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

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THE
PICTVRE
OF
INCEST.

Liuely
P O R T R A I C T E D

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.

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METAMOR-
PHOSIS.

LIB. x.



F ffrange 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 beleeu'd nor this my tale
Be thought of any credible availe.
Or if to so much truth they 'gaine consent
Yet with the fact beleuee 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 diaped.
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.

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 misbehauours.
 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 denie 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 reuolue I thus? what helpe accrewes

To my desires by the words I vse?
 Hence therefore you forbidden thoughts and flie
 The troubled brest wherein you lurking lie.
 Tis true, my Father hath a Power to moue
 An ycie disposition vnto loue.
 But yet in me can loue, 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 destinated woe, and shun
 The shelve 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 villanie?
 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 prohibites such vniust requests,
And which thogh 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 obseruing of his Countries guise
And one that by no fascinating art
Will be seduced to render vp his hart:
(Thogh ô 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 matrimoniall 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 Eclipse.

He thinking now, if euer had his cariage
Won a wisht time to win her vnto mariage,
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 conscios to herselfe of that foule fact
Which with her aged Sire she sought to act,
And griewing 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 strait
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 inuolues
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 mournfull 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 stricken) 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 reueal'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 grieffe.

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 worne strength) in ought that might
 Asswage these passions, or her hart delight.)
 Againe thus woes her, Sweet child, let me know,
 What sodaine grieffe this is torments thee so.
 And what my ag'd experience can redresse
 My willing power shall speedily expresse.
 Bee't a distrafting 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 heauy mone
 But yet suspects she loues, and therefore still
 Sticke 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 reueale

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 meanes 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 litle sparks forshewing
 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 vtter 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 haire, brisled vpriht
 (shewing how much these words her hart affright)
 Striues with request, to make her shun that shelve
 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 reape
 The fruit sowne with so many teares, to heape
 Vpon her lust, selfe murther, and thereby
 To end at once both life and misery.

Her louing Nurse, fearing this resolution
 Might proue indeed her beauties dissolution
 (If not preuented) to her wounds applies
 Sage soueraigne oyles of age-taught subtilties,
 And bids her liue, and rather then destroy
 So sweet a fabricke, fully to enioy
 Her so much lou'd—: but durst not (father) name
 For feare to moue in her both grieffe and shame,
 And to these words of comfort, swears to ioyne
 Her 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: Vnto 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 seruice, which might show
 The great respeft 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)
 Hauling 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 he
 Deny her what she sought, 'twould doubtlesse be
 Her liues consumer, therefore craues with speed
 That 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 *simpathize*.
And through my lifes long course I cannot tell
That e're I saw a nearer parrallell.
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 returns the old trot, 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 euent 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 discovered.
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 vermillion 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
 Enjoy more riches then thy Realme command.
 And with this hart-delighting-musicke-ioynes
 Their destinated 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 vnto 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 heighth 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 meerey breed,
And the next night returnes 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 beasiall 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 grieffe 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 vaile vncovered) did now plainely view.
 (For perpetrated vice seene after action
 Appears so foule it oft driues to distraction.)
 Away she flies, and by the helpe of night
 Auoyds the tragicke end of her affright;
 And vsher'd 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 grieffe whereof; (euen 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 supream power, if you haue any eares
 To heare the wofull sad and mournfull mones
 Of poore distressed wretched mortall ones;
 Such as with hearts vnfeigned doe confesse
 Their soule-deepe vlcerrated 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.
 Powre 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 griue 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 strait
 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 litle boughes doe turne.
 And finally her snow-white silke-smooth-skin
 Becomes a rough hard barke of what't had bin,
 Seruing 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 lue.
 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)
 Striuing to burst away through the darke tombe
 Of her transform'd incarcerating wombe.
 Her grauid belly swels vnto that heigh
 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 vtter 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 surpass
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.



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