The Picture of Incest. (James Gresham ca. 1626)

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THE

PICTVRE

OF

INCEST.

Liuely

PORTRAICTED

IN THE HISTORIE

of C I N Y R A S and

M Y R R H A.

By

James Gresham.

LONDON

Printed for R. A. 1626.
F frange disasters shall my Mufe now sing  
Fathers approach not you my Carolling,  
Nor you faire Daughters, that in vertue glory,  
To taint your chast eares with my lustfull story:  
Or if my poore vnpolisht lines haue power  
To yeeld delight vnto those harts of your,

Let me not be beleu'd nor this my tale  
Be thought of any credible availe.  
Or if to so much truth they 'gaine consent  
Yet with the fact beleue the punishment.  
And sith Dame Nature hath so farre transgrest  
To suffer such a deed to be confest  
I'me glad Ismaria and our Orphean Thrace  
Are not polluted with an act so base.  
And that our natiue soyle so distant lies,  
From those wherein there are such villanies.  
   Let Sweet Panchaia be with riches spred,  
And fragrant flowers rarely diapred.  
May there the tast delighting Cynamon,  
Sent pleasing Costus and the daintie gum  
Of sweet extracted Frankinsence there grow,  
Whilst that alone can only MYRRHA show.  
   But sure that tree could not enforce a deed  
So bad, from so much goodnesse to proceed  
No (MYRRHA) no CVPID himselfe denies  
To lend his ayde vnto such surquedries,  
And vindicates his flames from the least wrongs  
That to such bestiality belongs,  
No, rather haue some Stygean fate inspir'd  
Thee, with a wish by none to be desir'd.
The Picture of Incest

Tis lewd to loath, the parent thou shouldst rate
But this thy loue doth euen exceed that hate,
Making thee odious and vnfit to owne
That good the Gods vpon thee haue bestowne.
On each hand art them round beset with suers
Both home nobilitie and forraigne woers.
That both in wit and armes contend and sey,
How to bear thee (the wished prize) away.
Of these then (MIRRHA) choose thee one to be
Thy happy spouse, and let thy Sire be free.

Hereon she ponders, and her lust opposes,
And (to her selfe) what fury (sayes) discloses
My franticke mind? what can I better doe?
You Sacred gods and lawes Parentall too
As you prohibite such a deeds Commission
Resist in me this lawlesse disposition:
(If it at least be lawlese) But such fauours
Pitty forbids to be thought misbehauioirs.
Since other creatures without censuring crime
Doe freely couple in their owne due time.
The little Heifar scarce yet ag'd a yeare
Her owne begetter on her backe may beare
Yet not be turpious, and the lustie Steed
Couer the Mare which sprung from his owne seed
The leacherous Goat too, leapes the female she
From whom himselfe was gendred: and that hee
Proceeding from them both, by carnall vse
Oft tups the Dam that did himselfe produce.
Birds with each other too doe mate and by
The so vp hatch'd doe like fructifie.
And I no reason see but wee as well
May freely doe, when nature doth compell:
O happy they, that haue this Freedomes blisse
To couple where they list without amisse,
But most vnhappie we that must obey
Such lawes as humane care prouides for stay.
And that whereto our natures most doe plie vs
That only should those enuious lawes denye vs.
Yea, there are Nations too ('tis said) wherein
The bearing mother with her sonne doth sin,
And the ingendring Sire his Daughter proue,
And by this course ingeminate their loue,
Accursed I that (louing as I doe)
'Twas not my fortune to be borne there too.
But by this Islands too too happy fate
(Euen) seeking loue, must seeme degenerate.

But why revolue I thus? what helpe accrewes
To my desires by the words I use?
Hence therefore you forbidden thoughts and fly
The troubled breast wherein you lurking lie.
Tis true, my Father hath a Power to move
An ycie disposition unto love.
But yet in me can love, nor like no beauty,
That aymes at ought beyond a filiall duty.
Were my fate such, that I were not his daughter,
My wish would then be no such heynous matter,
A smiling fortune might so farre preuaile
To bring me to his bed with wind and saile,
But now (so ill hath destiny ordain'd)
That though she's mine there's nothing therein gain'd,
Since that proximitie which should combine
Denies me to be his, or make him mine.
O would I therefore were some other Sires,
That I on him might satiate my desires
And lose myselfe amidst those pleasing charms
Which liue within the circle of his armes:
Or that 'twere possible for me, by flight
(Leauing these confines and my Countries sight)
To flie my destined woe, and shun
The shelfe that threatens my confusion.
But a preposterous-burning-lust restraines
My power from doing so, in amorous chaines,
 Permitting me thus farre to reach at blisse
To heare, and see, and touch, and somtimes kisse
Though beyond that he grant me nothing more
'T'enrich my wish, or make his vertue poore:
Beyond (said I) fie on thee wicked mayd,
Canst thou euen hope for more then th'ast enioy
Or so beguile thy thoughts to thinke that he
(Though them shouldst craue't) would ast such villainie?
Dost thou not weigh that further grants will cause
Both losse of name and breach of humane lawes?
And make ensuing ages that shall read,
Thy haplesse story, blush at thee though dead?
What? would'st thy Mothers rivall be, yea more
Thy Fathers foule adulterated whore?
Or thy owne Daughters sister? and a Mother
To that abortiue birth thou shouldst cal brother?
Dost thou not dread those haire snak't furies ires
That doe not onely see thy foule desires
But can and will (vnto thy deeds extent)
Adde a condigne ensuing punishment?
O quake to thinke on't, and whilst yet th'art free
Taint not thy vertuous minde, nor let there bee
A base pollution of that natures hests
Which quite prohibits such vniust requests,
And which thoug thou shouldst (as them crau'st) obtaine
Would euen at best be but a fleeting gaine.
   My father too, is pious, and precise
In due obserueing of his Countries guise
And one that by no fascinating art
Will be seduced to render vp his hart:
(Though ō I wish (and feruently desire)
There burnt in him the selfe same ardent fire,
That as my hart on his perfections dote
So he of me and mine would take like note.)
But deepe and strange must that art be can lure
A mind so good to ought that's so impure.

Thus to her selfe she sayd, And stupid hee
(Whom plenty of great suters made to be
Ambiguous what to doe) little supposing
Her thoughts bent to a fact of so much loathing,
With secret scrutiny assaies to know,
(By iterating such as did her woe)
Towards whose desert, her best affection stands
To linke herselfe in matromoniall bands.
   To this at first she lockes her lips (as grieuing
To thinke how farre her wish was from relieuing)
But after looking with transpeircing eyes
Vpon her Sire! (whose loue 'twas did surprize
Her hart with lust,) vents from her troubled brest
Vollies of sighes (the symtomes of vnrest)
And from her rosie cheeke a dew let glide
Of pearly teares (like those in summer tide
Falling on the ripe Cherries which the sun
After exhales from lying thereupon,)
And with this teare-distilled shewre doth shroud
Her starre like eyes within her apron cloud.
Which strange distemperature of hers, her father
Deeming of feare (not lust) yet knowing neither
Forbids her weeping and with gentle touch
Wipes her wet eyes, then kisses her as much.
With which sie seemes to be so much oreioy'd
The she (euen) wishes to be stil thus cloy'd
With the Ambrosiacke Nectar of his lips,
And neuer to go out of this Ecclipse.
   He thinking now, if euer had his cariage
Won a wisht time to win her vnto mariadge,
Consults againe with her desires to find
What kind of man it was would please her mind
To whom (as glad by this meanes to expresse
The white she leveld at in this distresse,)
She thus replies, the man that must obtaine
The conquest of my heart, and my bed gaine,
Must in all parts (deere Sire) resemble thee,
Or neuer looke to be imbrac'd by mee.
Whilst he (not knowing her close thoughts) applauds
Of this her liking, and with lauish lauds,
Sayes, Daughter mayst thou be thus dutious still
And euermore obey thy fathers will.
The Gods will sure reward thee for't, and crowne
Thy duty with perpetuall renowne.

No sooner was the word of (duty) spoken,
But straight her countenance with a change was stroken,
As conscious to herselfe of that foule fact
Which with her aged Sire she sought to act,
And grieuing that those words, which she intended
To breake the yce, should be misapprehended.

It now was midnight and a silent sleepe
Did cares from mind, & toyles from bodye keepe,
When watchfull MIRRHA (too too haplesse Mayd)
Is to her former enemy betray'd,
And so pursued by her vnquiet thoughts
That night no sleepe vnto her eyes allots,
But doth againe retract that lewd desire
Which blew the coles to this incestious fire.
And one whiles timerously despaires to try
And yet againe resolues it by and by.
Shaming to aske she couets what she shames
And these vnwilling willing motions blames:
On euery side is her attempt beset
With hope to forward and with feare to let
And in this conflict what her hart should doe
Cannot resolue or giue consent vnto.

But as the tree hewne by the sharpe edg'd steele
After a many wounds begins to reele,
Tremblingly doubtfull on which hand to fall
And is on euery side much fear'd of all,
So stood she shaken with a various passion
By her too temerous timerous inclination.
That which diswades seems light, & what allures
As great and iust a punishment procures,
And nothing can her thoughts intend, but stra'rt
One change or other on those thoughts do waite
(Much like the billowes of the boyling sea
In a tempestious and cloudy day
Where one waue following the first amaine
Comes straight a third that breaks them both in twaine)[.]

No meane nor ease can her distemper finde
But that which death affords the loue-sick minde
And that indeed she hugges and straight resolues
To put in execution: Then invoules
Her faire necke with her Zone, tied to that height
That falling thence she so might clime to death.

And hauing thus prepar'd herselfe to run
On her owne wofull sad confusion
Farewell Deare father (cries she) when I'me dead
Let (yet) my deaths cause be remembered
And since my life durst not my loue make known
Let my desires by this my death be showne.

And therewith apts her girdles knot t'enchaine
Her azure-veyned necke, to ease her paine.

Tis said the mournefull murmur of her teares
And sorrowes tones, came to her nurses eares,
Who then (full little dreaming what a fact
Her foster charge was now about to act
Of selfe contriuing death) was not farre layd
From the sad stage wheron this Scene was playd
And hearing her, straight rises, and with speed
Opening the doores, and guessing at the deed
By what she saw prouided; first, expresses
Her wonder by her cryes, tearing her tresses,
And miserably macerating with her knife
Her age plough'd bosome; then (to saue her life)
Breaks from her tender neck, that hard knot, tied
By which so sweet a beauty sought t' haue died.
And with soft kind embraces, bids her cleere
Those heauens (her eyes) that weeping clouded were.

Earnestly crauing what the cause might be
That drag'd her thoughts to this selfe tragedy.
Whilst she as (one dumb strucken) stands at gaze
With a dejected looke, and nothing sayes
But grieues that by her death's too slow dispatch
Her too kind nurse should her so tardy catch.

Shee good old nurse conjures her still with loue
To shew what did these teares effusion moue
And with her nakd and wrinckled brests displayd
(Which hoary age had dry and withered made)
Entreats her, by her infant Swathlings, and
The food she first receiued from her hand
(When in her now exhaust and shriueld nipple
There then was pleasant milke for her to tipple)
That vnto her she would those griefes impart
Which seem'd so much to ouerload her hart,
Perswading her that griefes oft kill conceal'd
But finde redresse when th'are in time reuereal'd.
To all which MIRRHA still with silent gaze
(Turning aside) sighes, but yet nothing sayes;
As one whose thoughts presaging no reliefe
Would rather dye then vtter forth her griefe.
The gentle Nurse (as yet in knowledge blind
What these distempers mou'd, but bent to find
The fount from whence they flow'd: (with promise made
Both of her secresie and vtmost ayde,
(To her best age wore strength) in ought that might
Asswage these passions, or her hart delight.)
Againe thus woes her, Sweet child, let me know,
What sodaine griefe this is torments thee so.
And what my ag'd experience can redresse
My willing power shall speedily expresse.
Bee't a distraffing frenzie, I'ue a charme,
Of soueraigne herbes to cure thee of that harme
Or bee'st thou hurt by some malignant fate,
I'ue yet a spell shall shield thee from that hate.
Or dreadst them some incensed god, loe I
With sacred rites that ire can pacifie.
What should I more suggest? Good fortune shee,
Sweetly smiles on thee, and as yet wee're free
From all incursions; yea, thy Sire and Mother
Are liuing too and nightly 'nioy each other.
MIRRHA no sooner heares the name of Sire
Fall from her nurses lippes, but all on fire
(Like the dry flaxe to which the smallest cole
Serues as a taper to enflame the whole.)
She breaths forth many a sigh, whilst still th'old crone
The cause conceaues not of her heavy mone
But yet suspects she loues, and therefore still
Stickes to her former purpose; and doth will
That whatsoever 'twere she yet would please
To let her know't and trie her ages ease.
And therewith takes the teare-distilling Mayd
Into her lap, and (with weake armes displaid
Empaling her faire corpes,) sayes, come I know
The troubled spring from whence these streames doe flow.
Thou art in loue, and either sham'st to say
With whom, or doubtst lest I'le the same bewray.
But credit me my ayde shall serue t'expresse
How farre I am from such perfidiousnesse:
Nor shall my tongue one word thereof reuale
Vnto thy Father, but the same conceale.
At which her ill concluding words enraged
(Breaking the pale, wherein she was incaged
And with her face, pressing the neighbour bed
As one more grieu'd the joy'd by what sh'ad sed)
Cries, ô depart, and spare a further quest
Of that which shame constraines me to detest,
And either leaue me to my selfe alone
Or cease to question more, my ruefull mone.
For what you craue, t'enrich your knowledge by
Is but a lewd incestious villany.

Hereat th'old beldam starts, & (what with feare
And bed rid age, of many a hoary yeare)
With trembling hands vpheau'd, doth groueling lye
To gaine the cause of this her misery.
And one while with delusiue flattery sues
To screw it out, another while doth vse
The sharpe compulsiue menaces of death,
By shewing her the meanses to doe it with.
Adding withall to these her mixt perswasions
All her officious helpe t'asswage her passions.
Hart-griued MIRRHA, at those words erects
Her downe-cast lookes, and with such sad effects,
As shew'd how deepe sh'was hurt, with briny teares
Bedewes her nurses bosome, and still feares
To let her know't, and yet was oft about
To make it knowne, yet would not let it out.
But with her vesture clouding those faire skies
Wherein there shone at once, two sun like eyes.
(And by these words like little sparks forshowing
What kind of fire 'twas in her brest was glowing)
Sayes, Happy, ô thrice happy art thou sped
(Deare mother) that enioy'st my fathers bed.
And therewith sighing, shuts her lips asham'd
To vutter more, and therefore leaues't vnnam'd.

The aged nurse hereat, with tremor fill'd
Is almost to a jelly pale distill'd,
And with her snow-white haires, brisled vpright
(shewing how much these words her hart affright)
Striues with request, to make her shun that shelfe
By which she sought to shipwracke her faire selfe,
And (if 'twere possible) to quench that flame
Which seem'd to kindle such a fire of shame.
But she, (though knowing what her nurse aduis'd
Was friendly counsell (not to be despis'd)
And on what dangerous Seas her lust must Saile
Before it could arriue, where't might availe.)
Resolues (for sure) that if she did not reapethe fruit sowne with so many teares, to heapeupon her lust, selfe murther, and therebyto end at once both life and misery.

Her louing Nurse, fearing this resolutionmight proue indeed her beauties dissolution(if not preuented) to her wounds applies
Sage soueraigne oyles of age-taught subtilities,and bids her live, and rather then destroyso sweet a fabricke, fully to enjoyher so much lou'd—but durst not (father) namefor feare to moue in her both griefe and shame,and to these words of comfort, sweares to ioyneher beft endeauour, to content her mind.

Twas now the ripening Autumne, the wisht time
Wherein the aged matrons of that Clime,
With Snow white vestures o're their bodies spred
And each a Corne-made garland on her head,
Did vse to celebrate the annuall Feasts
Of Sacred CERES with their corne and beasts.
'Gainst which solemnitie, for nine nights space
All veniall act of manly sweet embrace
Were quite prohibited: Unto this throng
Comes the ag'd wife of CINYRAS among.
Willing to act the secret misteries
Of those Commanding Sacred Dieties.
And to omit no service, which might show
The great respect she to those gods did owe.

Whilst therefore by these rites, the nuptiall bed
Was of its lawfull charge disburthened.
The ill seducing Nurse, (whom age had made
A sound proficient in this kinde of trade)
Hauing with wine and fascinating Art
Bereft the weake brain'd CINYRAS of his hart
And brought him to her lure (by cunning gloze)
Doth MIRRHA'S loue in a forg'd name disclose,
Flattering his fancy with a faigned lye,
That such a virgin lou'd him whose bright eye
Reflected rayes of wonder, and should heDeny her what she sought, 'twould doubtlesse beHer liues consumer, therefore craues with speedThat hee'd accept her proffer in this need.
Adding such further praises to her feature
As she best thought might moue a yeelding nature.

He rapt with wonder straight desires to know
How old that beauty was, that lou'd him so,
To whom she (sence-deluding-crone) replies
Her yeares and MIRRHA'S doe iust sympathize. 
And through my lifes long course I cannot tell 
That e're I saw a nearer parralell. 
Hereat he forthwith loues, and craues with speed 
To bring her to his bed, (the marke indeed, 
At which she aym'd) that so he might possesse 
That sence-delighting-rare-delitiousnesse.

No sooner did his words his wish impart, 
(As lust still speeds when it is helpt by Art) 
But backe returnes the old trott, to discouer 
To her sad charge, how she had wonne her louer 
And thus begins, reioyce child the thing's done 
And that great difficultie's ouerthrowne 
Which thou thoughtst so impossible, and he 
To whom thou late wert thrall'd, 's now slaue to thee.

Ill did th'vnhappy virgin entertaine 
This haplesse knowledge of her Fathers gaine 
As one whose heart too truely did presage 
The sad euents of her lust fired rage.
And therefore weeps: & yet (like Aprill weather) 
Againe straight smiles, and so in truth doth neither 
But as the current of her passions winde 
So doe the various discords of her minde.

Now posts swift winged time towards night, with speed, 
Making the same as blacke as was the deed. 
And with a Death-like silence hath possest 
Whateuer might disturbe a quiet rest. 
And euen now, hath Charleswaine-Chariot runne 
His midway iourney from the setting sunne 
When on she goes to perpetrate that fact 
Which none but such a Minotaure would act

The pale-fac'd Moone thereat asham'd 'doth shroud 
And those bright Starres which nightly vs'd to blaze 
Their glorious splendor, (to the worlds amaze 
Are with blacke Curtaines so close ouerspred, 
That not the least can be discouered. 
The night it selfe too wants that wonted light 
Which vsually it had before that night 
And each thing so prodigiously seemes bent, 
As if they justly feared a sad euent. 
Thrice did her Humbling feet seeme to fore show 
How swiftly she was porting to her woe, 
And thrice th'ill boding screech-owle with harsh throat 
Croakes out an ominous and fatall note, 
Deuining what that foule acts end would be
That in each Scene had so much prodigie.
But on she trudges (shrowded by the darke
From the least lustre of a shamefull sparke.)
With one hand holding her lust guiding mother
And groping out the blind way with the other.
At last (as oft bad actions hit their ayme
Though in the end they perish with the same)
She findes the Chamber doore, and without din,
Opening the same with soft pace enters in,
When straight an aspen tremor doth so shake
Her feeble timbred joynts, and therewith make
Her legs so falter, that with fatall lucke,
Did she the fruit from that forbid tree plucke.
The milke dipt rose vermilion in her cheeke,
Fled from its seate, some safer place to seeke,
And that Angel-like face (in which before
There sate a godlike beauty to adore,
Did nothing but a bloodlesse pale retaine
(To linke both deed and issue in one chaine.)
Her wonted courage leaues her too; and still
The neerer she approaches to her ill
The more she trembles, and abhorres to thinke
How nigh she'was brought vnto her wishes brinke.
It irkes her now that [e'er] she was so vnwise
To vndertake so hard an enterprise.
And onely wishes to retire, so none
Might either see her, or she passe vnknowne.
But after long delay (still steered by
Her age experienc'st Nurses policie
In these distractions) she attaines the Port,
(Her fathers bed) so long'd for in this sort.
Whom when her Nurse bequeaths to his desires,
Here (sayes she) CINYRAS quench thy lustfull fires.
And ravell out thy thred of life in pleasure,
With that which thou accountst thy ages treasure
Here mayst thou satiate without surfet, and
Enioy more riches then thy Realme command.
And with this hart-delighting-musicke-iyones
Their destined brests for amorous twynes.
(Such as indeed are onely free for those,
That in a lawfull mariage bed repose.)

Her sence-deluded-sire with armes display'd
(As one not dreaming to be thus betray'd)
Receiues into his darke and wanton bed,
The tender bowels he so fostered
And with his Nectar-candied-words, assayes
To driue the Damsell from her virgin maze
Adding vn.to these words such pleasing action
As he best thought might giue her satisfaction.
And to compleat and make this tide of pleasure
Flow to a greater heigth and fuller measure
(Because her age so iustly did resemble
MIRRHA'S, whom shee both was and did dissemble,)
They interchange like names (as being nather)
He her sweet daughter calls; she him kind father.
Th' incestious game thus ended; and she full
Of that adulterate fruite she came to pull
Departs, and leaues her new beguiled sire
To guesse what sweete thus pleas'd his fond desire
Bearing within her wretched wombe that seed
Which nature made: but lust did meerely breed,
And the next night returns to cleere the score
Which both had ioyntly left vnpaid before
Pursuing her desires in that swift sort
As if she wish'd no end to such sweete sport.

At length, (when after many nights exchange
Of kind embrace betwixt these louers strange
And equall intermixture of such sweets
As are there vs'd, where loue with like loue meets)
His mind began to craue one happy sight
Of that obscured fewell of delight
Which he so oft had lockt within his armes
(And freed from rougher handlings and worse harmes
But neuer view'd, and onely in obscuritie
Had cropt the sweet flower of her vergin puritie)
He forthwith craues accordingly, to see
What this same peerelesse paragon might bee
Whom when apparently his eyes beheld
To be indeed his owne and only child
And therewith weigh'd what an abisse of sin
His sordid beastiall lust had plung'd him in
(For vice as till't be acted's euer blind
So when 'tis done it leaues a sting behind.)
Distracting rage then so possest his hart
And griefe his organ speech, that vp he start
And in his fury drawing forth the blade
Which fate for this her fault had ready layd,
Thought to haue sheath'd it in that tender brest
In which but now his chief'st content did rest.
But what with feare of this attempt, and stung
With the remembrance of that horrid wrong
Which she (as in a christall mirror true
The Picture of Incest

The vaile vncouered) did now plainly view.
(For perpetrated vice seene after action
Appeares so foule it oft driues to distraction.)
Away she flies, and by the helpe of night
Auoyds the tragicke end of her affright;
And vsherd by her thoughts, at randome roues
Among the large and solitary groues.
Leauing the sweet Arabia and those fields
Of Rich Panchaia which rare odour yeelds,
And nine Moones wanders in this carelesse race
Before her feare can find a retting place;
Till in the end not able to sustaine
A longer durance of her grauid paine
She seats her in a Sabra where a while
She striues her lust bred sorrowes to beguile,
But can scarce longer make her burthened womb
Th' incestious load therein inclosd entombe.
With griefe whereof; (even ignorant of prayer)
And almost brought vnto a foule dispaire
By a hart wounding and afflicting strife
Betweene a feared death and wearied life.
She thus in dolefull and soule grieuing plaints
Bewailes the discord of these Combatants,
O you all-sacred-Dieties (quoth she)
That rule the world with soueraigne Maieftie
And guide the heauenly motions of the Spheares
With supreame power, if you haue any eares
To heare the wofull sad and mournefull mones
Of poore distressed wretched mortall ones;
Such as with hearts vnfeigned doe confesse
Their soule-deepe vlcerated wickednesse.
Hearken ô hearken then vnto my cry
Who as I haue deseru'd desire to dye
And will not your dread powers inuoke to shun
The smarting rod of your corection.
Powe downe your angry vengeance on my head
That against nature haue thus trespassed,
And let me now no longer liue to shame
The lonely sexe and roote from whence I came.
But least my lingring life may be offence,
To such as shall suruiue my impudence,
And my dead corps those neighbour graues distaine
By whose offencelesse sides they must be layne
Let me partake neither of life or death
To grieue the one, or soyle the other with.
But so transformed bee, that I of either
May seeme possest, but yet indeed haue neither.
No sooner were these words effus'd, but straite
A strange effect vpon her wish did waite
Wrought by some certaine Dietie whose eare
Was bent her pitie mouing moane to heare,
And giue redresse to; For whilst yet her prayer
Was vttering, (but not quite dissolu'd to ayre)
Those goodly pillars, which but erst did grace
Her stately mouing fabricke, in their pace
Were so inuolu'd within the humid earth,
As if they onely there had had their birth,
And from her flesh transformed nayles and toes,
And out-stretcht crooked winding root there growes
From whence the long truncke of the lofty tree
Receiues its prime foundation and degree.
Her body sweet, so comely in each part
Doth to the middle of the tree conuert,
Within whose metaphorphos'd Saphire veynes
The life maintayning marrowy-sap remaynes.

Her faire enclasping armes, (which but ere while
Were snares for amorous louers to entoyle
Their lust-rapt sences in,) were now estrang'd
Frõ what they were, & to great branches chang'd
Through whose each little spray, her blood (like juyce)
Dispreads it selfe with profuse auarice.
Her dainty fingers too, (not hereto borne)
Into sun-shading little boughes doe turne.
And finally her snow-white silke-smooth-skin
Becomes a rough hard barke of what't had bin,
Serving to sheild her (as her clothes had done)
Both from the winters rage and peircing sun.
In this wise 'gins th' vprising tree t' entombe
Within its hollow graue her painefull wombe,
And hath with quicker speed then thought, o'represt,
Those loue-delighting hillockes of her brest,
And with swift change is hastening to enshrine
Her stately necke within its rugged rine,
All which she shuns not, but (as to her fate)
With willing minde her selfe doth subiugate
To the surrescent barque; which gliding ouer
Doth (as a cloud the sun) her faire face couer.

And though with this her bodies iust correction,
She lost both light of reason and affection
Yet still she weepes, in signe whereof her teares,
On the trees rine in luke-warme drops appeares.
Wherein a sweet and odoriferous smell
Of sence-delighting fragrancy doth dwell.
Which for its worth a semblable name we giue
That no age shall forget nor time out live.
But now begins th' incestious birth to grow
Vnto [its] full maturitie of woe.
(Within the barke-wall'd limitts of the tree
Wherewith she was enclos'd in misery)
Striving to burst away through the darke tombe
Of her transform'd incarcerating wombe.
Her grauid belly swels vnto that heigth
That each small throb seemes now to threaten death,
Making her stretch and struggle with the paine
Which her ripe birth did vrge her to sustaine.
Words she hath none to utter or expresse
The vnknowne measure of her wretchednesse.
Nor to inuoake a gracious helpe from those
Whose sacred powres helpe women in their throwes,
But still expects deliuery from that sorrow
Which as it had no meane, no help could borrow.
The bending tree seemes with sad hollow tones
To eccho forth her many ruthfull grones.
And with a floud of teares (gusht from her eyes)
Bedewes and wets it selfe in piteous wise,
Whereat the tender-hearted IVNO (grieu'd
To see so much distresse, so vnrelieu'd.)
Standing as then close by the mourning sprayes
Puts to her helping hand, and then assaies
With words of Child-bed comfort to delude
The wounding sence of this her sollitude.
Forthwith the wombe-swolne-tree-begins to cracke
And through the cleauing barke doth passage make,
For nine moneths growth to enter-at, when loe
She straight yeelds vp, the burthen of her woe.
Which had no sooner birth, but (as allied
Vnto its mothers misery) it cried.

The neighboring Naydes (whose cells not farre
From her distrest deliuery, distant were)
Hearing the cry, approach and in their armes
First taking the yong babe (yet free from harmes)
And then with tender touch, laying him downe
Vpon the new growne, smooth, and soft grass'd ground,
Embalme him with the Sweet-Mirrhe-trickling teares
Which on his tree-chang'd-mothers-barke appeares.
Swift posting time had not long run his race
Before this birth began to waxe in face.
And each part else so louely, that his feature
Grew natures wonder in a so borne creature,
And Enuies selfe delight: For such as was
That beauty of the world, which did surpasse
All others, whom the curious Artists paint
In tables naked: and [doe] call Loues Saint.
Euen such was he, and in a iust compare
Each way as louely sweet, as young, as faire.
And taking from the first his bow and arrowes
Wherewith he heales by loue, and wounds with arrowes.
Or adding but the like vnto the tother
You'd sweare that this were CVPID & no other.
So faire in matchlesse beauty did his fate
Conspire to make him, though vnfortunate.

FINIS.