When my love swears that she is made of truth,
I do believe her, though I know she lies,
That she might think me some untutored youth,
Unskilful in the world's false forgeries.

Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
Although I know my years be past the best,
I, smiling, credit her false-speaking tongue,
Outfacing faults in love with love's ill rest.

But wherefore says my love that she is young?
And wherefore say not I that I am old?
O, love's best habit's in a soothing tongue,
And age in love loves not to have years told.
Therefore I'll lie with love and love with me,
Since that our faults in love thus smothered be.

Two loves I have, of comfort and despair,
That like two spirits do suggest me still:
My better angel is a man right fair,
My worser spirit a woman coloured ill.

To win me soon to hell, my female evil
Tempteth my better angel from my side,
And would corrupt my saint to be a devil.
Wooing his purity with her fair pride.

And whether that my angel be turned fiend,
Suspect I may, yet not directly tell:
For being both to me, both to each, friend,
I guess one angel in another's hell.

Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
Although I know my years be past the best,
O, love's best habit's in a soothing tongue,
And age in love loves not to have years told.

Therefore I'll lie with love and love with me,
Since that our faults in love thus smothered be.

Did not the heavenly rhetoric of thine eye,
Gainst whom the world could not hold argument,
Persuade my heart to this false perjury?
Vows for thee broke deserve not punishment.

A woman I forswore, but I will prove,
Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee:
Vows for thee broken, thou art a heavenly love.
Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee:
Vows for thee broken, thou art a heavenly love.

Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee:
Vows for thee broken, thou art a heavenly love.

Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee:
Vows for thee broken, thou art a heavenly love.

Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee:
Vows for thee broken, thou art a heavenly love.

Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee:
Vows for thee broken, thou art a heavenly love.

Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee:
Vows for thee broken, thou art a heavenly love.

Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee:
Vows for thee broken, thou art a heavenly love.

Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee:
Vows for thee broken, thou art a heavenly love.

Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee:
Vows for thee broken, thou art a heavenly love.
As passing all conceit needs no defence.
Thou loy’st to hear the sweet melodious sound
That Phoebus’ lute, the queen of music, makes:
And I in deep delight am chiefly drowned
When as himself to singing he betakes.
One god is god of both, as poets feign:
One knight loves both and both in thee remain.

Fair was the morn, when the fair queen of love,
[...
Pale for sorrow than her milk-white dove,
For Adon’s sake, a youngster proud and wild,
Her stand she takes upon a steep-up hill.
Anon Adonis comes with his thorns and hounds:
She, silly queen, with more than love’s good will,
Forbade the boy he should not pass those grounds.
‘Once’, quoth she, ‘did I see a fair sweet youth
Here in these brakes deep-woodened with a boar,
Deep in the thigh, a spectacle of ruth!
See, in my thigh,’ quoth she, ‘here was the sore.’
She showed hers — he saw more wounds than one,
And blushing fled and left her all alone.

Sweet rose, fair flower, untimely plucked, soon faded,
Plucked in the bud and faded in the spring.
Bright orient pearl, alack, too timely shaded.
Fair creature, killed too soon by death’s sharp sting.
Like a green plum that hangs upon a tree,
And falls through wind before the fall should be.
I weep for thee and yet no cause I have,
For why thou leftst me nothing in thy will.
And yet thou leftst me more than I did crave.
For why I craved nothing of thee at all.
O yes, dear friend, I pardon crave of thee,
Thy discontent thou didst bequeath to me.

Venus with Adonis sitting by her
Under a lute much shame began to woo him.
She told the youngling how god Mars did try her,
And as he fell to her, she fell to him.
‘Even thus,’ quoth she, ‘the warlike god embraced me’.
And then she clipped Adonis in her arms:

Sarc'd he the sun dried up the dewy morn,
And sarc’st he the herd gone to the hedge for shade,
When Cytherea, all in love forlorn.
A longing terrance for Adonis made
Under an osier growing by a brook,
A brook where Adon used to cool his spleen.
Hot was the day, she hotter that did look
For his approach, that often there had been.
Anon he comes and throws his mantle by.
And stood stark-naked on the brook’s green brim:
The sun looked on the world with glorious eye,
Yet not so wistly as this queen on him.
He, spying her, bounded in whereas he stood:
‘O Jove,’ quoth she, ‘why was not I a flood?’

Fair is my love but not so fair as fickle,
Mild as a dove but neither true nor trusty,
Brighter than glass and yet as glass is brittle,
Softer than wax and yet as iron rusty:
A lily pale with damask dye to grace her,
None fairer, nor none false to deface her.

Her lips to mine how oft hath she join’d,
Between each kiss her oaths of true love swearing.
How many tales to please me hath she coined,
Between each kiss her oaths of true love swearing.

If music and sweet poetry agree,
As they must needs, the sister and the brother.
Then must the love be great ‘twixt thee and me,
Because thou lovest the one and I the other.
Dowland to thee is dear, whose heavenly touch
Upon the lute doth ravish human sense:
And as he fell to her, she fell to him.
The sun looked on the world with glorious eye,
Anon he comes and throws his mantle by.
For his approach, that often there had been.
Hot was the day, she hotter that did look.

She burnt with love as straw with fire flameth,
She burnt out love as soon as straw out-burneth:
She bade love last and yet she fell a-turning.
She burnt with love as straw with fire flameth,

She framed the love and yet she foiled the framing,
And falls through wind before the fall should be.
I weep for thee and yet no cause I have,
For why thou leftst me nothing in thy will.
And yet thou leftst me more than I did crave.
For why I craved nothing of thee at all.
O yes, dear friend, I pardon crave of thee,
Thy discontent thou didst bequeath to me.

Venus with Adonis sitting by her
Under a lute much shame began to woo him.
She told the youngling how god Mars did try her,
And as he fell to her, she fell to him.
‘Even thus,’ quoth she, ‘the warlike god embraced me’.
And then she clipped Adonis in her arms:
’Even thus’, quoth she, ‘the warlike god unlace me’, As if the boy should use like loving charms; ’Even thus’, quoth she, ’he seized on my lips’, 10 And with her lips on his did act the seizure: And as she fetched breath, away he skips And would not take her meaning nor her pleasure. Ah, that I had my lady at this bay. To kiss and clip me till I run away!

[12]
Crabbed age and youth cannot live together:
Youth is full of pleasure, age is full of care,
Youth like summer born, age like winter weather.
Youth like summer brave, age like winter bare.
5 Youth is full of sport, age’s breath is short,
Youth is nimble, age is lame:
Youth is hot and bold, age is weak and cold,
Youth is wild and age is tame.
Age, I do abhor thee: youth, I do adore thee.
10 O, my love, my love is young!
Age, I do defy thee. O, sweet shepherd, hie thee.
For methinks thou stays too long.

[13]
Beauty is but a vain and doubtful good,
A shining gloss that faethad suddenly,
A flower that dies when first it ’gins to bud,
A brittle glass that’s broken presently.
5 A doubtful good, a gloss, a glass, a flower,
Lost, faded, broken, dead within an hour.
And as goods lost are sold or never found,
As faded gloss no rubbing will refresh,
As flowers dead lie withered on the ground,
10 As broken glass no cement can redress:
So beauty blemished once, forever lost,
In spite of physic, painting, pain and cost.

[14]
Goodnight, good rest; ah, neither be my share.
She bade goodnight that kept my rest away,
And daffed me to a cabin hanged with care,
To descant on the doubts of my decay.
5 ’Farewell,’ quoth she, ’and come again tomorrow’:
Fare well I could not, for I supped with sorrow.
Yet at my parting sweetly did she smile,
In scorn or friendship nil I conster whether:
’T may be she joyed to jest at my exile,
10 ’T may be again to make me wander thither:
As take the pain, but cannot pluck the pelf.
Lord, how mine eyes throw gazes to the east!
My heart doth charge the watch, the morning rise
Doth cite each moving sense from idle rest,
Not daring trust the office of mine eyes.
While Philomela sits and sings, I sit and mark.
And wish her lays were tuned like the lark.

For she doth welcome daylight with her ditty,
And drives away dark dreaming night:
The night so packed, I post unto my pretty.
Heart hath his hope and eyes their wished sight:
Sorrow changed to solace and solace mixed with sorrow,
For why she sighed and bade me come tomorrow.

Were I with her, the night would post too soon,
But now are minutes added to the hours.
To spite me now, each minute seems a moon.
Yet not for me, shine sun to succour flowers.
Pack night, peep day. Good day, of night now borrow:
30 Short night tonight and length thyself tomorrow.

Sonnets to Sundry Notes of Music

[15]
It was a lording’s daughter, the fairest one of three,
That liked of her master as well as well might be,
Till looking on an Englishman, the fairest that eye could see,
Her fancy fell a-turning,
5 Long was the combat doubtful that love with love did fight,
To leave the master loveless or kill the gallant knight,
To put in practice either, alas, it was a spite
Into the silly damsel.
But one must be refused: more mickle was the pain
10 That nothing could be used to turn them both to gain.
For of the two the trusty knight was wounded with disdain,
Alas, she could not help it!
Thus art with arms contending was victor of the day,
Which by a gift of learning did bear the maid away:
Then, lullaby, the learned man hath got the lady gay,
For now my song is ended.

[16]
On a day, alack the day.
Love whose month was ever May
Spied a blossom passing fair.
Playing in the wanton air.
5
Through the velvet leaves the wind
All unsee’d gan passage find.
That the lover, sick to death,
Wished himself the heavens’ breath.
‘Air,’ quoth he, ‘thy cheeks may blow:
10
Air, would I might triumph so!
But, alas, my hand hath sworn
Ne’er to pluck thee from thy thorn:
Vow, alack, for youth unmeet.
Youth, so apt to pluck a sweet.
15
Thou for whom Jove would swear
Juno but an Ethiope were,
And deny himself for Jove,
Turning mortal for thy love.’

[17]

My flocks feed not, my ewes breed not,
Love hath forlorn me, living in thrall:
In black mourn I, all fears scorn I,
Love hath forlorn me, living in thrall:
Heart is bleeding, all help needing,
O frowning Fortune, curse’d fickle dame,
Thou for whom Jove would swear
Juno but an Ethiope were,
And deny himself for Jove,
Turning mortal for thy love.’

[18]

When as thine eye chose the dame,
And stalled the deer that thou shouldst strike,
Like as well thou shouldst strike,
Let reason rule things worthy blame.
And as well thou shouldst strike,
As well as fancy, partial might.
15
Take counsel of some wiser head.
Neither too young nor yet unwed.
And when thou com’st thy tale to tell,
Smooth not thy tongue with filed talk.
Lest she some subtle practice smell —
A cripple soon can find a halt —
But plainly say thou lov’st her well,
And set her person forth to sale.

Where her faith was firmly fixed in love,
All my lady’s love is lost, God wot.
Heart’s denying, causer of this.
Love is dying, faith’s defying,
My rams speed not, all is amiss:
My flocks feed not, my ewes breed not,
O cruel speeding, fraughted with gall.
And in thy suit be humble true,
Press never thou to choose anew:
When time shall serve, be thou not slack
To proffer, though she put thee back.

What though her frowning brows be bent,
Her cloudy looks will calm ere night.
And then too late she will repent
That thus dissembled her delight.
And twice desire, ere it be day,
What though she strive to try her strength
And ban and brawl, and say thee nay.
Her feeble force will yield at length,
What though she strive to try her strength
When craft hath taught her thus to say:

‘Had women been so strong as men,
In faith, you had not had it then.’

The wiles and guiles that women work,
Dissembled with an outward show,
The tricks and toys that in them lurk,
The wiles and guiles that women work,
Press never thou to choose anew:
When time shall serve, be thou not slack
To proffer, though she put thee back.

Think women still to strive with men,

Other help for him I see that there is none.

4 wanton playful/lascivious 5 leaves petals (with labial suggestion) 7 That so that sick to death made ill from longing (death possibly plays on sense of ‘organ’). 9 Air plays on sense of ‘musical melody’ 12 pluck . . . thorn plays on sense of ‘take your virginity’ 13 unmeet unloving, unsuitable 14 sweet i.e. flower 15 Jove supreme Roman god 16 Juno Jove’s wife 17 Ethiope Ethiopian (i.e. dark-complexioned, thought to be unattractive) 17 deny . . . Jove that he was Jove 17 authorship uncertain – possibly by Richard Barnfield; also printed in Thomas Weelkes’ Madrigals (1597) and in England’s Helicon (1600). 2 speed flourish 3 defying doubting 4 Heart’s denying her refusal to love me (is the) 6 wot knows 8 without remove irremovably 9 silly trivial/foolish cross mistake/misfortune 14 in thrall enslaved 16 speeding fortune fraughted with gall laden with bitterness 17 no deal not at all 18 wether castrated ram knell i.e. like a funeral bell 19 curtail with a docked tail 20 wont was accustomed 21 procures manages 22 wise manner 23 heartless ground the desolate landscape 26 dye colour 29 swains rustics 35 Corydon in Virgil’s second Eclogue, the name of a shepherd abandoned by his lover 18 authorship uncertain 2 stalled brought to a halt/confined deer puns on ‘dear’ 3 things worthy blame i.e. the blame-worthy passions 4 fancy love/infatuation 6 neither . . . young and still unmarried (i.e. pick someone experienced) 8 filed polished 9 subtle practice craftily play 10 find a halt spot a limp, i.e. it takes one to know one 12 set . . . sale list all her good points (as if you were a salesman) 14 spend money on gifts/words of love 15 desert merit, deserving 16 ringing proclaiming itself/jingling coins 18 golden bullet eloquence/money 21 unjust unfaithful 22 Press strive, be eager 23 slack remiss (plays on the phallic sense of ‘flaccid, impotent’) 24 put thee back refuse you 26 ere before 28 dissembled disguised 30 put away rejected 32 ban curse 39 toys whims, fancies 40 cock plays on sense of ‘penis’ 42 naught plays on sense of ‘vagina’ 43 Think . . . saint believe it, women always strive to outdo men in sin rather than virtue
To sin and never for to saint:
There is no heaven, be holy then,
When time with age shall them attaint.
  Were kisses all the joys in bed,
One woman would another wed.

But, soft, enough, too much, I fear,
Lest that my mistress hear my song;
She will not stick to round me on the ear,
To teach my tongue to be so long,
Yet will she blush, here be it said,
To hear her secrets so bewrayed.

[19]
Live with me and be my love.
And we will all the pleasures prove
That hills and valleys, dales and fields,
And all the craggy mountains yield.

There will we sit upon the rocks,
And see the shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow rivers, by whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

There will I make thee a bed of roses,
With a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle.

A belt of straw and ivy buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs;
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Then live with me and be my love.

LOVE'S ANSWER
If that the world and love were young,
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,
Then live with me and be my love.

As it fell upon a day
In the merry month of May,
Sitting in a pleasant shade
Which a grove of myrtles made.

Beasts did leap and birds did sing,
Trees did grow and plants did spring,
Every thing did banish moan,
Save the nightingale alone:
She, poor bird, as all forlorn,
Every thing did banish moan,
Trees did grow and plants did spring,
Which a grove of myrtles made,
Sitting in a pleasant shade
In the merry month of May,

And truth in every shepherd's tongue,
This is the first stanza of 'The Nymph's Reply', usually attributed to Sir Walter Ralegh.

Textual Notes

THE PASSIONATE PILGRIM

O1 = First Octavo text of 1598/99
O2 = Second Octavo text of 1599
O3 = Third Octavo text of 1612
Ed = a correction introduced by a later editor
EH = England's Helicon (1600)
Griffin = Bartholomew Griffin's Fidessa (1596)
LLL = Love's Labour's Lost (1597/1623)
MS = manuscript copy/copies held in Folger Library
Weelkes = Thomas Weelkes. Madrigals to 3, 4, 5, and 6 voices
(1597)
The only surviving copy of O1 is a fragment containing poems 1–5, 16–18; the remaining poems are edited from O2

1.11 habit's in = O1. O2 = habite is
3.11 Exhal'stä = LLL (Exhalst). O1 = Exhalt, O2 = Exhale
4.10 her — O2. O1 = his
7.10 whereof = O2. O3 = thereof 11 midst = O3. O2 = mids
10.1 faded spelled vaded in O2 8 left'st = Ed. O2 = lefts
13.2 fadeth spelled vadeth in O (also subsequently)

14.3 care = O2. O3 = care 14 the watch = O2. Ed = them watch 27 a moon = Ed. O2/O3 = an houre
16.12 thorn = EH. O1 = throne
17.27 stand = Weelkes/EH. O1 = stands 28 back peeping = EH. O1 = blacke peeping; Weelkes = back creping 34 woe = O1. EH = moane
19.1 Live = O2. EH = Come live