A Pastorall Elegie vpon the death of the most Noble and valorous Knight, Sir Philip Sidney.

Dedicated

To the most beautifull and vertuous Ladie, the Countesse of Essex.
Astrophel.

S

Hepheards that wont on pipes of oaten reed,
Oft times to plaine your loues concealed smart:
And with your pious layses have learnt to breed
Compassion in a country lasses hart.
Hearken ye gentle shepheards to my song,
And place my dolefull plaint your plaints emong.

To you alone I sing this mournfull verse,
The mournfull verse that euer man heard tell:
To you whose softened hearts it may emperise,
With doleurs dart for death of Astrophel.
To you I sing and to none other wight,
For well I wot my rymes bene rudeely dight.

Yet as they been, if any nycer wot
Shall hap to heare, or couet them to read:
Thinke he, that such are for such ones most fit,
Made not to please the living but the dead.
And if in him found pity euer place,
Let him be mood to pity such a case.

A

Gentle Shepheard borne in Arcady,
Of gentlest race that euer shepheard bore:
About the grassie bancks of Hamony,
Did keepe his sheep, his litle stock and store.
Full carefully he kept them day and night,
In fairest fields, and Astrophel he hight.
Young Astrophel the pride of shepheards praise,
Young Astrophel the rusticke lasses loue:
Far passing all the pastors of his daies,
In all that seemly shepheard might behoue.
In one thing onely fayling of the best,
That he was not so happie as the rest.
For from the time that first the Nymph his mother
Him forth did bring, and taught her lambs to feed,
A slender swaine excelling far each other,
In comely shape, like her that did him breed,
He grew vp fast in goodnesse and in grace,
And doubly faire wox both in mynd and face.
Which daily more and more he did augment,
With gentle vsage and demeanure myld:
That all mens hearts with secret raisiment
He stole away, and weetingly beguyl'd.
Ne spight it selfe that all good things doth spill,
Found ought in him, that she could say was ill.
His sports were faire, his ioyance innocent,
Sweet without sovre, and honny without gall:
And he himselfe seemd made for meriment,
Merily masking both in bowre and hall.
There was no pleasure nor delightfull play,
When Astrophel so euer was away.
For he could pipe and daunce, and caroll sweet,
Emongst the shepeheards in their shearing feast:
As Somers larke, that with her song doth greet
The dawning day forth comming from the East.
And layes of loue he also could compose.
Thrise happie she, whom he to praise did chose.
Full many Maydens often did him woo,
Them to vouchsafe amongst his rimes to name,
Or make for them as he was wont to doo,
For her that did his heart with loue inflame.
For which they promised to dight, for him,
Gay chapelets of flowers and gyrlonds trim.
And many a Nymph both of the wood and brooke,
Soone as his eaten pipe began to shirll:
Both christall wells and shadie grovces forsooke,
To heare the charmes of his enchanting skill.

And brought him presents, flowers if it were prime,
Or mellow fruit if it were haruest time.
But he for none of them did care a whit,
Yet wood Gods for them often sighed sore:
Ne for their gifts vnworthie of his wit,
Yet not vnworthie of the countries store.
For one alone he cared, for one he sight,
His lifes desire, and his deare loues delight.
Stella the faire, the fairest star in skie,
As faire as Venus or the fairest faire:
A fairer star saw neuer liuing eie,
Shot her sharp pointed beames through purest aire.
Her he did loue, her he alone did honor,
His thoughts, his rimes, his songs were all vpon her.
To her he vowed the seruice of his daies,
On her he spent the riches of his wit:
For her he made hymnes of immortall praise,
Of onely her he sung, he thought, he writ.
Her, and but her, of loue he worthie deemed,
For all the rest but little he esteemed.
Ne her with ydle words alone he wowed,
And verses vaine (yet verses are not vaine)
But with braue deeds to her sole seruice vowed,
And bold atchieuements her did entertaine.
For both in deeds and words he nourtred was,
Both wise and hardie (too hardie alas).
In wrestling nimble, and in renning swift,
In shooting steddie, and in swimming strong:
Well made to strike, to throw, to leape, to lift,
And all the sports that shepeheards are emong.
In every one he vanquisht every one,
He vanquisht all, and vanquisht was of none.
Besides, in hunting, such felicitie,
Or rather infelicitie he found:


50 often F: oft Q 53 sight Q: sighth F 65 but her, F: but her Q 73-4 in wrestling, nimble, and in running, swift; in shooting, steddie; and in swimming, F: 79 hunting, F: hunting Q 80 rather Q: rather, F
ASTROPHEL.

That every field and forest far away,
He sought, where saluage beasts do most abound.
No beast so saluage but he could it kill,
No chace so hard, but he therein had skill.

Such skill matcht with such courage as he had,
Did prick him forth with proud desire of praise:
To seek abroad, of daunger nought y'drad,
His mistresse name, and his owne fame to raise.
What needeth peril to be sought abroad,
Since round about vs, it doth make aboad? 90

It fortuned, as he that perilous game
In forcrine soyle pursued far away:
Into a forest wide and waste he came
Where store he heard to be of saluage pray.
So wide a forest and so waste as this,
Nor famous Ardeyn, nor fowle Arb is.

There his welwounen toyles and subtil traines
He laid, the brutish nation to enwrap:
So well he wroght with practise and with paines,
That he of them great troups did soone entrap.

Full happie man (misweeing much) was hee,
So rich a spoile within his power to see.

Eftsoones all heedlesse of his dearest hale,
Full greedily into the heard he thrust:
To slaughter them, and worke their finall hale,
Least that his toyle should of their troups be brust.
Wide wounds amongst them many one he made,
Now with his sharp borespear, now with his blade.

His care was all how he them all might kill,
That none might scape (so partiall vnto none) 110
Ill mynd so much to mynd another ill,
As to become vnmyndfull of his owne.
But pardon that vnto the cruell skies,
That from himselfe to them withdrew his eies.

A PASTORALL ELEGIE.

So as he rag'd amongst that beastly rout,
A cruell beast of most accursed brood
Vpon him turnd (despeyre makes cowards stout)
And with fell tooth accustomed to blood,
Launched his thigh with so mischievous might,
That it both bone and muscles ryued quight.

So deadly was the dint and deep the wound,
And so huge streames of blood thereout did flow,
That he endured not the direfull stound,
But on the cold deare earth himselfe did throw.
The whiles the captiue heard his nets did rend,
And hauing none to let, to wood did wend.

Ah where were ye this while his shepheard peares,
To whom alue was nought so deare as hee:
And ye faire Mayds the matches of his yeares,
Which in his grace did boast you most to bee?
Ah where were ye, when he of you had need,
To stop his wound that wondrously did bleed?

Ah wretched boy the shape of dreryhead,
And sad ensample of mans suddne end:
Full little faileth but thou shalt be dead,
Vnpitied, vnplaynd, of foe or fren.
Whilste none is nigh, thine eylids vp to close,
And kisse thy lips like faded leasu of rose.

A sort of shepheardes sewing of the chace,
As they the forest raunged on a day:
By fate or fortune came vnto the place,
Where as the lucklesse boy yet bleeding lay.
Yet bleeding lay, and yet would still haue bled,
Had not good hap those shepheardes thether led.

They stopp his wound (too late to stop it was)
And in their armes then softly did him reare:
Tho (as he wild) vnto his loued lasse,
His dearest loue him doefully did beare.
The dolefulst beare that euer man did see,
Was Astrophel, but dearest vnto mee.

89 neecedh F: need Q 91 fortuned, as he F: fortuned as he, Q
93 wide F: wide, Q 97-8 traines He laid, F: traines, He laid Q
ASTROPHEL.

She when she saw her loue in such a plight,
With cruell blood and filthie gore deformed:
That wont to be with flowers and gyrlonds dight,
And her deare fauours dearly well adorned,
Her face, the fairest face, that eye mote see,
She likewise did deforme like him to bee.
Her yellow locks that shone so bright and long,
As Sunny beames in fairest somers day
She fiersly tore, and with outrageous wrong
From her red cheeks the roses rent away.
And her faire brest the treasury of ioy,
She spoyld thereof, and filled with annoy.
His palled face impitted with death,
She bathed oft with teares and dried oft:
And with sweet kisses suckt the wasting breath,
Out of his lips like lilies pale and soft.
And oft she celd to him, who answerd nought,
But onely by his lookes did tell his thought.
The rest of her impatient regret,
And piteous mone the which she for him made,
No toong can tell, nor any forth can set,
But he whose heart like sorrow did inuade.
At last when paine his vitall powres had spent,
His wasted life her weary lodge forwent.
Which when she saw, she staied not a whit,
But after him did make vn timely haste:
Forth with her ghost out of her corps did flit,
And followed her make like Turtle chaste.
To proue that death their hearts cannot divide,
Which liuing were in loue so firmly tide.
The Gods which all things see, this same beheld,
And pittying this pair of louers trew,
Transformed them there lying on the field,
Into one flower that is both red and blew.

A PASTORALL ELEGIE.

It first growes red, and then to blew doth fade,
Like Astrophel, which thereinto was made.
And in the midst thereof a star appeares,
As fairly formd as any star in skyes:
Resembling Stella in her freshest yeares,
Forth darting beams of beautie from her eyes.
And all the day it standeth full of deow,
Which is the teares, that from her eyes did flow.
That hearbe of some, Starlight is celd by name,
Of others Penthia, though not so well:
But thou where euer thou doest finde the same,
From this day forth do call it Astrophel.
And when so euer thou it vp doest take,
Do pluck it softly for that shepheards sake.
Hereof when tydings far abroad did passe,
The shepheards all which loued him full deare,
And sure full deare of all he loued was,
Did thether flock to see what they did heare.
And when that piteous spectacle they vewed.
The same with bitter teares they all bedewed.
And euerie one did make exceeding mone,
With inward anguish and great grieve opprest:
And euerie one did weep and waille, and mone,
And meanes deviz’d to shew his sorrow best.
That from that houre since first on grassie greene
Shepheards kept sheep, was not like mourning seen.
But first his sister that Clorinda hight,
The gentlesst shepheardesse that liues this day:
And most resembling both in shape and spright
Her brother deare, began this dolefull lay.
Which least I marre the sweetness of the vearse,
In sort as she it sung, I will rehearse.

154 adorned, F: adorned Q 158 day] day: Q, F 161 brest Q:
brest, F 166 lips Q: lips, F 170 made, F: made: Q 182
trew, F: trew: Q 200 deare,] deare: Q: deare followed by bracket (And . . . was) F
209 greene F: greene, Q
AY me, to whom shall I my case complaine,
That may compassion my impatient grieue?
Or where shall I enfold my inward paine,
That my ennuien heart may find reliefe?
Shall I vnlo the heauenly powres it shew?
Or vnlo earthly men that dwell below?
To heauens? ah they alas the authors were,
And workers of my vnremediad wo:
For they foresee what to vs happens here,
And they foresaw, yet sufferd this be so.
From them comes good, from them comes also il,
That which they made, who can them warne to spill.

To men? ah they alas like wretched bee,
And subiect to the heauens ordinace:
Bound to abide what euer they decree,
Their best redresse, is their best sufferance.
How then can they, like wretched, comfort mee,
The which no lesse, need comforted to bee?

Then to my selfe will I my sorrow mourne,
Sith none alike like sorrowfull remaines:
And to my selfe my plaints shall back retourne,
To pay their vsury with doubled paines.
The woods, the hills, the riuers shall resound
The mournfull accent of my sorrowes ground.

Woodes, hills and riuers, now are desolate,
Sith he is gone the whick them all did grace:
And all the fields do waile their widow state,
Sith death their fairest flowre did late deface.
The fairest flowre in field that euer grew,
Was Astrophel; that was, we all may rew.

What cruel hand of cursed foe vnknowne,
Hath cropt the stalk which bore so faire a flowre?
Vntimely cropt, before it well were growne,
And cleane defaced in vntimely howre.
Great losse to all that euer him did see,
Great losse to all, but greatest losse to mee.

Breake now your gyrlonds, O ye shepheardes lasses,
Sith the faire flowre, which them adord, is gon:
The flowre, which them adord, is gone to ashes,
Neuer againe let lasse put gyrlond on.

In stead of gyrlond, weare sad Cyprce nowe,
And bitter Elder, broken from the bowe.
Ne euer sing the loue-layes which he made,
Who euer made such layes of loue as hee?
Ne euer read the riddles, which he sayd
Vnto your selues, to make you mery glee.
Your mery glee is now laid all abed,
Your mery maker now alasse is dead.

Death the deuourer of all worlds delight,
Hath robbd you and reft fro me my ioy:
Both you and me, and all the world he quight
Hath robbd of ioyance, and left sad annoy.
Ioy of the world, and shepheardes pride was hee,
Shepheardes hope neuer like againe to see.

Oh death that hast vs of such riches reft,
Tell vs at least, what hast thou with it done?
What is become of him whose flowre here left
Is but the shadow of his likenesse gone.
Scarce like the shadow of that which he was,
Nought like, but that he like a shade did pas.

But that immortall spirit, which was deckt
With all the dowries of celestiall grace:
By soueraine choyce from th'heuenly quires select,
And lineally deriv'd from Angels race:
O what is now of it become, aread.

Ay me, can so diuine a thing be dead?
Ah no: it is not dead, ne can it die,
But liues for aie, in blisful Paradis:
Where like a new-borne babe it soft doth lie.
In bed of lillies wrapt in tender wise.

And compast all about with roses sweet,
And daintie violets from head to feet.

17 they, like wretched, F: they like wretched Q 35 did see F: see Q
ASTROPHEL.

There thousand birds all of celestiall brood,
To him do sweetly caroll day and night:
And with straungeo notes, of him well vnderstood,
Lull him a sleep in Angelick delight;
   Whilst in sweet dreame to him presented bee
Immortall beauties, which no eye may see.
But he them sees and takes exceeding pleasure
Of their diuine aspects, appearing plaine,
   And kindling loue in him aboue all measure,
Sweet loue still ioyous, neuer feeling paine.
   For what so goodly forme he there doth see,
He may enjoy from jealous rancor free.

There liueth he in euerlasting blis,
Sweet spirit neuer fearing more to die:
Ne dreading harme from any foes of his,
Ne fearing saluage beasts more crueltie.
   Whilst we here wretches waile his priuate lack,
And with vaiue vowes do often call him back.

But liue thou there still happie, happie spirit,
And giue vs leaue thee here thus to lament:
Not thee that doest thy heauens ioy inherit,
But our owne selues that here in dole are drent.
   Thus do we weep and waile, and weare our eies,
Mourning in others, our owne miseries.

Which when she ended had, another swaine
Of gentle wit and daintie sweet deuice:
Whom Astrophel full deare did entertaine,
Whilst he liv'd, and held in passing price,
Hight Thespylis, began his mournfull tourne,
   And made the Muses in his song to mourn.
And after him full many other moe,
As euerie one in order lov'd him best,
Gan dight themselues t'expresse their inward woe,
With dolefull layes vnto the time addrest.
The which I here in order will rehearse,
As fittest flowres to deck his mournfull hearse.

76 Angelick Q: Angel-like F 104 As Q: And F