

The original erratic punctuation has been retained, all dittos ignored, and first letters of words capitalised when at beginnings of lines.

I have used the 1597 text, giving the original printed spellings, so that variations in wording may be compared with the more widely used 1613 spellings, chiefly for the benefit of singers who wish to employ 'Elizabethan' pronunciation - the edited and updated spelling given in all modern published editions virtually precludes this. Singers should remember that, generally speaking, whichever spelling is used, the words were intended to be pronounced the same.

Revised and Updated 23/01/2009

1597 text

1 Unquiet thoughts

Unquiet thoughts your civill slaughter stint,
And wrap your wrongs within a pensive heart :
And you my tongue that maks my mouth a minte,
And stamps my thoughts to coyne them words by arte:
Be still for if you ever doo the like,
Ile cut the string, that maks the hammer strike.

But what can staie my thoughts they may not start,
Or put my tongue in durance for to dye?
When as these eies, the keyes of mouth and harte,
Open the locke where all my love doth lye;
Ile seale them up within their lids for ever :
So thoughts and words, and looks shall dye together.

How shall I then gaze on my mistresse eies?
My thoughts must have som vent els hart wil break,
My tongue would rust as in my mouth it lies
If eyes and thoughts were free and that not speake.
Speake then, and tell the passions of desire
Which turns mine eies to floods, my thoghts to fire.

You anxious thoughts, cease from harming me. I must keep those wrongs that were done to me in my heart, and consider them. My tongue, (who 'mints' words from my thoughts in my mouth, by giving voice to them, just as a coiner stamps blank metal into coins), must be silent. If it cannot, I must 'cut the string' to my minting tongue¹.

But what can prevent these thoughts from occuring, which have put my tongue 'under sentence of death'? My eyes (which are the 'keys' to the locks of both my mouth and my heart), 'open' them both², revealing my unrequited longing to my mistress. Perhaps I should therefore seal up my eyes (rather than punish my tongue), so that my thoughts, words and looks are all 'killed' at the same time, by being withheld from her?

But, if I were blinded, how could I then gaze at my mistress' eyes? I must have some release for my thoughts, or my heart will break. My tongue would simply seize up, whilst it lies³ in my mouth, were I not able use my voice at the same time as my eyes and thoughts remained free!

Therefore I'll speak to my mistress, and explain to her my passionate desire, which causes my eyes to weep floods, and my thoughts to burn like fire.

¹ This conceit alludes to the then relatively new 'drop hammer mint' system of stamping coins, introduced during Elizabeth's reign, which dramatically improved and standardised the quality of coinage. Prior to this innovation, all coinage had been made by the centuries-old method of striking a blank disc between two dies, using a hammer. With the drop hammer system, a string was pulled, dropping the heavily weighted (180lbs) upper die onto the 'planchet' (blank coin) below with a force equivalent to over forty tonnes. See www.quicksilversmith.com for a video clip of a working example, and note the 'string that makes the hammer strike'.

² Hearts and mouths can both, of course, be 'opened'.

³ An obvious quibble on 'lies' = deceit.

2 Who ever thinks or hopes of love

Who ever thinks or hopes of love for love,
Or who belov'd in *Cupids* laws doth glorie,
Who ioyes in vowes or vowes not to remove,
Who by this light-god hath not ben made sorry:
Let him see me ecclipsed from my son,
With dark cloudes of an earth quite over-runne.

Who thinks that sorrowes felte, desires hidden,
Or humble faith in constant honor arm'd,
Can keepe love from the friut that is forbidden,
Who thinks that change is by entreatie charm'd'
Looking on me let him know loves delights
Are treasures hid in caves, but kept by Sprights.

(adapted from Sonnet V of 'Caelica' by Fulke Greville – possibly from an earlier version of the poem)

Whoever thinks, or even hopes of love, once given, being returned; or whoever, once loved, revels in the games played according to Cupid's rules⁴; whoever delights in promises, or who swears to be constant; whoever has not been made to feel sorry by the little, licentious⁵ god, Cupid; let that person look at me, removed (eclipsed) from the light that comes from my beloved (from my sun), and marvel at how I am now in darkness, the dark clouds of this separation causing my entire world to be completely covered (quite over-run) in gloom.

However, he who believes that either languishing in sorrow and unspoken desire, or trusting in the simple belief that constancy, sheathed in 'honour' (virtue, chastity) can prevent Love (Cupid) from obtaining the forbidden fruit⁶ (i.e. gratification), and he who thinks that the longed-for change of his mistress' feelings towards him can be brought about by mere supplication (entreaty), should again look at me, and realise that the delights of love are hidden treasures, guarded by spirits⁷.

⁴ Whoever enjoys the 'rules' (laws) of the game of love.

⁵ Light-god may mean 'slight' god, i.e. not serious, or frivolous, but more likely, here it means 'licentious', or 'promiscuous'.

⁶ Dowland has no difficulty with mixing Biblical and Classical mythological ideas in the same line!

⁷ Spright/sprite usually means 'ghost' at this date, rather than elf or fairy.

3 My thoughts are winged with hopes

My thoughts are winged with hopes, my hopes with love,
Mount love unto the moone in clearest night,
And say as she doth in the heavens moove
In earth so wanes and waxeth my delight :
And whisper this but softly in her eares,
Hope oft doth hang the head, and trust shed teares.

And you my thoughts that some mistrust do carry,
If for mistrust my mistrisse do you blame,
Say though you alter, yet you do not vary,
As she doth change, and yet remaine the same :
Distrust doth enter harts, but not infect,
And love is sweetest seasoned with suspect.

If she for this, with cloudes doe maske her eies,
And make the heavens darke with her disdain,
With windie sighes disperse them in the skies,
Or with thy teares dissolve them into raine;
Thoughts, hopes, and love returne to me no more,
Till *Cynthia* shine as she hath done before.

My thoughts are given wings by my hopes (that my mistress will requite me), and these hopes are, in turn, given wings by Love (i.e. Cupid, the little winged god).

Fly then, Cupid, up to the Moon (my mistress/the queen?), and tell her that just as she moves across the heavens, so here on earth my pleasure waxes and wanes. And whisper into my Moon's ears that (the personification of) Hope⁷ herself is sad, and (the personification of) Trust⁸ weeps.

You, my thoughts, that harbour doubts, should you blame my mistress for this sense of suspicion, remember that although you (my thoughts), alter, yet you do not vary, just as my mistress (like the Moon) changes, yet ever remains the same.

Doubt often affects the heart, but does not necessarily infect it, and love itself is sweetest when 'seasoned' by doubt and suspicion.

If, because of this (doubt), Cynthia my 'moon-mistress' retreats 'behind the cover of cloud' (i.e. displeased, frowning), disdainning me, I shall dispel such 'clouds' by my sighs, or dissolve them with my tears transforming them into rain.

My thoughts, my hopes, and love itself cannot be restored unless my 'Moon', Cynthia⁹, shines on me once again.

⁷ Elpis (Latin name Spes) Hope. Greek daimona (spirit) of Hope.

⁸ Pistis (Latin name Fides) Trust. Greek daimona (spirit) of Trust. Elpis and Pistis often seem to be mentioned together in classical writing.

⁹ Cynthia = the Moon. One of the names associated with the goddess Diana, after her birthplace on Mount Cynthus. Diana and Cynthia are names used to flatter Queen Elizabeth 1 in poetry of the late 16th century. Perhaps in Dowland's context here, we are intended to believe the poet's mistress' name is Cynthia, to assist the conceit, rather than a specific reference to the Queen. Sir Walter Raleigh helped to promote the cult of Elizabeth as a Moon goddess with a long poem he wrote during the late 1580s, 'The Ocean's Love to Cynthia', in which he compared Elizabeth to the Moon.

4 If my complaints

If my complaints could passions moove,
Or make love see wherein I suffer wrong :
My passions weare enough to proove,
That my despayrs had governd me to long,
O love, I live and dye in thee
Thy grieffe in my deepe sighes still speakes,
Thy wounds do freshly bleed in mee
My heart for thy unkindnes breakes,
Yet thou dost hope when I despaire,
And when I hope, thou makst me hope in vaine.
Thou saists thou canst my harmes repaire,
Yet for redresse, thou letst me still complaine.

Can love be ritch, and yet I want,
Is love my iudge, and yet am I condemn'd ?
Thou plenty hast, yet me dost scant,
Thou made a god, and yet thy power contemn'd.
That I do live, it is thy power,
That I desire it is thy worth,
If love doth make mens lives too soure,
Let me not love, nor live henceforth.
Die shall my hopes, but not my faith,
That you that of my fall may hearers be
May here despaire, which truely saith
I was more true to love, then love to me.

If, by my complaining, I might move the passions, and affect Cupid⁸, the god of love, and make him see how I suffer from my mistress' disdain, then the strength of my passions should prove that my despair has ruled me for far too long.

O Love¹⁰, I both live and die because of you. The grief you have given me can be heard in the depth of my sighs.

The wounds you have inflicted are still open, and my heart breaks at your unkindness.

Yet you, Love, offer hope when I despair of finding any, and when I do hope, you allow me to do so vainly.

You claim to offer to make reparation for the harms done to me, yet you still allow me to complain.

If Cupid is so rich, how can he allow me to want? Is Cupid my judge, and can he condemn me?

You have so much, yet starve me of love. You were created as a god, yet your power holds me in contempt.

If Love makes mens lives too sour, let me no longer live, nor love.

My hopes will die, but not my belief that all those who hear of my death may also hear the words of (the personification of) Despair, who says the truth when he states that I was more true to Love than he was towards me.

⁸ Printed as 'love', but both the personage of Cupid, and the concept of love itself are intended, as elsewhere in the songbooks.

5 Can she excuse my wrongs?

Can shee excuse my wrongs with vertues cloak:
Shall I call her good when she proves vnkind.
Are those cleere fires which vannish into smoake:
Must I praise the leaves where no fruit I find.
No no where shadowes do for bodies stand,
Thou maist be abusde if thy sight be dime.
Cold love is like to words written on sand,
Or to bubbles which on the water swim.
Wilt thou be thus abused still,
Seeing that she wil right thee never
If thou canst not ore come her will,
Thy love will be thus fruitles euer.

Was I so base, that I might not aspire
Unto those high ioyes which she houlds from me,
As they are high, so high is my desire,
If she this deny what can granted be.
If she will yeeld to that which reason is,
It is reasons will that love should be iust,
Deare make me happie still by granting this,
Or cut of delays if that dye I must.
Better a thousand times to dye
Then for to live thus still tormented,
Deare but remember it was I
Who for thy sake did dye contented.

Can she (my mistress/the Queen¹¹) excuse the slight she has made to me (by denying me)¹² by claiming she should protect her virtue?

Can I describe her as good, when she proves unkind to me, and will not requite my love?

Must the fires of my passion vanish into smoke?

Must I praise the leaves where no fruit I find?

When such shadowy 'spirits' take the place of 'solid bodies',

One may easily be deceived if one's 'sight' is poor¹³.

Cold love is as fragile as words written in the sand, or to bubbles on the surface of water.

Will I always be ill-treated by her, knowing that she will never grant my desires?

If I cannot overcome her defiant will, my longing will always be fruitless.

Am I (considered) so low that I do not deserve to aspire unto the pleasures that she withholds from me?

Those pleasures are as far removed from me as possible, yet if she will deny me this, can anything be granted to me?

I hope she will yield to my reasonable demands, for reason demands that Love¹⁴ should be fair-minded.

Dear one, you may yet make me happy by granting me what I most desire; or if I you intend to spurn me, do so without delay, that I may die sooner.

It would be better to die a thousand times, than to live in such torment - but, beloved, remember that it was I alone who died contented, despite your disdain.

¹¹ Robert Spencer wrote: "The poem appears to be written on behalf of the Earl of Essex (the title of the instrumental galliard version of the melody) as a plea to Queen Elizabeth herself. Such open, face-to-face complaint was acceptable in robust Elizabethan society, particularly if wrapped in the soft clothing of music". He added: "This is another galliard song, in which the irregular metre within each stanza of the poem proves that the words were written, very skilfully, to match the music". This surely rules out the likelihood that Dowland composed a setting of an existing poem by (or commissioned by) Essex himself, as is often stated.

¹² The wrongs done by her to me, not the wrongs done by me, as one might suppose at first reading.

¹³ One may be mistaken; misinterpreting signs or signals. 'Shadows' is often used to mean 'spirits' or 'ghosts' in poetry of this period.

¹⁴ Cupid, again.

6 Now, O now, I needs must part.

Now, O now, I needs must part,
Parting though I absent mourn,
Absence can no ioy impart:
Ioye once fled cannot returne.
While I live I needs must love,
Love lives not when hope is gone,
Now at last despayre doth prove,
Love devided loveth none:

Sad dispaire doth drive me hence,
This despaire unkindnes sends.
If that parting bee offence,
It is she which then offendes.

Deare, when I from thee am gone,
Gone are all my ioyes at once,
I loved thee and thee alone,
In whose love I ioyed once:
And although your sight I leave,
Sight wherein my ioyes doo lye
Till that death doth sense bereave,
Never shall affection dye.

Sad dispaire...

Deare if I do not returne,
Love and I shall die together,
For my absence never mourne
Whom you might haue ioyed euer :
Part we must though now I dye,
Die I doe to part with you,
Him despayre doth cause to lie,
Who both lived and dieth true.

Sad dispaire...

*I realise that now I have to leave (her), even though I will grieve to do so
Such absence can bring no joy to me, however, and once any joy has gone from me, it can never return.
As long as I live, I must love, but love cannot live when there is no longer any hope of requiting.
Now, finally, my state of despair proves to me that love simply cannot thrive once she and I are separated.
Such sad despairing is what is driving me away, and this same despair
brings with it unkindness¹². But if my parting causes offence, it is my beloved who was responsible for the
offence.*

*Beloved, when I am gone from you, all my happiness goes too.
I loved only you, in whose returned love I once delighted.
And although I leave your sight, the very sight which was once all my joy,
I shall never cease my affection for you until Death separates me from my senses¹³ (i.e. including my sense of
sight).*

*Beloved, if I never return, both Love and I shall die,
But do not grieve for my absence, even though you might have derived such joy from me.
We must part, though now I am dying by such a separation.
Despair has caused that man (me) to lie down and die¹⁴, who both lived and now dies true to you.*

¹² Both my unkindness to her, by leaving, and hers to me, by not requiting my love.

¹³ The quibble on 'sight' is perhaps used here as meaning both the sense of sight and the actual sight of the beloved.

¹⁴ 'Lie' meaning to lie down and die, perhaps, as well as the quibble with lie (deceive) and true in the final line.

7 Deare if you change

Deare if you change ile never chuse againe,
Sweete if you shrinke¹⁵ Ile never thinke of love,
Fayre if you faile, ile judge all beauty vaine,
Wise if to weake moe wits ile never prove.
Deare, sweete, faire, wise, change shrinke nor be not weake,
And on my faith, my faith shall neuer breake.

Earth with her flowers shall sooner heau'n adorne,
Heaven her bright stars through earths dim globe shall move,
Fire heate shall loose and frosts of flames be borne,
Ayre made to shine as black as hell shall prove:
Earth, heaven, fire, ayre, the world transform'd shall vew,
E're I prove false to faith, or strange to you.

*Dear one, even though you may change¹⁵ I will never choose another.
Sweet one, though your looks wither, I will never think of love¹⁶.
Fair one, if your beauty fades, I will consider all beauty to be but vanity.
Wise one, even if think you are too 'dull', I will not test any others.
Dear sweet fair and wise one, do not change, shrink, or doubt yourself,
And I swear, by my religious faith, my loyalty to you shall never be broken.*

I swear that the Earth, with all its flowers would be set up in the skies, and the stars of the heavens would move down here on Earth, fire will lose its heat, and frost be born from flame, the air that was created to be bright and clear will prove to be as black as Hell; Earth, heaven, fire and air, the whole world will be seen transformed, before I prove false to you.

¹⁵ Shrink = 'recoil' away from me, perhaps.

¹⁵ Change may mean 'age' here, or perhaps 'change in your affection for me'. Or both.

Anthony Rooley states that the rising fourth of the opening melody inverts Dowland's already celebrated 'Lachrime' melody.

¹⁶ Perhaps a reference to Cupid, 'Love', or merely, 'never think of love for you', and leave you alone.

8 Burst forth my teares¹⁷

Burst, burst forth my teares assist my forward grieffe,
And shew what paine imperious love provokes:
Kind tender lambes lament loves scant reliefe,
And pine, since pensive care my freedom yoaks.
O pine to see me pine my tender flocks.

Sad pining care that never may have peace,
At beauties gate in hope of pittie knocks:
But mercy sleeps while deepe disdain increase,
And beautie hope in her faire boosome yoaks,
O greive to heare my grieffe, my tender flocks.

Like to the windes my sighes have winged been
Yet are my sighes and sutes repaide with mocks
I pleade, yet she repineth at my teene:
O ruthless rigor harder than the rocks,
That both the Shephard kills, and his poore flocks.

*Break forth, my tears, and help my insistent grief,
And demonstrate the pain that tyrannical Love(Cupid) is responsible for.
Oh you my sheep, lament Cupid's meagre relief (i.e. the tears),
And pine for me, because heavy, considered suffering has imprisoned my very freedom.
Pine to witness my pining, my young lambs.*

*My sad, longing and anxiety, which can never know peace, is like one who knocks at the gate of (the personification of) Beauty¹⁶, in hope of her taking pity for him. But (the personification of) Mercy¹⁷ is asleep (and therefore does not hear him knock), which causes disdain (the beloved's contempt) to grow, and meanwhile Beauty has imprisoned (the personification of) Hope¹⁸ (i.e the Shepherd's hopes) in her fair breast.
Grieve to hear my grieving, my young lambs.*

My sighs have flown forth from me like the winds, but my sighing and my pleas have been repaid with laughter. I have pleaded, but she merely complains at my sorrow (teen). O what pitiless hardness it is, harder even than the rocks themselves, that kills both the shepherd and his innocent flock.

¹⁷ The poet of this song uses much alliteration and internal rhyme, a feature of earlier poetry (such as the 'choirboy plays'), but which is quite unusual in Dowland.

¹⁶ Aglaia.

¹⁷ Eleus.

¹⁸ Elpis. Although these three personifications are alluded to, it is unlikely that Dowland expects us to imagine them in any sense other than their 'qualities'.

9 Go cristall teares

Go cristall teares, like to the morning showers,
And sweetly weepe into thy ladies brest,
And as the deawes revive the dropping¹⁸ flowers,
So let your drops of pittie be address:
To quicken up the thoughts of my desert,
Which sleeps to sound whilst I from her departe.

Haste, haplesse sighs and let your burning breath
Dissolve the ice of her indurate harte,
Whose frozen rigor, like forgetfull death,
Feeles never any touch of my desarte:
Yet sighs and teares to her I sacryfise
Both from a spotles hart and pacient eyes.

Bright tears that I weep (that resemble the morning rain), gently weep into my mistress' heart, and, just as the morning dew revives the wilting flowers, may your pitiful drops help speed her consideration of my appeals to her; appeals which are 'soundly sleeping', all the time I am separated from her.

Hurry, my unfortunate sighs, and let your hot air dissolve the ice of my mistress' unyielding heart, which is frozen hard like unfeeling Death himself, and which never feels any sympathy for my cause. But still I offer, as a sacrifice to my mistress, my sighs and tears, which come from both my pure heart and patient eyes.

¹⁸ 'drooping' in 1613 edition.

10 Thinkst thou then by thy fayning

Thinkst thou then by thy fayning,
Sleepe with a proude disdainning,
Or with thy craftie closing,
Thy cruell eyes reposing,
To drive me from thy sight,
When sleepe yeelds more delight,
Such harmles beauty gracing.
And while sleepe fayned is,
May not I steale a kisse,
Thy quiet armes embracing.

O that thy sleepe dissembled,
Were to a trance resembled,
Thy cruell eies deceiving,
Of lively sense bereauing:
Then should my love requite
Thy loves unkind despite,
While fury triumpht bouldly
In beauties sweet disgrace:
And liv'd in sweet embrace
Of her that lov'de so couldly.

Should then my love aspiring,
Forbidden ioyes desiring:
So farre exceede the duty
That vertue owes to beauty?
No, Love seeke not thy blisse,
Beyond a simple kisse,
For such deceits are harmeles,
Yet kisse a thousand fould,
For kisses may be bould
When lovely sleepe is armlesse.

Do you imagine that by disdainfully pretending to be asleep¹⁹, affecting to rest those cruel eyes, that by this deception I can be driven from their sight? Seeing you sleeping gives me all the greater pleasure, since I can look on your innocent beauty, and perhaps, since you are feigning sleep, I may steal a kiss and an embrace.

I wish that your pretended sleep were like a trance, which could deceive your cruel eyes and deprive you of your conscious senses, for then I would be able to repay your unkindness and disdain, and I would lustily rejoice at the disgrace caused by this affront to your beauty, whilst I fully embrace she that was so cold in love to me.*

But does my desire for this forbidden pleasure go too far, by allowing the very thought of disrespecting your honour? Surely it does, so I will therefore not satisfy my desire beyond one small kiss, for such a trick is harmless – but then again, why should I not take a thousand kisses, for one may be bold when her innocently sleeping renders her so defenceless²⁰.

¹⁹ Crafty closing = cunning or devious closed eyes.

²⁰ Essentially, 'I wish your feigned sleep resembled a coma, so that I could 'disgrace' you as repayment for your coldness to me'. Although the poet may be referring to no more than stolen kisses in this poem, this fantasy of a non-consensual, revengeful sexual act, expressed here, even in the 'respectable' context of a poetic conceit, seems uncomfortably misogynistic and sinister to modern tastes, especially coming between the much lighter tone of the outer verses.

11 Come away, come sweet love

Come away, come sweet love,
The goulden morning breakes
All the earth, all the ayre
Of love and pleasure speakes,
Teach thine armes then to embrace,
And sweet rosie lips to kisse,
And mix our soules in mutuall blisse.
Eies were made for beauties grace,
Vewing, ruing Love long pains,
Procurd by beauties rude disdaine.

Come awaie, come sweet love,
The goulden morning wasts,
While the son from his sphere,
His fierie arrows casts:
Making all the shadowes flie,
Playing, staying in the grove,
To entertaine the stealth of love,
Thither sweet love let us hie,
Flying, dying, in desire,
Wingd with sweet hopes and heav'nly fire.

Come away, come sweet love,
Doe not in vaine adorne,
Beauties grace that should rise,
Like to the naked morne:
Lillies on the rivers side,
And faire Cyprian flowers new blowne,
Desire no beauties but their owne.
Ornament is nurce of pride,
Pleasure, measure, loves delight:
Hast then sweet love our wished flight

Come with me, my love, for it is the break of a bright new morning, and all the earth and skies speaks of love and pleasure. Learn to use your arms to embrace (me), and teach your lips to kiss, as we blend our souls in mutual joy. Your eyes were made not only to grace your beauty, but also to notice the pains of love, caused by (the personification of) Beauty's²¹ blunt disdain.

Come with me, my love, or the bright morning will be wasted. The sun sends forth his beams (like Cupid's fiery arrows) which dispels the shadows, and playfully remain in the grove, to assist in the 'pursuit' (stealth) of the game of love itself. Let us therefore go there now, carried on the wings of our hopes, and filled with the 'sacred' fire of desire.

Come with me, my love, you do not need to adorn your beautiful body with clothes, for you should rise as naked as the morning itself; the lilies beside the river, and new Cyprus²² flowers need the addition of no other beauty than that which they already possess. To attempt to augment beauty is to nurture the sin of pride, but our pleasure is the test of our delight in love - therefore hurry, sweet love, as we run towards our desires.

²¹ *Aglaia*, goddess of beauty is alluded to, but the beloved's beauty is the real meaning here.

²² Birthplace of Venus

12 Rest a while you cruell cares

Rest a while you cruell cares,
Be not more severe then love
Beauty kills and beautie spares,
and sweet smiles sad sighes remove:
Laura, fayre queen, of my delight,
Come grant me love in loves despite,
And if I ever faile to honor thee:
Let this heavenly light I see
Be as darke as hel to me.

If I speake my words want waite,
Am I mute, my hart doth breake,
If I sigh she feares deceit,
Sorrow then for me must speake:
Cruel, unkind, with favour view,
The wound that first was made by you:
And if my torments fained be,
Let this heavenly light I see
Be as darke as hell to me.

Neuer houre of pleasing rest,
Shall revive my dying ghost,
Till my soule hath repossesst,
The sweet hope which love hath lost:
Laura redeeme the soule that dies,
By fury of thy murdering eies,
And if it proves unkind to thee,
Let this heavenly light I see,
Be as darke as hell to me.

Cease for a while, my tormenting cares. Do not be harder than love itself can be; for though beauty can kill, it may also be merciful, and sweet smiles can remove the pain of sad sighs. Therefore Laura²³, my delightful queen, give me your love, and spite Cupid; but I swear that if I ever fail to respect you, may the light of this very sun appear as dark as hell itself to me.

If I speak to her, my words seem light, yet if I say nothing then my heart breaks. If I sigh, she will fear I am unfaithful, therefore I must hope that my sorrow will speak for itself. Cruel and unkind one, look with pity upon the wound you inflicted on me, because, I swear that if my torments are merely feigned, may the light of this very sun appear as dark as hell itself to me.

No amount of pleasant rest can revive my dying spirit until the time that my soul regains possession of that hope which I lost in the pursuit of your love. Laura, rescue the soul that is here dying from the murderous disdainful power of your eyes, but if these my complaints seem unkind to you, may the light of this very sun appear as dark as hell itself to me.

²³ Is *Laura* intended to be Petrarch's *Laura*, here? Is this a translation or paraphrase from Petrarch?

13 Sleep wayward thoughts

Sleep wayward thoughts, and rest you with my love,
Let not my love, be with my love diseasd.
Touch not proud hands, lest you her anger move,
But pine you with my longings long displeasd.
Thus, while she sleeps, I sorrow for her sake,
So sleeps my love, and yet my love doth wake.

But, O the fury of my restles feare,
The hidden anguish of my flesh desires,
The glories and the beauties that appeare,
Betweene her browes, neere *Cupids* closed fires
Thus while she sleeps, moves sighing for hir sake
So sleeps my love, and yet my love doth wake.

My love doth rage, and yet my love doth rest,
Feare in my love, and yet my love secure,
Peace in my love, and yet my love opprest:
Impatient, yet of perfect temprature.
Sleepe, dainty love, while I sigh for thy sake,
So sleeps my love, and yet my love doth wake.

Rest now, my wandering thoughts, and concern yourselves with my beloved²⁴; do not allow my love²⁵ to be out of ease with her. Do not touch her, my hands, lest you awaken and anger her, but join with me, pining in frustration and longing. So, whilst she is sleeping, I grieve in my desire for her, because she sleeps, but my love for her wakens.

But oh, the ferocity of my restless anxiety, (which is) the unspoken distress of my sexual desires! The glorious beauty of her face, especially her eyes, those fires of Cupid, now closed in sleep! Thus, while she is sleeping, my restless sighing stirs my desire for her, and as she sleeps, my love for her wakens.

My love²⁶ rages, but yet my love rests. I fear for my love, yet she is secure (in bed, asleep); my love is at peace (resting), yet my love (my emotion/arousal) is oppressed; my love is impatient, yet, at the same time, perfectly tempered. Sleep then my dainty love, whilst I sigh in longing for you; for as she sleeps, so my love for her wakens.

²⁴ Robert Spencer wrote that: "The poem is built around the word 'love', meaning either the sleeping girl or the singer's love for her". The poem cleverly tilts back and forth between these two senses.(see note 18)

²⁵ The first 'love' refers to this beloved, the second is the poet's love for her, and so on.throughout the poem.

²⁶ Passion. From the very first line, we are probably meant to infer that the poet and his mistress are lying in bed together, although this is not actually stated.('Sleep'..., 'rest you with my love', etc.) The erotic undertone is nevertheless unmistakable, and the refrain 'and yet my love doth wake' is probably intended to suggest physical arousal as well as the awakening of his love for her.

14 All ye whom love or fortune hath betraiede

All ye whom love or fortune hath betraiede,
All ye that dreame of blisse but live in greif,
Al ye whose hopes are evermore delaid,
All ye whose sighes or sicknes wants releif:
Lend eares and teares to me most haples man,
That sings my sorrewes like the dying Swanne.

Care that consumes the heart with inward paine,
Paine that presents sad care in outward vew,
Both tyrant like enforce me to complaine,
But still in vaine, for none my plaints will rue.
Teares, sighes, and ceaselesse cries alone I spend,
My woe wants comfort, and my sorrow end.

All you who have been betrayed by love or fortune; all you that dream of happiness, but live in grief; all you whose desires are constantly held back, or whose sighs or love-sickness needs relief; listen and weep for me, now - a most unfortunate man, singing of his sorrows, like the dying swan of legend.

Both the sorrow that devours my heart with internal pain, and the pain that shows my sorrow externally (to the world) have forced me, like some tyrant, to complain thus, but all for nothing, because no-one will sympathise with my lamentations. Alone, I weep, sigh and cry ceaselessly, for I desire comfort for my woes, and an end to my sorrow.

15 Wilt thou unkind thus reave me

Wilt thou unkind thus reave me
of my harte,
and so leave me:
Farewell
but yet or ere I part (O cruell),
kisse me sweet my Jewell.

Hope by disdayne growes chereles
feare doth love, love doth feare,
beautie peareles. Farewell...

If no delayes can move thee,
life shall dye, death shall live,
stil to love thee. Farewell...

Yet be thou mindfull ever,
heate from fire, fire from heat,
none can sever. Farewell...

True love cannot be chainged,
though delight, from desert
be estranged. Farewell...

Will you, unkind one, so rob (reave) me of my heart and then abandon me? Farewell, but yet, before you go, cruel one, kiss me, my sweet jewel.

Hope is rendered inconsolable by disdain; fear is made to love, but love itself is afraid of peerless beauty²⁷. Farewell, but yet, before you go, cruel one, kiss me, my sweet jewel.

If none of my 'hinderances' can move you, I shall die, but in death will still 'live' to love you. Farewell, but yet, before you go, cruel one, kiss me, my sweet jewel.

But always remember, no-one can separate heat from fire, or fire from heat. Farewell, but yet, before you go, cruel one, kiss me, my sweet jewel.

But, true love cannot, in fact, be transformed (as was suggested in the previous verses), even though my delight is separated from my reward. Farewell, but yet, before you go, cruel one, kiss me, my sweet jewel.

²⁷ Presumably, all of these are intended to suggest, but not directly refer to the personifications of Hope, Fear and Beauty.

16 Would my conceit, that first enforst my woe

Would my conceit, that first enforst my woe,
Or els mine eyes which still the same increase,
Might be extinct, to end my sorrowes so,
Which now are such as nothing can release:
Whose life is death, whose sweet each change of sowre,
And eke whose hell reneweth every houre.

Each houre amidst the deepe of hell I frie,
Each houre I wast and wither where I sit:
But that sweet houre wherein I wish to die,
My hope alas may not inioy it yet,
Whose hope is such, bereaved of the blisse,
Which unto all save mee allotted is.

To all save mee is free to live or die,
To all save mee remaineth hap or hope:
But all perforce I must abandon, I,
Sith Fortune still directs my hap aslope,
Wherefore to neither hap nor hope I trust,
But to my thralles I yeeld, for so I must.

If only my brooding imagination²⁸, that originally caused my misery, or my eyes (which continue to increase the pain²⁹) were both extinguished, and could put an end to my sorrows, which are now such as can offer no release for me, whose very life is like death, whose every sweetness is turned sour, and also whose hell is renewed every hour.

Every hour I fry in the heat of the depth of hell, every hour, I waste away and wither where I sit, but alas, although I hope for that sweet hour when I can die, I cannot yet enjoy that hope - I, whose hope is so robbed (bereaved) of that same bliss that is assigned to all others, but not to me.

All except for me are free to either live or die. To all but me there is always comfort or hope. But I must, by necessity, abandon all hope, since (The personification of) Fortune³⁰ still directs my comfort 'on the downward slope'³¹. For this reason, I cannot trust to either my fortune or hope, but must give in to my 'slavery' (thrall).

²⁸ That which is conceived in the mind – a thought or idea. 'imagining, brooding, fanciful thinking'

²⁹ Of continuing to see his mistress

³⁰ Tyche

³¹ Towards Hades/Hell

17 Come again: sweet love doth now invite / All the Day

1 Come againe: sweet love doth now envite,
Thy graces that refraine,
To do me due delight,
To see, to heare, to touch, to kiss, to die,
With thee againe in sweetest simphathy.

2 Come againe that I may cease to mourne,
Through thy unkind disdainne,
For now left and forlorne,
I sit, I sigh, I weepe, I faint, I die,
In deadly paine and endlesse miserie.

1 All the day the sun that lends me shine,
By frownes do cause me pine,
And feeds me with delay:
Her smiles, my springs, that makes my ioies to grow,
Her frownes the winters of my woe:

2 All the night, my sleepes are full of dreames,
My eies are full of streames,
My hart takes no delight:
To see the fruits and ioies that some do find,
And marke the stormes are mee asignde.

3 Out alas, my faith is ever true,
Yet will she never rue,
Nor yeeld my any grace:
Her eies of fire, her hart of flint is made,
Whom teares nor truth may once invade.

4 Gentle love draw forth thy wounding dart,
Thou canst not pearce her hart,
For I that to approve:
By sighs and teares more hot then are thy shafts:
Did tempt while she for triumphs laughs.

Return to me; Cupid now requests your favour, you that refuse to afford me any delight, to see, hear touch kiss and 'die'³² with me once more, in sweetest sympathy.

Return to me, so that I may cease this mourning, your unkind disdain has left me forlorn. I sit and sigh, weep, faint and 'die' in deadly pain and endless misery.

All day long the 'sun' that gives me light (my mistress), by her frowning causes me to pine, and tests my patience. Her smiles are like springtimes, causing my joyes to grow (like flowers and trees), but her frowns are the cold winters of my unhappiness.

All night long my sleep is full of dreams, my eyes are full of streams of teares. My heart has no interest to see the 'fruits' and joys that some find (in love), and note, as a contrast to this happy state, the 'storms' that are assigned to me.

Begone! Alas, my constancy to her is always true, yet she will never feel any pity for me, nor grant me any favour. Her eyes are made of fire, and her heart is as hard as flint, and neither my tears nor my faithfulness can ever make any impression on either.

Gentle Cupid, remove that arrow from your bow. Even you cannot pierce her heart, I can confirm (approve³³) that, for I employed sighs and tears that are hotter than your arrows in order to tempt her, but she, triumphing, merely laughs.

³² The sexual connotation of 'die' is clearly intended here.

This song, in all of the known printed editions, begins with the underlaid text 'Come againe', followed by a second verse also beginning 'Come againe' (numbered 2), but which are followed directly by four more verses numbered from 1 to 4, as shown above .

Robert Spencer suggested that the song was probably in circulation as '*All the Day*' before 1597, and was a setting of just the latter four verses (a pre -1597 'bass vvall' part by Matthew Holmes in the 'Cambridge Consort Books' is titled '*All the Day*'). The 'All the day' verses lack two syllables in the last line of each verse, however, and these must be supplied either by repetition of, or by adding words. (Dowland clearly did not consider this to be his problem, but the singer's!) In performance, it has become usual to shorten the song by singing just the first two '*Come againe*' verses, followed by the last, ('*Gentle love*'), but there is no justification for doing so, and it is really quite a short song anyway. I suggest singing the whole song as printed (which Dowland obviously intended), or sometimes, perhaps, just singing the latter four verses as '*All the Day*', the presumed earlier version.

³³ 'approve' can mean 'confirm' at this period.

18 His golden locks

His golden locks time hath to silver turnde,
O time too swift, O swiftnes never ceasing,
His youth gainst time and age hath ever spurnd,
But spurnd in vaine, youth waneth by encreasing:
Beautie, strength, youth are flowers but fading seene,
Duty, Faith, Love are roots and ever greene.

His helmet now shall make a hive for bees,
And lovers sonets turne to holy psalmes:
A man at armes must now serve on his knees,
And feed on prayers which are ages almes,
But though from court to cotage he departe
His saint is sure of his unspotted hart.

And when he saddest sits in homely Cell,
Hele teach his swaines this Caroll for a songe,
Blest be the harts that wish my soveraigne well,
Curst be the soule that thinke her any wrong:
Goddess allow this aged man his right,
To be your beadsman now that was your knight.

My once-golden hair has now been turned to white by time, O time too swift, time that never slows. In my youth I always rejected the idea of time and ageing, but in vain, for youth itself wanes as it 'increases'. Beauty, strength and youth are like flowers which will fade in time, but duty, loyalty and love are constant, embedded like roots and evergreen.

My warrior's helmet is now fit only as a hive for bees, and my reading matter, that once was love sonnets must now be holy psalms. I who was once a man at arms, must now serve you on my knees, and live by my prayers, which are the 'charity' of old age. But although I now leave the court for my cottage, my 'saint' (the Queen) can be certain of my pure heart.

And when I am at my saddest, in my simple cottage (like a hermit's or monk's cell), I will teach my rustic servants the following song: 'Blessed be those hearts that wish my sovereign well, but cursed be those who wish her any harm'. O goddess (Queen), allow this aged man who was once your champion knight the right to be your beadsman³⁴.

Dowland's setting of 'His Golden Locks', along with 'Times eldest sonne' (Second Booke nos. 6-8) are associated with the retirement ceremony of Sir Henry Lee (1533-1611), who was Master of the Ordnance to Queen Elizabeth. Lee became the Queen's champion in 1580, and was appointed master of the Royal Armories in 1580. Lee organised the Accession Day tilts (jousting tournaments and feasting) held annually on November 17th – a holiday celebrated in England for over a century after her death. Lee stepped down as Queen's Champion in 1590, and these songs probably formed part of his elaborate retirement pageant. This poem was almost certainly written (or commissioned) by Lee himself. The song was sung in the masque by Robert Hales,³⁵ and Lee wore a specially commissioned suit of white armour (representing old age³⁶) with a golden sun on his right shoulder, representing the active life at court that he was leaving, and a silver moon on his left, representing the more sedentary contemplative life he would retire to. The queen was so delighted with the retirement masque that she commanded that it was staged again the following year. Lee retired to Woodstock for the next twenty years, outliving Elizabeth and most of the court, eventually receiving the new king James 1 and his queen Anne, as recorded in John Dowland's *'Far from Triumphant Court'* included in his son, Robert Dowland's collection *A Musically Banquet*.

³⁴ Beadsman: A poor man, supported in a beadhouse, required to pray for the soul of its founder; an almsman. (Websters)

³⁵ Hales' only surviving song, *O eyes leave off your weeping*, appears in Robert Dowland's *A Musically Banquet*, as no. 3, as well as a version in the Turpyn Book of lute songs.

³⁶ Lee was only 57 – though this was considered 'old age' for an Elizabethan.

19 Awake sweet love

Awake, sweet love, thou art returnd:
My hart, which long in absence mournd,
Lives now in perfect ioy,
Let love, which never absent dies,
Now live for ever in her eyes
Whence came my first annoy,
Only her selfe hath seemed faire,
She only I could love,
She onely drave me to dispaire
When she unkind did prove.
Dispayer did make me wish to die
That I my ioyes migyt end'
She onely, which did make me flie,
My state may now amend.

If she esteeme thee now ought worth,
She will not grieve thy love henceforth,
Which so dispaire hath proved,
Dispaire hath proved now in me,
That love will not unconstant be,
Though long in vaine I loved.
If she at last reward thy love.
And all thy harmes repaire,
Thy happinesse will sweeter prove,
Raisde up from deep dispaire.
And if that now thou welcome be,
When thou with her dost meete,
She al this while but plaide with thee:
To make thy ioies more sweet.

Now awaken, sweet love³⁷: you have come back to me, and my heart, which was long in mourning for your absence is now living in perfect happiness. May this sensation of love, which never dies when absent, now live for ever in the eyes of her who first caused my distress. She alone seemed fair - the only one I could love, but she alone drove me to despair when she proved unkind to me. My despair made me wish to die, so that my joys (and despairs) might end, only she, who caused me to fly from her, may now amend my (unhappy) state.

If she values me at all, she will not deny my love any more, which my despair has so tested. This despair has now proved to me that love should not be unconstant, even though I loved in vain for so long. If she now rewards my love, and repairs all the harms done to me, my happiness will prove sweeter, once raised up from deep despair. And if it be true that I am now accepted by her, when I meet her, I shall know that all this time she merely played with my affections to make those joys (that I receive now) all the more sweet.

³⁷ Although the poet appears to be addressing Cupid (Love) directly, he may also be referring to the sensation of love itself.

20 Come heavy sleepe

Come heavy sleepe, the Image of true death:
And close up these my weary weeping eyes,
Whose spring of tears doth stop my vitall breath,
And tears my hart with sorrows sigh swoln crys:
Com and posses my tired thoghts, worne soule,
That living dies, till thou on me bestoule.

Come shadow of my end: and shape of rest,
Alied to death, child to his black fast night,
Come thou and charme these rebels in my brest,
Whose waking fancies doth my mind affright.
O come sweet sleepe, come or I die for ever:
Come ere my last sleepe, coms or come never.

Come, sorrowful³⁸ Sleep, the apparition³⁹ of Death himself, and close these my weary weeping eyes, whose well of tears obstructs my vital breath itself, and tears at my heart with sighs, swollen with sorrow. Come, Sleep, and possess my tired soul (that is) worn out with my thoughts. My soul will die, even as it lives, until you, Sleep, steal⁴⁰ upon me.

Come Sleep, you spirit⁴¹ of my ending, you ghost⁴² of rest, the ally of Death⁴³ and the child of this unchanging⁴⁴ black night. Come, and by your magical incantation remove these 'warring' sighs (rebels) from my breast, for their sleep-preventing fantasies (nightmares/terrors) frighten my mind. Come, sweet sleep, or I shall die for ever. Come before my final sleep (my death) comes, or else do not come ever.

This song references characters from Greek mythology in the form of personifications: *Hypnos* (Sleep) was the twin brother of *Thanatos* (Death), both are children of *Nyx* (Night) and *Erebus*, a relationship also alluded to in Robert Johnson's 'Care charming sleep': 'Care-charming sleep, thou easer of all woes, Brother to death, sweetly thyself dispose'.

In Dowland's second verse, Sleep (*Hypnos*) is described (in the 1613 edition) as 'child to this blacke fac't night', which confirms the association with his mother, Night (*Nyx*).

The song appears to be an invocation to a supernatural figure to end his restless torment, but in the absence of any obvious 'love' context, it is tempting for us 'moderns' to conclude that it may simply be describing the misery of insomnia or depression, rather than the fashionable affected Elizabethan melancholy.

'In Darkness let me dwell' from 'A Musically Banquet' is another 'dark' song (invoking the architecture of the tomb), with no given or obvious 'motive'. These supernatural invitations in the text of 'Come heavy sleep' sit oddly with the long sweeping lines of this achingly beautiful and serene song, but, despite the references to characters and personifications from Greek mythology, perhaps the real meaning of the poem is, quite simply, exactly what it appears to be describing, and reflects a Christian's calm invitation of welcome sleep, mirroring the 'last sleep' of Death which will finally ease his sadness, and weariness with life.

³⁸ As well as the (then less often-used) modern sense of 'weighty', *heavy* meant sorrowful, sad and gloomy to Elizabethans.

³⁹ Although 'image' may mean 'embodiment', 'apparition' is also one of several meanings of 'image' at this date. This is only one interpretation – Dowland appears to be invoking the personification of Sleep (*Hypnos*), who, in granting him rest, will physically close his eyes, just as a priest might, at the deathbed. This seems to be confirmed by the invitation at the beginning of the second verse. If we accept Sleep to be *Hypnos* here, the idea of him as a 'spirit' or supernatural figure is appropriate. Image is sometimes defined as 'personal likeness' and 'semblance' at this date, which also fits the twin brothers *Hypnos/Thanatos* imagery.

⁴⁰ Steal = creep upon, furtively, stealthily - 'be stol'n', in Robert Johnson's setting of the first verse of the same poem.

⁴¹ Although 'shadow' can mean 'image', 'likeness', 'portrait' and even 'reflection' and 'illusion' at this date, I prefer the sense of 'ghost' or 'phantom' here, which mirrors 'image' in the first stanza.

⁴² Again, one of the accepted senses of 'shape' at this time, although 'appearance' and 'aspect', and even 'in the rôle of' are possibly correct.

⁴³ Allied could also mean 'related' at this date, so may be used in the sense of 'brother of' here.

⁴⁴ 'Fast' could mean 'permanent', or 'secure' or several other terms at this date. 'Unchanging' seems to fit the claustrophobic, dark imagery best, though 'fast' is probably a misprint for 'faced' in the 1597 edition. The 1613 text gives 'blackefac't' (black-faced), so Night (*Nyx*) is probably being described as black-faced, as 'night' characters in masque costume are known to have been. We do not know whether the change to 'blackfac't' was made by Dowland himself, his printer or the printer's compositor, however. Black faced certainly fits with the imagery of spirits and personifications in the poem, and *Nyx/Night* as depicted in, for example, the 10th century Paris Psalter (alongside the prophet Isaiah) is painted black.

21 Away with these selfe loving lads

Away with these selfe loving lads,
Whom *Cupids* arrowe never glads:
Away poore soules that sigh and weepe
In love of them that lie and sleepe,
For Cupid is a medooe god,
and forceth none to kisse the rod.

God *Cupids* shaft like destinie,
Doth either good or ill decree:
Desert is borne out of his bow,
Reward upon his foot doth go,
What fooles are they that have not knowne
That love likes no lawes but his owne?

My song they be of *Cynthias* praise,
I weare her rings on hollidaies,
On every tree I write her name,
And every day I reade the same:
Where honor, *Cupids* rivall is,
There miracles are seene of his:

If *Cinthia* crave her ring of me,
I blot her name out of the tree,
If doubt do darken things held deere,
Then well fare nothing once a yeere:
For many run, but one must win,
Fools only hedge the Cuckoo in.

The worth that worthinesse should move
Is love, which is the bowe of love,
And love as well the foster can,
As can the mighty Noble-man:
Sweet Saint, tis true you worthie be,
Yet without love nought worth to me.

Begone, all you vain, self-centered young men who claim that Cupid's arrow always renders them unhappy. Begone, you poor souls that sigh and weep for the love of those women that lie and sleep, oblivious to your pains. For Cupid is a meadow god, and does not force anyone to yield in submission to a master (or mistress).

The god Cupid's arrow, like the workings of Destiny, creates either good or bad. What we 'deserve' is born from the actions of his bow, and what we perceived as having been our our reward is made to walk away. What fools are they that do not realise that Cupid only ever likes and plays by his own rules?

My songs are in praise of Cynthia, and I wear the rings that she gave me (as tokens of love), proudly, for all to see on holidays. I write her name on every tree, and read these every day. When (the personification of) Honour⁴⁵ is the rival of Cupid, miracles of his (Honour's) making may be seen (i.e. things such as love tokens may sometimes thwart even Cupid's plans).

If Cynthia ask for her ring(s) to be returned, I shall erase her name from the tree(s). If doubts (of my constancy towards her) have darkened her once dear feelings towards me, then – oh well, it's only once a year (the holiday), and though many run (as in a race), only one can win, and only fools would attempt to prevent the cuckoo⁴⁶ from flying away, (preserving the Spring).

The true test of anyone's worthiness is love, by which I mean Cupid's bow. For the forester can love as well as the powerful nobleman. Therefore, sweet beloved, although it is true you are worthy, without the quality of love, you are of no value to me!⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Honos (Roman), Greek equivalent is Arete.

⁴⁶ This relates to the popular folk tales of the 'Wise Men of Gotham', who, in an attempt to preserve the Springtime, built a hedge around the bush where the cuckoo was nesting - to no avail, of course, as it simply flew over the top of the hedge. The tales were very popular in the late 16th century, and the reference is used here perhaps with the combined allusion to Cuckoo and cuckold, suggesting faithlessness. 'Cuckoo' has been used as a term for adulterer since Roman times: "*Te cuculum uxor ex lustris rapit*" (*Plautus: Asinaria*, v. 3) Perhaps the old adage 'three's a crowd' is intended by Dowland in this last line.

⁴⁷ This recalls: 'She is not worthy to be loved that hath not some feeling of her own worthiness'. (*The Old Arcadia* - Philip Sidney).