Title: “Female Agency and Knowledge within Suspended Time”

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Description of the Workshop:
This workshop explores the agentive, cognitive, and authorial means through which women manipulated time by elongating or freezing it in medieval and early modern literature. In particular, we hope to explore how women in the period assumed the role of authors, teachers, and agents of spaces and ideas in malleable time, time that was self-constructed, generational, and yet non-teleological. Our workshop will engage with colleagues interested in how women took on a method of reading or manipulating time that was not necessarily bound by dominant discourses or disciplinary means for transmitting lineal, historical, or apocalyptic narratives. In this case, we hope that our workshop will open up new directions for how women can be figured as wielding control over time through embracing a sense of stasis or protraction.

Recent scholarship has considered how women broke down the traditionally linear sense of time through what Patricia Parker describes as a “temporal deferral and spatial extension.” This postponement of time occurred through the “partition” of time, which allowed women to “branch out” momentarily from a course of action without “ultimate closure” (522-524). Scholars propose that these periods of separation and temporary closure enable individual expansion (“dilation”), whether through spiritual and moral growth, education, or gaining sexual authority (524-528). Delayed or frozen time may grant greater authority to individuals in a more domestic, private space.

The panel will consider women’s control over time and their ability to enact change within these constructed periods of stasis. Women in the drama and poetry discussed established stopped time by creating institutionalized spaces, collapsing generational gaps in material objects, and accessing magical forces. Women who created institutional spaces of stopped time, like the matrons who instruct the young ladies in Margaret Cavendish’s play The Female Academy, attempted to promote female public authority in young women within what appears to be an autonomous private space. However, the ephemeral nature of frozen time and the inability of the women at the female academy to fully separate themselves from the patriarchal public sphere leaves doubt as to the extent to which the young women may practice their agency once they re-enter their communities. How might cracks in frozen time engage the community outside of that private institution? How might female agency be performed during these interstitial times?

Following a discussion of feminine educative manipulation of time, the panel will shift its discussion to the question of how objects like handkerchiefs and other embroidered cloths represent women’s secret, shared knowledge, and serve as a form of communication suspended in time. Representations of embroidered objects, like those in The Assembly of Ladies, Othello, and Spenser’s Book III of the Faerie Queene, are often portrayed within a static temporality by preserving a static moment of female fulfillment in time or by existing within frozen spaces that allow female characters to explore their desires. These objects, however, are threatened by the encroaching patriarchal structure as masculine discourses disrupt attempts of female communication through these objects.
From here the workshop considers the obverse question: what happens when women enter a typically masculine discourse and discipline by reading time and the natural world for what it might foretell? The third focus of our workshop looks to how John Fletcher and Philip Massinger’s *The Prophetess* borrows from contemporary methods of reading time in early modern almanacs. We aim to explore how almanacs written by women in the period, alongside *The Prophetess*, present a nuanced, distinct understanding of time as malleable, knowable, and ultimately as a book to be read by feminine agents.

Lastly, we will consider what happens when suspended time constitutes a world of women’s making. Circe figures and their subsequent iterations (Alcina, Armida, and Acrasia) all offer bowers, islands, and gardens as planes in which time and plot are effectively halted. These figures often intervene in and reshape plot as disruptive elements of the text. As profligates, the disorder they infuse into these texts functions as a necessary process of development for characters of virtue (male figures who enter therein and are subject to female rule and female agency). Here we will take Tasso’s *Jerusalem Delivered* as the control text and pair it with Milton’s *Comus*, a text that offers a male Circe figure who abducts the young Lady of virtue. The forest in *Comus* is not a world of Lady’s creation, but it is a world steeped in subversively female, pagan trappings that now attempts to ensnare a girl rather than the traditional male hero. Suspended time in these works does more than offer a platform for transformation, but is in fact a mechanism of that transformation. Rather than arrest change, frozen time ruled by fiendish tempters elicits a sort of trial or even moral gestation period in which the hero or heroine must enact virtue.

Our comparison of these representations of female agency within static temporalities will be broken into two discussion sessions. First, the panelists will provide a brief overview of the major themes and questions of the workshop (5 minutes). We will follow the overview with an introduction (5 minutes) to the texts’ representation of female authority and suspended time in institutions and objects before opening up the session for discussion (30 minutes). The panelists will then transition (10 minutes) the workshop discussion to focus on the intervention of women in male discourse and consider the implications of gendered worlds on female agency (30 minutes). The remaining time will be spent discussing conclusions and further research opportunities (10 minutes).

**Questions for Consideration:**
- Who delineates the temporal boundaries of these gendered spaces? How is authority transitioned to or claimed by female characters?
- What might be gained from this temporary empowerment?
- How do male characters respond to the limitations they experience within suspended time?
- How do women fare when they return to a space that is not gendered?
- In what ways do male-authored representations of women and their agency in regards to suspended time differ from female-authored texts (in themselves “frozen” arenas of female agency)?
Workshop Texts:
Anon. Assembly of Ladies.
Cavendish, Margaret. The Female Academy. 1662.
Fletcher, John and Philip Massinger. The Prophetess.
Jinner, Sarah. The Woman's Almanac.
Spenser, Edmund. The Faerie Queene.
Tasso, Torquato. Jerusalem Delivered.

Suggested Readings:
Anon. Assembly of Ladies. (All)
Cavendish, Margaret. The Description of a New World, Called The Blazing World. 1666.
Spenser, Edmund. The Faerie Queene. (All of Book III)
PART I
Excerpts from The Female Academy (1662)
Act I
Scene 1.
Enter two Antient Ladies.

1 Lady.
If you would have your Daughter virtuously and wisely educated, you must put her into the Female Academy.

2 Lady.
The Female Academy, what is that?

1 Lady.
Why a House, wherein a company of young Ladies are instructed by old Matrons; as to speak wittily and rationally, and to behave themselves handsomely, and to live virtuously.

2 Lady.
Do any men come amongst them?

1 Lady.
No; only there is a large open Grate, where on the out-side men stand, which come to hear and see them; but no men enter into the Academy; nor women, but those that are put in for Education; for they have another large open Grate at the other end of the Room they discourse in; where on the out-side of that Grate stand women that come to hear them discourse.

2 Lady.
I will put my Daughter therein to be instructed.

1 Lady.
If your Daughter were not of honourable Birth, they would not receive her, for they take in none but those of antient Descent, as also rich, for it is a place of charges.

2 Lady.
Why then they will not refuse my Daughter, for she is both honourably born, and also rich.

Exeunt.

Scene 2.
Enter a Company of young Ladies, and with them two Grave Matrons; where through the Hanging a company of men look on them, as through a Grate.

1 Matron.
Come Lady, 'tis your turn this day to take the Chair.

All sit, and she that speaks sits in an adorned Chair.

Lady Speaker.
Deliver your Themam.

1 Matron.
You speak Lady like a Robber, when he says deliver your Purse; but you must say propound your Themam.

Lady Speaker.
Why then propound your Themam.

1 Matron.
I present to your opinion, whether women are capable to have as much Wit or Wisdom as men.

Lady Speaker.
First, I must define what Wit and Wisdom are: as for Wit, it is the Daughter of Nature, and Wisdom is a Son of the Gods; this Daughter of Nature, the Lady Wit, is very beautiful, and for the most part her Countenance is very Amiable, and her Speech delightful; in her Accostments she is as all other of the Female Sex are, various; as sometimes in plain Garments, and sometimes in glittering Garments; and sometimes she is attired in Garments of as many several Colours as the Rainbow; and she alters in their Fashions, as often as in their Substances or Trimmings: as for her humour, it is according to the nature of her Sex, which is as various and changing as her Accostments; for that sometimes she is merry and jesting, other times pleasing and delightfull; sometimes melancholy, sometimes fantastical, other times sibemptfull and censorious, and oft times wild and wanton, unless discretion rules and leads her, who keeps her within the bounds and pales of Modesty; also her discourses are various, as sometimes she will chatter grosly, other times she will rail maliciously, and sometimes she will speak so eloquently, and demean her self so elegantly, as to ravish the minds of the beholders and hearers: This Lady Wit hath [25] nine Daughters, very beautyfull Ladies, namely the Nine Muses; and every several Muse partakes of
every several Humour of the Mother: These nine beautifull Ladies, Natures Grand-children, and VVits Daughters, have vowed single lives, living alwayes in the Court with their Mother, whose Court is a very glorious Palace; for it is composed of Coelestial flame, and Divine Spirits were the Architectures thereof; the Servants and Courtiers of the Lady Wit are Poets, men of all Nations, Qualities, Dignities and Humours; these Courtiers the Poets, make love to the Lady Wits Daughters, the nine Muses, and often receive favours from them; which favours their Servants the Poets braid them into Rimes, and make several works of Verse, then tie them into True Lovers Knots, and then as all Lovers use to do, with their Mistresses favours, vaingloriously shew them to the publick view of the world; for though the Lady Muses will not marry, yet they receive Courtyly addresses, and take delight to be wooed and sued to; the younger sort of Poets are Amorous Lovers; the Grave and more antient Poets are Platonick Lovers, and some are Divine Lovers, and some are Heroick Lovers, and some are Satyrical Lovers, which woe in a crabbid stile: but to conclude of VVit, there are good VVits which have foolish Judgements; for though VVit and VVisdome are Sisters and Brothers, both the Children of Nature, yet for the most part, the Brother is a meer Fool, and the Sister hath a great wit; but some have Masculine VVits, and Effeminate Judgements, as if their beans were Hermaphrina.

The next I am to define is VVisdome, who as I said, is a Son of the Gods: this VVisdome is a person of perfect and upright Shape, of well-composed Features, of a manly Garb, and an assured Countenance, in his speach he is of a readie delivery, and he hath a well-tempered Humour: as for the Acoustements of his Person, he changes them according to the times and occasions: His constant habitation is in the strong Tower of Honestie, this Tower is built round, without ends or corners, or by places; and it stands upon four Pillars, as Prudence, Fortitude, Justice and Temporance; upon every several Pillar are Letters ingraven, wherein may be read the proper uses, benefits, and advantages of each Pillar: These Pillars of Support, causes this Tower to be impregnable; for though there are many assaults made against it, as by Riches, which shoots his golden Bullets out of his golden Canons at it, striving to batter it down; and Power brings a mighty Army to assault it, and Danger of Death strives to storm it, and Flattery and Insinuation to undermine it, yet it holds out without any breach therein; for the walls of this Tower, named Honesty, are of a wonderfull strength, for they are as durable as an intire Diamond, not to be dissolved, and as transparant as a Christal, without the least spot, stain, or blemish: In this Tower as I said, lives Wisdom, a most magnificent Lord he is, and is attended numerously and nobly: his chief Favourite is Truth, his chief Counselors are Reason, Understanding, Observation, Experience, and Judgement; his chief Officers are Patience, Industry, and Opportunity; his Domestick Servants are the Appetites, which Servants he rules and governs with great moderation; his Nobility are the Passions, which he prefers according to their merit; but those that are apt to be Factious, he severely punishes, for he is one that loves peace, and hates brulleries, or any dissertation: he is a person of the quickest Sense, for he hath a most piercing sight to foresee dangers, as to avoid them, and can well distinguish the right ways from the wrong; Likewise he hath a most cleer hearing, for nothing passes by that concerns him, but the sound gives him an Alarm to stand upon his guard, or a charge to take his advantage; but he hath a silent tongue, for he never speaks but it is to some purpose also he hath a marvelous quick Scent, to smel out a Rebellion or Treason, and he will follow it pace by pace, as Hounds do Hares, and never leaves till he hath hunted it out. also his Touch is very sensibl, he soon feels a courtesy or injury, the first he receives gratefully, and feels tenderly, the other he receives strongly, and gripes hard, when he can take fast hold, otherwise he lets it passe or fall, as if his touch were numb'd, he is a person which is so solicited by the weak, sought to by the wronged, flattered by the ambitious, sued to by the distressed; and he often sits in the Court of Errors, to rectifie the disorder therein: sometimes he hath been in great humane Counsels, but that is very rare; indeed he is so seldom in great humane Counsels, as he is hardly known, for not one among a thousand that did ever see him, much lesse to have any acquaintance with him, for he is reserved, and not company for every one: But there are many that falsly pretend not only to be acquainted with him, but gets false Vizards, and pretend to be Wisdom it self, and the world for the most part is cozened and abused with these Cheats, in not knowing the right & true Wisdom and how should they? When Wisdom it self appears so seldom, as he is a stranger even in Kings Courts and Princes Palaces, and so great a stranger he is in many Couns and Counsels, that if by chance he should be there, they thrust him out as a troublesome Guest, and laugh at his advice as foolish, or condemn his Counsel as treacherous: but now I have declared unto you whom VVit and Wisdom are, now I am to give my opinion whether women [100] are capable of their Society; but truly I must tell you it is a difficult question, by reason the several Educations, which are the Ushers that lead humane Creatures to several Societies, for there are Societies of the Ignorant and foolish, as well as of the witty and wise, and several Ushers belonging thereto; and indeed these latter Societies are numerous, and of all sorts; the other are Societies of the most choicest, for though Wit is not an absolute Goddesse, nor humane Wisdom an absolute God, yet they are a degree above other earthly mortals, but Fools are produced from the degrees of Mortality, and Ignorance is the Daughter of Obscurity; the Ushers o these are Obstinance, Stupidity, and
Illiteration, which leads mortals to dangerous and unexcessible ways; in this last Society, for the most part women are of, as being bred therein, and having such ill Tutors and Guides, they must needs err, for there is an old saying, *When the Blind leads the Blind, they must needs fall into the Ditch*, not having sight to choose their way; so women breeding up women, the Generations must needs be Fools: for the first, women had an ill Tutor, the Devil, which neither instructed her in the knowledge of Wisdome nor Wit, but learn'd her hurtful dissimulation, to which she hath bred all her Female Generations successively, as from Female to Female; but your question is, whether women are capable of Wit and Wisdome: truly in my opinion women are more capable of Wit than Wisdome, by reason they are both of the Female Gender, which may cause some sympathy in their Natures; and in some things they do plainly sympathize and agree, for VVit is wild and various, and so are women, and VVit is busie and meddles with every thing, cause, or subject, so do women; Wit is fantastical, and so are women, VVit is always in extremities, and so are women, Wit [125] deth talk much, and so do women, Wit is humorous, and so are women, VVit is prodigal, and so are women, VVit loves praises, and so do women, VVit doth sport and play, dance and sing the time away, and so do women, VVit is many times wanton, and so are women; Thus far are women capable of the Society and Conversation of Wit; but I doubt of her jubile Invention, quick Apprehension, tare Conceptions, elevated Fancy, and smooth Eloquition.

As for Wisdome, women seem to all outward appearance to have a natural Antipathy abhorring his severe and strict Rules, hating his medicable Admonitions, his profitable Counsels and Advice, his wary wayes, his prudent forecast, his serious actions, his temperate life and sober disposition; all which makes them incapable of the Society of Wisdome.

*Exeunt.*

**Act II**

**Scene 3.**

*Enter two Gentlemen.*

1 *Gentleman.*

I suppose you have heard that a company of young Gentlemen have set up an Academy, next to the Ladies Academy.

2 *Gentleman.*

VVe heard nothing of it.

1 *Gentleman.*

VVhy then I will tell you, the men are very angry that the women should speak so much, and they so little, I think: for they have made that Room which they stood in to see and hear the Ladies speak in, so a place for themselves to speak in, that the Ladies may hear what they can say.

2 *Gentleman.*

Faith if you will have my opinion, it is, that the men do it out of a mockery to the Ladies.

1 *Gent.*

'Tis likely so, for they rail extremely that so many fair young Ladies are so strictly inclosed, as not to suffer men to visit them in the Academy.

2 *Gentleman.*

Faith if the men should be admitted into their Academy, there would be work enough for the Grave Matrons, were it but to act the part of Midwives.

*Exeunt.*

**Scene 6.**

*Enter a Company of young men, as in the Room next to the Ladies; one takes the Chair.*

*Gentleman Speaker.*

Gentlemen, we need no Learned Scholars, nor Grave Sages to propound the Theam of our discourse in this place, and at this time; for our minds are so full of thoughts of the Female Sex, as we have no room for any other Subject or Object; wherefore let the "cham be what it will, our discourses will soon run on them: but if we could bring women as easily into our arms, as into our brains; and had we as many Mistresses in our possessions, as we have in our imaginations, we should be much more happy than we are; Nay, had we been blind, deaf, and insensible to the Sex, we had been happy, unless that Sex had been more kinder than they are; but they are cruel, which makes men miserable; but Nature had made Beauty in vain, if not for the use of the Masculine Sex, wherfore Nature forbids restraint, and 'tis a sin agains: Nature for women to be Incloystred, Retired, or restrained: Nay, it is not only a sin against Nature, but a grievous sin against the Gods, for women to live single lives, or to vow Virginity: for if
women live Virgins, there will be no Saints for Heaven, nor worship nor Adoration offered to the Gods from Earth for if all women live Virgins, the Race of Mankind will be utterly extinguished; and if it be a general sin to live Virgins, no particular can be exempted; and if it be lawful for one to live a Virgin, it is lawful for all; so if it be unlawful for one, it is unlawful for all; but surely the Gods would not make any thing lawful that were against themselves: But to conclude, those women which restrain themselves from the company and use of men, are damned, being accused by Men, judged by Nature, and condemned by the Gods.

Exeunt.

Scene 8.
Enter the Academy of Ladiz, and the Grave Matronnesse: The Lady that is to speak takes a Chair.

Matron.
Lady, let the Theam of your discourse be at this time on the behaviour of our Sex.
Lady Speaker.
It is a greater difficulty for a woman to behave her self discreetly in private Visitations, than for a man to speak wisely in privy Councils: and it is a greater difficulty for a woman to behave her self well in a publick Assembly, than for a man to speak eloquently in a publick Auditory: and it is a greater difficulty for a woman to behave her self well to several Persons, and in several Assemblies, than for a man to behave himself gallantly in several Battels, and as much dishonour comes in the misbehaviour of the one, as the cowardliness of the other: Wherefore there requires as much skill, care, and conduct in a womans behaviour, in visiting, entertaining, placing, applying, and discoursing, as to a Commander in Mustering, Training, Intrenching, Besieging, Inbattelling, Fighting, and Retreating; for it is not enough for a woman to behave her self according to her Degree, Quality, Dignity, Birth, and Breeding. Age, Beauty; Wit, and Fortune; But according to Time, Place, and Occasion, Businesse, and Affairs, as also to the Humours, Capacities, Professions, Dignities, Qualities, Births, Breedings, Fortunes, Ages, and Sexes of those persons she is in Company and Conversation withall: Also in mixt Companies she must have a mixt behaviour, and mixt discourses, as sometimes to one, then to another, according as she can handsomely and civilly apply or address her self; and to those that apply and addresse themselves to her: for a woman must not behave her self, or discourse unto a great Lord or Prince, as to a Peasant, or to a Peasant as to a great Lord or Prince, nor to a Souldier as to a Divine, nor to a Divine as to a Souldier, nor to a Statesman as to a Tradesman, nor to a Tradesman as to a Statesman, nor to a Flattering Gallant, as to a Grave Senior, nor to a Grave Senior as to a Flattering Gallant, nor to a young man as to an antient man, nor to a Boy as to a man, nor to a woman as to a man, nor to a Poet as to a woman, or as to those men that understand not Poetry, nor to learned men, as to ignorant men. Also an antient Grave Matron must not behave her self like a wanton young Girl, nor a Wife like a Maid, nor a Widow like a Virgin, nor a Mother like her Daughter, nor a Mistresse like her Servant, nor a Servant like a Mistresse, nor a great Lady like a Country wise, nor a Country wise like a great Lady, for that would be ridiculous; Indeed it is easier for a middle Rank or Degree, at least it is ofter seen, to behave themselves better than those of high Titles and great Estates, or those of a very mean Condition, and of low Birth, for the one is apt to err with excessive pride, the other with an excessive rudenesse, both being hold and ignorantly bred, knowing not how to be civil, nor what belongs to civil Persons; for the pride of the one scorns to be instructed, and the poverty of the other hath not means to keep and pay Instructors; for the excess of Plenty mussels the one in Ignorance, and excess of Poverty blindfolds the other from knowledge: but to conclude of the behaviour of women, first as to the generality, they must behave themselves civilly and circumspectly, to particulars, modestly and friendly; for the chief Principals of behaviour are twelve, six good, and six bad; the six good are, Ceremony, Civility, Modesty, Humility, Friendship, and Obedience: The first is Majestical and Magnificent, the second Noble, the third Virtuous, the fourth Humane, the fift Generous, the sith Pious; The first is Gracefull, the [50] second Sociable, the third Delightfull, the fourth Natural, the fift Helpfull, the sith Necessary; The first belongs to Dignity, the second to Breeding, the third to Youth, the fourth to Age, the fift to Wealth, the sith to Peace.

As for the six bad Principals, is, to be Proud, Bold, Rude, Wanton, Disobedient, and Cruel; The first is, Insolent, the second Impudent, the third Ignorant, the fourth Brutish, the fift Unnatural, the sith Wicked: The first lives with mean Births, joined with good Fortune, the second lives with ignorant & doltish Spirits, the third with base Breeding, the fourth with Beasts, the fift with uncivil Nations, the sith with Atheists: The first is to be Slighted, the second to be Pityed, the third to be Shunned, the fourth to be Hated, the fift to be Governed, the sith to be Punished.

Exeunt.

Scene 9.
Enter two Gentlemen.
I Gent.
What say you to these young Ladies?
2. Gent.
I say, that though they be but young Ladies, they discourse like old Women.

Exeunt.

Act III
Scene 18.
Enter a company of Gentlemen; The Speaker takes the Chair.

Gentleman Speaker.
It were too tedious to recite the several humours of the female Sex; their scornfull Pride, their obstinate Retirednesse, their reserved Coynesse, their facit Inconstancy, by which they become the most useless, and most unprofitable Creatures that nature hath made; but when they are joined to men, they are the most usefull, and most profitable Creatures nature hath made; wherefore, all those women that have common reason, or sense of shame, will never retire themselves from the company of men: for what women that have any consideration of Honour, Truth, or touch of Goodness, will be the worst of all Creatures, when they may be the best? but the truth of it is, women are spoyled by the over-fond dotage of men; for being flattered, they become so self-conceited, as they think they were only made for the Gods, and not for men; and being Mistrisses of mens affections, they usurp their Masculine Power and Authority, and instead of being dutifull, humble and obedient to men, as they ought to be, they are Tyrannical Tyrannizers.

Exeunt.

Scene 20.
Enter the Ladies of the Academy: The Lady Speaker takes the Chair.

Matron.
Ladies, let the Theam of your discourse be, at this time, of Friendship.

Lady Speaker.
This Theam may more easily be discoursed of, than Friendship made; by reason it is very difficult to make a right Friendship, for hard it is to match men in agreeable Humours, Appetites, Passions, Capacities, Conversations, Customs, Actions, Natures and Dispositions, all which must be to make a true and lasting Friendship, otherwise, two Friends will be like two Horses that draw contrary waies, whereas Souls, Bodies, Education and Lives, must equally agree in Friendship; for a worthy honest man cannot be a friend to a base and unworthy man, by reason Friendship is both an offensive and defensive League between two Souls and Bodies; and no actions, either of the Souls or Bodies, or any outward thing, or fortune belonging thereunto, are to be denied; wherefore Knaves with Knaves, and unworthy Persons with unworthy Persons, may make a Friendship, & Honest men with Honest men, and worthy Persons with worthy Persons, may do the like: but an Honest man with a Knave, or a worthy Person with a base man, or an Honourable Person with a mean Fellow, a noble Soul with a base Nature, a Coward with a Valiant man, can make no true Friendship. For, put the case, in such friendships, my Friend should desire me to do a base Action for his sake, I must either speak break Friendship, or do unworthily, but as all worthy Persons make Truth their Godesse, which they seek and worship, Honour the Saint which they pray too, Vertue, the Lady which they serve, so Honesty is the only Friend they trust and rely on, and all the VWorld is obliged to Honesty, for upright and just dealing.

Exeunt.

Act IV
Scene 21.
Enter two Gentlemen.

1 Gent.
Methinks the womens Lectural discourse is better than the mens; for in my opinion, the mens discourses are simple, childish, and foolish, in comparison of the womens,

2 Gent.
Why, the subject of the discourse is of women, which are simple, foolish, and childish.

1 Gent.
There is no sign of their simplicity or folly, in their discourse or Speeches, I know not what may be in their Actions.

2 Gent.
Now you come to the point, for the weaknesse of women lyes in their Actions, not in their VWords, for they have sharp Wits and blunt Judgements.

Exeunt.

Scene 25.
Enter the Academical Gentlemen.
1. Gent.
This is not to be suffered: for if we should let these Ladies rest in peace and quiet, in their inclosed Habitation, we shall have none but Old Women; for all those young Ladies, that are not in the Academy, talk of nothing but of going into a Female Academy.
2 Gent.
You say true, insomuch as it begins to be a Mode, and a Fashion; for all the Youngest, Fairest, Richest, and Noblest Ladies, to inclose themselves into an Academy.
3. Gent.
Nay, we must seek some way, and devise some means to unroost them.
4. Gent.
There is nothing can do it, but noise; for they take such pleasure in the exercise of their Tongues, that unless we can put them to silence, there is no hopes to get them out.
1. Gent.
Trumpets, I doubt, will not be loud enough.
Let us try.
All the Gentlemen.
Content, Content, &c.

Exeunt.

Scene 28.
Enter the Lady and their Matroness; The Lady Speaker takes the Chair.
Matron.
Lady, let the Theam of your discourse at this time be of Virtuous Courtships, and wooing Suters.
Lady Speaker.
Some Poetical and Romantical Writers make valiant gallant Heroicks wooe poorly, sneakingly, and pedlingly.
Matron.
Lady, let me interrupt you; would you have gallant Heroicks in their Courtships to Fair young Ladies, as Commanding as in the Field, or as Furious as in a Battel.
Lady Speaker.
No, I would have them wooe with a Confident Behaviour, a Noble Demeanor, a Generous Civility, and not to be amazed or to tremble for fear, to weep for pity, to kneel for mercy, to sigh and be dejected with a Mistresses frown; ...
But Lady, let me ask you one question, would you have a young [50] Virgin as confident and knowing as a Married Wife?

_Lady Speaker._

Yes, although not in their Behaviour or Condition of life, but in her Virtue and Constancy; for a chast Married wife is as Modest and Bashfull as a Virgin, though not so simple, ignorant, and shame-faced as a plain bred Maid; but as I said, VVriters should describe the wooing of gallant Heroicks, or Great and Noble Persons, to woo with a Generous Confidence, or Manly Garb, a Civil Demeanor, a Rational Discourse, to an honest Design, and to a Virtuous end, and not with a whining Voice, in pitiful words, and fawning Language; and if it be only for a Mistriess, as for a Courtezan, Bribes are the best Advocates, or to imploy others to treat with them, and not to be the Pimp, although for themselves.

Also VVriters should when they describe Noble Virgins, to receive Noble Addresses of Love, and to receive those Noble Addresses or Courtships with an attentive Modesty in a bashfull Countenance; and if in tremble for fear, to describe the fear, as being the Nature of the Sex; also to describe their Behaviour after a Noble Garb, and their answers to their Suters, to be full of Reason, Sense, and Truth, and those answers to be delivered in as short discourses, and as few words as Civility will allow of, and not like an ignorant innocent, a childish simplicity. an unbred Behaviour, expressing themselves, or answering their Suters with mincing words that have neither Sense nor Reason in them...

_Exit._

_Scene the last._

_Enter the Academical Gentlemen; to them enters a Servant._

_Man Servant._

May it please your Worships, there is an Antient Gentlewoman that desires to speak with your VVorships.

1 _Gent._

I lay my life it is one of the Matrons of the Academy.

2 _Gent._

Faith if the Humble Bee is flown out, the rest of the Bees will follow.

3 _Gent._

I fear if they do, they will swarm about our Ears.

4 _Gent._

Yes, and sting us with their Tongues.

5 _Gent._

Let us send for her in.

6 _Gent._

I will go and Usher her in.

_He goes out._

_Enters with the Matron; All the Gentlemen pull off their Hats._

_Matron._

Gentlemen, the Ladies of the Academy have sent me unto you to know the Reason or Cause that you will not let them rest in quiet, or suffer them to live in peace, but disturb them in both, by a confused noise of Trumpets, which you uncivilly and discourteously blow at their Grate and Gates.

1 _Gent._

The cause is, that they will not permit us to come into their Company, but have barricadoed their Gates against us, and have incloystred themselves from us; besides, it is a dangerous example for all the rest of their Sex; for if all women should take a toy in their heads to incloyster themselves, there would be none left out to breed on.

_Matron._

Surely it is very fit and proper that young Virgins should live a retired life, both for their Education and Reputation.

2 _Gent._

As for their Education, it is but to learn to talk, and women can do that without teaching, for on my Conscience, a woman was the first inventor of Speech; and as for their Retirement, Nature did never make them [25] for that purpose, but to associate themselves with men: and since men are the chief Head of their kind, it were a sign they had but very little Brain, if they would suffer the youngest and fairest women to incloyster themselves.

_Matron._
Gentlemen pray give me leave to inform you, for I perceive you are in great Error of mistake, for these Ladies have not vowed Virginity, or are they incloystred; for an Academy is not a Cloyster, but a School, wherein are taught how to be good Wives when they are married.

3 Gent.
But no man can come to woo them to be Wives.

Matron.
No, but if they can win their Parents, or those thy are left in trust with, and get their good liking and consent, the young Ladies have learn'd so much Duty and Obedience, as to obey to what they shall think fit.

4 Gent.
But we desire the Ladies good liking, we care not for their Friends; for the approvment and good liking of their Friends, without the Love of the Ladies, will not make us happy, for there is no satisfaction in a secondary Love, as to be beloved for anothers sake, and not for their own.

Matron.
If you be Worthy Gentlemen, as I believe you all are, their Love will be due to your Merits, and your Merits will perswade them to love you.

All the Gentlemen.
Well, if you will be our Mediator, we will surcease our Clamour, otherwise we will increase our noise.

Matron.
If you can get leave of their Parents, and Friends, I will endeavour to serve you, and shall be proud of the imployment that you shall be pleased to impose to my trust and management.

Gentlemen.
And we shall be your Servants, for your favours.

They all go out, with the Gentlemen waiting on her, with their Hats in their hands, Scraping and Congying to her.
PART II
Excerpts from Assembly of Ladies

1. 71-91
A litel while thus was I alone
Beholdyng wele this deelecable place;
My felawshyp were comyng everichone
So must me nede abide as for a space,
Remembryng of many dyvers cose
Of tyme past, musyng with sighes depe,
I set me downe and there fil in sleepe.

And as I slept me thought ther com to me
A gentil woman metely of stature;
Of grete worship she semed for to be,
Atired wele, nat hye but bi mesure,
Hir contenaunce ful sad and ful demure,
Hir colours blewe, al that she had upon;
Theyr com no mo but hir self alon.

Hir gowne was wele enbroadid, certaynly,
With sovenez aftir hir owne devise;
On the prufil hir word, by end by,
Bien toutament, as I cowde me avise.
Than prayd I hir in everie manner wise
That of hir name I myght have remembraunce.
She sayde she was called Perseveraunce.

1. 394-413
We sawe folkes comyng whouth the wal,
So grete people that nombre contewe none.
Ladies they were and gentil wymmen al
Cloathed in bliew everichone, her wordes withal;
But for to knowe theyr wordis or devise
They com so thymeke we myght not in wise.

And wher I stooode she com streight to me:
'Ye bien,' quod she, 'of myn old acquantiaunce,
Yow to enquerre the boldere dare I be
What worde they bere echere after theyr degre;
I pray yow telle it me in secrete wise
And I shal kepe it close on warnaunce.'

'Ye bien,' quod I, 'fuye ladies al in feere,
And gentil wymmen fourere in company;
When they begynne to opyn theyr manner
There shal ye knowe her wordis, by and by.
But as for me I have none verily
And so I told to Countenaunce here afore;
Al myn array is bliew, what nedith more?'

1. 582-8
The first lady, beryng in hir devise
Sanz que jamais, thus wrote she in hir bille:
Compleyneng sore and in ful pitious wise
Of promesse made with feithful hert and wil
And so broken ayenst al manere skille,
Without desert alweys in hir party,
In this matier desyryng remedy.

1. 694-728
'Nothynge so lye as death to come to me
For fynal end of my soryes and peyne;
What shal I more desire, as seme ye -
And ye knewe al aforne it for certeyne
I wote ye wold; and for to telle yow pleynye,
Without hir help that hath al thyng in cure
I can nat thyknk that it may long endure;

And for my trought, prevyd it hath bien wele -
To sey the soth, it canne no more -
Of ful lorg tym, and suffred every dele
In pacience and kept it al in store;
Of hir goodenesse besechyng hir therfor
That I myght have my thank in suche wise
As my desert deservith of justice.'

What these bille were rede everichone
This lady toke goode avisement,
And hem til aunswere, echew on by oon,
She thought it to moche in hir entent,
Wherfor she yaf in coumandement
In hir presence to come both oon and al
To yeve hem there hir answere in general.

What did she than, suppose yow, verily?
She spak hir self and seyde in this manere:
'We have wele sen youre billis by and by
And som of hem ful pitous for to here.
We wil therfor ye knowen this al in feere:
Withyn short tyme oure court of parlement
Here shal be holde in oure paleys present,

And in al this wherein ye fynde yow greved
There shal ye fynde an open remedy,
In suche wise as ye shul be releved
Of al that ye reherec heere triowyly.
As of the date ye shal knowe verily,
Than ye may have a space in your comyng,
For Diligence shall bryng it yow bi writyng.'
Excerpts from The Faerie Queene
III.i.58-63: Malecasta and Britomart

39
So was that chamber clad in goodly wise,
And round about it many beds were dight,
As whilome was the antique worldes guise,
Some for vntimely ease, some for delight,
As pleased them to vse, that vse it might:
And all was full of Damzels, and of Squires,
Daunting and reueling both day and night,
And swimming deep in sensuall desires,
And Cupid still amongst them kindled lustfull fires.

... 41
Thence they were brought to that great Ladies vew,
Whom they found sitting on a sumptuous bed,
That glistred all with gold and glorious shew,
As the proud Persian Queenes accustomed:
She seemed a woman of great bountith,
And of rare beautie, sauing that askaunce
Her wanton eyes, ill signes of womanhede,
Did roll too highly, and too often glaunce,
Without regard of grace, or comely amenaunce.

... 56
Therewith a while she her flit fancy fed,
Till she motte winne fit time for her desire,
But yet her wound still inward freshely bled,
And through her bones the false instilled fire
Did spred it selfe, and venime close inspire.
Tho were the tables taken all away,
And euery knight, and euery gentle Squire
 Gan choose his dame with Basciomani gay,
With whom he meant to make his sport & courtly play.

57
Some fell to daunce, some fell to hazardry,
Some to make loue, some to make meriment,
As divers wits to divers things apply;
And all the white faire Malecasta bent
Her craftie engins to her close intent.
By this theternall lampes, wherewith high loue
Doth light the lower worlde, were halfe yspent,
And the moist daughters of huge Atlas strove
Into the Ocean deewe to driue their wearey droue.

58
High time it seemed then for euery wight
Them to betake vnto their kindly rest;
Eftesoones long waxen torches weren light,
Vnto their boweres to gyden euery guest:
Tho when the Britonesse saw all the rest
Auoided quyte, she gan her selfe despoile,
And safe commit to her soft fethered nest,
Where through long watch, and late daies weary toile,
She soundly slept, and carefull thoughts did quite assoile.

59
Now whenas all the world in silence deewe
Yshrowed was, and euery mortall wight
Was drowned in the depth of deadly sleepe,
Faire Malecasta, whose enguised spright
Could find no rest in such perplexed plight,
Lightly arose out of her wearey bed,
And vnder the blacke veale of guilty Night,
Her with a scarlet mantle covered,
That was with gold and Ermine fayre enuoloped.

60
Then panting soft, and trembling euerie lyoint,
Her fearfull feete towards the bowre she moued;
Where she for secret purpose did appoynt
To lodge the warlike mayd vnwisely loued,
And to her bed approaching, first she proued,
Whether she slept or wakt, with her soft hand
She softly felt, if any member moued,
And lent her wary earre to vnderstand,
If any puffle of breath, or signe of sence she fond.

61
Which whenas none she fond, with easie shift,
For feare least her vnwares she should abrayd,
Theembroiderd quile she lightly vp did lift,
And by her side her selfe she softly layd,
Of euery finest fingers touch affaynd;
Ne any noise she made, ne word she spake,
But inly sighd. At last the royall Mayd
Out of her quiet slumber did awake,
And chaungd her wearey side, the better ease to take.

62
Where feeling one close couched by her side,
She lightly left out of her filled bed,
And to her weapon ran, in minde to gride
The loathed leachour. But the Dame halfe ded
Through suddain feare and ghastly dereithed,
Did shrieked aloud, that through the house it rong,
And the whole family therewith adred,
Rashly out of their rouzed couches sprong,
And to the troubled chamber all in armes did throng.

63
And those six Knights that Ladies Champions,
And eke the Rederrose knight ran to the stownd,
Halfe armd and halfe vnarmd, with them attons:
Where when confusedly they came, they fownd
Their Lady lying on the senclesse ground;
On thother side, they saw the warlike Mayd
All in her snow-white smocke, with locks yunbound,
Thretening the point of her auenging blade,
That with so troublous terrouer they were all dismayde.
DESDEMONA
Where should I lose that handkerchief, Emilia?
EMILIA
I know not, madam.
DESDEMONA
Believe me, I had rather have lost my purse
Full of crusader; and but my noble Moor
Is true of mind, and made of no such baseness
As jealous creatures are, it were enough
To put him to ill-thinking.
EMILIA
Is he not jealous?
DESDEMONA
Who, he? I think the sun where he was born
Drew all such humours from him.
EMILIA
Look where he comes.

Enter OTHELLO.

DESDEMONA
I will not leave him now till Cassio
Be called to him. How is’t with you, my lord?
OTHELLO
Well, my good lady. [aside] O hardness to dissemble!—
How do you, Desdemona?
DESDEMONA
Well, my good lord.

OTHELLO
Give me your hand. This hand is moist, my lady.
DESDEMONA
It yet hath felt no age, nor known no sorrow.
OTHELLO
This argues fruitfulness and liberal heart:
Hot, hot, and moist. This hand of yours requires
A sequester from liberty, fasting and prayer,
Much castigation, exercise devout,
For here’s a young and sweating devil, here,
That commonly rebels. ’Tis a good hand,
A frank one.
DESDEMONA
You may indeed say so,
For ‘twas that hand that gave away my heart.
OTHELLO
A liberal hand. The hearts of old gave hands
But our new heraldry is hands, not hearts.
DESDEMONA
I cannot speak of this. Come, now, your promise.
OTHELLO
What promise, chuck?

[Notes and marginalia added for clarity]
DESDEMONA
I have sent to bid Cassio come speak with you.

OTHELLO
I have a salt and sullen rheum offends me,
Lend me thy handkerchief.

DESDEMONA
Here, my lord.

OTHELLO
That which I gave you.

DESDEMONA
I have it not about me.

OTHELLO
Not?

DESDEMONA
No, faith, my lord.

OTHELLO
That's a fault. That handkerchief
Did an Egyptian to my mother give,
She was a charmer and could almost read
The thoughts of people. She told her, while she kept it,
'Twould make her amiable and subdue my father
Entirely to her love; but if she lost it
Or made a gift of it, my father's eye
Should hold her loathed and his spirits should hunt
After new fancies. She, dying, gave it me
And bid me, when my fate would have me wife,

To give it her. I did so, and—take heed on't!
Make it a darling, like your precious eye!—
To lose't or give't away were such perdition
As nothing else could match.

DESDEMONA
Is't possible?

OTHELLO
'Tis true, there's magic in the web of it.
A sibyl that had numbered in the world
The sun to course two hundred compasses,
In her prophetic fury sewed the work;
The worms were hallowed that did breed the silk,
And it was dyed in mummy, which the stiff
Conserved of maidens' hearts.

DESDEMONA
I'faith, is't true?

OTHELLO
Most veritable, therefore look to't well.

DESDEMONA
Then would to God that I had never seen't!

OTHELLO
Hal! wherefore?

DESDEMONA
Why do you speak so startledly and rashly?
OTHELLO

Is't lost? Is't gone? Speak, is't out o'the way?

DESDEMONA

Heaven bless us!

OTHELLO

Say you?

DESDEMONA

It is not lost, but what an if it were?

OTHELLO

How?

DESDEMONA

I say: it is not lost.

OTHELLO

Fetch't, let me see't.

DESDEMONA

Why, so I can, sir; but I will not now. This is a trick to put me from my suit. Pray you, let Cassio be received again.

OTHELLO

Fetch me the handkerchief, my mind misgives.

DESDEMONA

Come, come,

You'll never meet a more sufficient man.

OTHELLO

The handkerchief! DESDEMONA

I pray, talk me of Cassio.

IAGO

Look you, Cassio and my husband.

OTHELLO

The handkerchief!

DESDEMONA

A man that all his time

Hath founded his good fortunes on your love,

Shared dangers with you—

IAGO

The handkerchief!

DESDEMONA

I'faith, you are to blame.

OTHELLO

Zounds!

EMILIA

Is not this man jealous?

DESDEMONA

I ne'er saw this before,

Sure there's some wonder in this handkerchief; I am most unhappy in the loss of it.

EMILIA

'Tis not a year or two shows us a man.

They are all but stomachs, and we all but food:

They eat us hungerly, and when they are full They belch us.

Enter IAGO and CASSIO.

IAGO

There is no other way, 'tis she must do,

O. 82 out ... way lost; missing. Cf. 1.3.355-40.

Heaven bless us! expressing surprise, but could be rendered as what's all the fuss about (OEDE bless)?

Say you: 'do you say so?' or 'what do you say?' (I. I. 4.5.28, M.M. 5.1.271, Oth. 4.2.279).

This sounds like a lie, because we know that she has lost it (cf. 23), but she may believe that, though missing, it will turn up again. See p. 98, "is it?"

Sir This word creates distance between them.

IC. 82 [F]: is it Q: other T: Q: 83 Heaven blesses Q: Blesses F. 86 have... P: s: 84 See Q: See in Q: not in F. 90 I pray you: I pray Q: 91 or Q: F has Handkerchief, misgives, the Q: that Q: 92-5: one line Q: 94: Q: not in F.
To the Reader.

Courtesious Reader, The gift of learning being so little set by in these days amongst these of our Sex, is the chief invitation which hath caused me to publish this small Tract, thereby to stir up others, not to let their great worth with other learned Authors of our Sex ly in obscurity. I need not quote them for I think few of our Sex so ignorant but they have either read or heard of them, and though some of them have been abused by the quacksalving Mountebanks that would engroste all knowledge into their own hands, yet have great & wonderful cures been done by our Sex, after these paper-foal Mongrels have left them. Why then should we suffer these Cater-pillers to eat up our vine? Let me tell you, it is as lawful for us to be Judges & plead our own Causes in our own gowns as Lawyers to plead for others. Then let's raise up our spirits, and show forth our Vertues, for the knowledge in this Art will animate our husbands to excel us, no doubt but we shall make them sensible where the sign lies; and make them be in our studies many times when they would be in an Alcove house; nay we shall find the nights will be more comfortable, and the days more pleasant. By this means we shall be counted instead of Mobs, maps of modesty, and for taling Gosips, but Emblemes of vertue, and patterns of civility to all the world.

By Sarah Ginnor Student in Physick.

London, Printed for J. J. 1659.
A Prognostication.

in Pisces and Jupiter in Cancer, it is a fortunate time of marrying, many of our Sex shall obtain gallant matches, nay some better than they deserve. If Mercury and Venus be in Cancer, in conjunction in the eleventh house, to marry a Seaman is fortunate. If Venus be in Scorpio, the wantons of our Sex as well as the other Sex will be pepper'd with the P — and then woe to your Notes, for its a fatal plague to the roof of your mouth besides the downfall of Narrow-bridge and the drying up your Fish-ponds by the operation of malignant fireworks.

For this my Judgement, do not take distail;
But as I am, I wish you all, be caution:
This is the only way, if you desire
To be preserved from the Frenchmans fire.

The Names of the Planets and the Days governed by each Planet.

As Saturn stands for Saturday to Luna Sunday,
Mars to Tuesday Sol stands up to Monday,
Jupiter boldly doth to Thursday fly,
To Friday Venus Wednesday Mercury.

The 12 signs ruling in the body are, Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagitarius Capricorn, Aquarius, Pisces.

Monthly
A Prognostication.

The signification of Moles in these of our sex.

If the Woman have a Mole on the left Breast, it denotes her undoubtedly wicked. If she have a Mole on her Belly, it denotes a Glutton or great feeder. If a Mole right against the Spleen, it denotes she shall be often sick. If on the bottom of the Belly, it argues much debility and weakness. If near the privy Members, it denotes unpeacable desires after Venery, and unsatisfiable in coaking. If a Woman have a Mole on the right Knee, it denotes her honest, if on the left many Children. If on the Angle of the foot, she shall take on her the mans part. Moles on the right side betokeneth honesty Riches, on the left side Calamity and Poverty. If on the Forhead, it denotes that she shall come to high dignity. If she have a Mole about the overbrow, it argues that she shall marry a rich comely person. But if on the overbrow she shall have five Husbands. If she have a Mole on the Nose somewhat Ruddy, and another in the privy place, it doth shew such a person is overmuch given to Venereal acts. If a Woman have a Mole on the neither jaw, it denotes she shall lead her life in sorrow, which shall hinder her from bearing Children. If a Mole on any of the Lips, it doth portend that she has a great glutton. If on the Chin, it portends wealth. If a Mole on any of her Ears, it portends she shall be Rich and much reverenced, and hath the like Mole on her Thigh or Ham. If on the Neck, it likewise denotes Riches. If a Woman shall have a Mole

A Prognostication.

Mole on her Lows, it denotes poor Kindred, and always wanting. If on the Shoulders, it denotes imprisonment and sorrow. If she have a Mole on the Throat, it signifies she shall marry a Wealthy and Comely man. If in the Hand a Mole shall appear, it denotes good Luck and Prosperous Children. If a Mole on the Breast, it denotes she shall be harmed by much poverty.

How to know whether a Woman be with Child of Boy or Girl.

Write the proper names of the Father or Mother, and of the Moneth that she conceived with Child, and adding like wise all the numbers of those Letters together, divide them by seven, and if the remainder be even, it will be a Girl, if odd, it will be a Boy.

To know whether the Wife be Honest or not.

Write the name of the Wife, and of her Mother, and put all the number of those Letters together, and put to the total sum 15, and divide it by 7, and if the remainder be even, she is honest, if even she is dishonest. Always write the proper names in Latin.

The same may be to know whether a Man or his Wife shall dye first, only add not the number 15, but divide by seven, if even the Woman shall dye, if odd the man.
Excerpts from The Prophetess 2.1

ACT II. SCENE I.
Enter Drusilla and Delphia.
Drus: LEAVE us, and not vouchsafe a parting kiss
To her, that in his hopes of greatness lives,
And goes along with him in all his dangers?
Delp: I grant 'twas most inhuman.
Drus: Oh, you give it
Too mild a name! 'twas more than barbarous!
And you a partner in it.
Delp: I, Drusilla?
Drus: Yes; you have blown his swollen pride to that vastness,
As he believes the earth is in his fathom;
This makes him quite forget his humble being:
And can I hope that he, that only fed
With the imagin'd food of future empire,
Disdains ev'n those that gave him means and life,
To nourish such desires, when he's possess'd it
or his ambitious ends (which must fell on him,
Or your predictions are false) will ever
Descend to look on me?
Delp: Were his intents
Perfidious as the seas or winds; his heart
Compos'd of falsehood; yet the benefit,
The greatness of the good he has from you,
(For what I have conferred is thine, Drusilla)
Must make him firm and thankful: But if all
Remembrance of the debts he stands engag'd for,
Find a quick grave in his ingratitude.
My powerful art, that guides him to his height,

Shall make him curse the hour he c'er
Was rais'd,
Or sink him to the centre.
Drus: I had rather
Your art could force him to return that ardour
To me, I bear to him; or give me power
To moderate my passions: Yet I know not;
I should repent your grant, tho' you had sign'd it
(So well I find he's worthy of all service).
But to believe that any check to him
In his main hopes, could yield content to me,
Were treason to true love, that knows no pleasure,
The object that it doats on ill affected!
Delp: "Pretty simplicity! I love thee for't,
And will not sit an idle looker-on,
And see it cozen'd. Dry thy innocent eyes,
And cast off jealous fears, (yet promises
Are but lip-comforts) but fancy aught
That's possible in nature, or in art,
That may advance thy comfort, and be bold
To tell thy soul 'tis thine; therefore speak freely
Drus: You new-create me! To conceal from you
My Virgin fondness, were to hide my sickness
From my physician. Oh, dear aunt, I languish
For want of Diocles' sight: He is the sun
That keeps my blood in a perpetual spring;
But, in his absence, cold benumbing winter
Seizes on all my faculties. Would you bind me
(That am your slave already) in more fetters,
And, in the place of service, to adore you
Oh, bear me then (but 'tis impossible,
I fear, to be effected) where I may
See how my Diocles breaks thro' his dangers,

And in what heaps his honours flow in him,
That I may meet him in the height an pride
Of all his glories, and there (as your gift)
Challenge him as mine own.
Delp: Enjoy thy wishes:
This is an easy boon, which, at thy years,
I could have giv'n to any, but now grown
Perfect in all the hidden mysteries
Of that inimitable art, which makes us
Equal ev'n to the gods, and nature's wonders,
It shall be done as fits my skill and glory:
To break thro' bolts and locks, a scholar's Prize
For thieves and pick-locks! to pass thro' an army,
Cover'd with night, or some disguise, the practice
Of poor and needy spys! No, my Drusilla,
From Ceres I will force her winged dragons,
And in the air hang over the tribunal,
The music of the spheres attending on us,
There, as his goodsfier, thou shalt shine upon him,
If he prove true, and as his angel guard him:
But if he dare be false, I, in a moment,
Will put that glorious light out, with such horror
As if 'th eternal night had seiz'd the sun,
Or all things were return'd to the first chaos,
And then appear like furies.
Drus: I will do
Whate'er you shall command.
Delp: Rest then assur'd,
I am the mistress of my art, and fear not.
"At last we gan approach that woful clime,
Where fire and brimstone down from Heaven was sent
To take revenge for sin and shameful crime
Gainst kind commit, by those who nould repent;
A loathsome lake of brimstone, pitch and lime,
O'ergoes that land, erst sweet and redolent.
And when it moves, thence stench and smoke up flies
Which dim the weikin and infect the skies.

"This is the lake in which yet never might
Aught that hath weight sink to the bottom down,
But like to cork or leaves or feathers light,
Stones, iron, men, there fleet and never drown;
Therein a castle stands, to which by sight
But o'er a narrow bridge no way is known,
Hither us brought, here welcomed us the witch,
The house within was stately, pleasant, rich.

"The heavens were clear, and wholesome was the air,
High trees, sweet meadows, waters pure and good;
For there in thickest shade of myrtles fair
A crystal spring poured out a silver flood;
Amid the herbs, the grass and flowers rare,
The falling leaves down pattered from the wood,
The birds sung hymns of love; yet speak I naught
Of gold and marble rich, and richly wrought.

"Under the curtain of the Greenwood shade,
Beside the brook upon the velvet grass,
In massy vessel of pure silver made,
A banquet rich and costly furnished was,
All beasts, all birds beguiled by fowler's trade,
All fish were there in floods or seas that pass,
All dainties made by art, and at the table
An hundred virgins served, for husbands able.

"She with sweet words and false enticing smiles,
Infused love among the dainties set,
And with empoisoned cups our souls beguiles,
And made each knight himself and God forget.
She rose and turned again within short whiles,
With changed looks where wrath and anger met,
A charming rod, a book with her she brings,
On which she mumbled strange and secret things.

"She read, and change I felt my will and thought,
I longed to change my life, and place of biding,
That virtue strange in me no pleasure wrought,
I leapt into the flood myself there hiding,
My legs and feet both into one were brought,
Mine arms and hands into my shoulders sliding,
My skin was full of scales, like shields of brass,
Now made a fish, where late a knight I was.

"The rest with me like shape, like garments wore,
And dived with me in that quicksilver stream,
Such mind, to my remembrance, then I bore,
As when on vain and foolish things men dream;
At last our shade it pleased her to restore,
Then full of wonder and of fear we seem,
And with an ireful look the angry maid
Thus threatened us, and made us thus afraid.

"Then, for alone they say falls no mishap,
Within short while Prince Tancred thither came,
And was unwares surprised in the trap:
But there short while we stayed, the wily dame
In other folds our mischiefs would unwarp.
From Hidraort an hundred horsemen came,
Whose guide, a baron bold to Egypt's king,
Should us disarmed and bound in fetters bring.

"Now on our way, the way to death we ride,
But Providence Divine thus for us wrought,
Rinaldo, whose high virtue is his guide
To great exploits, exceeding human thought,
Mel us, and all at once our guard defied.
And ere he left the fight to earth them brought.
And in their harness armed us in the place,
Which late were ours, before our late disgrace.

14. 50-71

L
"Armida's craft, her sleight and hidden guile
You partly wot, her acts and arts untrue,
How to your camp she came, and by what wile
The greatest lords and princes thence she drew;
You know she turned them first to monsters vile,
And kept them since closed up in secret mew,
Lastly, to Gaza-ward in bonds them sent,
Whom young Rinaldo rescued as they went.

LI
"What chanced since I will at large declare,
To you unknown, a story strange and true.
When first her prey, got with such pain and care,
Escaped and gone the witch perceived and knew,
Her hands she wrung for grief, her clothes she tare,
And full of woe these heavy words outthrew:

Chas! my knights are slain, my prisoners free,
Yet of that conquest never boast shall he,

LI
"He in their place shall serve me, and sustain
Their plagues, their torments suffer, sorrows bear,
And they his absence shall lament in vain,
And wait his loss and theirs with many a tear.'
Thus talking to herself she did ordain
A false and wicked guile, as you shall hear;
Thither she hasted where the valiant knight
Had overcome and slain her men in fight.

LII
"Rinaldo there had dolt and left his own,
And on his back a Pagan's harness tied,
Perchance he deemed so to pass unknown,
And in those arms less noted false to ride.
A headless corse in fight late overthrown,
The witch in his forsaken arms did hide,
And by a brook exposed it on the sand
Whither she wished would come a Christian band:

LV
"Their coming might the dame foreknow right well,
For secret spies she sent forth thousand ways,
Which every day news from the camp might tell,
Who parted thence, booties to search or prey:
Beside, the sprites conjured by sacred spell,
All what she asks or doubts, reveals and says,
The body therefore placed she in that part
That furthered best her sleight, her craft and art;

LV
"And near the corpse a variet false and sly
She left, attired in shepherd's homely weed,
And taught him how to counterfeit and lie
As time required, and he performed the deed;
With him your soldiers spoke, of jealousy
And false suspect amongst them he strewed the seed,
That since brought forth the fruit of strife and jar,
Of civil brawls, contention, discord, war.

LVI
"And as she wished so the soldiers thought
By Godfrey's practice that the prince was slain,
Yet vanished that suspicion false to naught
When truth spread forth her silver wings again
Her false devices thus Armida wrought,
This was her first deceit, her foremost train;
What next she practised, shall you hear me tell,

Against our knight, and what thereof befell.

LVII
"Armida hunted him through wood and plain,
Till on Orontes' flowery banks he stayed,
There, where the stream did part and meet again
And in the midst a gentle island made,
A pillar fair was pight beside the main,
Near which a little frigate floating laid,
The marble while the prince did long behold,
And this inscription read, there writ in gold:

LVIII
"Whoso thou art whom will or chance deth bring
With happy steps to flood Orontes' sides,
Know that the world hath not so strange a thing,
Twixt east and west, as this small island hides,
Then pass and see, without more tarrying.'
The hasty youth to pass the stream provides,
And for the cogs was narrow, small and strait,
Alone he rowed, and bade his squires there wait;

LIX
"Landed he stalks about, yet naught he sees
But verdant groves, sweet shades, and mossy rocks
With caves and fountains, flowers, herbs and trees,
So that the words he read he takes
for mocks:
But that green isle was sweet at all
degrees,
Wherewith enticed down sits he and
unlocks
His closed helm, and bares his
visage fair,
To take sweet breath from cool and
gentle air.

LX
"A rumbling sound amid the waters
deep
Meanwhile he heard, and thither
turned his sight,
And tumbling in the troubled stream
took keep
How the strong waves together rush
and fight,
Whence first he saw, with golden
tresses, peep
The rising visage of a virgin bright,
And then her neck, her breasts, and
all, as low
As he for shame could see, or she
could show.

LXI
"So in the twilight does sometimes
appear
A nymph, a goddess, or a fairy
queen,
And though no siren but a sprite this
were
Yet by her beauty seemed it she had
been
One of those sisters false which
haunted near
The Tyrrenhe shores and kept those
waters sheen,
Like theirs her face, her voice was,
and her sound,
And thus she sung, and pleased both
skies and ground:

LXII
"Ye happy youths, who April fresh
and May
Attire in flowering green of lusty age,
For glory vain, or virtue's idle ray,
Do not your tender limbs to toil
engage;
In calm streams, fishes; birds, in
sunshine play,
Who followeth pleasure he is only
sage,
So nature saith, yet gainst her sacred
will
Why still rebel you, and why strive
you still?

LXIII
"O fools who youth possess, yet
scorn the same
A precious, but a short-abiding
treasure,
Virtue itself is but an idle name,
Prized by the world 'love reason all
and measure,
And honor, glory, praise, renown and
fame,
That men's proud harts bewitch with
tickling pleasure,
An echo is, a shade, a dream, a
flower,
With each wind blasted, spoiled with
every shower.

LXIV
"But let your happy souls in joy
possess
The ivory castles of your bodies fair,
Your passed harms salve with
forgetfulness,
Haste not your coming evils with
thought and care,
Regard no blazing star with burning
tress,
Nor storm, nor threatening sky, nor
thundering air,
This wisdom is, good life, and worldly
bliss,
Kind teacheth us, nature commands
us this.'

LXV
"Thus sung the spirit false, and
stealing sleep,
To which her tunes enticed his heavy
eyes,
By step and step did on his senses
creep,
Still every limb therein unmoved lies,
Not thunders loud could from this
slumber deep,
Of quiet death true image, make him
rise:
Then from her ambush forth Armida
start,
Swearing revenge, and threatening
torments smart.

LXVI
"But when she looked on his face
awhile,
And saw how sweet he breathed, how
still he lay,
How his fair eyes though closed
seemed to smile,
At first she stayed, astound with great
dismay,
Then sat her down, so love can art
beguile,
And as she sat and looked, fled fast
away
Her wrath, that on his forehead gazed
the maid,
As in his spring Narcissus tooting
laid;

LXVII
"And with a veil she wiped now and
then
From his fair cheeke the globes of
silver sweat,
And cool air gathered with a
trembling fan,
To mitigate the rage of melting heat,
Thus, who would think it, his hot eye-
glance can
Of that cold frost dissolve the
hardness great
Which late congealed the heart of
that fair dame,
Who late a foe, a lover now became.

LXVIII
"Of woodbines, lilies, and of roses
sweet,
Which proudly flowered through that
wanton plain,
All platted fast, well knit, and joined
meet,
She framed a soft but surely holding
chain,
Wherewith she bound his neck his
hands and feet,
Thus bound, thus taken, did the
prince remain,
And in a coach which two old
dragons drew,
She laid the sleeping knight, and
thence she flew:

LXIX
"Nor turned she to Damascus'
kingsdoms large,
Nor to the fort built in Asphaltes's lake,
But jealous of her dear and precious
charge,
And of her love ashamed, the way did
take,
To the wide ocean whither skiff or
barge
From us doth seld or never voyage
make,
And there to frolic with her love
awhile,
She chose a waste, a sole and desert
isla.

LXX
"An isle that with her fellows bears
the name
Of Fortunate, for temperate air and mould,
There in a mountain high alight the dame,
A hill obscured with shades of forests old,
Upon whose sides the witch by art did frame
Continual snow, sharp frost and winter cold,
But on the top, fresh, pleasant, sweet and green,
Beside a lake a palace built this queen.

LXXI
"There in perpetual sweet and flowering spring,
She lives at ease, and joys her lord at will;
The hardy youth from this strange prison bring
Your valors must, directed by my skill,
And overcome each monster and each thing,
That guards the palace or that keeps the hill,
Nor shall you want a guide, or engines fit,
To bring you to the mount, or conquer it.

20.121-136

CXXI
This done, Rinaldo stayed and looked around,
Where he should harm his foes, or help his friends;
Nor of the Pagans saw he squadron sound:
Each standard falls, ensign to earth descends;
His fury quiet then and calm he found,
There all his wrath, his rage, and rancor ends,
He called to mind how, far from help or aid,
Amida fled, alone, amazed, afraid:

CXXII
Well saw he when she fled, and with that sight
The prince had pity, courtesy and care;
He promised her to be her friend and knight
When erst he left her in the island bare:
The way she fled he ran and rode aright.
Her palfrey's feet signs in the grass outware:
But she this while found out an ugly shade,
Fit place for death, where naught could life persuade.

CXXIII
Well pleased was she with those shadowe brown,
And yet displeased with luck, with life, with love;
There from her steed she lighted, there laid down
Her bow and shafts, her arms that helpless prove.
"There lie with shame," she says, "disgraced, o'erthrown,
Blunt are the weapons, blunt the arms I move.
Weak to revenge my harms, or harm my foe,
My shafts are blunt, ah, love, would thine were so!

CXXIV
Alas, among so many, could not one,
Not one draw blood, one wound or rend his skin?
All other breasts to you are marble stone.
Dare you then pierce a woman's bosom thin?
See, see, my naked heart, on this alone
Employ your force this fort is eath to win,
And love will shoot you from his mighty bow,
Weak is the shot that driple falls in snow.

CXXV
"I pardon will your fear and weakness past,
Be strong, mine arrows, cruel, sharp, gainst me,
Ah, wretch, how is thy chance and fortune cast;
If placed in these thy good and comfort be?
But since all hope is vain all help is waste.
Since hurts ease hurts, wounds must cure wounds in thee;
Then with thine arrow's stroke cure stroke of love,
Death for thy heart must salve and surgeon prove.

CXXVI
"And happy me if, being dead and slain,
I bear not with me this strange plague to hell:
Love, stay behind, come thou with me disdain,
And with my wronged soul forever dwell;
Or else with it turn to the world again
And vex that knight with dreams and visions fell,
And tell him, when twixt life and death I strove
My last wish, was revenge—last word, was love."

CXXVII
And with that word half mad, half dead, she seems,
An arrow, poignant, strong and sharp she took,
When her dear knight found her in these extremes.
Now fit to die, and pass the Stygian brook.
Now prest to quench her own and beauty's beams;
Now death sat on her eyes, death in her look.
When to her back he stepped, and stayed her arm
Stretched forth to do that service last, last harm.

CXXVIII
She turns and, ere she knows, her lord she spies,
Whose coming was unwished, unthought, unknown.
She shrieks, and twines away her disdainful eyes.
From his sweet face, she falls dead in a swoon.
Falls as a flower half cut, that bending lies:
He held her up, and lest she tumble down,
Under her tender side his arm he placed,
His hand her girdle loosed, her gown unlaced;

CXXIX
And her fair face, fair bosom he bedews
With tears, teers of remorse, of ruth, of sorrow.
As the pale rose her color lost renews
With the fresh drops fallen from the
silver morrow,
So she revives, and cheeks empurpled shows
Moist with their own tears and with tears they borrow;
Thrice looked she up, her eyes thrice closed she;
As who say, "Let me die, ere look on thee."

CXXX
And his strong arm, with weak and feeble hand
She should have thrust away, loosed and untwined:
Oft strove she, but in vain, to break that band,
For he the hold he got not yet resigned,
Herself fast bound in those dear knots she fand,
Dear, though she feigned scorn, strowe and repined:
At last she speaks, she weeps, complains and cries;
Yet durst not, did not, would not see his eyes.

CXXXI
"Cruel at thy departure, at return
As cruel, say, what chance thee hither guideth,
Would'st thou prevent her death whose heart forlorn
For thee, for thee death's strokes each hour divideth?
Com'st thou to save my life? alas, what scorn,
What torment for Armida poor abedeth?
No, no, thy crafts and sleights I well descry,
But she can little do that cannot die.

CXXXII
"Thy triumph is not great nor well arrayed
Unless in chains thou lead a captive dame:
A dame now ta'en by force, before betrayed,
This is thy greatest glory, greatest fame:
Time was that thee of love and life I prayed,
Let death now end my love, my life, my shame.
Yet let not thy false hand bereave this breath,
For if it were thy gift, hateful were death.

CXXXIII
"Cruel, myself an hundred ways can find,
To rid me from thy malice, from thy hate,
If weapons sharp, if poisons of all kind,
If fire, if strangling fail, in that estate,
Yet ways enough I know to stop this wind:
A thousand entries hath the house of fate.
Ah, leave these flatteries, leave weak hope to move,
Cease, cease, my hope is dead, dead is my love."

CXXXIV
Thus mourned she, and from her watery eyes
Disdain and love dropped down, rolled up in tears;
From his pure fountains ran two streams likewise,
Wherein chaste pity and mild ruth appears:
Thus with sweet words the queen he pacifies,
"Madam, appease your grief, your wrath, your fears,
For to be crowned, not scorned, your life I save;
Your foe nay, but your friend, your knight, your slave.

CXXXV
"But if you trust no speech, no oath, no word;
Yet in mine eyes, my zeal, my truth behold:
For to that throne, whereof thy sire was lord,
I will restore thee, crown thee with that gold,
And if high Heaven would so much grace afford
As from thy heart this cloud this veil unfold
Of Paganism, in all the east no dame
Should equalize thy fortune, state and fame."

CXXXVI
Thus plaineth he, thus prays, and his desire
Endears with sighs that fly and tears that fall;
That as against the warmth of Titan's fire,
Snowdrifts consume on tops of mountains tall,
So melts her wrath; but love remains entire.
"Behold," she says, "your handmaid and your thrall:
My life, my crown, my wealth use at your pleasure;"
Thus death her life became, loss proved her tenure.

Link to full text:
http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/392/pg392.html

Excerpts from Comus

The Scene changes to a stately Palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness; soft Musick, Tables spred with all dainties. Comus appears with his rabble, and the Lady set in an incanted Chair, to whom he offers his Gass, which she puts by, and goes about to rise.

Comus: Nay Lady sit; if I but wave this wand,
Your nerves are all chain'd up in Alabaster, [ 660 ]
And you a statue; or as Daphne was Root-bound, that fled Apollo,

Ledy. Fool do not boast,
Thou canst not touch the freedom of my minde
With all thy charms, although this corporal rinde
Thou haste immanucl'd, while Heav'n sees good. [ 665 ]

Co. Why are you vext, Lady? why do you frown?
Here dwell no frowns, nor anger, from these gates
Sorrow flies farr: See here be all the pleasures
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns [ 670 ]
Brisk as the April buds in Primrose-season.
And first behold this cordial Julep here
That flames, and dances in his crystal bounds
With spirits of balm, and fragrant Syrops mixt,
Not that Nepenthes which the wife of Trone, [ 675 ]
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena.
Is of such power to stir up joy as this,  
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.  
Why should you be so cruel to your self,  
And to those dainty limms which nature lent [680]  
For gentle usage, and soft delicacy?  
But you invert the co'v'nants of her trust,  
And harshly deal like an ill borrower  
With that which you receiv'd on other terms,  
Scorning the unexempt condition [685]  
By which all mortal frailty must subsist,  
Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,  
That have been tir'd all day without repast,  
And timely rest have wanted, but fair Virgin  
This will restore all soon. [690]  

La. 'Twill not, false traitor,  
'Twill not restore the truth and honesty  
That thou hast banish't from thy tongue with lies,  
Was this the cottage, and the safe abode  
Thou told'st me of? What grim aspects are these,  
These oughly-headed Monsters?  
Mercy guard me! [695]  
Hence with thy brew'd inchantments, foul deceiver,  
Hast thou betray'd my credulous innocence  
With visor'd falsehood and base forger}'ry,  
And wouldst thou seek again to trap me here  
With lick'erish baits fit to ensnare a brute? [700]  
Were it a draft for Juno when she banquet's,  
I would not taste thy treasonous offer; none  
But such as are good men can give  
good things,  
And that which is not good, is not delicious  
To a well-govern'd and wise appetite. [705]  

Co. O foolishness of men! that lend their ears  
To those budge doctors of the Stoick Furr.  
And fetch their precepts from the  
Cynick Tub,  
Praising the lean and sallow Abstinence.  
Wherefore did Nature powre her bounties forth. [710]  
With such a full and unwithering hand,  
Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,  
Thronging the Seas with spawn innumerable,  
But all to please, and sate the curious taste?  
And set to work millions of spinning Worms, [715]  
That in their green shops weave the smooth-hair'd silk  
To deck her Sons; and that no corner might  
Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loyns  
She hatch't th' all-worship'rt ore and precious gems  
To store her children with; if all the world [720]  
Should in a pet of temperance feed on  
Pulse,  
Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but Friexe,  
Th' all-giver would be unthank'rt, would be unprais'rt,  
Not half his riches known, and yet despis'rt;  
And we should serve him as a grudging master, [725]  

As a penurious niggard of his wealth,  
And live like Natures bastards, not her sons,  
Who would be quite surcharg'd with her own weight,  
And stragl'd with her waste fertility;  
Th' earth cumber'd, and the wing'd air dark't with plumes, [730]  
The herds would over-multitude their Lords,  
The Sea o'refraft'g would swell, & th unsought diamonds  
Would su emblace the forhead of the Deep,  
And so bestudd with Stars, that they below  
Would grow inur'd to light, and com at last [735]  
To gaze upon the Sun with shameless brows.  
List Lady be not coy, and be not cosen'd  
With that same vaunted name  
Virginity,  
Beauty is nature's coyn, must not be hoarded,  
But must be currant, and the good thereof [740]  
Consists in mutual and partak'n bliss,  
Unsavoury in th' enjоyment of it self.  
If you let slip time, like a neglected rose  
It withers on the stalk with languish'd head.  
Beauty is natures brag, and must be shown [745]  
In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities  
Where most may wonder at the workmanship;  
It is for homely features to keep home,  
They had their name thence; course complications  
And cheeks of sorry grain will serve to ply [750]  
The sampler, and to teize the huswifes  
wooll.  
What need a vermeil-tinctur'd lip for that  
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the Morn?  
There was another meaning in these gifts,  
Think what, and be adviz'd, you are but young yet. [755]  

La. I had not thought to have unlockt my lips  
In this unhallow'd air, but that this Jugler  
Would think to charm my judgement,  
as mine eyes,  
Ostruding false rules pranckt in reasons garb.  
I hate when vice can bolt her arguments. [760]  
And vertue has no tongue to check her pride:  
Impositor do not charge most innocent nature.  
As if she would her children should be riotous  
With her abundance, she good ceteress  
Means her provision onely to the good [765]  
That live according to her sober laws,  
And holy dictate of spare Temperance;  
If every just man that now pines with want  
Had but a moderate and beseeing share  
Of that which lewdly-pamper'd Luxury [770]  
Now heaps upon som few with vast excess,  
Natures full blessings would be well dispenc'd  
In unsuperfluous even proportion.  
And she no whit encomber'd with her store,  
And then the giver would be better
thank't, [ 775 ]
His praise due paid, for swinish
gluttony
Ne're looks to Heav'n amidst his
gorgeous feast,
But with besotted base ingratitude
Cramms, and blasphemes his feeder.
Shall I go on?
Or have I said enough? To him that
dares [ 780 ]
Arm his profane tongue with
contemptuous words
Against the Sun-clad power of
Chastity,
Fain would I somthing say, yet to what
end?
Thou hast nor Eare nor Soul to
apprehend
The sublime notion, and high mystery [ 785 ]
That must be utter'd to unfold the sage
And serious doctrine of Virginity,
And thou art worthy that thou shouldst
not know
More hapiness then this thy present
lot.
Enjoy your dear Wit, and gay
Rhetorick [ 790 ]
That hath so well been taught her
dazzling fence,
Thou art not fit to hear thy self
convinc't;
Yet should I try, the uncontrolled
worth
Of this pure cause would kindle my
rapt spirits
To such a flame of sacred vehemence,
[ 795 ]
That dumb things would be mov'd to
sympathize,
And the brute Earth would lend her
nerves, and shake,
Till all thy magick structures rear'd so
high.
Were shatter'd into heaps o're thy false
head.

Co. She fables not, I feel that I do fear
[ 800 ]
Her words set off by som superior
power;
And though not mortal, yet a cold
shuddring dew
Dips me all o're, as when the wrath of
Jove
Speaks thunder, and the chains of
Erebos.
To som of Saturn's crew, I must
dissemble, [ 805 ]
And try her yet more strongly. Com, no
more,
This is meer moral babble, and direct
Against the canon laws of our
foundation;
I must not suffer this, yet 'tis but the
lees
And settings of a melancholy blood; [ 810 ]
But this will cure all straight, one sip of
this
Will bathe the drooping spirits in
delight
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise,
and taste.

The Brothers rush in with Swords
drawn, wrest his Glass out of his hand,
and break it against the ground; his
rout make signe of resistance, but are
all driven in; The attendant Spirit
comes in.

Spir. What, have you let the false
enchanter scape?
O ye mistook, ye should have snatch'd
his wand [ 815 ]
And bound him fast; without his rod
revers't,
And backward mutters of disovering
power.
We cannot free the Lady that sits here
In stony fetters fixt and motionless;
Yet stay, be not disturb'd, now I
bethink me, [ 820 ]
Some other means I have which may be
us'd,
Which once of Meliboeus old I learnt
The soothest Shepherd that ere pip't
on plains.

There is a gentle Nymph not far from
hence,
That with moist curb sways the smooth
Severn stream, [ 825 ]
Sabrina is her name, a Virgin pure,
Whilom she was the daughter of
Locrine,
That had the Scepter from his father
Brute.
The guiltless damsell flying the mad
pursuit
Of her enraged stepdam Guendolen, [ 830 ]
Commended her innocence to the
flood
That stay'd her flight with his cross-flowing
course,
The water Nymphs that in the bottom
plaid,
Held up their pearl'd wrists and took
her in,
Bearing her straight to aged Nereus
Hall, [ 835 ]
Who piteous of her woes, reard her
lank head,
And gave her to his daughters to
imbathe
In nectar'd lavers strew'd with
Asphodel,
And through the porch and inlet of
each sense
Dropt in Ambrosial Oils till she reviv'd,
[ 840 ]
And underwent a quick immortal
change
Made Goddess of the River: still she
retains
Her maid'n gentlenes, and oft at Eeve
Visits the herds along the twilight
meadows,
Helping all urchin blasts, and ill luck
signes [ 845 ]
That the shrewd meddling Elf delights to
make,
Which she with precious viold liquors
heals.
For which the Shepherds at their
festivals
Carol her goodnes loud in rustick
lays,
And throw sweet garland wreaths into
her stream [ 850 ]
O' pancies, pinks, and gaudy
Daffadils.
And, as the old Swain said, she can
unlock
The clasp'd charm, and thaw the
numming spell,
If she be right invok't in warbled Song,
For maid'nhood she loves, and will be
swift [ 855 ]
To aid a Virgin, such as was her self
In hard besetting need, this will I try
And adde the power of som adjuring
verse.
Link to full text:
https://www.dartmouth.edu/~milton/reading_room/comus/text.shtml