wherfore dispayring doth she weare her selfe away with woe.
Therfore (deere Syr) in time take on your daughter ruth;
For why, a brickel thing is glasse, and frayle is frayllesse youth.
Joyne her at once to somme in linke of mariage,
That may be meete for our degree, and much about her age:
So shall you banish care out of your daughters brest,
So we her parentes, in our age, shall live in quiet rest.
Wherto gan easely her husband to agree,
And to the mothers skilfull talke thus straightway aunswerd he.

Oft have I thought (deere wife) of all these thinges ere this,
But evermore my mynd me gave, it should not be amisse
By farther leysure had a husband to provyde;
Scarce saw she yet full XVI. yeres: too yong to be a bryde.
But since her state doth stande on termes so perilous,
And that a mayden daughter is a treasour daungerous,
With so great speede I will endevour to procure
A husband for our daughter yong, her sickenes faynt to cure,
That you shall rest content, (so warely will I choose)
And she recover soone enough the time she seemes to loose.
The whilst seeke you to learne, if she in any part
Already hath (unware to us) fixed her frendly hart;
Lest we have more respect to honor and to welth,
Then to our daughters quiet life, and to her happy helth:
Whom I do hold as deere as thapple of myne eye,
And rather wish in poore estate and daughterles to dye,
Then leave my goodes and her ythrald to such a one,
Whose chorlish dealing, (I once dead) should be her cause of mone."
This pleasaunt aunswere heard, the lady partes agayne,
And Capilet, the maydens sire, within a day or twayne,
Conferreth with his frendes for mariage of his daughter,
And many gentlemen there were with busy care that sought her;
Both, for the mayden was well shaped, yong and fayre,
As also well brought up, and wise; her fathers onely heyre.
Emong the rest was one inflamde with her desire,
Who County Paris cliped was; an earle he had to syre.
Of all the suters him the father liketh best,
And easely unto the earle he maketh his behest,
Both of his owne good will, and of his frendly ayde,
To win his wife unto his will, and to perswade the mayde.
The wife dyd joy to heare the joyfull husband say
How happy hap, how meete a match, he had found out that day;
Ne did she seeke to hyde her joyes within her hart,
But straight she hyeth to Juliet; to her she telles, apart,
What happy talke (by meane of her) was past no rather
Betwene the woing Paris and her carefull loving father.
The person of the man, the fewters of his face,
His youthfull yeres, his fayrenes, and his port, and semely grace,

With curious wordes she payntes before her daughters eyes,
And then with store of vertues prayse she heaves him to the skyes.
She vauntes his race, and gyftes that Fortune did him geve,
Wherby (she sayth) both she and hers in great delight shall live.
When Juliet conceived her parentes whole entent,
Wherto both love and reasons right forbod her to assent,
Within her selfe she thought rather then be forsworne,
With horses wilde her tender partes asonder should be torne.
Not now, with bashful brow, (in wonted wise) she spake,
But with unwonted boldnes straight into these woordes she brake:
Madame, I marvell much, that you so lavasse are
Of me your childe, (your jewell once, your onely joy and care,)
As thus to yelde me up at pleasure of another,
Before you know if I doe like or els mislike my lover.
Doo what you list, but yet of this assure you still,
If you do as you say you will, I yelde not there untill.
For had I choyse of twayne, farre rather would I choose
My part of all your goodes and eke my breath and lyfe to lose,
Then graunt that he possess of me the smallest part;
First, weary of my painefull lyfe, my cares shall kill my hart,
Els will I perce my brest with sharpe and bloody knife;
And you, my mother, shall becomme the murdresse of my lyfe,
In geving me to him whom I ne can, ne may,
Ne ought, to love: wherefore, on knees, deere mother, I you pray,
To let me live henceforth, as I have lived tofore:
Ceasse all your troubles for my sake, and care for me no more;
But suffer Fortune feerce to worke on me her will,
In her it lyeth to doe me boote, in her it lyeth to spill.
For whilst you for the best desyre to place me so,
You hast away my lingring death, and double all my woe.
So deepe this aunswere made the sorowes downe to sinke
Into the mothers brest, that she ne knoweth what to thinke
Of these her daughters woords, but all appalde she standes,
And up unto the heavens she throwes her wondring head and handes.
And, nigh besyde her selfe, her husband hath she sought;
She telles him all; she doth forget ne yet she hydeth ought.
The testy old man, wroth, disdainfull without measure,
Sendes forth his folke in haste for her, and byds them take no leysure:

Ne on her teares or plaint at all to have remorse,
But (if they cannot with her will) to bring the mayde perforce.
The message heard, they part, to fetch that they must fet,
And willingly with them walkes forth obedient Juliet.
Arrived in the place, when she her father saw,
Of whom (as much as duety would) the daughter stoode in awe,
The servantes sent away (the mother thought it meete),
The wofull daughter all bewept fell groveling at his feete,
Which she doth washe with teares as she thus groveling lyes:
So fast, and eke so plenteously distill they from her eyes:
When she to call for grace her mouth doth thinke to open,
Muet she is; for sighes and sobs her fearefull talke have broken.
The syre, whose swelling wroth her teares could not asswage,
With fiery eyen, and skarlet cheekes, thus spake her in his rage,
Whilst ruthfully stood by the maydens mother mylde:
Listen (quoth he) unthankfull and thou disobedient childe;
Hast thou so soone let slip out of thy mynde the woord,
That thou so often times hast heard rehearsed at my boord?
How much the Romayne youth of parentes stood in awe,
And eke what powre upon theyr seede the fathers had by lawe?
Whom they not onely might pledge, alienate, and sell,
(When they so stoode in neede) but more, if children did rebell,
The parentes had the powre of life and sodayn death.
What if those goodmen should agayne receave the livyng breth,
In how straight bondes would they the stubberne body bynde?
What weapons would they seeke for thee? what tormentes would they fynde?
To chasten (if they saw) the lewdnes of thy lyfe,
Thy great unthankfulnes to me, and shamefull sturdy stryfe?
Such care thy mother had, so deere thou wert to me,
That I with long and earnest sute provyded have for thee
One of the greatest lordes that wonnes about this towne,
And for his many vertues sake a man of great renowne.
Of whom both thou and I unworthy are too much,
So rich ere long he shalbe left, his fathers welth is such,
Such is the noblenes and honor of the race
From whence his father came: and yet thou playest in this case

The dainty foole, and stubberne gyrle; for want of skill
Thou dost refuse thy offred weale, and disobay my will.
Even by his strength I sweare, that fyrst did geve me lyfe,
And gave me in my youth the strength to get thee on my wyfe,
On lesse by Wensday next thou bende as I am bent,
And at our castle cald Freetowne thou freely doe assent
To Counte Paris sute, and promise to agree
To whatsoever then shall passe twixt him, my wife, and me,
Not onely will I geve all that I have away
From thee, to those that shall me love, me honor, and obay,
But also too so close and to so hard a gayle,
I shall thee wed, for all thy lyfe, that sure thou shalt not fayle
A thousand times a day to wishe for sodayn death,
And curse the day and howre when fyrst thy lunges did geve thee breath.
Advise thee well, and say that thou art warned now,
And thinke not that I speak in sporte, or mynd to breake my vowe.
For were it not that I to Counte Paris gave
My fayth, which I must keepe unfalst, my honor so to save,
Ere thou go hence, my selfe would see thee chastned so,
That thou shouldst once for all be taught thy duetie how to knowe;
And what revenge of olde the angry syres did finde
Against theyre children that rebeld, and shewd them selfe unkinde.
These sayd, the olde man straight is gone in hast away;
Ne for his daughters aunswere would the testy father stay.
And after him his wife doth follow out of doore,
And there they leave theyr chidden childe kneeling upon the floore,
Then shee that oft had seene the fury of her syre,
Dreading what might come of his rage, nould farther styrre his yre.
Unto her chamber she withdrew her selfe aparte,
Where she was wonted to unlode the sorowes of her hart.
There did she not so much busy her eyes in sleping,
As overprest with restles thoughts in piteous booteless weeping.
The fast falling of teares make not her teares decrease,
Ne, by the powring forth of plaint, the cause of plaint doth cease.
So that to thend the mone and sorow may decaye,
The best is that she seeke somme meane to take the cause away.

Her wery bed betime the woful wight forsakes,
And to sainct Frauncis church to masse her way devoutly takes.
The fryer forth is calde; she prayes him heare her shrift;
Devotion is in so yong yeres a rare and precious gyft.
When on her tender knees the daynty lady kneeles,
In minde to powre foorth all the greefe that inwardly she feeles,
With sighes and salted teares her shryving doth beginne,
For she of heaped sorowes hath to speake, and not of sinne.
Her voice with piteous playnt was made already horce,
And hasty sobs, when she would speake, brake of her woordes parforce.
But as she may, peece meale, she powreth in his lappe
The mariage newes, a mischief newe, prepared by mishappe,
Her parentes promisse erst to Counte Paris past,
Her fathers threats she telleth him, and thus concludes at last:
Once was I wedded well, ne will I wed agayne;
For since I know I may not be the wedded wyfe of twayne,
For I am bound to have one God, one fayth, one make,
My purpose is as soone as I shall hence my jorney take,
With these two handes, which joynde unto the heavens I stretch,
The hasty death which I desire, unto my selfe to reache.
This day (O Romeus) this day, thy wofull wife
Will bring the end of all her cares by ending carefull lyfe.
So my departed sprite shall witnes to the skye,
And eke my blood unto the earth beare record, how that I
Have kept my fayth unbroke, stedfast unto my frende.
When this her heavy tale was tolde, her vowe eke at an ende,
Her gasing here and there, her feerce and staring looke,
Did witnes that some lewd attempt her hart had undertooke.
Whereat the fryer astonde, and gastfully afrayde
Lest she by dede perfourme her woord, thus much to her he sayde:
Ah Lady Juliet, what nede the woordes you spake?
I pray you, graunt me one request, for blessed Maries sake.
Measure somewhat your greefe, holde here a while your peace,
Whilst I bethinke me of your case, your plaint and sorowes cease.
Such comfort will I geve you, ere you part from hence,
And for thassaltes of Fortunes yre prepare so sure defence,
So holesome salve will I for your afflictions finde,
That you shall hence depart agayne with well contented mynde.

His wordes have chased straight out of her hart despayre,
Her blacke and ougly dredfull thoughts by hope are waxen fayre.
So fryer Lawrence now hath left her there alone,
And he out of the church in hast is to his chaumber gone;
Where sundry thoughtes within his carefull head arise;
The old mans foresight divers doutes hath set before his eyes.
His conscience one while condems it for a sinne
To let her take Paris to spouse, since he himselfe hath byn
The chefest cause, that she unknowne to father or mother,
Not five monthes past, in that selfe place was wedded to another.
An other while an hugy heape of daungers dred
His restles thought hath heaped up within his troubled hed.
Even of it selfe thattempt he judgeth perilous;
The execucion eke he demes so much more daungerous,
That to a womans grace he must himselfe commit,
That yong is, simple and unware, for waighty affaires unfit,
For if she fayle in ought, the matter published,
Both she and Romeus were undonne, himselfe eke punished.
When too and fro in mynde he dyvers thoughts had cast,
With tender pity and with ruth his hart was wonne at last;
He thought he rather would in hasard set his fame,
Then suffer such adultery. Resolving on the same,
Out of his closet straight he tooke a litele glasse,
And then with double hast retornde where wofull Juliet was;
Whom he hath found welnigh in traunce, scarce drawing breath,
Attending still to heare the newes of lyfe or els of death.
Of whom he did enquire of the appointed day;
On Wensday next, (quod Juliet) so doth my father say,
I must geve my consent; but (as I do remember)
The solemne day of mariage is the tenth day of September."
Deere daughter, quoth the fryer of good chere see thou be,
For loe, sainct Frauncis of his grace hath shewde a way to me,
By which I may both thee and Romeus together
Out of the bondage which you feare assuredly deliver.
Even from the holy font thy husband have I knowne,
And, since he grew in yeres, have kept his counsels as myne owne.
For from his youth he would unfold to me his hart,
And often have I cured him of anguish and of smart;

I know that by desert his frendship I have wonne,
And I him hold as dere as if he were my propre sonne.
Wherfore my frendly hart can not abyde that he
Should wrongfully in ought be harmde, if that it lay in me
To right or to revenge the wrong by my advise,
Or timely to prevent the same in any other wise.
And sith thou art his wife, thee am I bound to love,
For Romeus frindship sake, and seeke thy anguishe to remove,
And dreadful torments, which thy hart besegen rounde;
Wherfore, my daughter, geve good eare unto my counsels sounde.
Forget not what I say, ne tell it any wight,
Not to the nurce thou trustest so, as Romeus is thy knight;
For on this threed doth hang thy death and eke thy lyfe,
My fame or shame, his weale or woe that chose thee to his wyfe.
Thou art not ignorant, (because of such renowne
As every where is spred of me, but chefely in this towne,)
That in my youthfull dayes abrode I travayled,
Through every lande found out by men, by men inhabited;
So twenty yeres from home, in landes unknowne a gest,
I never gave my weary limmes long time of quiet rest,
But in the desert woodes, to beastes of cruell kinde,
Or on the seas to drenching waves, at pleasure of the winde,
I have committed them, to ruth of rovers hand,
And to a thousand daungers more, by water and by lande.
But not, in vayne (my childe) hath all my wandring byn;
Beside the great contentednes my sprete abydeth in,
That by the pleasant thought of passed thinges doth grow,
One private frute more have I pluckd, which thou shalt shortly know:
What force the stones, the plants, and metals have to woorke,
And divers other thinges that in the bowels of earth do loorke,
With care I have sought out, with payne I did them prove;
With them eke can I helpe my selfe at times of my behove,
(Although the science be against the lawes of men)
When sodain daunger forceth me; but yet most cheefly when
The worke to doe is least displeasing unto God
(Not helping to do any sin that wrekefull Jove forbode.)
For since in lyfe no hope of long abode I have,
But now am comme unto the brinke of my appointed grave,

And that my death drawes nere, whose stripe I may not shonne,
But shalbe calde to make account of all that I have donne,
Now ought I from hence forth more depely print in mynde
The judgment of the Lord, then when youthes folly made me blynde,
When love and fond desyre were boyling in my brest,
Whence hope and dred by striving thoughts had banishd frendly rest.
Knowe therfore, (daughter) that with other gyftes which I
Have well attained to, by grace and favour of the skye,
Long since I did finde out, and yet the way I knowe,
Of certain rootes, and savory herbes to make a kinde of dowe,
Which baked hard, and bet into a powder fine,
And dronke with conduite water, or with any kynd of wine,
It doth in halfe an howre astonne the taker so,
And mastreth all his sences, that he feeleth weale nor woe:
And so it burieth up the sprite and living breath,
That even the skilfull leche would say, that he is slayne by death.
One vertue more it hath, as mervelous as this;
The taker, by receiving it, at all not greeved is;
But painelesse as a man that thinketh nought at all,
Into a swete and quiet slepe immediately doth fall;
From which, (according to the quantitie he taketh)
Longer or shorter is the time before the sleper waketh;
And thence (theffect once wrought) agayne it doth restore
Him that receaved unto the state wherein he was before.
Wherfore, marke well the ende of this my tale begonne,
And therby learne what is by thee hereafter to be donne.
Cast off from thee at once the weede of womannish dread,
With manly courage arme thy selfe from heele unto the head;
For onely on the feare or boldnes of thy brest
The happy happe or yll mishappe of thy affayre doth rest.
Receive this vyoll small and keepe it as thine eye;
And on the mariage day, before the sunne doe cleare the skye,
Fill it with water full up to the very brim,
Then drinke it of, and thou shalt feele throughout eche vayne and lim
A pleasant slumber slide, and quite dispred at length
On all thy partes, from every part reve all thy kindly strength;
Withouten moving thus thy ydle parts shall rest,
No pulse shall goe, ne hart once beate within thy hollow brest,

But thou shalt lye as she that dyeth in a traunce:
Thy kinsmen and thy trusty frendes shall wayle the sodain chaunce;
The corps then will they bring to grave in this churchyarde,
Where thy forefathers long agoe a costly tombe preparde,
Both for himselfe and eke for those that should come after,
Both deepe it is, and long and large, where thou shall rest, my daughter,
Till I to Mantua sende for Romeus, thy knight;
Out of the tombe both he and I will take thee forth that night.
And when out of thy slepe thou shalt awake agayne,
Then mayst thou goe with him from hence; and, healed of thy payne,
In Mantua lead with him unknowne a pleasant life;
And yet perhaps in time to comme, when cease shall all the strife,
And that the peace is made twixt Romeus and his foes,
My selfe may finde so fit a time these secretes to dysclose,
Both to my prayse, and to thy tender parentes joy,
That daungerles, without reproche, thou shalt thy love enjoy.
When of his skilfull tale the fryer had made an ende,
To which our Juliet so well her eare and wits dyd bend,
That she hath heard it all and hath forgotten nought,
Her fainting hart was comforted with hope and pleasant thought,
And then to him she said—Doubte not but that I will
With stoute and unappauled hart your happy hest fulfill.
Yea, if I wist it were a venemous dedly drinke,
Rather would I that through my throte the certaine bane should sinke,
Then I (not drinking it) into his handes should fall,
That hath no part of me as yet, ne ought to have at all.
Much more I ought with bold and with a willing hart
To greatest daunger yelde my selfe, and to the dedly smart,
To comme to him on whome my life doth wholy stay,
That is my onely hartes delight, and so he shalbe aye.
Then goe (quoth he) my childe, I pray that God on hye
Direct thy foote, and by thy hand upon the way thee gye.
God graunt he so confirme in thee thy present will,
That no inconstant toy thee let thy promesse to fulfill.
A thousand thankes and more our Juliet gave the fryer,
And homeward to her fathers house joyfull she doth retyre;

And as with stately gate she passed through the streete,
She saw her mother in the doore, that with her there would meete,
In mynd to aske if she her purpose yet did holde,
In mynd also, apart twixt them, her duety to have tolde;
Wherfore with pleasant face, and with unwonted chere,
As soone as she was unto her approched sumwhat nere,
Before the mother spake, thus did she fyrst begin:
Madame, at sainct Frauncis churche have I this morning byn,
Where I did make abode a longer while (percase)
Then dewty would; yet have I not been absent from this place
So long a while, whithout a great and just cause why;
This frute have I receaved there;—my hart, erst lyke to dye,
Is now revived agayne, and my afflicted brest,
Released from affliction, restored is to rest!
For lo, my troubled gost (alas too sore diseasde)
By gostly counsell and advise hath fryer Lawrence easde;
To whome I dyd at large discourse my former lyfe,
And in confession did I tell of all our passed strife;
Of Counte Paris sute, and how my lord, my syre,
By my ungrate and stubborne stryfe I styrred unto yre;
But lo, the holy fryer hath by his gostly lore
Made me another woman now then I had been before.
By strength of argumentes he charged so my mynde,
That (though I sought) no sure defence my serching thought could finde.
So forced I was at length to yeld up witles will,
And promist to be orderd by the friers praysed skill.
Wherfore, albeit I had rashely, long before,
The bed and rytes of mariage for many yeres forswore,
Yet mother, now behold your daughter at your will,
Ready (if you commaunde her ought) your pleasure to fulfill.
Wherefore in humble wise, dere madam, I you pray,
To goe unto my lord and syre, withouten long delay;
Of hym fyrst pardon crave of faultes already past,
And shew him (if it pleaseth you) his child is now at last
Obedient to his just and to his skilfull hest,
And that I will (God lending lyfe) on Wensday next, be prest

To wayte on him and you, unto thappoynted place,
Where I will, in your hearing, and before my fathers face,
Unto the Counte geve my fayth and whole assent,
And take him for my lord and spouse; thus fully am I bent;
And that out of your mynde I may remove all doute,
Unto my closet fare I now, to searche and to choose out
The bravest garmentes and the richest jewels there,
Which (better him to please) I mynd on Wensday next to weare;
For if I did excell the famous Gretian rape,
Yet might attyre helpe to amende my bewty and my shape.
The simple mother was rapt in to great delight;
Not halfe a word could she bring forth, but in this joyfull plight
With nimble foote she ran, and with unwonted pace,
Unto her pensive husband, and to him with pleasant face
She tolde what she had heard, and prayseth much the fryer;
And joyfull teares ranne downe the cheekes of this gray-berded syer.
With handes and eyes heaved up he thankes God in his hart,
And then he sayth: This is not (wife) the friers first desart;
Oft hath he shewde to us great frendship heretofore,
By helping us at nedefull times with wisdomes pretious lore.
In all our common weale scarce one is to be founde
But is, for somme good torne, unto this holy father bounde.
Oh that the thyrd part of my goodes (I doe not fayne)
But twenty of his passed yeres might purchase him agayne!
So much in recompence of frendship would I geve,
So much (in faith) his extreme age my frendly hart doth greve.

These said, the glad old man from home goeth straight abrode,
And to the stately palace hyeth where Paris made abode;
Whom he desyres to be on Wensday next his geast,
At Freetowne, where he myndes to make for him a costly feast.
But loe, the earle saith, such feasting were but lost,
And counsels him till mariage time to spare so great a cost,
For then he knoweth well the charges wilbe great;
The whilst, his hart desyreth still her sight, and not his meate.
He craves of Capilet that he may straight goe see
Fayre Juliet; wher to he doth right willingly agree.
The mother, warnde before, her daughter doth prepare;
She warneth and she chargeth her that in no wyse she spare

Her curteous speche, her pleasant lookes, and commely grace,
But liberally to geve them forth when Paris commes in place:
Which she as cunningly could set forth to the shewe,
As cunning craftesmen to the sale do set their wares on rew;
That ere the County did out of her sight depart,
So secretly unwares to him she stale away his hart,
That of his lyfe and death the wyly wench hath powre.
And now his longing hart thinkes long for theyr appoynted howre
And with importune sute the parentes doth he pray
The wedlocke knot to knit soone up, and hast the mariage day.
The woer hath past forth the first day in this sort,
And many other more then this, in pleasure and disport.
At length the wished time of long hoped delight
(As Paris thought) drew nere; but nere approched heavy plight.
Against the bridall day the parentes did prepare
Such rich attyre, such furniture, such store of dainty fare,
That they which did behold the same the night before
Did thinke and say, a man could scarcely wishe for any more.
Nothing did seeme to deere; the deerest thinges were bought;
And (as the written story saith) in dede there wanted nought,
That longd to his degree, and honor of his stocke;
But Juliet, the whilst, her thoughts within her brest did locke;
Even from the trusty nurce, whose secretnes was tryde,
The secret counsell of her hart the nurce childe seekes to hide.
For sith, to mocke her dame, she did not sticke to lye,
She thought no sinne with shew of truth to bleare her nurces eye.
In chamber secretly the tale she gan renew,
That at the doore she tolde her dame, as though it had been trew.
The flattring nurce dyd prayse the fryer for his skill,
And said that she had done right well by wit to order will.
She setteth forth at large the fathers furious rage,
And eke she prayseth much to her the second mariage;
And County Paris now she praiseth ten times more,
By wrong, then she her selfe by right had Romeus praysde before.
Paris shall dwell there still, Romeus shall not retourne;
What shall it boote her lyfe to languish still and mourne.
The pleasures past before she must account as gayne;
But if he doe retorne, what then?—for one she shall have twayne.

The one shall use her as his lawful wedded wyfe,
In wanton love with equall joy the other leade his lyfe;
And best shall she be sped of any townish dame,
Of husband and of paramour to fynde her chaunge of game.
These wordes and like the nurce did speake, in hope to please,
But greatly did these wicked wordes the ladies mynde disease;
But ay she hid her wrath, and seemed well content,
When dayly dyd the naughty nurce new argumentes invent.
But when the bryde perceved her howre approched nere,
She sought (the best she could) to fayne, and tempted so her cheere,
That by her outward looke no living wight could gesse
Her inward woe; and yet anew renewde is her distresse.
Unto her chaumber doth the pensive wight repayre,
And in her hand a percher light the nurce beares up the stayre.
In Juliets chamber was her wonted use to lye;
Wherfore her mistres, dreading that she should her work descrye,
As sone as she began her pallet to unfold,
Thinking to lye that night where she was wont to lye of olde,
Doth gently pray her seeke her lodgeing some where els;
And, lest she crafty should suspect, a ready reason telles.
Dere frend (quoth she) you knowe, to morow is the day
Of new contract; wherefore, this night, my purpose is to pray
Unto the heavenly myndes that dwell above the skyes,
And order all the course of thinges as they can best devyse,
That they so smyle upon the doynges of to morow,
That all the remnant of my lyfe may be exempt from sorow:
Wherefore, I pray you, leave me here alone this night,
But see that you to morow comme before the dawning light,
For you must coorle my heare, and set on my attyre.
And easely the loving nurse dyd yelde to her desire,
For she within her hed dyd cast before no doute;
She little knew the close attempt her nurce childe went about.
The nurce departed once, the chamber doore shut close,
Assured that no living wight her doing myght disclose,
So powred forth into the vyole of the fryer,
Water, out of a silver ewer, that on the boord stoode by her.
The slepy mixture made, fayre Juliet doth it hyde
Under her bolster soft, and so unto her bed she hyed:

Where divers novel thoughts arise within her hed,
And she is so invironed about with deadly dred,
That what before she had resolved undoubtedly
That same she calleth into doute; and lying doutfully
Whilst honest love did strive with dred of dedly payne,
With handes ywrong, and weping eyes, thus gan she to complaine:—
What, is there any one, beneth the heavens hye,
So much unfortunate as I? so much past hope as I?
What, am I not my selfe, of all that yet were borne,
The depest drenched in dispayre, and most in Fortunes skorne?
For loe the world for me hath nothing els to finde,
Beside mishap and wretchednes and anguish of the mynde;
Since that the cruel cause of my unhappines
Hath put me to this sodaine plonge, and brought to such distres,
As (to the end I may my name and conscience save)
I must devowre the mixed drinke that by me here I have,
Whose woorking and whose force as yet I doe not know.
And of this piteous plaint began another doute to growe:
What doe I knowe (quoth she) if that this powder shall
Sooner or later then it should or els not woorke at all?
And then my craft descride as open as the day,
The peoples tale and laughing stocke shall I remayn for aye.
And what know I (quoth she) if serpentes odious,
And other beastes and wormes that are of nature venomous,
That wonted are to lurke in darke caves under grounde,
And commonly, as I have heard, in dead mens tombes are found,
Shall harme me, yea or nay, where I shall lye as ded?—
Or how shall I that alway have in so freshe ayre been bred,
Endure the loathsome stinke of such an heaped store
Of carkases, not yet consumde, and bones that long before
Intombed were, where I my sleping place shall have,
Where all my auncesters doe rest, my kindreds common grave?
Shall not the fryer and my Romeus, when they come,
Fynd me (if I awake before) ystifled in the tombe?"

And whilst she in these thoughtes doth dwell somwhat to long,
The force of her ymagining anon dyd waxe so strong,
That she surmysde she saw, out of the hollow vaulte,
(A griesly thing to looke upon) the carkas of Tybalt;

Right in the selfe same sort that she few dayes before
Had seene him in his blood embrewde, to death eke wounded sore.
And then when she agayne within her selfe had wayde
That quicke she should be buried there, and by his side be layde,
All comfortles, for she shall living feere have none,
But many a rotten carkas, and full many a naked bone;
Her dainty tender partes gan shever all for dred,
Her golden heares did stand upright upon her chillish hed.
Then pressed with the feare that she there lived in,
A sweat as colde as mountaine yse pearst through her slender skin,
That with the moysture hath wet every part of hers:
And more besides, she vainely thinkes, whilst vainly thus she feares,
A thousand bodies dead have compast her about,
And lest they will dismember her she greatly standes in dout.
But when she felt her strength began to weare away,
By little and little, and in her hart her feare increased ay,
Dreading that weakenes might, or foolish cowardise,
Hinder the execution of the purposde enterprise,
As she had frantike been, in hast the glasse she cought,
And up she dranke the mixture quite, withouten farther thought.
Then on her brest she crost her armes long and small,
And so, her senses fayling her, into a traunce did fall.

And when that Phœbus bright heaved up his seemely hed,
And from the East in open skies his glistring rayes dispred,
The nurce unshut the doore, for she the key did keepe,
And douting she had slept to long, she thought to breake her slepe;
Fyrst softly dyd she call, then lowder thus did crye,
Lady, you slepe to long, the earle will rayse you by and by.
But wele away, in vayne unto the deafe she calles,
She thinkes to speake to Juliet, but speaketh to the walles.
If all the dredfull noyse that might on earth be found,
Or on the roaring seas, or if the dredfull thunders sound,
Had blowne into her eares, I thinke they could not make
The sleping wight before the time by any meanes awake;
So were the sprites of lyfe shut up, and senses thrald;
Wherwith the seely carefull nurce was wondrously apalde.
She thought to daw her now as she had donne of olde,
But loe, she found her parts were stiffe and more than marble colde;

Neither at mouth nor nose found she recourse of breth;
Two certaine argumentes were these of her untimely death.
Wherfore as one distraught she to her mother ranne,
With scratched face, and heare betorne, but no woord speake she can,
At last (with much adoe) Dead (quoth she) is my childe.
Now, (Out alas) the mother cryde and as a tyger wilde,
Whose whelpes, whilst she is gonne out of her denne to pray,
The hunter gredy of his game doth kill or cary away;
So rageing forth she ranne unto her Juliets bed,
And there she found her derling and her onely comfort ded.
Then shriked she out as lowde as serve her would her breth,
And then (that pity was to heare) thus cryde she out on death:
Ah cruell death (quoth she) that thus against all right,
Hast ended my felicitie, and robde my hartes delight,
Do now thy worst to me, once wreake thy wrath for all,
Even in despite I crye to thee, thy vengeance let thou fall.
Whereto stay I (alas) since Juliet is gone?
Whereto live I since she is dead, except to wayle and mone?
Alacke, dere chyld, my teares for thee shall never cease;
Even as my dayes of lyfe increase, so shall my plaint increase:
Such store of sorow shall afflict my tender hart,
That dedly panges, when they assayle shall not augment my smart.
Then gan she so to sobbe, it seemde her hart would brast;
And while she crieth thus, behold, the father at the last,
The County Paris, and of gentilmen a route,
And ladies of Verona towne and country round about,
Both kindreds and alies thether apace have preast,
For by theyr presence there they sought to honor so the feast;
But when the heavy newes the bydden geastes did heare,
So much they mournd, that who had seene theyr countnance and theyr cheere,
Might easely have judgde by that that they had seene,
That day the day of wrath and eke of pity [to] have beene.
But more then all the rest the fathers hart was so
Smit with the heavy newes, and so shut up with sodain woe,
That he ne had the powre his daughter to bewepe,
Ne yet to speake, but long is forsd his teares and plaint to keepe.

In all the hast he hath for skilfull leaches sent;
And, hearyng of her passed life, they judge with one assent
The cause of this her death was inward care and thought;
And then with double force againe the doubled sorowes wrought.
If ever there hath been a lamentable day,
A day, ruthfull, unfortunate and fatall, then I say,
The same was it in which through Veron towne was spred
The wofull newes how Juliet was sterved in her bed.
For so she was bemonde both of the yong and olde,
That it might seeme to him that would the commen plaint behold,
That all the commen welth did stand in jeopardy;
So universall was the plaint, so piteous was the crye.
For lo, beside her shape and native bewties hewe,
With which, like as she grew in age, her vertues prayses grewe,
She was also so wise, so lowly, and so mylde,
That, even from the hory head unto the witles childe,
She wan the hartes of all, so that there was not one,
Ne great, ne small, but did that day her wretched state bemone.
Whilst Juliet slept, and whilst the other wepen thus,
Our fryer Lawrence hath by this sent one to Romeus,
A frier of his house, there never was a better,
He trusted him even as himselfe, to whom he gave a letter,
In which he written had of every thing at length,
That past twixt Juliet and him, and of the powders strength;
The next night after that, he willeth him to comme
To helpe to take his Juliet out of the hollow toombe,
For by that time, the drinke, he saith, will cease to woorke,
And for one night his wife and he within his cell shall loorke;
Then shall he cary her to Mantua away,
(Till fickell Fortune favour him,) disguisde in mans aray.
Thys letter closde he sendes to Romeus by his brother;
He chargeth him that in no case he geve it any other.
Apace our frier John to Mantua him hyes;
And, for because in Italy it is a wonted gyse
That friers in the towne should seeldome walke alone,
But of theyr covent ay should be accompanide with one
Of his profession, straight a house he fyndeth out,
In mynde to take some frier with him, to walke the towne about.

But entred once he might not issue out agayne,
For that a brother of the house a day before or twayne
Dyed of the plague, (a sickenes which they greatly feare and hate)
So were the brethren charged to kepe within theyr covent gate,
Bard of theyr felowship that in the towne do wonne;
The towne folke eke commaunded are the fryers house to shonne,
Till they that had the care of health theyr fredome should renew;
Wherof, as you shall shortly heare, a mischeefe great there grewe.
The fryer by this restraint, beset with dred and sorow,
Not knowing what the letters held, differd untill the morowe;
And then he thought in tyme to send to Romeus.
But whilst at Mantua where he was, these dooinges framed thus,
The towne of Juliets byrth was wholy busied
About her obsequies, to see theyr darling buried.
Now is the parentes myrth quite chaunged into mone,
And now to sorow is retornde the joy of every one;
And now the wedding weedes for mourning weedes they chaunge,
And Hymene into a dyrge;—alas! it seemeth straunge:
In steade of mariage gloves, now funerall gloves they have,
And whom they should see maried, they follow to the grave.
The feast that should have been of pleasure and of joy,
Hath every dish and cup fild full of sorow and annoye.
Now throughout Italy this common use they have,
That all the best of every stocke are earthed in one grave;
For every houshold, if it be of any fame;
Doth bylde a tombe, or digge a vault, that beares the houshouldes name;
Wherein (if any of that kindred hap to dye)
They are bestowde; els in the same no other corps may lye.
The Capilets her corps in such a one dyd lay,
Where Tybalt slayne of Romeus was layde the other day.
An other use there is, that whosoever dyes,
Borne to their church with open face upon the beere he lyes,
In wonted weede attyrde, not wrapt in winding sheete.
So, as by chaunce he walked abrode, our Romeus man dyd meete
His masters wyfe; the sight with sorow straight dyd wounde
His honest heart; with teares he saw her lodged under ground.

And, for he had been sent to Verone for a spye,
The doynges of the Capilets by wisdom to descrye,
And for he knew her death dyd tooch his maister most,
(Alas) too soone, with heavy newes he hyed away in post;
And in his house he found his maister Romeus,
Where he, besprent with many teares, began to speake him thus:
Syr, unto you of late is chaunced so great a harme,
That sure, except with constancy you seeke your selfe to arme,
I feare that strayght you will brethe out your latter breath,
And I, most wretched wight, shalbe thoccasion of your death.
Know syr, that yesterday, my lady and your wyfe,
I wot not by what sodain grefe, hath made exchaunge of life;
And for because on earth she found nought but unrest,
In heaven hath she sought to fynde a place of quiet rest;
And with these weping eyes my selfe have seene her layde,
Within the tombe of Capilets: and here withall he stayde.
This sodayne message sounde, sent forth with sighes and teares,
Our Romeus receaved too soone with open listening eares;
And therby hath sonke in such sorow in his hart,
That loe, his sprite annoyed sore with torment and with smart,
Was like to breake out of his prison house perforce,
And that he might flye after hers, would leave the massy corce:
But earnest love that will not fayle him till his ende,
This fond and sodain fantasy into his head dyd sende:
That if nere unto her he offred up his breath,
That then an hundred thousand parts more glorious were his death:
Eke should his painfull hart a great deale more be eased,
And more also (he vainely thought) his lady better pleased.
Wherfore when he his face hath washt with water cleene,
Lest that the staynes of dryed teares might on his cheekes be seene,
And so his sorow should of every one be spyde,
Which he with all his care dyd seeke from every one to hyde,
Straight, wery of the house, he walketh forth abrode:
His servant, at the maisters hest, in chamber styll abode;
And then fro streate to streate he wandreth up and downe,
To see if he in any place may fynde, in all the towne,
A salve meete for his sore, an oyle fitte for his wounde;
And seeking long (alac too soone) the thing he sought, he founde.

An apothecary sate unbusied at his doore,
Whom by his heavy countenance he gessed to be poore.
And in his shop he saw his boxes were but fewe,
And in his window (of his wares) there was so small a shew;
Wherfore our Romeus assuredly hath thought,
What by no frendship could be got, with money should be bought;
For nedy lacke is lyke the poore man to compell
To sell that which the cities lawe forbiddeth him to sell.
Then by the hand he drew the nedy man apart,
And with the sight of glittring gold inflamed hath his hart:
Take fiftie crownes of gold (quoth he) I geve them thee,
So that, before I part from hence, thou straight deliver me
Somme poyson strong, that may in lesse than halfe an howre
Kill him whose wretched hap shalbe the potion to devowre.
The wretch by covetise is wonne, and doth assent
To sell the thing, whose sale ere long, too late, he doth repent.
In hast he poyson sought, and closely he it bounde,
And then began with whispering voyce thus in his eare to rounde:
Fayre syr (quoth he) be sure this is the speeding gere,
And more there is then you shall nede; for halfe of that is there
Will serve, I undertake, in lesse then halfe an howre
To kill the strongest man alive; such is the poysons power.
Then Romeus, somwhat easd of one part of his care,
Within his bosome putteth up his dere unthrifty ware.
Retoorning home agayne, he sent his man away,
To Verone towne, and chargeth him that he, without delay,
Provyde both instruments to open wyde the toombe,
And lightes to shew him Juliet; and stay (till he shall comme)
Nere to the place whereas his loving wyfe doth rest,
And chargeth him not to bewray the dolours of his brest.
Peter, these heard, his leave doth of his maister take;
Betyme he commes to towne, such hast the paynfull man dyd make:
And then with busy care he seeketh to fulfill,
But doth dysclose unto no wight his wofull maisters will.
Would God, he had herein broken his maisters hest!
Would God, that to the fryer he had dysclosed all hys brest!
But Romeus the whyle with many a dedly thought
Provoked much, hath caused ynke and paper to be brought,

And in few lynes he dyd of all his love dyscoorse,
How by the fryers helpe, and by the knowledge of the noorse,
The wedlocke knot was knyt, and by what meane that night
And many moe he dyd enjoy his happy hartes delight;
Where he the poyson bought, and how his lyfe should ende;
And so his wailefull tragedy the wretched man hath pend.
The letters closd and seald, directed to his syre,
He locketh in his purse, and then a post hors doth he hyre.
When he approched nere, he warely lighted downe,
And even with the shade of night he entred Verone towne;
Where he hath found his man, wayting when he should comme,
With lanterne, and with instruments to open Juliets toomme.
Helpe Peter, helpe, quod he, helpe to remove the stone,
And straight when I am gone fro thee, my Juliet to bemone,
See that thou get thee hence, and on the payne of death
I charge thee that thou comme not nere whyle I abyde beneath,
Ne seeke thou not to let thy masters enterprise,
Which he hath fully purposed to doe, in any wise.
Take there a letter, which, as soone as he shall ryse,
Present it in the morning to my loving fathers eyes;
Which unto him perhaps farre pleasanter shall seeme,
Than eyther I do mynd to say, or thy grose head can deeme.
Now Peter, that knew not the purpose of his hart,
Obediently a little way withdrewe himselfe apart;
And then our Romeus (the vault stone set up upright)
Descended downe, and in his hand he bare the candle light.
And then with piteous eye the body of his wyfe
He gan beholde, who surely was the organ of his lyfe;
For whom unhappy now he is, but erst was blyst;
He watred her with teares, and then a hundred times her kyst;
And in his folded armes full straightly he her plight,
But no way could his greedy eyes be filled with her sight:
His fearfull handes he layd upon her stomacke colde,
And them on divers parts besyde the wofull wight did hold.
But when he could not fynd the signes of lyfe he sought,
Out of his cursed box he drewe the poyson that he bought;
Wherof he gredely devowrde the greater part,
And then he cryde, with dedly sigh fetcht from his mourning hart:

Oh Juliet, of whom the world unwoorthy was,
From which, for worldes unworthines thy worthy gost dyd passe,
What death more pleasant could my hart wish to abyde
Then that which here it suffreth now, so nere thy frendly syde?
Or els so glorious tombe how could my youth have craved,
As in one selfe same vaulte with thee haply to be ingraved?
What epitaph more worth, or halfe so excellent,
To consecrate my memorye, could any man invente,
As this our mutuell and our piteous sacrifice
Of lyfe, set light for love?"—but while he talketh in this wise,
And thought as yet a while his dolors to enforce,
His tender hart began to faynt, prest with the venoms force;
Which little and little gan to overcomme hys hart,
And whilst his busy eyne he threwe about to every part,
He saw, hard by the corce of sleping Juliet,
Bold Tybalts carkas dead, which was not all consumed yet.
To whom (as having life) in this sort speaketh he:
Ah cosin dere, Tybalt, where so thy restles sprite now be,
With stretched handes to thee for mercy now I crye,
For that before thy kindly howre I forced thee to dye.
But if with quenched lyfe not quenched be thine yre,
But with revengeing lust as yet thy hart be set on fyre,
What more amendes, or cruell wreke desyrest thou
To see on me, then this which here is shewd forth to thee now?
Who reft by force of armes from thee thy living breath,
The same with his owne hand (thou seest) doth poyson himselfe to death.
And for he caused thee in tombe too soone to lye,
Too soone also, yonger then thou, himselfe he layeth by.
These said, when he gan feele the poysons force prevayle,
And little and little mastred lyfe for aye beganne to fayle,
Kneeling upon his knees, he said with voyce full lowe,—
Lord Christ, that so to raunsome me descendedst long agoe
Out of thy fathers bosome, and in the virgins wombe
Didst put on fleshe, oh let my plaint out of this hollow toombe,
Perce through the ayre, and graunt my sute may favour finde;
Take pity on my sinneful and my poore afflicted mynde!

For well enough I know, this body is but clay,
Nought but a masse of sinne, to frayle, and subject to decay.
Then pressed with extreme greefe he threw with so great force
His overpressed parts upon his ladies wayled corse,
That now his wekened hart, weakened with tormentes past,
Unable to abyde this pang, the sharpest and the last,
Remayned quite deprived of sense and kindly strength,
And so the long imprisoned soule hath freedome wonne at length.
Ah cruell death, too soone, too soone was this devorce,
Twixt youthfull Romeus heavenly sprite, and his fayre earthy corse.

The fryer that knew what time the powder had been taken,
Knew eke the very instant when the sleper should awaken;
But wondring that he could no kinde of aunswer heare,
Of letters which to Romeus his fellow fryer did beare,
Out of Saint Frauncis church hymselfe alone dyd fare,
And for the opening of the tombe meete instrumentes he bare.
Approching nigh the place, and seeing there the light,
Great horror felt he in his hart, by straunge and sodaine sight;
Tyll Peter, Romeus man, his coward hart made bolde,
When of his masters being there the certain newes he tolde:
There hath he been (quoth he) this halfe howre at the least,
And in this time, I dare well say, his plaint hath still increast.
Then both they entred in, where they (alas) dyd fynde
The bretheles corps of Romeus, forsaken of the mynde;
Where they have made such mone, as they may best conceve,
That have with perfect frendship loved, whose frend feerce death dyd reve.
But whilst with piteous playnt they Romeus fate bewepe,
An howre too late fayre Juliet awaked out of slepe;
And much amasde to see in tombe so great a light,
She wist not if she saw a dreame, or sprite that walkd by night.
But cumming to her selfe she knew them, and said thus:
What, fryer Lawrence, is it you? where is my Romeus?
And then the auncient frier, that greatly stood in feare
Lest if they lingred over long they should be taken theare,
In few plaine woordes the whole that was betyde, he tolde,
And with his fingar shewd his corps out stretched, stiffe, and colde;

And then perswaded her with pacience to abyde
This sodain great mischaunce, and sayth, that he will soone provyde
In somme religious house for her a quiet place,
Where she may spend the rest of lyfe, and where in time percase
She may with wisdomes meane measure her mourning brest,
And unto her tormented soule call backe exiled rest.
But loe, as soone as she had cast her ruthfull eye
On Romeus face, that pale and wan fast by her side dyd lye,
Straight way she dyd unstop the conduites of her teares,
And out they gushe;—with cruell hand she tare her golden heares.
But when she neither could her swelling sorow swage,
Ne yet her tender hart abyde her sickeness furious rage,
Falne on his corps she lay long panting on his face,
And then with all her force and strength the ded corps did embrace,
As though with sighes, with sobs, with force, and busy payne,
She would him rayse, and him restore from death to lyfe agayne:
A thousand times she kist his mouth, as cold as stone,
And it unkist againe as oft; then gan she thus to mone:
Ah pleasant prop of all my thoughts, ah onely grounde
Of all the sweete delightes that yet in all my lyfe I founde,
Did such assured trust within thy hart repose,
That in this place and at this time, thy churchyard thou hast chose?
Betwixt the armes of me, thy perfect loving make?
And thus by meanes of me to ende thy life, and for my sake?
Even in the flowring of thy youth, when unto thee
Thy lyfe most deare (as to the most) and pleasant ought to be,
How could this tender corps withstand the cruell fight
Of furious death, that wonts to fray the stoutest with his sight?
How could thy dainty youth agree with willing hart
In this so fowle infected place (to dwell) where now thou art?
Where spitefull Fortune hath appoynted thee to be
The dainty foode of greedy woormes, unworthy sure of thee.
Alas, alas, alas, what neded now anew
My wonted sorowes, doubled twise, againe thus to renewe?
Which both the tyme and eke my patient long abode
Should now at length have quenched quite, and under foote have trode?

Ah wretch and caytive that I am, even when I thought
To find my painefull passions salve, I myst the thing I sought;
And to my mortall harme the fatall knyfe I grounde,
That gave to me so deepe, so wyde so cruell dedly wounde.
Ah thou, most fortunate and most unhappy tombe!
For thou shalt beare, from age to age, witnes in time to comme
Of the most perfect leage betwixt a payre of lovers,
That were the most unfortunate and fortunate of others
Receave the latter sigh, receave the latter pang,
Of the most cruell of cruell slaves that wrath and death ay wrang."
And when our Juliet would continue still her mone,
The fryer and the servant fled, and left her there alone;
For they a sodayne noyse fast by the place did heare,
And lest they might be taken there, greatly they stoode in feare.
When Juliet saw her selfe left in the vaulte alone,
That freely she might worke her will, for let or stay was none,
Then once for all she tooke the cause of all her harmes,
The body dead of Romeus, and claspd it in her armes;
Then she with earnest kisse sufficiently did prove,
That more than by the feare of death, she was attaint by love;
And then past deadly feare, for lyfe ne had she care,
With hasty hand she did draw out the dagger that he ware.
"O welcome death (quoth she) end of unhappines,
That also art beginning of assured happines,
Feare not to darte me nowe, thy stripe no longer stay,
Prolong no longer now my lyfe, I hate this long delaye;
For straight my parting sprite, out of this carkas fled,
At ease shall finde my Romeus sprite emong so many ded.
And thou my loving lord, Romeus my trusty feer,
If knowledge yet doe rest in thee, if thou these woordes dost heer,
Receve thou her, whom thou didst love so lawfully,
That causd (alas) thy violent death, although unwillingly;
And therefore willingly offers to thee her gost,
To thend that no wight els but thou might have just cause to boste
Thinjoying of my love, which ay I have reserved
Free from the rest, bound unto thee, that hast it well deserved:
That so our parted sprites from light that we see here,
In place of endlesse light and blisse may ever live yfere."

These said, her ruthlesse hand through gyrt her valiant hart:
Ah, ladies, helpe with teares to wayle the ladies dedly smart!
She grones, she stretcheth out her limmes, she shuttes her eyes,
And from her corps the sprite doth flye;—what should I say? she dyes.
The watchemen of the towne the whilst are passed by,
And through the gates the candle light within the tombe they spye;
Whereby they did suppose inchaunters to be comme,
That with prepared instrumentes had opend wide the tombe,
In purpose to abuse the bodies of the ded,
Which by their science ayde abusde, do stand them oft in sted.
Theyr curious harts desyre the truth herof to know;
Then they by certaine steppes descend, where they do fynd below,
In clasped armes ywrapt the husband and the wyfe,
In whom as yet they seemd to see somme certaine markes of lyfe.
But when more curiously with leysure they did vew,
The certainty of both theyr deathes assuredly they knew:
Then here and there so long with carefull eye they sought,
That at the length hidden they found the murthrers;—so they thought.
In dongeon depe that night they lodgde them under grounde:
The next day do they tell the prince the mischefe that they found.
The newes was by and by throughout the towne dyspred,
Both of the taking of the fryer, and of the two found ded.
Thether you might have seene whole housholdes forth to ronne,
For to the tombe where they did heare this wonder straunge was donne,
The great, the small, the riche, the poore, the yong, the olde,
With hasty pace do ronne to see, but rew when they beholde.
And that the murtherers to all men might be knowne,
Like as the murders brute abrode through all the towne was blowne
The prince did straight ordaine, the corses that wer founde
Should be set forth upon a stage hye raysed from the grounde,
Right in the selfe same fourme, (shewde forth to all mens sight)
That in the hollow valt they had been found that other night;
And eke that Romeus man and fryer Lawrence should
Be openly examined; for els the people would

Have murmered, or faynd there were some waighty cause
Why openly they were not calde, and so convict by lawes.
  The holy fryer now, and reverent by his age,
In great reproche set to the shew upon the open stage,
(A thing that ill beseemde a man of silver heares)
His beard as white as mylke he bathes with great fast-falling teares:
Whom straight the dredfull judge commaundeth to declare
Both, how this murther had been donne, and who the murthrers are;
For that he nere the tombe was found at howres unfitte,
And had with hym those yron tooles for such a purpose fitte.
The frier was of lively sprite and free of speche,
The judges woords appald him not, ne were his wittes to seeche.
But with advised heed a while fyrst did he stay,
And then with bold assured voyce aloud thus gan he say:
"My lordes, there is not one emong you, set togyther,
So that (affection set aside) by wisdome he consider
My former passed lyfe, and this my extreme age,
And eke this heavy sight, the wreke of frantike Fortunes rage,
But that, amased much, doth wonder at this chaunge,
So great, so sodainly befalne, unlooked for, and straunge.
For I, that in the space of lx yeres and tenne,
Since first I did begin, to soone, to lead my lyfe with men,
And with the worldes vaine thinges, my selfe I did acquaint,
Was never yet, in open place, at any time attaynt
With any cryme, in waight as heavy as a rushe,
Ne is there any stander by can make me gylty blushe;
(Although before the face of God, I doe confesse
My selfe to be the sinfulst wretch of all this mighty presse.)
When readiest I am and likeliest to make
My great accompt, which no man els for me shall undertake;
When wormes, the earth, and death, doe cyte me every howre,
Tappeare before the judgment seate of everlasting powre,
And falling ripe, I steppe upon my graves brinke,
Even then, am I, most wretched wight, (as eche of you doth thinke,)
Through my most haynous deede, with hedlong sway throwne downe,
In greatest daunger of my life, and damage of renowne.
The spring, whence in your head this new conceite doth ryse,
And in your hart increaseth till your vayne and wrong surmise:

May be the hugenes of these teares of myne, (percase,)
That so aboundantly downe fall by eyther syde my face;
As though the memory in scriptures were not kept
That Christ our Saviour himselfe for ruth and pittie wept;
And more, whoso will reade, ywritten shall he fynde,
That teares are as true messengers of mans ungyltie mynde.
Or els, (a liker proofe) that I am in the cryme,
You say these present yrons are, and the suspected tyme;
As though all howres alike had not been made above!
Did Christ not say, the day had twelve? whereby he sought to prove,
That no respect of howres ought justly to be had,
But at all times men have the choyce of dooing good or bad;
Even as the sprite of God the hartes of men doth guyde,
Or as it leaveth them to stray from vertues path asyde.
As for the yrons that were taken in my hand,
As now I deeme, I neede not seeke to make ye understande
To what use yron first was made, when it began;
How of it self it helpeth not, ne yet can helpe a man.
The thing that hurteth is the malice of his will,
That such indifferent thinges is wont to use and order yll
Thus much I thought to say, to cause you so to know
That neither these my piteous teares, though nere so fast they flowe,
Ne yet these yron tooles, nor the suspected time,
Can justly prove the murther donne, or damne me of the cryme:
No one of these hath powre, ne powre have all the three,
To make me other then I am, how so I seeme to be.
But sure my conscience, (if so my gylt deserve,)
For an appeacher, witnesse, and a hangman, eke should serve;
For through mine age, whose heares of long time since were hore,
And credyt great that I was in, with you, in time tofore,
And eke the sojorne short that I on earth must make,
That every day and howre do loke my journey hence to take,
My conscience inwardly should more torment me thrise,
Then all the outward deadly payne that all you could devyse.
But (God I prayse) I feele no worme that gnaweth me,
And from remorses pricking sting I joy that I am free:
I meane, as touching this, wherewith you troubled are,
Wherewith you should be troubled still, if I my speche should spare.

But to the end I may set all your hartes at rest,
And plucke out all the scrupuls that are rooted in your brest,
Which might perhappes henceforth increasing more and more,
Within your conscience also increase your curelesse sore,
I sweare by yonder heavens, whither I hope to clym,
And for a witness of my woordes my hart attesteth him,
Whose mighty hande doth welde them in theyr vyolent sway,
And on the rolling stormy seas the heavy earth doth stay:
That I will make a short and eke a true dyscourse
Of this most wofull tragedy, and shew both thend and sourse
Of theyr unhappy death, which you perchaunce no lesse
Will wonder at then they (alas) poore lovers in distresse,
Tormented much in mynd, not forcing lively breath,
With strong and patient hart did yelde themselfe to cruell death:
Such was the mutuall love wherein they burned both,
And of their promyst frendshippes fayth so stedy was the troth.
And then the auncient frier began to make dyscourse,
Even from the first, of Romeus and Juliets amours;
How first by sodayn sight the one the other chose,
And twixt them selfe dyd knitte the knotte which onely death might lose;
And how, within a while, with hotter love opprest,
Under confessions cloke, to him them selfe they have adrest,
And how with solemne othes thy have protested both,
That they in hart are maried by promise and by othe;
And that except he graunt the rytes of church to geve,
They shall be forst by earnest love in sinneful state to live:
Which thing when he had wayde, and when he understoode
That the agreement twixt rhem twayne was lawfull, honest, good,
And all thinges peysed well, it seemed meet to bee
For lyke they were of noblenesse, age, riches, and degree;
Hoping that so at leugth ended myght be the stryfe,
Of Montagewes and Capelets, that led in hate theyr lyfe,
Thinking to woorke a woorke well pleasing in Gods sight,
In secret shrift he wedded them; and they the selfe same night
Made up the mariage in house of Capelet,
As well doth know (if she be askt) the nurce of Juliet.
He told how Romeus fled for reving Tybalts lyfe,

And how, the whilst, Paris the earle was offred to hys wyfe;
And how the lady dyd so great a wrong dysdayne,
And how to shrift unto his church she came to him agayne;
And how she fell flat downe before his feete aground,
And how she sware, her hand and blody knife should wound
Her harmeles hart, except that he some meane dyd fynde
To dysappoynt the earles attempt; and spotles save her mynde.
Wherfore, he doth conclude, (although that long before)
By thought of death and age he had refusde for evermore
The hidden artes which he delighted in, in youth,
Yet wonne by her importunenes, and by his inward ruth,
And fearing lest she would her cruell vowe dyscharge
His closed conscience he had opened and set at large;
And rather did he choose to suffer for one tyme
His soule to be spotted somdeale with small and easy cryme,
Then that the lady should, (wery of lyving breath,)
Murther her selfe, and daunger much her seely soule by death:
Wherfore his auncient artes agayne he puttes in ure,
A certaine powder gave he her, that made her slepe so sure,
That they her held for dead; and how that frier John
With letters sent to Romeus to Mantua is gone;
Of whom he knoweth not as yet, what is becomme;
And how that dead he found his frend within her kindreds tombe.
He thinkes with poyson strong, for care the yong man sterved,
Supposing Juliet dead; and how that Juliet hath carved,
With Romeus dagger drawne her hart, and yelded breath,
Desyrous to accompany her lover after death;
And how they could not save her, so they were afeard,
And hidde them selfe, dreding the noyse of watchmen, hat they heard.
And for the proofe of thys his tale, he doth desyer
The judge to send forthwith to Mantua for the fryer,
To learne his cause of stay, and eke to reade his letter;
And, more beside, to thend that they might judge his cause the better,
He prayeth them depose the nurce of Juliet,
And Romeus, man whom at unawares besyde the tombe he met.
Then Peter, not so much erst as he was, dismayd:
My lordes, (quoth he) too true is all that fryer Laurence sayd.

And when my maister went into my mystres grave.
This letter that I offer you, unto me then he gave,
Which he himselfe dyd write, as I do understand,
And charged me to offer them unto his fathers hand.
The opened packet doth conteyne in it the same
That erst the skilfull frier said; and eke the wretches name
That had at his request the dedly poyson sold,
The price of it, and why he bought, his letters playne have tolde.
The case unfolded so and open now it lyes,
That they could wish no better proofe, save seeing it with theyr eyes:
So orderly all thinges were tolde and tryed out,
That in the prease there was not one that stoode at all in doute.
The wyser sort, to councell called by Escalus,
Have geven advyse, and Escalus sagely decreeth thus:
The nurce of Juliet is banisht in her age,
Because that from the parentes she dyd hyde the mariage,
Which might have wrought much good had it in time been knowne,
Where now by her concealing it a mischeefe great is growne;
And Peter, for he dyd obey his masters hest,
In woonted freedome had good leave to lead his lyfe in rest:
Thapothecary high is hanged by the throte,
And for the paynes he tooke with him the hangman had his cote.
Bnt now what shall betyde of this gray-bearded syre?
Of fryer Laurence thus araynde, that good barefooted fryre?
Because that many times he woorthely did serve
The commen welth, and in his lyfe was never found to swerve,
He was discharged quyte, and no marke of defame
Did seeme to blot or touch at all the honor of his name.
But of him selfe he went into an hermitage,
Two myles from Veron towne, where he in prayers past forth his age;
Till that from earth to heaven his heavenly sprite dyd flye:
Fyve years he lived an hermite and an hermite dyd he dye.
The straungenes of the chaunce, when tryed was the truth,
The Montagewes and Capelets hath moved so to ruth,
That with their emptyed teares theyr choler and theyr rage
Has emptied quite; and they, whose wrath no wisdom could asswage,
Nor threatning of the prince, ne mynd of murthers donne,
At length, (so mighty Jove it would) by pitye they are wonne.

And lest that length of time might from our myndes remove
The memory of so perfect, sound and so approved love,
The bodies dead, removed from vaulte where they did dye,
In stately tombe, on pillers great of marble, rayse they hye.
On every syde above were set, and eke beneath,
Great store of cunning epitaphes, in honor of theyr death.
And even at this day the tombe is to be seene;
So that among the monumentes that in Verona been,
There is no monument more worthy of the sight,
Then is the tombe of Juliet and Romeus her knight.

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THE TWENTY-FIFTH NOVELL.

The goodly hystory of the true, and constant love betweene Rhomeo and Julietta, the one of whom died of poyson, and the other of sorrow, and hevinesse: wherein be comprysed many adventures of love, and other devises touchinge the same.

I AM sure that they which measure the greatnesse of goddes workes accordinge to the capacity of their rude, and simple understandinge, wyll not lightly adhibite credite unto thys history, so wel for the variety of straunge accidents which be therein described, as for the novelty of so rare, and perfect amity. But they that have red Plinie, Valerius Maximus, Plutarche, and divers other writers, do finde, that in olde time a great number of men and women have died, some of excessive joy, some of overmutch sorrow, and some of other passions: and amongs the same, love is not the least, whych when it seazeth uppon any kynde and gentle subject, and findeth no resistaunce to serve for a rampart to stay the violence of his course, by little and little undermineth, melteth and consumeth the virtues of naturall powers, in sutch wyse as the spyrite yealdinge to the burden, abandoneth the place of lyfe: which is verified by the pitifull, and infortunate death of two lovers that surrendered their last breath in one toumbe at Verona a citty of Italy, wherein repose yet to thys day: (with great marvell) the bones, and remnauntes of their late loving bodies: an hystory no lesse wonderfull than true. If then perticular affection which of good right every man ought to beare to the place where he was borne, doe not deceyve those that travayle, I thincke they will confesse wyth me, that few citties in Italy, can surpasse the sayd citty of Verona, as well for the navigable river called Adissa, which passeth almost through the midst of the same, and thereby a great trafique into Almayne, as also for the prospect towards the fertile mountaynes, and pleasant valeys whych do environ the same, with a great number of very clere and lyvely fountaynes, that serve for the ease and commodity of the place. Omittinge (bisides many other singularities) foure bridges, and an infinite nnmber of other honourable antiquities dayly apparaunt

unto those, that be to curious to viewe and looke upon them. Which places I have somewhat touched, bycause thys most true history which I purpose hereafter to recite, dependeth thereupon, the memory whereof to thys day is so wel known at Verona, as unneths their blubbred eyes be yet dry, that saw and beheld that lamentable sight.

When the Senior Escala was lorde of Verona, there were two families in the citty, of farre greater fame than the rest, aswell for riches as nobility: the one called the Montesches, and the other the Capellets: but lyke as most commonly there is discorde amongs theym which be of semblable degree in honour, even so there hapned a certayne emnity betweene them: and for so mutch as the beginning thereof was unlawfull, and of ill foundation, so lykewyse in processe of time it kindled to sutch flame, as by divers and sundry devyses practised on both sides, many lost their lyves. The lord Bartholmew of Escala, (of whom we have already spoken) being lord of Verona, and seeing sutch disorder in his common weale, assayed divers and sundry waies to reconcile those two houses but all in vayne: for their hatred had taken sutch roote, as the same could not be moderated by any wyse counsell or good advice: betweene whom no other thing could be accorded, but geving over armour, and weapon for the time, attending some other season more convenient, and with better leysure to appease the rest. In the time that these thinges were adoing, one of the family of Montesches called Rhomeo, of the age of XX. or XXI. yeares, the comliest and best conditioned gentleman that was amonges the Veronian youth, fell in love with a young gentlewoman of Verona, and in few dayes was attached with hir beauty, and good behaviour, as he abandoned all other affaires and busines, to serve and honour hir: and after many letters, ambassades, and presents, he determined in the ende to speake unto hir, and to disclose hys passions, which he did without any other practise. But she which was vertuously brought up, knew how to make him so good answere to cut of his amorous affections, as he had no lust after that time to returne any more, and shewed hir selfe so austere, and sharpe of speach, as she vouchsafed not with one looke to behold him. But how mutch the young gentleman saw hir whist, and silent, the more he was inflamed; and after he had continued

certayne months in that service wythout remedy of his griefe, he determined in the ende to depart Verona, for proofe if by chaunge of the place he might alter his affection, saying to himselfe: "What do I meane to love one that is so unkinde, and thus doth disdayn me: I am all hir owne, and yet she flieth from me: I can no longer live, except hir presence I doe enjoy: and she hath no contented mynde, but when she is furthest from me: I will then from henceforth estraunge my selfe from hir, for it may so come to passe by not beholding hir, that thys fire in me which taketh increase and nourishment by hir fayre eyes, by little and little may dy and quench." But minding to put in proofe what he thought, at one instant hee was reduced to the contrary, who not knowing whereupon to resolve, passed dayes and nights in marveilous playnts, and lamentations: for love vexed him so neare, and had so well fixed the gentlewoman's beauty within the bowels of his heart, and mynde, as not able to resist, hee faynted with the charge, and consumed by little and little as the snow agaynst the sunne: whereof hys parenttes, and kinred did marvayle greatly, bewaylinge hys misfortune, but above all other one of hys companyons of riper age, and counsell than hee, began sharply to rebuke him: for the love that he bare him was so great as hee felt hys martirdome, and was pertaker of hys passion: which caused him by ofte viewyng his friend's disquietnesse in amorous panges, to say thus unto him: "Rhomeo, I marvell mutch that thou spendest the best time of thine age, in pursute of a thing, from which thou seest thy self despised and banished, wythout respecte either to thy prodigall dispense, to thine honor, to thy teares, or to thy myserable lyfe, which be able to move the most constant to pity: wherefore I pray thee for the love of our auncient amity, and for thyne health sake, that thou wilt learn to be thine owne man, and not to alyenat thy lyberty to any so ingrate as she is: for so farre as I conjecture by things that are passed betwene you, either she is in love wyth some other, or else determineth never to love any. Thou arte yong, rich in goods and fortune, and more excellent in beauty than any gentleman in thys cyty: thou art well learned, and the onely sonne of the house wherof thou commest: what gryef would it bee to thy poore olde father and other thy parentes, to see the so drowned in this dongeon of vyce, specially at that age wherein thou oughtest rather to put them in some hope of thy vertue?

begyn then from henceforth to acknowledge thyne error, wherein thou hast hitherto lyved, doe away that amorous vaile or coverture whych blyndeth thyne eyes and letteth thee to folow the ryghte path, wherein thine auncestors have walked: or else if thou do feele thy selfe so subject to thyne owne wyll, yelde thy hearte to some other place, and chose some mistresse accordyng to thy worthynesse, and henceforth doe not sow thy paynes in a soyle so barrayne whereof thou reapest no fruycte: the tyme approcheth when al the dames of the cyty shal assemble, where thou mayst behold sutch one as shall make thee forget thy former gryefs." Thys younge gentleman attentyvely hearyng all the persuadyng reasons of hys fryend, began somewhat to moderate that heate and to acknowledge all the exhortatyons which hee had made to be directed to good purpose: and then determined to put them in proofe, and to be present indifferently at al the feasts and assemblies of the city, without bearing affection more to one woman than to an other: and continued in thys manner of lyfe, ii. or iii. monthes, thinking by that meanes to quench the sparks of auncient flames. It chaunced then within few dayes after, about the feast of Chrystmasse, when feasts and bankets most commonly be used, and maskes accordinge to the custome frequented, that Anthonie Capellet being the chief of that familye, and one of the principall lords of the city too, made a banket, and for the better solempnization thereof, invited all the noble men and dames, to which feast resorted the moste parte of the youth of Verona. The family of the Capellets (as we have declared in the beginninge of thys hystory) was at variance with the Montesches, which was the cause that none of that family repaired to that banket, but onelye the yong gentleman Rhomeo, who came in a maske after supper with certaine other yong gentlemen: and after they had remained a certayne space with their visards on, at length they did put of the same, and Rhomeo very shamefast, withdrew himself into a corner of the hall: but by reason of the light of the torches which burned very bright, he was by and by knowen and loked upon of the whole company, but specially of the ladies, for besides his native beauty wherewyth nature had adorned him, they marvelled at his audacity how hee durst presume to enter so secretly into the house of that famyllye which had litle cause to do him any good. Notwithstanding, the Capellets dis-

sembling their mallice, either for the honor of the company, or else for respect of his age, did not misuse him eyther in worde or deede: by meanes whereof wyth free liberty he behelde and viewed the ladies at hys pleasure, which hee dyd so well, and wyth grace so good, as there was none but did very well lyke the presence of his person: and after hee had particularly given judgement uppon the excellency of each one, according to his affection, hee sawe one gentlewoman amonges the reste of surpassinge beautye who (althoughe hee had never seene hir tofore) pleased him above the rest, and attributed unto hir in heart the chyefest place for all perfection in beautye: and feastyng hir incessantlye with piteous lookes, the love whych hee bare to his first gentlewoman, was overcomen with this newe fire, that tooke sutch norishement and vigor in his hart, as he was not able never to quench the same but by death onely: as you may understande by one of the strangest discourses, that ever any mortall man devised. The yong Rhomeo then felyng himselfe thus tossed wyth thys newe tempest, could not tell what countenaunce to use, but was so surprised and chaunged with these last flames, as he had almost forgotten himselfe in sutch wise as he had not audacity to enquyre what shee was, and wholly bente himself to feede hys eyes with hir sighte, wherewyth hee moystened the sweete amorous venome, which dyd so empoyson him, as hee ended hys dayes with a kinde of most cruell death. The gentlewoman that dydde put Rhomeo to sutch payne, was called Julietta, and was the daughter of Capellet, the mayster of the house wher that assembly was, who as hir eyes did rolle and wander too and fro, by chaunce espied Rhomeo, which unto hir seemed to be the goodliest personage that ever shee sawe: and love (which lay in wayte never untill that time,) assayling the tender heart of that yong gentlewoman, touched hir so at the quicke, as for any resistance she coulde make, was not able to defende his forces, and then began to set at naught the royalties of the feast, and felt no pleasure in hir heart, but when she had a glimpse by throwing or receiving some sight or looke of Rhomeo. And after they had contented eche others troubled heart with millions of amorous lookes which oftentimes interchangeably encountred and met together, the burning beames gave sufficient testimony of loves privy onsettes.

Love having made the heartes breache of those two lovers, as they two sought meanes to speake together, fortune offered them a very meete and apt occasion. A certayne lord of that troupe and companye tooke Julietta by the hande to daunce, wherein shee behaved hir selfe so well, and wyth so excellent grace, as shee wanne that daye the prise of honour from all the damosels of Verona. Rhomeo, havynge foreseene the place whereunto shee mynded to retire, approched the same, and so dyscretelye used the matter, as hee founde the meanes at hir returne to sit beside hir: Julietta when the daunce was finished, returned to the very place where she was set before, and was placed betwene Rhomeo and an other gentleman called Mercutio, which was a courtlyke gentleman, very well be loved of all men, and by reason of his pleasaunt and curteous behavior was in every company wel intertayned. Mercutio that was of audacity among maydens, as a lyon is among lambes, seazed incontynently upon the hande of Julietta, whose hands wontedly were so cold both in wynter and sommer as the mountayne yce, although the fire's heat did warm the same. Rhomeo whych sat uppon the left side of Julietta, seynge that Mercutio held hir by the right hand, toke hir by the other that he myght not be deceived of his purpose, and strayning the same a little, he felt himself so prest wyth that newe favor, as he remayned mute, not able to aunswer: but she perceyvyng by his chaunge of color, that the fault proceded of the vehemence of love, desyryng to speake unto hym, turned hir selfe towards hym, and wyth tremblyng voyce joyned with virginal shamefastnesse, intermedled with a certayn bashfulnesse, sayd to hym: "Blessed be the howre of your neare approche:" but mynding to procede in further talke, love had so closed up hir mouth, as she was not able to end hir tale.

Wherunto the yong gentleman all ravished with joy and contentation, sighing, asked hir what was the cause of that ryght fortunate blessing: Julietta, somwhat more emboldened with pytyful loke and smyling countenance, said unto him: "Syr, do not marvell yf I do blesse your comminge hither, bicause sir Mercutio a good tyme wyth frosty hand hath wholly frosen mine, and you of your curtesy have warmed the same agayne." Wherunto immediatly Rhomeo replyed: "Madame, if the heavens have ben so favorable to

employe me to do you some agreable service, being repaired hither by chance amongs other gentlemen, I esteeme the same well bestowed, craving no greater benefite for satisfaction of all my contentations received in this world, than to serve obey and honor you as long as my lyfe doth last, as experience shall yeld more ample proofe when it shall please you to geve further assaye: moreover, if you have received any heat by touche of my hand, you may be well assured that those flames be dead in respect of the lyvely sparkes and violent fire which sorteth from your fayre eyes, which fire hath so fiercely inflamed all the most sensible parts of my body, as if I be not succored by the favoure of your good graces, I do attend the time to be consumed to dust." Scarse had he made an ende of those last words, but the daunce of the torche was at an end: whereby Julietta, which wholly burnt in love, straightly claspyng her hand with hys, had no leysure to make other aunswer, but softly thus to say: "My deare frend, I know not what other assured wytnesse you desire of love, but that I let you understand that you be no more your own, than I am yours, beyng ready and dysposed to obey you so farre as honour shal permyt, beseechyng you for the present tyme to content your selfe wyth thys aunswere, untyll some other season meeter to communicate more secretly of our affaires." Rhomeo seeing himselfe pressed to part of the company, and for that hee knew not by what meanes he myght see hir agayne that was hys life and death, demaunded of one of his friends what shee was, who made aunswer that she was the daughter of Capellet, the lord of the house, and mayster of that dayes feast (who wroth beyonde measure that fortune had sent him to so daungerous a place, thought it impossible to bring to end his enterprise begon.) Julietta covetous on the other side, to know what yong gentleman he was which had so curteously intertayned hir that nyght, and of whome shee felt the new wound in hir heart, called an olde gentlewoman of honor which had nurssed hir and brought hir up, unto whom she sayd leaning upon hir shoulder: "Mother, what two yong gentlemen be they which first goe forth with the two torches before them." Unto whome the old gentlewoman told the name of the houses wherof they came. Then she asked hir againe, what young gentleman that was which holdeth the visarde in his hand, wyth the

damaske cloke about hym. "It is" (quod she) "Romeo Montesche, the sonne of youre father's capytall enimye and deadly foe to all your kinne." But the mayden at the onely name of Montesche was altogyther amazed, despayrynge for ever to attayne to husband hir great affectyoned fryend Rhomeo, for the auncyent hatreds betweene those two families. Neverthelesse she knewe so well how to dissemble hir grief and discontented minde, as the olde gentlewoman perceived nothing, who then began to persuade hir to retire into hir chamber: whom she obeyed, and being in bed, thinking to take hir wonted rest, a great tempest of divers thoughtes began to environ and trouble hir mynde, in sutch wyse as shee was not able to close hir eyes, but turninge heere and there, fantasied divers things in hir thought, sometimes purposed to cut of the whole attempte of that amorous practise, sometimes to continue the same. Thus was the poore pucell vexed with two contraries, the one comforted hir to pursue hir intent, the other proposed the immynente perill whereunto undyscretly she headlong threwe hir self: and after she had wandred of long time in this amorous laberinth, she knew not whereuppon to resolve, but wept incessantly, and accused hir self, saying: "Ah, caitife and myserable creature, from whence do rise these unaccustomed travayles which I feele in mynde, provokynge mee to loose my reste: but infortunate wretch, what doe I know if that yong gentleman doe love mee as hee sayeth. It may be under the vaile of sugred woordes he goeth about to steale away mine honore, to be revenged of my parentes whych have offended his, and by that meanes to my everlastyng reproche to make me the fable of the Verona people."

Afterwardes sodainly as she condempned that which she suspected in the beginning, sayd: "Is it possible that under sutch beautye and rare comelynesse, dysloyaltye and treason may have theyr syedge and lodgynge? If it bee true that the face is the faythfull messanger of the myndes conceypte, I may bee assured that hee doeth love mee: for I marked so many chaunged colours in his face in time of his talke with me, and sawe hym so transported and besides himselfe, as I cannot wyshe any other more certayne lucke of love, wherein I wyll persyst immutable to the laste gaspe of lyfe, to the intente I may have hym to bee my husband: for it maye so come to passe, as this newe aliaunce shall engender a

perpetuall peace and amity betweene hys house and mine." Arrestinge then uppon this determynation styll, as she saw Rhomeo passynge before hir father's gate, she shewed hir self with merry countenance, and followed him so with loke of eye, untill she had lost his sight. And continuing this manner of lyfe for certaine dayes, Rhomeo not able to content himself with lookes, daily did behold and marke the situation of the house, and one day amongs others hee espyed Julietta at hir chamber window, bounding upon a narrow lane, ryght over against which chamber he had a gardein, which was the cause that Rhomeo fearing discovery of their love, began the day time to passe no more before the gate, but so soone as the night with his browne mantell had covered the earth, hee walked alone up and downe that little streat: and after he had bene there many times, missing the chiefest cause of his comming, Julietta impacient of hir evill, one night repaired to hir window, and perceived throughe the bryghtnesse of the moone hir friend Rhomeo under hir window, no lesse attended for, than hee hymselfe was waighting. Then she secretly with teares in hir eyes, and wyth voyce interrupted by sighes, sayd: "Signior Rhomeo, me thinke that you hazarde your person to mutch, and commyt the same into great daunger at thys time of the nyght, to protrude your self to the mercy of them which meane you little good. Who yf they had taken would have cut you in pieces, and mine honor (which I esteme dearer than my lyfe), hindred and suspected for ever." "Madame," aunswered Rhomeo, "my lyfe is in the hand of God, who only can dispose the same: howbeyt yf any man had soughte menes to beryeve mee of my lyfe, I should (in the presence of you) have made him knowen what mine ability had ben to defend the same. Notwythstandyng lyfe is not so deare, and of sutch estimation wyth me, but that I coulde vouchsafe to sacryfice the same for your sake: and althoughe my myshappe had bene so greate, as to bee dyspatched in that place, yet had I no cause to be sorrye therefore, excepte it had bene by losynge the meanes, and way how to make you understande the good wyll and duety which I beare you, desyrynge not to conserve the same for anye commodytye that I hope to have thereby, nor for anye other respecte, but onelye to love, serve, and honor you, so long as breath shal remaine in me." So soone as he had made an end of

his talke, love and pity began to seaze upon the heart of Julietta, and leaning hir head upon hir hand, having hir face all besprent wyth teares, she said unto Rhomeo: "Syr Rhomeo, I pray you not to renue that grief agayne: for the onely memory of sutch inconvenyence, maketh me to counterpoyse betwene death and lyfe, my heart being so united with yours, as you cannot receyve the least injury in this world, wherein I shall not be so great a partaker as your self: beseechyng you for conclusion, that if you desire your owne health and mine, to declare unto me in fewe wordes what youre determynation is to attaine: for if you covet any other secrete thing at my handes, more than myne honoure can well allowe, you are marvelously deceived: but if your desire be godly, and that the frendship which you protest to beare mee, be founded uppon vertue, and to bee concluded by maryage, receiving me for your wyfe and lawfull spouse, you shall have sutch part in me, as whereof without any regard to the obedience and reverence that I owe to my parentes, or to the auncient enimity of oure famylyes, I wyll make you the onely lord and mayster over me, and of all the thyngys that I possesse, being prest and ready in all poyntes to folow your commaundement: but if your intent be otherwyse, and thinke to reape the fruycte of my virginity, under pretense of wanton amity, you be greatly deceived, and doe pray you to avoide and suffer me from henceforth to lyve in rest amongs myne equals." Rhomeo whych looked for none other thyng, holding up his handes to the heavens, wyth incredible joy and contentation, aunswered: "Madame, for so mutch as it hath pleased you to doe me that honour to accepte me for sutch a one, I accorde and consent to your request, and do offer unto you the best part of my heart, which shall remayn with you for guage and sure testimony of my saying, untill such time as God shall give me leave to make you the entier owner and possessor of the same. And to the intent I may begyn mine enterpryse, to morrow I will to the frier Laurence for counsell in the same, who besides that he is my ghostly father, is accustomed to give me instruction in al my other secret affaires, and fayle not (if you please) to meete me agayne in this place at this very hour, to the intent I may give you to understand the device betwene him and me." Which she lyked very well, and ended their talke for that time. Rhomeo receyving none

other favour at hir hands for that night, but only wordes. Thys fryer Laurence, of whom hereafter wee shall make more ample mention, was an auncient doctor of divinity, of the order of the fryers minors, who besides the happy profession which he had made in study of holy writ, was very skilful in philosophy, and a great searcher of natures secrets, and exceeding famous in magike knowledge, and other hidden and secret sciences, which nothing diminished his reputation, bicause hee did not abuse the same. And this frier through his vertue and piety, had so well won the citizens hearts of Verona, as he was almost the confessor to them all, and of all men generally reverenced and beloved: and many tymes for his great prudence was called by the lords of the citty, to the hearing of their weighty causes. And amonges other he was greatly favored by the lorde of Escale, that tyme the principall governor of Verona, and of all the family of Montesches, and of the Capellets, and of many other. The young Rhomeo (as we have already declared) from his tender age, bare a certayne particuler amity to frier Laurence, and departed to him his secrets, by meanes whereof so soone as he was gone from Julietta, went strayght to the fryers Franciscans, where from poinct to poinct he discoursed the successe of his love to that good father, and the conclusion of mariage betwene him and Julietta, adding upon the ende of talke, that hee woulde rather choose shamefull death, than to fayle hir of his promise. To whom the good frier after he had debated divers matters, and proposed al the inconveniences of that secret mariage, exhorted hym to more mature deliberation of the same: notwithstandinge, all the alleged persuasions were not able to revoke his promyse. Wherefore the frier vanquished with his stubbornesse, and also forecasting in his mynde that the mariage might be some meanes of reconciliation of those two houses, in th'end agreed to his request, intreating him, that he myght have one dayes respit for leysure to excogitate what was best to be done. But if Rhomeo for his part was carefull to provide for his affayres, Julietta lykewise did her indevour. For seeing that shee had none about her to whom she might discover hir passions, shee devised to impart the whole to hir nurse which lay in her chamber, appoyncted to wayte uppon hir, to whom she committed the intier secrets of the love betwene Rhomeo and hir. And although

the olde woman in the beginninge resisted Julietta hir intent, yet in the ende she knew so wel how to persuade and win hir, that she promised in all that she was able to do, to be at her commaundement. And then she sent hir with all diligence to speake to Rhomeo, and to know of him by what meanes they might be maried, and that he would do hir to understand the determination betwene fryer Laurence and him. Whom Rhomeo aunswered, how the first day wherein he had informed fryer Laurence of the matter, the sayde fryer deferred aunswere until the next, which was the very same, and that it was not past one houre sithens he returned with finall resolution, and that frier Laurence and he had devised, that she the Saterday following, should crave leave of hir mother to go to confession, and to repayre to the church of Saynct Francis, where in a certayne chappell secretly they should be maried, praying hir in any wyse not to fayle to be there. Which thinge she brought to passe with sutch discretion, as hir mother agreed to hir request: and accompanied onely wyth hir governesse, and a young mayden, she repayred thither at the determined day and tyme. And so soone as she was entred the church, she called for the good doctor fryer Laurence, unto whom answere were made that he was in the shriving chappell, and forthwith advertisement was gieven him of hir comming. So soone as fryer Laurence was certified of Julietta, hee went into the body of the church, and willed the olde woman and yong mayden to go heare service, and that when hee had heard the confession of Julietta, he would send for them agayn. Julietta beinge entred a little cell wyth frier Laurence, he shut fast the dore as he was wont to do, where Rhomeo and he had bin together shut fast in, the space of one whole hour before. Then friar Laurence that after he had shrived them, sayd to Julietta: "Daughter, as Rhomeo here present hath certified me, you be agreed, and contented to take him to husband, and he likewise you for his espouse and wyfe. Do you now still persist and continue in that mynde?" The lovers aunswered that they desired none other thing. The fryer seeing theyr conformed and agreeable willes, after he had discoursed somewhat uppon the commendation of mariage dignity, pronounced the usuall woordes of the church, and she having receyved the ring from Rhomeo, they rose up before the fryer, who sayd unto them: "If you have any other

thing to conferre together, do the same wyth speede: for I purpose that Rhomeo shall goe from hence so secretly as he can." Rhomeo sory to goe from Julietta sayde secretly unto hir, that shee shoulde send unto hym after diner the old woman, and that he would cause to be made a corded ladder the same evening, thereby to climbe up to her chamber window, where at more leisure they would devise of their affaires. Things determined betwene them, either of them retyred to their house with incredible contentation, attending the happy houre for consummamation of their mariage. When Rhomeo was come home to his house, he declared wholly what had passed betwen him and Julietta, unto a servaunt of his called Pietro, whose fidelity he had so greatly tryed, as he durst have trusted him with hys lyfe, and commaunded him wyth expedition to provide a ladder of cordes wyth ii. strong hookes of iron fastned to both endes, which hee easily did, because they were mutch used in Italy. Julietta did not forget in the evening about five of the clocke, to send the olde woman to Rhomeo, who having prepared all things necessary, caused the ladder to be delivered unto her, and prayed hir to require Julietta the same evening not to fayle to bee at the accustomed place. But if this jorney seemed long to these two passioned lovers, let other judge, that have at other tymes assayed the lyke: for every minute of an houre seemed to them a thousande yeares, so that if they had power to commaund the heavens (as Josua did the sunne) the earth had incontinently bene shadowed wyth darkest cloudes. The appoyncted houre come, Rhomeo put on the most sumptuous apparell hee had, and conducted by good fortune neere to the place where his heart tooke lyfe, was so fully determined of hys purpose, as easily hee clymed up the garden wall. Beinge arrived hard to the wyndow, he perceyved Julietta, who had already so well fastned the ladder to draw him up, as without any daunger at all, he entred hir chambre, which was so clere as the day, by reason of the tapers of virgin wax, which Julietta had caused to be lighted, that she might the better beholde hir Rhomeo. Julietta for hir part, was but in hir night kerchief: who so soone as she perceyved him colled him about the neck, and after she had kissed and rekissed hym a million of times, began to imbrace hym betwene hir armes, having no power to speake unto him, but by sighes onely,

holding hir mouth close against his, and being in this traunce beheld him with pitifull eye, which made him to live and die together. And afterwards somewhat come to hir selfe, she sayd with sighes deepely fetched from the bottom of hir heart: "Ah Rhomeo, the exampler of al vertue and gentlenes, most hartely welcome to this place, wherein for your lacke, and absence, and for feare of your person, I have gushed forth so many teares as the spring is almost dry: but now that I hold you betwen my armes, let death and fortune doe what they list. For I count my selfe more than satisfied of all my sorrowes past, by the favour alone of your presence." Whom Rhomeo with weeping eye, giving over silence aunswered: "Madame, for somutch as I never receyved so mutch of fortune's grace, as to make you feele by lively experience what power you had over me, and the torment every minute of the day sustained for your occasion, I do assure you the least grief that vexeth me for your absence, is a thousand times more paynefull than death, which long time or this had cut of the threede of my lyfe, if the hope of this happy journey had not bene, which paying mee now the just tribute of my weepings past, maketh me better content, and more glad, than if the whole worlde were at my commaundement, beseeching you (without further memory of auncient griefe) to take advice in tyme to come how we may content our passionate hearts, and to sort our affayres with sutch wysedome and discretion, as our enimies without advantage may let us continue the remnant of our dayes in rest and quiet." And as Julietta was about to make answere, the olde woman came in the meane time, and sayd unto them: "He that wasteth time in talke, recovereth the same to late. But for so mutch as eyther of you hath endured sutch mutuall paynes, behold (quoth shee) a campe which I have made ready:" (shewing them the fielde bed which shee had prepared and furnished,) whereunto they easily agreed, and being then betwene the sheets in privy bed, after they had gladded and cherished themselves with al kinde of delicate embracements which love was able to devise, Rhomeo unloosing the holy lines of virginity, tooke possession of the place, which was not yet besieged with sutch joy and contentation as they can judge which have assayed like delites. Their marriage thus consumate, Rhomeo perceyving the morning make to hasty approch,

tooke his leave, making promise that he would not fayle wythin a day or two to resort agayne to the place by lyke meanes, and semblable time, until fortune had provided sure occasion unfearfully to manyfest their marriage to the whole worlde. And thus a month or twayne, they continued their joyful mindes, to their incredible satisfaction, until lady Fortune envious of their prosperity, turned hir wheele to tumble them into sutch a bottomlesse pit, as they payed hir usury for their pleasures past, by a certayne most cruell and pitifull death, as you shal understand hereafter by the discourse that followeth. Now as we have before declared, the Capellets and the Montesches were not so well reconciled by the lord of Verona, but that there rested in them sutch sparks of auncient displeasures, as either partes waited but for some light occasion to draw togethers, which they did in the Easter holy dayes, (as bloudy men commonly be most willingly disposed after a good time to commit some nefarious deede) besides the gate of Boursarie leading to the olde castel of Verona, a troupe of Capellets rencountred with certayne of the Montesches, and without other woordes began to set upon them. And the Capellets had for chiefe of their glorious enterprise one called Thibault, cosin germayne to Julietta, a yong man strongly made, and of good experience in armes, who exhorted his companions with stout stomakes to represse the boldnes of the Montesches, that ther might from that time forth no memory of them be left at all. The rumoure of this fray was disperssed throughout al the corners of Verona, that succour might come from all partes of the citty to depart the same. Whereof Rhomeo advertized, who walked alonges the citty with certayne of his companions, hasted him speadily to the place where the slaughter of his parents and alies were committed: and after he had well advised and beholden many wounded and hurt on both sides, he sayd to hys companions: "My frends let us part them, for they be so flesht one upon an other, as will all be hewed to pieces before the game be done." And saying so, he thrust himselfe amids the troupe, and did no more but part the blowes on eyther side, crying upon them aloud: "My freends, no more, it is time henceforth that our quarel cease. For besides the provocation of God's just wrath, our two families be slaunderous to the whole world, and are the cause that this

common wealth doth grow unto disorder." But they were so egre and furious one agaynst the other, as they gave no audience to Rhomeo his councel, and bent theymselves too kyll, dysmember and teare eche other in pieces. And the fyght was so cruell and outragious betweene them as they which looked on, were amased to see theym endure those blowes, for the grounde was all covered with armes, legges, thighes, and bloude, wherein no signe of cowardnes appeared, and mayntayned their feyghte so longe, that none was able to judge who hadde the better, untill that Thibault cousin to Julietta inflamed with ire and rage, turned towardes Rhomeo thinkinge with a pricke to runne him through. But he was so wel armed and defended with a privye coate whiche he wore ordinarily for the doubt he had of the Capellets, as the pricke rebounded: unto whom Rhomeo made answeare: "Thibault thou maiest know by the pacience which I have had untill this present tyme, that I came not hether to fyght with thee or thyne, but to seeke peace and attonemente betweene us, and if thou thinkest that for default of courage I have fayled myne endevor, thou doest greate wronge to my reputacion. And impute thys my suffrance to some other perticular respecte, rather than to wante of stomacke. Wherfore abuse mee not but be content with this greate effusion of bloude and murders already committed. And provoke mee not I beseeche thee to passe the boundes of my good will and mynde." "Ah traitor," sayd Thibaulte, "thou thinkeste to save thy selfe by the plotte of thy pleasaunt tounge, but see that thou defende thy selfe, els presently I will make thee feele that thy tounge shal not gard thy corps, nor yet be the buckler to defende the same from present death." And saying so, he gave him a blow with such furye, as hadde not other warded the same hee had cutte of his heade from his shoulders, and the one was no readyer to lende, but the other incontinentlye was able to paye agayne, for hee being not onelye wroth with the blowe that hee had received, but offended with the injury which the other had don, began to pursue his ennemy with suche courage and vivacity, as the third blowe with his swerd hee caused him to fall backewarde starke deade uppon the ground with a pricke vehementlye thruste into his throte, whiche hee followed till hys sworde appeared throughe the hynder parte of the same, by reason wherof the conflicte ceassed.

For besides that Thibault was the chiefe of his companye he was also borne of one of the noblest houses within the cittye, which caused the potestate to assemble his souldiers with diligence for the apprehension and imprisonment of Rhomeo, who seyeng yl fortune at hand, in secrete wise convayed himselfe to fryer Laurence at the friers Franciscanes. And the fryer understandinge of his facte, kepte him in a certayne secret place of his covente until fortune did otherwise provyde for his safe goinge abroade. The bruite spred throughout the citty, of this chaunce don upon the lorde Thibault, the Capellets in mourning weedes caused the deade bodye to be caryed before the sygnory of Verona, so well to move them to pytty, as to demaunde justice for the murder: before whom came also the Montesches, declaryng the innocencye of Rhomeo, and the wilfull assault of the other. The councell assembled and witnesses heard on both partes, a straight commaundemente was geven by the lorde of the citty to geeve over theire weapons, and touchinge the offence of Rhomeo, because he hadde killed the other in his owne defence, he was banished Verona for ever. This common misfortune published throughout the citty, was generally sorowed and lamented. Som complayned the death of the lorde Thibault, so well for his dexteritye in armes as for the hope of his great good service in time to come, if hee hadde not bene prevented by sutch cruell death. Other bewailed (specially the ladies and gentlewomen) the overthrow of yong Rhomeo, who besides his beauty and good grace wherwith he was enriched, had a certayne naturall allurement, by vertue whereof he drew unto him the hearts of eche man, like as the stony adamante doth the cancred iron, in sutch wise as the whole nation and people of Verona lamented his mischaunce: but above all infortunate Julietta, who advertised both of the death of hir cosin Thibault, and of the banishment of hir husband, made the ayre sound with infinite number of mornefull playnts and miserable lamentations. Then feeling hirselfe to mutch outraged with extreeme passion, she went into hir chamber, and overcome with sorrowe threwe hir selfe upon hir bed, where she began to reinforce hir dolor after so straunge fashion, as the most constant would have bene moved to pitty. Then like one out of hir wits, she gazed heere and there, and by fortune beholding the window whereat Rhomeo was wont

to enter into hir chamber, cried out: "Oh unhappy windowe, oh entry most unlucky, wherein were woven the bitter toyle of my former mishaps, if by thy meanes I have receyved at other times some light pleasure or transitory contentation, thou now makest me pay a tribute so rigorous and paynefull, as my tender body not able any longer to support the same, shall henceforth open the gate to that lyfe where the ghost discharged from this mortal burden, shal seeke in some place els more assured rest. Ah Rhomeo, Rhomeo, when acquayntaunce first began betweene us, and reclined myne eares unto thy suborned promisses, confirmed with so many othes, I would never have beleeved that in place of our continued amyty, and in appeasing of the hatred of our houses, thou wouldest have sought occasion to breake the same by an acte so shamefull, whereby thy fame shall be spotted for ever, and I miserable wretch desolate of spouse and companion. But if thou haddest beene so gready after the Cappelletts bloud, wherefore didst thou spare the deare bloud of mine owne heart when so many tymes, and in sutch secret place the same was at the mercy of thy cruell handes? The victory which thou shouldest have gotten over me, had it not bene glorious inough for thine ambitious minde, but for more triumphant solempnity to bee crowned wyth the bloude of my dearest kinsman? Now get thee hence therefore into some other place to deceive some other, so unhappy as my selfe. Never come agayne in place where I am, for no excuse shall heereafter take holde to asswage mine offended minde: in the meane tyme I shall lament the rest of my heavy lyfe, with sutch store of teares, as my body dried up from all humidity, shall shortly search reliefe in earth." And having made an ende of those hir wordes, hir heart was so grievously strayned, as shee coulde neyther weepe nor speake, and stoode so immoveable, as if she had bene in a traunce. Then being somewhat come agayne unto hirselfe, with feeble voyce shee sayd: "Ah, murderous tongue of other men's honor, how darest thou so infamously to speake of him whom his very enimies doe commend and prayse? How presumest thou to impute the blame upon Rhomeo, whose unguiltines and innocent deede every man alloweth? Where from henceforth shall be hys refuge, sith she which ought to bee the onely bulwarke, and assured rampire of his distresse, doth pursue and defame him? Receyve, receyve then

Rhomeo the satisfaction of mine ingratitude by the sacrifice which I shal make of my proper lyfe, and so the faulte whiche I have committed agaynste thy loyaltye, shall bee made open to the worlde, thou being revenged and my selfe punished." And thinking to use some further talke, all the powers of hir body fayled hir wyth signes of present death. But the good olde woman whych could not imagine the cause of Julietta hir long absence, doubted very mutch that she suffred some passion, and sought hir up and downe in every place wythin hir father's pallace, untill at length shee founde her lying upon hir bed, all the outwarde parts of hir body so colde as marble. But the good olde woman which thought hir to bee deade, began to cry like one out of hir wittes, saying: "Ah deare daughter, and noursechylde, howe mutch doeth thy death now grieve mee at the very heart?" And as she was feeling all the partes of hir body, shee perceyved some sparke of lyfe to bee yet within the same, whych caused hir to call hir many tymes by her name, til at length she brought her oute of her sounde, then sayde unto her: "Why Julietta, myne owne deare darelyng, what meane you by this tormoylinge of your selfe? I cannot tel from whence this youre behaviour and that immoderate heavines doe proceede, but wel I wot that within this houre I thought to have accompanied you to the grave." "Alas good mother" (aunswered woful Julietta) "do you not most evidently perceive and see what just cause I have too sorrow and complayne, loosyng at one instante two persons of the world which wer unto mee most deare?" "Methinke," aunsweared the good woman, "that it is not seemely for a gentlewoman of your degree to fall into such extremetye: for in tyme of tribulation wysedome should most prevaile. And if the lord Thibault be deade do you thinke to get him agayn by teares? What is he that doth not accuse his overmutch presumption: woulde you that Rhomeo hadd done that wronge to him, and hys house, to suffer himselfe outraged and assayled by one to whom in manhoode and prowesse he is not inferioure? Sufficeth you that Rhomeo is alyve, and his affayres in sutche estate whoe in tyme may be called home agayne from banishmente, for he is a greate lorde, and as you know well allied and favored of all men, wherefore arme your selfe from henceforth with pacyence: for albeit that fortune doth estraunge him from

you for a tyme, yet sure I am, that hereafter shee will restore him unto you agayne wyth greater joye and contentatyon than before. And to the ende that wee bee better assured in what state he is, yf you wyll promyse me to gyve over your heavynesse, I wyll to daye knowe of fryer Laurence whether he is gone." To which request Julietta agreed, and then the good woman repayred to S. Frauncis, wher shee founde fryer Laurence who tolde her that the same nyghte Rhomeo would not fayle at hys accustomed houre to visite Julietta, and there to do hir to understande what he purposed to doe in tyme to come. This jorney then fared like the voiages of mariners, who after they have ben tost by greate and troublous tempest seeyng some sunne beame pearce the heavens to lyghten the lande, assure themselves agayne, and thinkinge to have avoyded shipwracke, and sodaynlye the seas begynne to swell, the waves do roare with sutch vehemence and noyse, as if they were fallen agayne into greater danger than before. The assigned hour come, Rhomeo fayled not accordinge to hys promise to bee in his garden, where he found his furniture prest to mount the chamber of Julietta, who with displayed armes, began so strayghtly to embrace hym, as it seemed that the soule would have abandoned hir body. And they two more than a large quarter of an hour were in sutch agony, as they were not able to pronounce one word, and wetting ech others face fast closed together, the teares trickled downe in sutch abundance as they seemed to be throughly bathed therein, which Rhomeo perceyving thinking to stay those immoderate teares, sayd unto hir: "Myne owne dearest freend Julietta, I am not now determined to recite the particulars of the straung happes of frayle and inconstaunte fortune, who in a moment hoisteth a man up to the hyghest degree of hir wheele, and by and by, in lesse space than in the twynckeling of an eye, she throweth hym downe agayne so lowe, as more misery is prepared for him in one day, than favour in one hundred yeares: whych I now prove, and have experience in my selfe, which have bene nourished delicately amonges my frends, and maynteyned in sutch prosperous state, as you doe little know, (hoping for the full perfection of my felicity) by meanes of our mariage to have reconciled our parents, and frends, and to conduct the residue of my lyfe, according to the scope and lot determined by Almighty God:

and neverthelesse all myne enterprises be put backe, and my purposes tourned cleane contrary, in sutch wise as from henceforth I must wander lyke a vagabonde through divers provinces, and sequestrate my selfe from my frends, wythout assured place of myne abode, whych I desire to let you weete, to the intent you may be exhorted, in tyme to come, paciently to beare so well myne absence, as that whych it shal please God to appoint." But Julietta, al affrighted wyth teares and mortal agonies, would not suffer hym to passe any further, but interruptinge his purpose, sayd unto hym: "Rhomeo, how canst thou be so harde hearted and voyde of all pity, to leave mee heere alone, besieged with so manye deadlye myseries? There is neyther houre nor minute, wherein death doth not appeare a thousand tymes before mee, and yet my missehappe is sutch, as I can not dye, and therefore doe manyfestlye perceyve, that the same death preserveth my lyfe, of purpose to delight in my gryefes, and tryumphe over my evyls. And thou lyke the mynister and tyrante of hir cruelty, doest make no conscience (for ought that I can see) having atchieved the summe of thy desyres and pleasures on me, to abandon and forsake me: whereby I well perceyve, that all the lawes of amity are deade and utterly extinguyshed, forsomutch as he in whom I had greatest hope and confidence, and for whose sake I am become an enimy to my self, doth disdayne and contemne me. No, no Rhomeo, thou must fully resolve thy selfe uppon one of these ii. points, either to see me incontinently throwen down headlong from this high window after thee: or else to suffer me to accompany thee into that countrey or place whither fortune shall guide thee: for my heart is so mutch transformed into thine, that so soone as I shall understande of thy departure, presently my lyfe will depart this wofull body: the continuance whereof I doe not desire for any other purpose, but only to delight my selfe in thy presence, to bee pertaker of thy misfortunes: and therefore if ever there lodged any pity in the heart of gentleman, I beseeche the Rhomeo with al humility, that it may now finde place in thee, and that thou wilt vouchsafe to receyve me for thy servaunt, and the faithful companion of thy mishaps: and if thou thinke that thou canst not conveniently receyve me in the estate and habite of a wyfe, who shall let me to chaunge myne apparell? Shall I be the first that have

used lyke shiftes, to escape the tyranny of parentes? Doste thou doubt that my service will not bee so good unto thee as that of Petre thy servaunte? Wyll my loyaltye and fidelity be lesse than his? My beauty which at other tymes thou hast so greatly commended, it is not esteemed of thee? my teares, my love, and the aunciente pleasures and delights that you have taken in mee shal they be in oblivyon?" Rhomeo seeing hir in these alterations, fearing that worsse inconvenience would chaunce, tooke hir agayne betweene hys armes, and kissing hir amorously, sayd: "Julietta, the onely mistresse of my heart, I pray thee in the name of God, and for the fervent love whych thou bearest unto me, to doe away those vayne cogitations, excepte thou meane to seeke and hazard the destruction of us both: for yf thou persever in this purpose, there is no remedye but wee muste both perish: for so soone as thyne absence shalbe knowen, thy father will make sutch earnest pursute after us, that we cannot choose but be discried and taken, and in the ende cruelly punished, I as a theefe and stealer of thee, and thou as a dysobedyent daughter to thy father: and so instead of pleasaunt and quiet lyfe, our dayes shalbe abridged by most shamefull death. But if thou wylt recline thy self to reason, (the ryght rule of humane lyfe), and for the tyme abandon our mutuall delyghts, I will take sutch order in the time of my banishment, as within three or foure months wythoute any delay, I shalbe revoked home agayne: but if it fall out otherwyse (as I trust not), howsoever it happen, I wyll come agayne unto thee, and with the helpe of my fryendes wyll fetch thee from Verona by strong hand, not in counterfeit apparell as a straunger, but lyke my spouse and perpetuall companion: in the meane time quyet your selfe, and be sure that nothing else but death shall devide and put us a sunder." The reasons of Rhomeo so mutch prevailed with Julietta, as shee made hym thys aunswere: "My deare fryend, I wyll doe nothing contrary to your wyll and pleasure: and to what place so ever you repayre, my hearte shall bee your owne, in like sorte as you have given yours to be mine: in the meane while I pray you not to faile oftentimes to advertise me by frier Laurence, in what state your affaires be, and specially of the place of your abode." Thus these two pore lovers passed the night togither, until the day began to appeare which did dyvyde them, to their extreame

sorrow and gryef. Rhomeo havinge taken leave of Julietta, went to S. Fraunces, and after he hadde advertysed frier Laurence of his affaires, departed from Verona in the habit of a marchaunt straunger, and used sutch expedytyon, as without hurt he arrived at Mantuoa, (accompanied onely wyth Petre his servaunt, whome hee hastily sente backe agayne to Verona, to serve his father) where he tooke a house: and lyvyng in honorable companye, assayed certayne monthes to put away the gryefe whych so tormented him. But duryng the tyme of his absence, miserable Julietta could not so cloke hir sorrow, but that through the evyll colour of hir face, hir inwarde passion was discryed: by reason whereof hir mother, who heard hir oftentimes sighing, and incessantly complayning, coulde not forbeare to say unto hir: "Daughter, if you continue long after thys sort, you wyll hasten the death of your good father and me, who love you so dearely as our owne lyves: wherefore henceforth moderate your heavinesse, and endevor your self to be mery: think no more upon the death of your cosin Thibault, whome (sith it pleased God to cal away) do you thinke to revoke wyth teares, and so withstande his almightye will?" But the pore gentlewoman not able to dyssemble hir griefe, sayd unto hir: "Madame, long time it is sithens the last teares for Thibault were poured forth, and I beleve that the fountayne is so well soked and dried up, as no more will spryng in that place." The mother which could not tell to what effect those woords were spoken held hir peace, for feare she should trouble hir daughter: and certayne dayes after seeing hir to continue in heavinesse and continuall griefs, assaied by al meanes possible to know, aswell of hir, as of other the housholde servauntes, the occasion of their sorrow, but al in vayne: wherwith the pore mother vexed beyonde measure, proposed to let the lord Antonio hir husband to understand the case of hir daughter: and uppon a day seeing him at convenient leisure, she sayd unto him: "My lord, if you have marked the countenaunce of our daughter, and hir kinde of behavior sithens the death of the lord Thibault hir cosyn, you shall perceive so straunge mutation in hir, as it will make you to marvell, for she is not onely contented to forgoe meate, drinke, and slepe, but she spendeth her tyme in nothing else than in weeping and lamentatyon, delighting to kepe hir selfe solytarye

wythin hir chamber, where she tormenteth hir self so outragiously as yf wee take not heede, hir lyfe is to be doubted, and not able to knowe the oryginall of hir payne, the more difficulte shall bee the remedye: for albeit that I have sought meanes by all extremity, yet cannot I learne the cause of hir sicknesse: and where I thought in the beginning, that it proceeded upon the death of hir cosin, now I doe manifestly perceive the contrary, specially when she hir self did assure me that she had already wept and shed the last teares for him that she was mynded to doe: and uncertayne whereuppon to resolve, I do thinke verily that she mourneth for some despite, to see the most part of hir companions maried, and she yet unprovyded, persuading with hir selfe (it may be) that wee hir parents do not care for hir: wherefore deare husband, I heartely beseech you for our rest and hir quiet, that hereafter ye be carefull to provyde for hir some maryage worthy of our state." Whereunto the lord Antonio, willingly agreed, saying unto hir: "Wyfe, I have many times thought uppon that whereof you speake, notwythstandyng sith as yet shee is not attayned to the age of xviii. yeares, I thought to provide a husband at leysure: neverthelesse, things beinge come to these termes, and knowing that virgins chastity is a daungerous treasure, I wyll be mindfull of the same to your contentation, and she matched in sutch wyse, as she shall thynke the tyme hitherto well delayed. In the meane while marke dylygently whyther she bee in love wyth any, to the end that we have not so greate regard to goodes, or the nobylity of the house wherein we mean to bestow hir, as to the lyfe and health of our daughter who is to me so deare as I had rather die a begger without landes or goods, than to bestow hir upon one which shall use and intreat hir il." Certayne dayes after that the lorde Antonio had bruted the maryage of his daughter, many gentlemen were suters, so wel for the excellency of hir beauty, as for hir great rychesse and revenue. But above all others the alyaunce of a young earle named Paris, the count of Lodronne. lyked the lord Antonio: unto whom lyberally he gave his consent, and told his wyfe the party uppon whom he dyd mean to bestow his daughter. The mother very joy ful that they had found so honest a gentleman for theyr daughter, caused her secretly to be called before hir, doyng hir to understande what things had passed

betwen hir father and the counte Paris, discoursing unto hir the beauty and good grace of the yong counte, the vertues for which he was commended of al men, joyning thereunto for conclusion the great richesse and favor which he had in the goods of fortune, by means whereof she and hir fryends should live in eternal honor: but Julietta which had rather to have ben torne in pieces than to agree to that maryage, answered hir mother with a more than accustomed stoutnesse: "Madame, I mutch marvel, and therewithal am astonned that you being a lady discrete and honorable, wil be so liberal over your daughter as to commit her to the pleasure and wil of an other, before you do know how her mind is bent: you may do as it pleaseth you, but of one thing I do wel assure you, that if you bring it to passe, it shal be against my wil: and touching the regard and estimation of counte Paris, I shal first lose my lyfe before he shal have power to touch any part of my body: which being done, it is you that shal be counted the murderer, by delivering me into the handes of him, whome I neyther can, wil, or know whiche way to love: wherefore I pray you to suffer me henceforth thus to lyve, without taking any further care of me, for so mutche as my cruell fortune hath otherwyse disposed of me."

The dolorous mother which knewe not what judgement to fixe upon hir daughter's aunswere, lyke a woman confused and besides hir selfe went to seeke the lord Antonio, unto whom without conceyling any part of hir daughter's aunswer, she dyd him understand the whole. The good olde man offended beyonde measure, commaunded her incontinently by force to be brought before him, if of hir own good will she would not come: so soone as she came before hir father, hir eyes full of tears, fel down at his fete, which she bathed with the luke warme drops that distilled from hir eyes in great abundance, and thynkyng to open hir mouth to crye him mercy, the sobbes and sighes many times stopt hir speach, that shee remained dumbe not able to frame a woorde. But the olde man nothing moved with his daughter's teares, sayd unto hir in great rage: "Come hither thou unkynd and dysobedient daughter, hast thou forgotten how many tymes thou hast hearde spoken at the table, of the puissance and authoryty our auncyente Romane fathers had over their chyldren? unto whome it was not onelye lawfull to sell, guage, and other-

wyse dyspose them (in theyr necessity) at their pleasure, but also which is more, they had absolute power over their death and lyfe? With what yrons, with what torments, with what racks would those good fathers chasten and correct thee if they were a live againe, to see that ingratitude, misbehavior, and disobedience which thou usest towards thy father, who with many prayers and requestes hath provided one of the greatest lords of this province to be thy husband, a gentleman of best renoume, and indued wyth all kynde of vertues, of whom thou and I be unworthy, both for the notable masse of goods and substance wherewith he is enriched, as also for the honoure and generositie of the house whereof hee is discended, and yet thou playest the parte of an obstinate and rebellyous chyld agaynst thy fathers will. I take the omnipotency of that Almightye God to witnesse, which hath vouchsafed to bryng thee forth into this world, that if upon Tuesday nexte thou failest to prepare thy selfe to be at my castell of Villafranco, where the counte Paris purposeth to meete us, and there give thy consent to that whych thy mother and I have agreed uppon, I will not onely deprive thee of my worldly goodes, but also will make thee espouse and marie a pryson so straight and sharpe, as a thousande times thou shalt curse the day and tyme wherein thou wast borne: wherfore from henceforth take advisement what thou doest, for excepte the promise be kept which I have made to the counte Paris, I will make thee feele how greate the just choler of an offended father is against a chylde unkynde." And without staying for other answer of his daughter, the olde man departed the chamber, and lefte hir uppon hir knees. Julietta knowing the fury of hir father, fearing to incurre his indignation, or to provoke his further wrath, retired for the day into hir chamber, and contrived that whole nyght more in weeping then slepyng. And the next morning fayning to goe heare service, she went forth with the woman of hir chamber to the fryers, where she caused father Laurence to be called unto hir, and prayed him to heare hir confession: and when she was upon hir knees before hym, shee began hir confession wyth teares, telling him the greate mischyefe that was prepared for hir, by the maryage accorded betweene hir father and the counte Paris: and for conclusion sayd unto him: "Sir, for so mutch as you know that I cannot by God's law bee maried

twice, and that I have but one God, one husband, and one faith, I am determined when I am from hence, with these two hands which you see joyned before you, this day to end my sorowful lyfe, that my soule may beare wytnesse in the heavens, and my bloude uppon the earth of my faith and loyalty preserved." Then havyng ended hir talke, shee looked about hir, and seemed by hir wylde countenaunce, as though she had devised some sinister purpose: wherefore frier Laurence, astonned beyonde measure, fearyng least she would have executed that which she was determyned, sayd unto hir: "Mistresse Julietta, I pray you in the name of God by little and little to moderate youre conceived griefe, and to content your self whilst you bee heere, untill I have provided what is best for you to doe, for before you part from hence, I will give you sutch consolation and remedy for your afflictions, as you shall remaine satysfied and contented." And resolved uppon thys good minde, he speedily wente out of the churche unto his chamber, where he began to consider of many things, his conscience beyng moved to hinder the marriage betwene the counte Paris and hir, knowing by his meanes she had espoused an other, and callynge to remembraunce what a daungerous enterprise he had begonne by committyng hymself to the mercy of a symple damosell, and that if shee fayled to bee wyse and secrete, all theyr doyngs should be discried, he defamed, and Rhomeo hir spouse punished. Hee then after he had well debated upon infinite numbre of devises, was in the end overcome with pity, and determined rather to hazarde his honour, than to suffer the adultery of the counte Paris with Julietta: and being determined hereupon, opened his closet, and takynge a vyall in his hande, retourned agayne to Julietta, whom he founde lyke one that was in a traunce, wayghtinge for newes, eyther of lyfe or death: of whome the good olde father demaunded upon what day hir maryage was appoynted. "The firste daye of that appoyntment (quod shee) is uppon Wednesdaye, whych is the daye ordeyned for my consente of maryage accorded betweene my father and counte Paris, but the nuptiall solemnitye is not before the x. day of September." "Wel then" (quod the religious father) "be of good cheere daughter, for our Lord God hathe opened a way unto me both to deliver you and Rhomeo from the

prepared thraldom. I have knowne your husband from his cradle, and hee hath daily committed unto me the greatest secretes of hys conscience, and I have so dearely loved him agayne, as if hee had been mine owne sonne: wherefore my heart can not abide that anye man should do him wrong in that specially wherein my counsell may stande him in stede. And for somutch as you are his wyfe, I ought lykewyse to love you, and seke meanes to delyver you from the martyrdome and anguish wherewyth I see your heart besieged: understande then (good daughter) of a secrete which I purpose to manifest unto you, and take heede above all thinges that you declare it to no living creature, for therein consisteth your life and death. Ye be not ignorant by the common report of the cityzens of this city, and by the same published of me, that I have travailed throughe all the provinces of the habytable earthe, wherby duryng the continuall tyme of xx. yeres, I have soughte no rest for my wearied body, but rather have many times protruded the same to the mercy of brute beasts in the wyldernesse, and many times also to the mercilesse waves of the seas, and to the pity of common pirates, together with a thousand other daungers and shipwracks uppon sea and land: so it is good daughter that all my wandring voyages have not bene altogethers unprofitable. For besides the incredible contentation received ordinarily in mind, I have gathered some particular fruyct, whereof by the grace of God you shall shortly feele some experience. I have proved the secrete properties of stones, of plants, metals, and other thinges hydden within the bowels of the earth, wherewith I am able to helpe my selfe againste the common lawe of men, when necessity doth serve: specyally in thynges wherein I know mine eternal God to be least offended. For as thou knowest I beynge approached as it were, even to the brymme of my grave, and that the tyme draweth neare for yeldynge of myne accompte before the audytor of all audytors, I oughte therefore to have some deepe knowledge and apprehension of God's judgement more than I had when the heat of inconsidered youth did boyle within my lusty body. Know you therefore good daughter, that with those graces, and favours which the heavens prodigally have bestowed upon me, I have learned and proved of long time the composition of a certayne paaste, which I make of divers soporiferous

simples, which beaten afterwards to pouder, and dronke wyth a quantyty of water, within a quarter of an houre after, bringeth the receiver into sutch a sleepe, and burieth so deepely the senses and other sprites of life, that the cunningest phisitian will judge the party dead: and besides that it hath a more marvellous effect, for the person which useth the same feeleth no kinde of griefe, and according to the quantity of the dough, the pacient remayneth in a sweete sleepe, but when the operation is wrought and done, hee returneth into his first estate. Now then Julietta receive myne instruction, put of all feminine affection by taking uppon you a manly stomacke for by the only courage of your minde consisteth the hap or mishap of your affayres. Beholde here I geve you a vyale which you shall keepe as your owne propre heart, and the night before your mariage, or in the morninge before day, you shal fil the same up with water, and drink so mutch as is contayned therein. And then you shall feele a certayne kynde of pleasaunt sleepe, which incrochinge by litle and litle all the partes of your body, wil constrayne them in sutch wyse, as unmoveable they shal remayne: and by not doing their accustomed dueties, shall loose their naturall feelinges, and you abide in sutch extasie the space of forty houres at the least, without any beating of poulse or other perceptible motion, which shall so astonne them that come to see you, as they will judge you to be deade, and accordinge to the custome of our citty, you shal be caried to the churchyarde hard by our church, where you shal be intoumbed in the common monument of the Capellets your auncestors, and in the meane tyme we will send word to lord Rhomeo by a speciall messanger of the effect of our device, who now abideth at Mantua. And the night following I am sure he will not fayle to be heere, then he and I together will open the grave, and lift up your body, and after the operation of the pouder is past, hee shall convey you secretly to Mantua, unknowen to all your parents and frends. Afterwards (it may be) tyme, the mother of truth, shall cause concord betwene the offended city of Verona and Rhomeo. At which time your common cause may be made open to the generall contentacion of all your frends." The words of the good father ended, new joy surprised the heart of Julietta, who was so attentive to his talke as she forgat no one poynct of hir lesson. Then she sayd

unto him: "Father, doubt not at all that my heart shall fayle in performaunce of your commaundement: for were it the strongest poyson, or most pestiferous venome, rather woulde I thrust it into my body, than to consent to fall into the hands of him, whom I utterly mislike: with a right strong reason then may I fortifie my selfe, and offer my body to any kinde of mortall daunger to approch and draw neare to him, upon whom wholly dependeth my life and all the solace I have in this world." "Go your wayes then my daughter" (quod the frier) "the mighty hand of God keepe you, and hys surpassing power defende you, and confirme that will and good mynde of yours, for the accomplishment of this worke." Julietta departed from frier Laurence, and returned home to hir father's pallace about xi. of the clock, where she found hir mother at the gate attending for hir: And in good devotion demaunded if shee continued still in hir former follies? But Julietta with more gladsome cheere than she was wont to use, not suffering hir mother to aske agayne, sayd unto hir: "Madame I come from S. Frauncis church, where I have taried longer peradventure than my duety requireth: how be it not without fruict and great rest to my afflicted conscience, by reason of the godly persuasions of our ghostly father frier Laurence, unto whom I have made a large declaration of my life. And chiefly have communicated unto him in confession, that which hath past betwene my lord my father and you, upon the mariage of counte Paris and me. But the good man hath reconciled me by his holy words, and commendable exhortations, that where I had minde never to mary, now I am well disposed to obey your pleasure and commaundement. Wherfore, madame, I beseech you to recover the favor and good wyll of my father, aske pardon in my behalfe, and say unto him (if it please you) that by obeying his fatherly request, I am ready to meete the counte Paris at Villafranco, and there in your presence to accept him for my lorde and husband: In assurance whereof, by your pacience, I meane to repayre into my closet, to make choise of my most pretious jewels, that I being richly adorned, and decked, may appeare before him more agreeable to his mynde, and pleasure." The good mother rapt with exceeding great joy, was not able to aunswere a word, but rather made speede to seeke out hir husband the lord Antonio, unto whom she reported the

good will of hir daughter, and how by meanes of frier Laurence hir minde was chaunged. Whereof the good olde man marvellous joyfull, praysed God in heart, saying: "Wife this is not the firste good turne which we have received of that holy man, unto whom euery cittizen of this common wealth is dearely bounde. I would to God that I had redeemed xx. of his yeares with the third parte of my goods, so grievous is to me his extreme olde age." The selfe same houre the lord Antonio went to seeke the counte Paris, whom hee thought to perswade to goe to Villafranco. But the counte told him agayne, that the charge would be to great, and that better it were to reserve that cost to the mariage day, for the better celebration of the same. Notwithstanding if it were his pleasure, he would himselfe goe visite Julietta: and so they went together. The mother advertised of his comming, caused hir daughter to make hir selfe ready, and to spare no costly jewels for adorning of hir beauty agaynst the counte's comming, which she bestowed so well for garnishing of hir personage, that before the counte parted from the house, shee had so stolne away his heart, as he lived not from that time forth, but upon meditation of hir beauty, and slacked no time for acceleration of the mariage day, ceasing not to be importunate upon father and mother for th'ende and consummation thereof. And thus with joy inough passed forth this day and many others until the day before the mariage, against which time the mother of Julietta did so well provide, that there wanted nothing to set forth the magnificence and nobility of their house. Villafranco whereof we have made mention, was a place of pleasure, where the lord Antonio was wont many tymes to recreate himselfe a mile or two from Verona, there the dynner was prepared, for so mutch as the ordinary solemnity of necessity muste be done at Verona. Julietta perceyving hir time to approache dyssembled the matter so well as shee coulde: and when tyme forced hir to retire to hir chamber, hir woman would have waited uppon hir, and have lyen in hir chambre as hir custome was: but Julietta sayd unto hir: "Good and faithfull mother, you know that to morrow is my maryage day, and for that I would spend the most parte of the nyght in prayer, I pray you for this time to let me alone, and to morrow in the mornyng about vi. of the clocke come to me agayne to helpe make mee readie." The good olde woman

willing to follow hir minde, suffred hir alone, and doubted nothyng of that which she did meane to do. Julietta beinge within hir chambre having an eawer ful of water standing uppon the table filled the viole which the frier gave her: and after she had made the mixture, she set it by hir bed side, and went to bed. And being layde, new thoughtes began to assaile hir, with a conceipt of grievous death, which brought hir into sutch case as she could not tell what to doe, but playning incessantly sayd: "Am not I the most unhappy and desperat creature, that ever was borne of woman? For mee there is nothyng left in this wretched worlde but mishap, misery, and mortall woe, my distresse hath brought me to sutch extremity, as to save mine honor and conscience, I am forced to devoure the drynke whereof I know not the vertue: but what know I (sayd she) whether the operatyon of thys pouder will be to soone or to late, or not correspondent to the due tyme, and that my fault being discovered, I shall remayne a fable to the people? What know I moreover, if the serpents and other venomous and crauling wormes, whych commonly frequent the graves and pittes of the earth wyll hurt me, thynkyng that I am deade. But howe shall I indure the stynche of so many carions and bones of myne auncestors whych rest in the grave, yf by fortune I do awake before Rhomeo and fryer Laurence doe come to help me?" And as shee was thus plunged in the deepe contemplatyon of thynges, she thought that she saw a certayn vision or fansie of her cousin Thibault, in the very same sort as shee sawe him wounded and imbrued wyth bloud, and musing how that she must be buried quick amongs so many dead carcases and deadly naked bones, hir tender and delycate body began to shake and tremble and hir yellowe lockes to stare for feare, in sutch wyse as fryghtened with a terroure a cold sweate beganne to pierce hir heart and bedewe the rest of al her membres, in sutch wise as she thought that an hundred thousand deathes did stande about hir, haling her on every side, and plucking her in pieces, and feelyng that hir forces diminyshed by lyttle and lyttle, fearing that through to great debilyty she was not able to do hir enterpryse, like a furious and insensate woman, with out further care, gulped up the water wythin the voyal, then crossing hir armes upon hir stomacke, she lost at that instante all the powers of hir body, restyng in a

traunce. And when the morning lyght began to thrust his head out of his oryent, hir chaumber woman which had lockte hir in with the key, did open the doore, and thynkyng to awake hir, called her many tymes, and sayde unto hir: "Mistresse, you sleepe to long, the counte Paris will come to raise you." The poore olde woman spake unto the wall, and sange a song unto the deafe. For if all the horrible and tempestuous soundes of the world had bene cannoned forth out of the greatest bombardes, and sounded through hir delycate eares, hir spyrites of lyfe were so fast bounde and stopt, as she by no meanes coulde awake, wherewith the pore olde woman amazed, began to shake hir by the armes and handes, whych she found so colde as marble stone. Then puttyng hande unto hir mouthe, sodainely perceyved that she was deade, for shee perceyved no breath in hir. Wherefore lyke a woman out of hir wyttes, shee ranne to tell hir mother, who so madde as a tigre berefte of hir faons hied hir selfe into hir daughter's chaumber, and in that pitiful state beholdynge hir daughter, thynkyng hir to be deade, cried out: "Ah cruell death, which hast ended all my joye and blysse, use the last scourge of thy wrathfull ire agaynst me, least by sufferyng mee to lyve the rest of my woefull dayes, my torment doe increase." Then she began to fetch sutch strayning sighes, as hir heart did seeme to cleave in pieces. And as hir cries began to encrease, behold the father, the counte Paris, and a great troupe of gentlemen and ladies, which were come to honour the feaste, hearing no sooner tell of that which chaunced, were stroke into sutch sorrowfull dumpes as he which had beheld their faces would easily have judged that the same had ben a day of ire and pity, specially the lord Antonio, whose heart was frapped with sutch surpassing woe, as neither teare nor word could issue forth, and knowing not what to doe, straight way sent to seeke the most expert phisitians of the towne, who after they had inquired of the life past of Julietta, deemed by common reporte, that melancoly was the cause of that sodayne death, and then their sorows began to renue a fresh. And if ever day was lamentable, piteous, unhappy, and fatall, truly it was that wherein Julietta hir death was published in Verona: for shee was so bewayled of great and small, that by the common playnts, the common wealth seemed to be in daunger, and not without cause: for besides hir naturall beauty (accompanied with

many vertues wherewith nature had enriched hir) she was else so humble, wise and debonaire, as for that humility and curtesie she had stollen away the hearts of every wight, and there was none but did lament hir misfortune. And whilest these thinges were in this lamented state, frier Laurence with diligence dispatched a frier of his covent, named frier Anselme, whom hee trusted as himselfe, and delivered him a letter written with hys owne hande, commaunding him expressely not to give the same to any other but to Rhomeo, wherein was conteyned the chaunce which had passed betwene him and Julietta, specially the vertue of the pouder, and commaunded him the nexte ensuinge nighte to speede himselfe to Verona, for that the operation of the pouder that time would take ende, and that he should cary wyth him back agayne to Mantua his beloved Julietta, in dissembled apparell, untill fortune had otherwise provided for them. The frier made sutch hast as (too late) hee arrived at Mantua, within a while after. And bicause the maner of Italy is, that the frier travayling abroade ought to take a companion of his covent, to doe his affaires wythin the city, the fryer went into his covent, and for that he was within, it was not lawfull for him to come oute againe that day, bicause that certayn dayes before, one relygious of that covent it was sayd, dyd dye of the plague: wherefore the magistrates appoynted for the health and visitation of the sick, commaunded the warden of the house that no friers should wander abrode the city, or talke with any citizen, untill they were licensed by the officers in that behalfe appoynted, which was the cause of the great mishap, which you shal heare hereafter. The frier being in this perplexitye, not able to goe forth, and not knowyng what was contayned in the letter, deferred hys jorney for that day. Whilst things were in thys plyght, preparation was made at Verona, to doe the obsequies of Julietta. There is custome also (whych is common in Italy,) to place all the best of one lignage and familye in one tombe, whereuppon Julietta was intoumbed, in the ordinary grave of the Capellettes, in a churcheyarde, hard by the churche of the fryers, where also the lord Thibault was interred, whose obsequies honorably done, every man returned: whereunto Pietro, the servaunt of Rhomeo, gave hys assystance: for as we have before declared, hys mayster sente hym backe

agayne from Mantua to Verona, to do his father service, and to advertise him of that which should chaunce in hys absence there: who seeyng the body of Julietta, inclosed in toumbe, thinkyng with the reste that shee had bene dead in deede, incontinently tooke poste horse, and with dylygence rode to Mantua, where he founde his mayster in his wonted house, to whome he sayde, wyth hys eyes full of teares: "Syr, there is chaunced unto you so straunge a matter as if so be you do not arme your selfe with constancye, I am afrayd that I shall be the cruell minyster of your death: be it known unto you sir, that yesterday morning my mistresse Julietta left hir lyfe in thys worlde to seeke rest in an other: and wyth these eyes I saw hir buryed in the churchyarde of S. Frauncis." At the sounde of whych heavye message, Rhomeo begann woefullye to lamente, as thoughe hys spyrites gryeved wyth the tormente of hys passion at that instant would have abandoned his bodye. But stronge love which woulde not permytte him to faynt untyl the extremity, framed a thoughte in hys fantesie, that if it wer possyble for him to dye besides hir his death should be more gloryous, and shee (as he thought) better contented: by reason whereof, after hee had washed his face for feare to discover his sorrowe, hee wente out of his chamber, and commaunded hys man to tarry behynd him, that he myght walke through out all the corners of the citye, to fynde propre remedye (if it were possyble) for hys gryefe. And amonges others, beholdynge an apoticaryes shop of lyttle furnyture and lesse store of boxes and other thinges requisite for that scyence, thought that the verye poverty of the mayster apothecarye would make hym wyllingle yeld to that which he pretended to demaunde: and after he had taken hym aside, secretly sayde unto hym: "Syr, if you be the mayster of the house, as I thynke you be, beholde here fifty ducates, whych I gyve you to the intent you delyver me some strong and vyolente poyson that within a quarter of an houre is able to procure death unto hym that shall use it." The couetous apothecarye entysed by gayne, agreed to his request, and fayning to gyve hym some other medycine before the peoples face, he speedily made ready a strong and cruell poyson, afterwardes he sayd unto him softly: "Syr, I gyve you more than is needefull, for the one halfe is able to destroy the strongest manne of the world:" who after he hadde

receyved the poyson, retourned home, where he commaunded his man to departe with diligence to Verona, and that he should make provision of candels, a tynder boxe, and other instrumentes meete for the opening of the grave of Julietta, and that above all things hee shoulde not fayle to attende hys commynge besides the churchyarde of S. Frauncis, and uppon payne of life to keepe hys intente in silence. Which Pietro obeied in order as hys maister had requyred, and made therin sutch expedityon, as he arrived in good time to Verona, taking order for al things that wer commaunded him. Rhomeo in the meane while beyng solycyted wyth mortall thoughtes caused incke and paper to be broughte unto hym, and in few words put in wryting all the discourse of his love, the mariage of him and Julietta, the meane observed for consummation of the same, the helpe that he had of frier Laurence, the buying of his poyson, and last of all his death. Afterwardes having finished his heavy tragedy, hee closed the letters, and sealed the same with his seale, and directed the superscription thereof to hys father: and puttynge the letters into his pursse, he mounted on horsebacke, and used sutch dylygence, as he arrived uppon darke nyght at the citye of Verona, before the gates were shut, where he founde his servuante, tarying for hym with a lanterne and instrumentes as is before sayd, meete for the opening of the grave, unto whome hee said: "Pietro, helpe mee to open this tombe, and so soone as it is open I commaunde thee uppon payne of thy life, not to come neere mee, nor to stay me from the thing I purpose to doe. Beholde, there is a letter which thou shalt present to morrow in the mornyng to my father at his uprysing, which peradventure shall please him better than thou thinkest." Pietro, not able to imagine what was his maisters intent, stode somewhat aloofe to beholde his maisters gestes and countenance. And when they had opened the vaulte, Rhomeo descended downe two steppes, holdyng the candel in his hand and began to behold wyth pityfull eye, the body of hir, which was the organ of his eyes, and kyst it tenderly, holdyng it harde betwen his armes, and not able to satisfie him selfe with hir sight, put hys fearefull handes uppon the colde stomacke of Julietta. And after he had touched her in many places, and not able to feele anye certayne judgemente of lyfe, he drewe the poyson out of hys boxe, and

swallowyng downe a great quantytye of the same, cryed out: "O Julietta, of whome the worlde was unworthye, what death is it possyble my hearte coulde choose oute more agreeable than that whych yt suffereth harde by thee? what grave more gloryous, than to bee buried in thy tombe? what more woorthy or excellent epytaphe can bee vowed for memorye, than the mutuall and pytyfull sacryfice of our lyves?" And thinkinge to renue his sorrowe, his hearte began to frette through the vyolence of the poyson, which by lyttle and lyttle assailed the same, and lookyng about hym, espyed the bodye of the lorde Thibault, lying nexte unto Julietta, whych as yet was not al together putrified, and speakyng to the bodye as though it hadde bene alyve, sayde: "In what place so ever thou arte (O cousyn Thibault) I most heartely do crye the mercy for the offence whych I have done by depryving of thy lyfe: and yf thy ghost doe whyshe and crye out for vengeaunce vppon mee. what greater or more cruell satysfaction canste thou desyre to have, or henceforth hope for, than to see him whych murdered thee, to bee empoysoned with his owne handes, and buryed by thy side?" Then endynge hys talk, felyng by lyttle and lyttle that his lyfe began to fayle, falling prostrate uppon his knees, wyth feeble voyce hee softely sayd: "O my Lord God, which to redeeme me didest discend from the bosom of thy father, and tookest humane fleshe in the wombe of the vyrgine, I acknowledge and confesse, that this body of myne is nothing else but earth and dust." Then seazed uppon wyth desperate sorrow, he fell downe uppon the body of Julietta with sutch vehemence, as the heart faint and attenuated with too great torments, not able to beare so hard a vyolence, was abandoned of all his sense and naturall powers, in sutch sorte as the siege of hys soule fayled him at that instant, and his members stretched forthe, remayned stiffe and colde. Fryer Laurence whych knew the certayne tyme of the pouders operation, marvelled that he had no answere of the letter which he sent to Rhomeo by his fellowe fryer Anselme, departed from S. Frauncis and with instruments for the purpose, determined to open the grave to let in aire to Julietta, whych was ready to wake: and approchyng the place, hee espied a lyght within, which made him afraide untyll that Pietro whych was hard by, had certyfied

hym that Rhomeo was with in, and had not ceased there to lamente and complayne the space of halfe an houre: and when they two were entred the grave and finding Rhomeo without lyfe, made sutch sorrowe as they can well conceyve whych love their dear fryende wyth lyke perfection. And as they were making theyr complaints, Julietta rising out of hir traunce, and beholding light within the toumbe, uncertayne wheather it were a dreame or fantasie that appeared before his eyes, comming agayne to hir selfe, knew frier Laurence, unto whom she sayd: "Father, I pray thee in the name of God to perfourme thy promise, for I am almost deade." And then frier Laurence concealing nothing from hir, (bycause he feared to be taken through his too long abode in that place) faythfully rehearsed unto hir, how he had sent frier Anselme to Rhomeo at Mantua, from whom as yet hee had receyved no aunswere. Notwithstanding he found Rhomeo dead in the grave, whose body he poyncted unto, lyinge hard by hir, praying hir sith it was so, paciently to beare that sodayne misfortune, and that if it pleased hir, he would convey hir into some monastery of women where she might in time moderate hir sorrow, and give rest unto hir minde. Julietta had no sooner cast eye uppon the deade corps of Rhomeo, but began to breake the fountayne pipes of gushing teares, which ran forth in sutch aboundance, as not able to support the furor of hir griefe, she breathed without ceasing upon his mouth, and then throwen hir selfe uppon his body, and embracing it very hard, seemed that by force of sighes and sobs, she would have revived, and brought him againe to ilfe, and after she had kissed and rekissed hym a million of times, she cried out: "Ah the sweete rest of my cares, and the onely port of all my pleasures and pastimes, hadst thou so sure a hearte to choose thy churchyarde this in place betwene the armes of thy perfect lover, and to ende the course of thy life for my sake in the floure of thy youth when lyfe to thee should have bene most deare and delectable? how had this tender body power to resist the furious cumbat of death, very death it selfe here present? how coulde thy tender and delicate youth willingly permit that thou shouldest approch into this filthy and infected place, where from henceforth thou shalt be the pasture of worms unworthy of thee? Alas, alas, by what meanes shall I now renue my playnts,

which time and long pacience ought to have buried and clearely quenched? Ah I, miserable and caitife wretch, thinking to finde remedy for my griefs, have sharpned the knife that hath gieven me this cruell blow, whereof I receive the cause of mortall wound. Ah, happy and fortunate grave which shalt serve in world to come for witnesse of the most perfect aliaunce that ever was betwene two most infortunate lovers, receyve now the last sobbing sighes, and intertaynment of the most cruell of all the cruell subjects of ire and death." And as she thought to continue hir complaynts, Pietro advertised Frier Laurence that he heard a noyse besides the citadell, wherewyth being afrayd, they speadily departed, fearing to be taken: and then Julietta seeing hir selfe alone, and in full liberty, tooke agayne Rhomeo betweene hir armes, kissing him with sutch affection, as she seemed to be more attaynted with love than death, and drawing out the dagger which Rhomeo ware by his side, she pricked hir selfe with many blowes against the heart, sayinge with feeble and pitiful voice: Ah death the end of sorrow, and beginning of felicity, thou art most hartely welcome: feare not at this time to sharpen thy dart: give no longer delay of life, for feare that my sprite travayle not to finde Rhomeo's ghost amongs sutch number of carion corpses: and thou my deare lord and loyall husband Rhomeo, if there rest in thee any knowledge, receyve hir whom thou hast so faythfully loved, the onely cause of thy violent death, which frankley offreth up hir soule that none but thou shalt joy the love whereof thou hast made so lawfull conquest, and that our soules passing from this light, may eternally, live together in the place of everlasting joy." And when she had ended those wordes shee yelded up hir ghost. While these thinges thus were done, the garde and watch of the citty, by chaunce passed by, and seeing light within the grave, suspected straight that there were some necromancers which had opened the toumbe to abuse the deade bodies for ayde of their arte: and desirous to knowe what it ment, went downe into the vaut, where they found Rhomeo and Julietta, with their armes imbracing ech other's neck, as though there had bene some token of lyfe. And after they had well viewed them at leysure, they perceyved in what case they were: and then all amazed they sought for the theeves which (as they thought) had done the murther, and in the ende founde the good

father fryer Laurence, and Pietro the servaunte of deade Rhomeo (whych had hid themselves under a stall) whom they caryed to pryson, and advertysed the lord of Escala, and the magistrates of Verona of that horrible murder, which by and by was published throughoute the city. Then flocked together al the citizens, women and children leavyng their houses, to loke uppon that pityful sighte, and to the ende that in presence of the whole cytie, the murder should be knowne, the magistrates ordayned that the two deade bodies should be erected uppon a stage to the view and sight of the whole world, in sutch sorte and manner as they were founde withyn the grave, and that Pietro and frier Laurence should publikely bee examyned, that afterwardes there myght be no murmure or other pretended cause of ignoraunce. And thys good olde frier beynge uppon the scaffold, havinge a whyte bearde all wet and bathed with teares, the judges commaunded him to declare unto them who were the authors of that murder, sith at untimely houre hee was apprehended with certayne irons besides the grave. Fryer Laurence, a rounde and franke man of talke, nothyng moved with that accusation, answered them with stoute and bolde voyce: "My maisters, there is none of you all (if you have respect unto my forepassed life, and to my aged yeres, and therewithall have consideration of this heavy spectacle, whereunto unhappy fortune hathe presently brought me) but doeth greatly marvell of so sodaine mutation and change unlooked for, for so mutch as these three score and ten or twelve yeares sithens I came into this worlde, and began to prove the vanities thereof, I was never suspected, touched, or found guilty of any crime which was able to make me blushe, or hide my face, although (before God) I doe confesse my self to be the greatest and most abhominable sinner of al the redeemed flocke of Christ. So it is notwythstanding, that sith I am prest and ready to render mine accompte, and that death, the grave and wormes do dailye summon this wretched corps of myne to appeare before the justyce seate of God, still wayghtyng and attending to be carried to my hoped grave, this is the houre I say, as you likewise may thinke wherein I am fallen to the greatest damage and prejudice of my lyfe and honest porte, and that which hath ingendred thys synyster opynyon of mee, may peradventure bee these greate teares which in abundaunce

tryckle downe my face as though the holy scriptures do not witnesse, that Jesus Christ moved with humayne pitty, and compassion, did weepe, and pour forth teares, and that many times teares be the faythfull messengers of a man's innocency. Or else the most likely evidence, and presumption, is the suspected hour, which (as the magistrate doth say) doth make mee culpable of the murder, as though all houres were not indifferently made equall by God their Creator, who in his owne person declareth unto us that there be twelve houres in the day, shewing thereby that there is no exception of houres nor of minutes, but that one may doe eyther good or ill at all times indifferently, as the party is guided or forsaken by the sprite of God: touching the irons which were founde about me, needefull it is not now to let you understand for what use iron was first made, and that of it selfe it is not able to increase in man eyther good or evill, if not by the mischievous minde of hym which doth abuse it. Thus mutch I have thought good to tell you, to the intent that neyther teares nor iron, ne yet suspected houre, are able to make me guilty of the murder, or make me otherwyse than I am, but only the witnesse of mine owne conscience, which alone if I were guilty should be the accuser, the witnesse, and the hangman, whych, by reason of mine age and the reputation I have had amonges you, and the little time that I have to live in this world shoulde more torment me within, than all the mortall paynes that coulde be devised: but (thankes be to myne eternall God) I feele no worme that gnaweth, nor any remorse that pricketh me touching that fact, for which I see you all troubled and amazed: and to set your harts at rest, and to remove the doubts which hereafter may torment your consciences, I sweare unto you by all the heavenly parts wherein I hope to be, that forthwith I will disclose from first to last the entire discourse of this pitifull tragedy, whych peradventure shall drive you into no lesse wondre and amaze, than those two poore passionate lovers were strong and pacient, to expone themselves to the mercy of death, for the fervent and indissoluble love betwene them." Then the fatherly frier began to repeate the beginning of the love betwene Julietta, and Rhomeo, which by certayne space of time confirmed, was prosecuted by wordes at the first, then by mutual promise of mariage, unknown

to the world. And as within few dayes after, the two lovers feelinge themselves sharpned and incited with stronger onset, repaired unto him under colour of confession, protesting by othe that they were both maried, and that if he woulde not solempnize that mariage in the face of the church, they should be constrayned to offend God to live in disordred lust: in consideration whereof, and specially seeing their alliaunce to be good, and comfortable in dignity, richesse and nobility on both sides, hoping by that meanes perchaunce to reconcile the Montesches, and Capellets, and that by doing sutch an acceptable worke to God, he gave them the churches blessing in a certayne chappel of the friers church whereof the night following they did consummate the mariage fruicts in the pallace of the Capellets. For testimony of which copulation, the woman of Juliettaes chamber was able to depose: Adding moreover, the murder of Thibault, which was cousin to Julietta: by reason whereof the banishment of Rhomeo did followe, and howe in the absence of the sayd Rhomeo, the mariage being kept secret betwene them, a new matrimony was intreated wyth the counte Paris, which misliked by Julietta, she fell prostrate at his feete in a chappell of S. Frauncis church, with full determination to have killed hirself with hir owne hands, if he gave hir not councell how she should avoyde the mariage agreed betwene hir father and the counte Paris. For conclusion, he sayd, that although he was resolved by reason of his age, and nearenesse of death to abhorre all secret sciences, wherein in his younger yeares he had delight, notwithstanding, pressed with importunity, and moved with pitty, fearing lest Julietta should do some cruelty agaynst hirselfe, he strayned his conscience, and chose rather with some little fault to grieve his minde, than to suffer the young gentlewoman to destroy hir body, and hazarde the daunger of hir soule: and therefore he opened some part of his auncient cunning, and gave her a certayne pouder to make hir sleepe, by meanes whereof she was thought to be deade. Then he tolde them how he had sent frier Anselme to cary letters to Rhomeo of their enterprise, whereof hitherto he had no aunswere. Then briefly he concluded how he found Rhomeo dead within the grave, who as it is most likely did impoyson himselfe, or was otherwise smothered or suffocated with sorow by findinge Julietta in that

state, thinking shee had bene dead. Then he tolde them how Julietta did kill hirselfe with the dagger of Rhomeo to beare him company after his death, and how it was impossible for them to save hir for the noyse of the watch which forced theym to flee from thence. And for more ample approbation of his saying, he humbly besought the lord of Verona and the magistrats to send to Mantua for frier Anselme to know the cause of his slack returne, that the content of the letter sent to Rhomeo might be seene: to examine the woman of the chamber of Julietta, and Pietro the servaunt of Rhomeo, who not attending for furder request, sayd unto them: "My lordes, when Rhomeo entred the grave, he gave me this pacquet, written as I suppose with his owne hand, who gave me expresse commaundement to deliver it to his father." The pacquet opened, they founde the whole effect of this story, specially the apothecaries name, which sold him the poyson, the price, and the cause wherefore he used it, and all appeared to be so cleare and evident, as there rested nothing for further verification of the same, but their presence at the doing of the particulers thereof, for the whole was so well declared in order, as they were out of doubt that the same was true: and then the lord Bartholomew of Escala, after he had debated with the magistrates of these events, decreed that the woman of Julietta hir chamber should bee banished, because shee did conceale that privy mariage from the father of Rhomeo, which if it had beene knowne in tyme, had bred to the whole citty an universall benefit. Pietro because he obeyed hys maysters commaundement, and kept close hys lawfull secrets, according to the well conditioned nature of a trusty servaunt, was set at liberty. The poticary taken, rackt, and founde guilty, was hanged. The good olde man frier Laurence, as well for respect of his auncient service which he had done to the common wealth of Verona, as also for his vertuous life (for the which hee was specially recommended) was let goe in peace, without any note of infamy. Notwithstanding by reason of his age, he voluntarily gave over the world, and closed himselfe in an hermitage, two miles from Verona, where he lived v. or vi. yeares, and spent hys tyme in continuall prayer, until he was called out of this transitory worlde, into the blisfull state of everlasting joy. And for the compassion of so straunge an infortune, the Montes-

ches, and Capellets poured forth sutch abundaunce of teares, as with the same they did evacuate their auncient grudge and choler, whereby they were then reconciled: and they which coulde not bee brought to attonement by any wisedome or humayne councell, were in the ende vanquished and made frends by pity: and to immortalizate the memory of so intier and perfect amity, the lord of Verona ordayned, that the two bodies of those miraculous lovers should be fast intoumbed in the grave where they ended their lyves, in which place was erected a high marble piller, honoured with an infinite number of excellent epytaphes, which to this day be apparaunt, with sutch noble memory, as amongs all the rare excellencies, wherewith that city is furnished, there is none more famous than the monument of Rhomeo and Julietta.

THE STORY

OF

GILETTA OF NARBONA,

ON WHICH IS FOUNDED

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

Reprinted from the first tome of

THE PALACE OF PLEASURE, 1566.

INTRODUCTION.

THE story of "Giletta of Narbona" is a translation from the Italian, and it forms *Nov.* 9, *Giorn.* iii, of the *Decameron.* Paynter, in his version in tome i of his "Palace of Pleasure," 4to, 1566, somewhat amplifies the title, in order to render it a sort of argument to the story, but in Boccaccio it is, perhaps, sufficiently explanatory: it runs thus:—"Giglietta di Nerbona guarisce il Re di Francia d'una fistola; domanda per marito Beltramo di Rossiglione; il quale contra sua voglia sposatala, a Firenze se ne va per isdegno; dove vagheggiando una giovane, in persona di lei Giglietta giacque con lui, e hebbene due figlioli; perchè egli poi havutala cara per moglie la tiene." Whether Shakespeare did or did not understand Italian, he need not in this instance have taken the trouble to resort to that language, for Paynter rendered his original very literally, and there is little doubt, for various reasons, that our great Dramatist availed himself of the version he found already made to his hands.

It will be seen on comparison that Shakespeare adopted all the main incidents from the novel, with some important additions to the characters. He anglicised Beltramo into Bertram, and changed Giglietta into Helena, and these are the only names given by Boccaccio: the characters of the Countess, the Clown, and Parolles, are new in Shakespeare, and there is no hint in the Italian of any part of the comic scenes in which the latter is engaged, and which so admirably heighten the effect of the more serious portions of the play. The Countess is a delightful creation; and the Clown is the domestic fool, a jester in the disguise of a half-witted menial, the nature of whose duties and situation is illustrated with peculiar force in Armin's "Nest of Ninnies," 1608,

recently reprinted by the Shakespeare Society from the sole existing copy in the Bodleian Library. There is no work in our language so curious and valuable, in respect to the manners of the times, as regards a character so conspicuous, not only in the plays of Shakespeare, but in those of many of his contemporaries; and it is extraordinary that it seems to have been entirely unknown to the late Mr. Douce, who has left behind him so much learning on the subject.

Regarding William Paynter, the collector and translator of the two volumes of which "The Palace of Pleasure" consists, it is, of course, not necessary to repeat here what we have said of him in the "Introduction" to Parts VII and VIII, which contain the "Romeus and Juliet" of Arthur Brooke, and the "Rhomeo and Julietta" of Bandello and Boisteau, as rendered by Paynter. His version of the tale of Giglietta di Nerbona is faithful, and that seems to have been the principal excellence at which he aimed, for he was certainly not an elegant writer of English, even for the time at which he flourished: he seldom or never attempts any of the graces of style, and seems generally satisfied with the first word that presented itself to his mind, if it conveyed sufficiently the meaning of his author. He was a man of no fancy, and of very limited original powers of any kind.

THE THIRTY-EIGHTH NOVELL.

Giletta a phisician's doughter of Narbon, healed the Frenche Kyng of a fistula, for reward wherof she demaunded Beltramo counte of Rossiglione to husbande. The counte beyng maried againste his will, for despite fled to Florence and loved an other. Giletta his wife, by pollicie founde meanes to lye with her husbande, in place of his lover, and was begotten with child of two soonnes: whiche knowen to her husbande, he received her againe, and afterwardes he lived in greate honor and felicitie.

In Fraunce there was a gentleman called Isnardo, the counte of Rossiglione, who bicause he was sickly and diseased, kepte alwaies in his house a phisicion, named maister Gerardo of Narbona. This counte had one onely sonne called Beltramo, a verie yonge childe, pleasaunt and faire. With whom there was nourished and broughte up, many other children of his age: emonges whom one of the doughters of the said phisicion, named Giletta, who ferventlie fill in love with Beltramo, more then was meete for a maiden of her age. This Beltramo, when his father was dedde, and left under the roial custodie of the kyng, was sente to Paris, for whose departure the maiden was verie pensife. A little while after, her father beyng likewise dedde, she was desirous to goe to Paris, onely to see the younge counte, if for that purpose she could gette any good occasion. But beyng diligently looked unto by her kinsfolke (bicause she was riche and fatherlesse) she could see no conveniente waie for her intended journey: and being now mariageable, the love she bare to the counte was never out of her remembraunce, and refused many husbandes with whom her kinsfolke would have placed her, without making them privie to the occasion of her refusall. Now it chaunced that she burned more in love with Beltramo than

ever she did before, bicause she heard tell that hee was growen to the state of a goodly yonge gentlemanne. She heard by reporte, that the Frenche kyng had a swellyng upon his breast, whiche by reason of ill cure was growen to a fistula, and did putte him to merveilous paine and grief, and that there was no phisicion to be founde (although many were proved) that could heale it, but rather did impaire the grief and made it worsse and worsse. Wherfore the kyng, like one that was in dispaire, would take no more counsaill or helpe. Wherof the yonge maiden was wonderfull glad, and thought to have by this meanes, not onelie a lawfull occasion to goe to Paris, but if the disease were suche (as she supposed,) easely to bryng to passe that she might have the counte Beltramo to her husbande. Whereupon with suche knowledge as she had learned at her fathers handes before time, shee made a pouder of certain herbes, whiche she thought meete for that disease, and rode to Paris. And the first thing she went about when she came thither was to see the counte Beltramo. And then she repaired to the kyng, praying his grace to vouchsaufe to shewe her his disease. The kyng perceivyng her to be a faire yonge maiden and a comelie, would not hide it, but opened the same unto her. So soone as she sawe it, shee putte hym in comforte, that she was able to heale hym, saiyng: "Sire, if it shall please your grace, I trust in God without any paine or grief unto your highnesse, within eighte daies I will make you whole of this disease." The kyng hearyng her saie so, began to mocke her, saiyng: "How is it possible for thee, beyng a yong woman, to doe that whiche the best renoumed phisicions in the worlde can not?" He thanked her for her good will, and made her a directe answere, that he was determined no more to followe the counsaile of any phisicion. Whereunto the maiden answered: "Sire, you dispise my knowledge bicause I am yonge and a woman, but I assure you that I doe not minister phisicke by profession, but by the aide and helpe of God: and with the cunnyng of maister Gerardo of Narbona, who was my father,

and a phisicion of greate fame so longe as he lived." The kyng hearyng those wordes, saied to hymself: "This woman, peradventure, is sent unto me of God, and therefore why should I disdain to prove her cunnyng? sithens she promiseth to heale me within a litle space, without any offence or grief unto me." And beyng determined to prove her, he said: "Damosell, if thou doest not heale me, but make me to breake my determinacion, what wilt thou shall folowe thereof." "Sire," saied the maiden: "Let me be kept in what guarde and kepyng you list: and if I dooe not heale you within these eight daies, let me bee burnte: but if I doe heale your grace what recompence shall I have then? To whom the kyng answered: "Bicause thou art a maiden and unmaried, if thou heale me accordyng to thy promisse, I wil bestowe thee upon some gentleman, that shalbe of right good worship and estimacion." To whom she answeared: "Sire, I am verie well content that you bestowe me in mariage: but I will have suche a husbande as I my self shall demaunde, without presumpcion to any of your children or other of your bloudde." Whiche requeste the kyng incontinently graunted. The yong maiden began to minister her phisicke, and in shorte space before her appoincted tyme, she had throughly cured the kyng. And when the king perceived himself whole, said unto her: "Thou hast well deserved a husbande (Giletta) even suche a one as thy selfe shalt chose." "I have then my lorde (quod she) deserved the countie Beltramo of Rossiglione, whom I have loved from my youthe." The kyng was very lothe to graunte hym unto her: but bicause he had made a promis which he was lothe to breake, he caused hym to be called forthe, and saied unto hym: "Sir counte, bicause you are a gentleman of greate honor, our pleasure is, that you retourne home to your owne house, to order your estate according to your degree: and that you take with you a damosell whiche I have appoincted to be your wife." To whom the counte gave his humble thankes, and demaunded what she was? "It is she (quoth the kyng) that with her

medecines hath healed me." The counte knewe her well, and had alredie seen her, although she was faire, yet knowing her not to be of a stocke convenable to his nobilitie, disdainfullie said unto the king, "Will you then (sir) give me a phisicion to wife? It is not the pleasure of God that ever I should in that wise bestowe my self." To whom the kyng said: "Wilt thou then, that we should breake our faithe, whiche we to recover healthe have given to the damosell, who for a rewarde thereof asked thee to husband?" Sire (quoth Beltramo) you maie take from me al that I have, and give my persone to whom you please, bicause I am your subject: but I assure you I shall never be contented with that mariage." "Well, you shall have her, (saied the kyng) for the maiden is faire and wise, and loveth you moste intirely: thinkyng verelie you shall leade a more joyfull life with her, then with a ladie of a greater house." The counte therewithal helde his peace, and the king made great preparacion for the mariage. And when the appoincted daie was come, the counte in the presence of the kyng (although it were againste his will) maried the maiden, who loved hym better then her owne self. Whiche dooen, the counte determinyng before what he would doe, praied licence to retourne to his countrie to consummat the mariage. And when he was on horsebacke he went not thither, but tooke his journey into Thuscane, where understandyng that the Florentines and Senois were at warres, he determined to take the Florentines parte, and was willinglie received and honourablie interteigned, and made capitaine of a certaine nomber of men, continuyng in their service a longe tyme. The newe maried gentlewoman, scarce contented with that, and hopyng by her well doyng to cause hym to retourne into his countrie, went to Rossiglione, where she was received of all his subjectes for their ladie. And perceivyng that through the countes absence all thinges were spoiled and out of order, she like a sage lady, with greate diligence and care, disposed all thynges in order againe: whereof the subjectes rejoysed verie muche,

bearyng to her their hartie love and affection, greatlie blamyng the counte bicause he could not contente himself with her. This notable gentlewoman having restored all the countrie againe, sent worde thereof to the counte her husbande, by two knightes of the countrie, whiche she sent to signifie unto hym, that if it were for her sake that he had abandoned his countrie, he should sende her worde thereof, and she to doe hym pleasure, would depart from thence. To whom he chorlishlie saied: "Lette her doe what she list: for I doe purpose to dwell with her, when she shall have this ryng (meanyng a ryng which he wore) upon her finger, and a soonne in her armes begotten by me." He greatly loved that ryng, and kepte it verie carefullie, and never tooke it of from his finger, for a certaine vertue that he knewe it had. The knightes hearyng the harde condicion of twoo thinges impossible: and seyng that by them he could not be removed from his determinacion, thei retourned againe to the ladie, tellinge her his answere: who, verie sorowfull, after she hadde a good while bethought herself, purposed to finde meanes to attaine to those twoo thynges, to the intente that thereby she might recover her husbande. And havyng advised with her self what to doe, she assembled the noblest and chiefest of her countrie, declaring unto them in lamentable wise what shee had alredie dooen, to winne the love of of the counte, shewyng them also what folowed thereof. And in the ende saied unto them, that she was lothe the counte for her sake should dwell in perpetuall exile: therefore she determined to spende the rest of her tyme in pilgrimages and devocion, for preservacion of her soule, praiyng them to take the charge and governemente of the countrie, and that they would lette the counte understande, that she had forsaken his house, and was removed farre from thence: with purpose never to retourne to Rossiglione againe. Many teares were shedde by the people, as she was speakyng these wordes, and divers supplicacions were made unto him to alter his opinion, but al in vaine. Wherefore commending them all

unto God, she tooke her waie with her maide, and one of her kinsemen, in the habite of a pilgrime, well furnished with silver and precious jewelles: tellyng no man whither shee wente, and never rested till she came to Florence: where arrivyng by fortune at a poore widowes house, she contented her self with the state of a poore pilgrime, desirous to here newes of her lorde, whom by fortune she sawe the next daie passing by the house (where she lay) on horsebacke with his companie. And although she knewe him well enough, yet she demaunded of the good wife of the house what he was: who answered that he was a straunge gentleman, called the counte Beltramo of Rossiglione, a curteous knighte, and wel beloved in the citie, and that he was merveilously in love with a neighbor of hers, that was a gentlewoman, verie poore and of small substaunce, neverthelesse of right honest life and report, and by reason of her povertie was yet unmaried, and dwelte with her mother, that was a wise and honest ladie. The countesse well notyng these wordes, and by litle and litle debatyng every particular point thereof, comprehendyng the effecte of those newes, concluded what to doe, and when she had well understanded whiche was the house, and the name of the ladie, and of her doughter that was beloved of the counte: upon a daie repaired to the house secretelie in the habite of a pilgrime, where finding the mother and doughter in poore estate emonges their familie, after she hadde saluted them, tolde the mother that she had to saie unto her. The gentlewoman risyng up, curteouslie interteigned her, and beyng entred alone into a chamber, thei satte doune, and the countesse began to saie unto her in this wise. "Madame, me thinke that ye be one upon whom fortune doeth frowne, so well as upon me: but if you please, you maie bothe comfort me and your self." The ladie answered, "That there was nothyng in the worlde whereof she was more desirous then of honest comforte." The countesse procedyng in her talke, saied unto her. "I have nede now of your fidelitie and trust, whereupon if I doe

staie, and you deceive mee, you shall bothe undoe me and your self." "Tel me then what it is hardelie (saied the gentlewoman:) if it bee your pleasure: for you shall never bee deceived of me." Then the countesse beganne to recite her whole estate of love: tellyng her what she was, and what had chaunced to that present daie, in such perfite order that the gentlewoman belevyng her woordes, bicause she had partlie heard report thereof before, beganne to have compassion upon her, and after that the countesse had rehearsed all the whole circumstaunce, she continued her purpose, saiyng: "Now you have heard emonges other my troubles, what twoo thynges thei bee, whiche behoveth me to have, if I do recover my husbande, whiche I knowe none can helpe me to obtain, but onely you, if it bee true that I heare, whiche is, that the counte my husbande, is farre in love with your doughter." To whom the gentlewoman saied: "Madame, if the counte love my doughter, I knowe not, albeit the likelihoode is greate: but what am I able to doe, in that whiche you desire?" "Madame, answered the countesse, I will tell you: but first I will declare what I mean to doe for you, if my determinacion be brought to effect: I see your faier doughter of good age, redie to marie, but as I understand the cause why she is unmaried, is the lacke of substance to bestowe upon her. Wherfore I purpose, for recompence of the pleasure, whiche you shall dooe for me, to give so much redie money to marie her honorably, as you shall thinke sufficient." The countesse' offer was very well liked of the ladie, bicause she was but poore: yet having a noble hart, she said unto her, "Madame, tell me wherein I maie do you service: and if it be a thing honest, I will gladlie performe it, and the same being brought to passe, do as it shal please you." Then saied the countesse: "I thinke it requisite, that by some one whom you truste, that you give knowledge to the counte my husbande, that your doughter is, and shalbe at his commaundement: and to the intent she maie bee well assured that he loveth her in deede above any other, that she praieth him to sende her

a ring that he weareth upon his finger, whiche ring she heard tell he loved verie derely: and when he sendeth the ryng, you shall give it unto me, and afterwardes sende hym woorde, that your doughter is redie to accomplishe his pleasure, and then you shall cause him secretly to come hither, and place me by hym (in steede of your doughter) peradventure God will give me the grace, that I maie bee with childe, and so havyng this ryng on my finger, and the childe in myne armes begotten by him, I shall recover him, and by your meanes continue with hym, as a wife ought to doe with her husbande." This thing semed difficulte unto the gentlewoman: fearyng that there would folowe reproche unto her doughter. Notwithstandyng, consideryng what an honest parte it were, to be a meane that the good ladie should recover her husband, and that she should doe it for a good purpose, havyng affiaunce in her honest affection, not onely promised the countesse to bryng this to passe, but in fewe daies with greate subtiltie, folowyng the order wherein she was instructed, she had gotten the ryng, although it was with the countes ill will, and toke order that the countesse in stede of her doughter did lye with hym. And at the first meetyng, so affectuously desired by the counte: God so disposed the matter that the countesse was begotten with child, of twoo goodly sonnes, and her delivery chaunced at the due time. Whereupon the gentlewoman, not onely contented the countesse at that tyme with the companie of her husbande, but at many other times so secretly that it was never knowen: the counte not thinkyng that he had lien with his wife, but with her whom he loved. To whom at his uprisyng in the mornyng, he used many curteous and amiable woordes, and gave divers faire and precious jewelles, whiche the countesse kepte moste carefullie: and when shee perceived herself with childe, she determined no more to trouble the gentlewoman, but saied unto her. "Madame, thankes be to God and you, I have the thyng that I desire, and even so it is tyme to recompence your desert, that afterwardes I maie departe."

The gentlewoman saied unto her, that if she had doen any pleasure agreable to her mind, she was right glad thereof whiche she did, not for hope of rewarde, but because it apperteined to her by well doyng so to doe. Whereunto the countesse saied: "Your saiyng pleaseth me well, and likewise for my parte, I dooe not purpose to give unto you the thing you shall demaunde of me in rewarde, but for consideracion of your well doyng, which duetie forceth me to so dooe." The gentlewoman then constrained with necessitie, demaunded of her with greate bashefulnesse, an hundred poundes to marie her doughter. The countesse perceivyng the shamefastnesse of the gentlewoman, and hearyng her curteous demaunde, gave her five hundred poundes, and so many faire and costly jewels whiche almoste amounted to like valer. For whiche the gentlewoman more then contented, gave moste hartie thankes to the countesse, who departed from the gentlewoman and retourned to her lodging. The gentlewoman to take occasion from the counte of any farther repaire, or sendyng to her house, tooke her doughter with her, and went into the countrie to her frendes. The counte Beltramo, within fewe daies after, beyng revoked home to his owne house by his subjectes, (hearyng that the countesse was departed from thence) retourned. The countesse knowynge that her housband was gone from Florence and retourned into his countrie, was verie glad and contented, and she continewed in Florence till the tyme of her childbedde was come, and was brough a bedde of twoo soones, whiche were verie like unto their fatner, and caused them carefullie to be noursed and brought up, and when she sawe tyme, she toke her journey (unknowen to any manne) and arrived at Monpellier, and restyng her self there for certaine daies, hearyng newes of the counte, and where he was, and that upon the daie of All Sainctes, he purposed to make a great feast and assemblie of ladies and knightes, in her pilgrimes weede she wente thither. And knowyng that thei were all assembled, at the palace of the counte, redie to sitte doune at the table,

she passed through the people witbout chaunge of apparell, with her twoo sonnes in her armes: and when she was come up into the hall, even to the place where the counte was, fallying doune prostrate at his feete, wepyng, saied unto him: "My lorde, I am thy poore infortunate wife, who to th'intent thou mightest returne and dwel in thine owne house, have been a great while beggyng about the worlde. Therefore I now beseche thee, for the honour of God, that thou wilt observe the condicions, whiche the twoo knightes (that I sent unto thee) did commaunde me to doe: for beholde, here in myne armes, not onelie one soonne begotten by thee, but twaine, and likewise thy rynge. It is now tyme then (if thou kepe promis) that I should be received as thy wife." The counte hearyng this, was greatly astonned, and knewe the rynge, and the children also, thei were so like hym. "But tell me (quod he) how is this come to passe?" The countesse to the great admiracion of the counte, and of all those that were in presence, rehearsed unto them in order all that, whiche had been doen, and the whole discourse thereof. For whiche cause the counte knowyng the thynges she had spoken to be true (and perceivyng her constaunt minde and good witte, and the twoo faier yonge boies to kepe his promisse made, and to please his subjectes, and the ladies that made sute unto him, to accept her from that time forthe as his lawfull wife, and to honour her) abjected his obstinate rigour: causyng her to rise up, and imbraced and kissed her, acknowledgyng her againe for his lawfull wife. And after he had apparelled her according to her estate, to the greate pleasure and contentacion of those that were there, and of all his other frendes not onely that daie, but many others, he kepte great chere, and from that tyme forthe, he loved and honoured her, as his dere spouse and wife.

THE STORY

OF THE

TWO LOVERS OF PISA,

WHICH SHAKESPEARE EMPLOYED IN HIS PLAY OF

THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

Reprinted from "TARLTONS NEWS OUT OF PURGATORY."

INTRODUCTION.

"THE Two Lovers of Pisa" was printed at an early date in a tract called "Tarlton's News out of Purgatory." This novel is not, as has been usually supposed and asserted, a translation from *Il Pecorone* of Giovanni Fiorentino, but more properly from *Le tredici Piacevoli Notti* of Straparola. The two Italian tales have, however, a strong resemblance; and a comparison of them has been rendered easy, because both are contained in the Appendix to Mr. Halliwell's "First Sketch of the Merry Wives of Windsor," printed for the Shakespeare Society. The main incident, however, of concealing a lover in a heap of family linen, as Falstaff is hidden in the buck-basket, is found in *Il Pecorone*, and is not in the story as related by Straparola: the words of Giovanni Fiorentino are worth quoting:—"La donna era à sedere al fuoco con Buccivolo, e sentendo bussar l'uscio, subitamente si pensò che fosse il maestro, e prese Buccivolo, e nascose lo sotto un monte di panni di bucato, il quali non erano ancora rasciutti, e per lo tempo gli haveva ragunati in su la tavola à pie d'una finestra." This important circumstance is preserved in another production, as far as we now know, of a date considerably subsequent to the time of Shakespeare, but of which there may have been an earlier edition, although the style seems more modern than the close of the sixteenth century: it is called "The Fortunate, the Deceived, and the Unfortunate Lovers," 4to, 1632, and it has been referred to by Steevens. Mr. Halliwell informs us (p. 101) that a copy of a much later date is preserved among Capell's books in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge; and he is quite correct, for it was, in fact, reprinted in 1685.

"Tarlton's News out of Purgatory" is silent respecting the half-dry clothes from the wash, so that, if Shakespeare derived the incident from the Italian, it must have been from

the original novel in *Il Pecorone*, or from some early version of it with which we are not now acquainted: as we have said, the story of "The Two Lovers of Pisa" bears a much closer resemblance to Straparola than to Giovanni Fiorentino. Richard Tarlton, as many of our readers are aware, was a very celebrated actor, who died not long after the date when it is probable Shakespeare came to London: he was buried in 1588, and his extraordinary popularity long survived him. The "News out of Purgatory" must have been printed soon after his decease, perhaps in 1589: it has no date on the title-page, but in 1590 came out an answer to it, called "The Cobler of Caunterburie, or an Invective against Tarlton's Newes out of Purgatorie," of which a second edition appeared in 1608, and a third under a new name, "The Tinker of Turvey" (with some alterations at the beginning and end, in order to give it the appearance of a different work) in 1630. The truth is, that although "The Cobler of Caunterburie" professes to be "an invective against Tarlton's News out of Purgatory," it is a direct imitation of it, in form and substance, as well as in style. However, we have here nothing to do with "The Cobler of Caunterburie," farther than as the printing of it with the date of 1590 ascertains that "Tarlton's News out of Purgatory," containing the Novel of "The Two Lovers of Pisa," was published before it.

Excepting as regards the "buck-basket" of Shakespeare, and the *panni di bucato* of Giovanni Fiorentino, the coincidences between the comedy and the novel are rather general than particular, consisting mainly of the manner in which a gallant takes the husband of the lady with whom he wishes to have an intrigue into his confidence, and thus obtains his assistance. Of course, we hear of no such personage as Falstaff either in Straparola or in Giovanni Fiorentino: he was, and must necessarily have been, a character of Shakespeare's invention.

THE TWO LOVERS OF PISA.

In Pisa, a famous cittie of Italye, there lived a gentleman of good linage and landes, feared as well for his wealth, as honoured for his vertue; but indeed well thought on for both, yet the better for his riches. This gentleman had one onelye daughter called Margaret, who for her beauty was liked of all, and desired of many: but neither might their sutes, nor her own prevaile about her father's resolution, who was determyned not to marrye her, but to such a man as should be able in abundance to maintain the excellency of her beauty. Divers young gentlemen proffered large foeffments, but in vaine: a maide shee must be still; till at last an olde doctor in the towne, that professed phisicke, became a sutor to her, who was a welcome man to her father, in that he was one of the welthiest men in all Pisa. A tall stripling he was, and a proper youth, his age about fourscore; his head as white as milke, wherein for offence sake there was left never a tooth: but it is no matter; what he wanted in person he had in the purse; which the poore gentlewoman little regarded, wishing rather to tie herself to one that might fit her content, though they lived meanely, then to him with all the wealth in Italye. But shee was yong and forcst to follow her father's direction, who upon large covenants was content his daughter should marry with the doctor, and whether she likte him or no, the match was made up, and in short time she was married. The poore wench was bound to the stake, and had not onely an old impotent man, but one that was so jealous, as none might enter into his house without suspicion, nor shee doo any thing without blame: the least glance, the smallest countenance, any smile, was a manifest instance to him, that shee thought of others better

then himselfe: thus he himselfe lived in a hell, and tormented his wife in as ill perplexitie. At last it chaunced that a young gentleman of the citie comming by her house, and seeing her looke out at her window, noting her rare and excellent proportion, fell in love with her, and that so extreamelye as his passion had no meanes till her favour might mittigate his heart sicke content. The young man that was ignorant in amorous matters, and had never been used to courte anye gentlewoman, thought to reveale his passions to some one freend, that might give him counsaile for the winning of her love; and thinking experience was the surest maister, on a daye seeing the olde doctor walking in the churche, that was Margarets husband, little knowing who he was, he thought this was the fittest man to whom he might discover his passions, for that hee was olde and knewe much, and was a physition that with his drugges might help him forward in his purposes: so that seeing the old man walke solitary, he joinde unto him, and after a curteous salute, tolde him he was to impart a matter of great import unto him; wherein if hee would not onely be secrete, but endeavour to pleasure him, his pains should bee every way to the full considered. You must imagine, gentleman, quoth Mutio, for so was the doctors name, that men of our profession are no blabs, but hold their secrets in their hearts bottome; and therefore reveale what you please, it shall not onely be concealed, but cured, if either my art or counsaile may doo it. Upon this Lionell, (so was the young gentleman called,) told and discourst unto him, from point to point, how he was falne in love with a gentlewoman that was married to one of his profession; discovered her dwelling and the house, and for that hee was unacquainted with the woman, and a man little experienced in love matters, he required his favour to further him with his advise. Mutio at this motion was stung to the hart, knowing it was his wife hee was fallen in love withall: yet to conceale the matter, and to experience his wives chastity, and that if she plaide false, he might be re-

vengde on them both, he dissembled the matter, and answered, that he knewe the woman very well, and commended her highly; but saide, she had a churle to her husband, and therefore he thought shee would bee the more tractable: trie her man, quoth hee; fainte hart never woonne faire lady; and if shee will not bee brought to the bent of your bowe, I will provide such a potion as shall dispatch all to your owne content; and to give your further instructions for opportunitie, knowe that her husband is foorth every after noone from three till sixe. Thus farre I have advised you, because I pitty your passions as my selfe being once a lover: but now I charge thee, reveale it to none whomsover, lest it doo disparage my credit, to meddle in amorous matters. The young gentleman not onely promised all carefull secrecy, but gave him harty thanks for his good counsell, promising to meete him there the next day, and tell him what newes. Then hee left the old man, who was almost mad for feare his wife should any way play false. He saw by experience, brave men came to besiege the castle, and seeing it was in a woman's custodie, he had so weake a governor as himselfe, he doubted it would in time be delivered up: which feare made him almost franticke, yet he drivde of the time in great torment, till he might heare from his rival. Lionello, he hastes him home, and sutes him in his braverye, and goes down towards the house of Mutio, where he sees her at her windowe, whom he courted with a passionate looke, with such an humble salute as shee might perceive how the gentleman was affectionate. Margaretta looking earnestlye upon him, and noting the perfection of his proportion, accounted him in her eye the flower of all Pisa; thinkte herselfe fortunate if she might have him for her freend, to supply those defaultes that she found in Mutio. Sundry times that afternoone he past by her window, and he cast not up more loving lookes then he received gratious favours: which did so incourage him, that the next daye betweene three and sixe hee went to her house, and knocking at the doore, desired to speake with the

mistris of the house, who hearing by her maid's description what he was, commaunded him to come in, where she interteined him with all curtesie.

The youth that never before had given the attempt to covet a ladye, began his exordium with a blushe: and yet went forward so well, that hee discourst unto her howe hee loved her, and that if it might please her so to accept of his service, as of a freende ever vowde in all duetye to bee at her commaunde, the care of her honour should bee deerer to him then his life, and hee would bee ready to prise her discontent with his bloud at all times.

The gentlewoman was a little coye, but before they part they concluded that the next day at foure of the clock hee should come thither and eate a pound of cherries, which was resolved on with a succado des labras; and so with a loath to depart they took their leaves. Lionello, as joyfull a man as might be, hyed him to the church to meete his olde doctor, where he found him in his olde walke. What newes, syr, quoth Mutio? How have you sped? Even as I can wishe, quoth Lionello; for I have been with my mistresse, and have found her so tractable, that I hope to make the olde peasant her husband look broad-hedded by a paire of browantlers. How deepe this strooke into Mutio's hart, let them imagine that can conjecture what jelousie is; insomuch that the olde doctor askte, when should be the time. marry, quoth Lionello, to morrow at foure of the clocke in the afternoone; and then maister doctor, quoth hee, will I dub the olde squire knight of the forked order.

Thus they past on in chat, till it grew late; and then Lyonello went home to his lodging, and Mutio to his house, covering all his sorrowes with a merrye countenance, with full resolution to revenge them both the next day with extremitie. He past the night as patiently as he could, and the next daye after dinner awaye hee went, watching when it should bee four of the clocke. At the houre justly came Lyonello, and was intertained with all curtesie: but scarse

had they kist, ere the maide cried out to her mistresse that her maister was at the doore; for he hasted, knowing that a horne was but a litle while on grafting. Margaret at this alarum was amazed, and yet for a shifte chopt Lyonello into a great driefatte full of feathers, and sat her downe close to her woorke: by that came Mutio in blowing; and as though hee came to looke somewhat in haste, called for the keyes of his chambers, and looked in everye place, searching so narrowlye in evrye corner of the house, that he left not the very privie unsearcht. Seeing he could not finde him, hee saide nothing, but fayning himselfe not well at ease, staide at home, so that poore Lionello was faine to staye in the drifatte till the old churle was in bed with his wife; and then the maide let him out at a backe doore, who went home with a flea in his eare to his lodging.

Well, the next daye he went againe to meete his doctor, whome hee found in his woonted walke. What news, quoth Mutio? How have you sped? A poxe of the olde slave, quoth Lyonello, I was no sooner in, and had given my mistresse one kisse, but the jealous asse was at the doore; the maide spied him, and cryed, her maister: so that the poore gentlewoman for verye shifte, was faine to put me in a driefatte of feathers that stoode in an olde chamber, and there I was faine to tarrie while he was in bed and asleepe, and then the maide let me out, and I departed.

But it is no matter; twas but a chaunce; and I hope to crye quittance with him ere it be long. As how, quoth Mutio? Marry thus, quoth Lionello: she sent me woord by her maide this daye, that upon Thursday next the olde churle suppeth with a patient of his a mile out of Pisa, and then I feare not but to quitte him for all. It is well, quoth Mutio; fortune bee your freende. I thank you, quoth Lionello; and so after a little more prattle they departed.

To bee shorte, Thursdaye came; and about sixe of the clocke foorth goes Mutio, no further than a freendes house of his, from whence he might descrye who went into his house.

Straight he sawe Lionello enter in; and after goes hee, insomuche that hee was scarselye sitten downe, before the mayde cryed out againe, my maister comes. The good wife that before had provided for afterclaps, had found out a privie place between two seelings of a plauncher, and there she thrust Lionello; and her husband came sweting. What news, quoth shee, drives you home againe so soone, husband? Marrye, sweete wife, quoth he, a fearfull dreame that I had this night, which came to my remembrance; and that was this: Me thought there was a villeine that came secretly into my house with a naked poinard in his hand, and hid himselfe; but I could not finde the place: with that mine nose bled, and I came backe; and by the grace of God I will seeke every corner in the house for the quiet of my minde. Marry, I pray you doo, husband, quoth she. With that he lockt in all the doors, and began to search every chamber, every hole, every chest, every tub, the very well; he stabd every featherbed through, and made havocke, like a mad man, which made him thinke all was in vaine, and hee began to blame his eies that thought they saw that which they did not. Upon this he reste halfe lunaticke, and all night he was very wakefull; that towards the morning he fell into a dead sleepe, and then was Lionello conveighed away.

In the morning when Mutio wakened, hee thought how by no meanes hee should be able to take Lyonello tardy; yet he laid in his head a most dangerous plot, and that was this. Wife, quoth he, I must the next Monday ride to Vicensa to visit an olde patient of mine; till my returne, which will be some ten dayes, I will have thee stay at our little graunge house in the countrey. Marry very well content, husband, quoth she: with that he kist her, and was verye pleasant, as though he had suspected nothing, and away hee flinges to the church, where hee meetes Lionello. What sir, quoth he, what newes? Is your mistresse yours in possession? No, a plague of the old slave, quoth he: I think he is either a