
PLANETOMACHIA

or

The first part of the general opposition of the seven planets, wherein is astronomically described their essence, nature, and influence.

Diversly discovering in their pleasant and tragical histories the inward affections of the minds, and painting them out in such perfect colours as youth may perceive what fond fancies their flourishing years do foster, and age clearly see what doting desires their withered hairs do afford.

Containing also a brief apology of the sacred and mystical science of astronomy.

By Robert Greene
Master of Arts and Student in Physic.
1585.

Imprinted at London for Thomas Cadman, dwelling at the great north door of St. Paul's,
at the sign of the Bible.

To the right honourable, the Lord Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, Baron of Denbigh, of the honourable Order of the Garter and St. Michael, knight, Master of the Queen Majesty's Horses, & one of her Highness' most honourable Privy Council, Robert Greene wisheth increase of honour & virtue.

Apelles (right honourable) drawing the counterfeit of Honour portrayeth her holding in the one hand a star and in the other a stone, meaning as I suppose by this his emblem that although noble minds intituled with dignities should reach as high as the skies, yet they might not disdain to look as low as the earth. Jupiter gluttoned with drinking of nectar sharpened his stomach with chewing of Philemon's sour grapes. Honour oft-times hath her eye as soon delighted with the sight of a crooked table as with the view of a curious picture, and as well could Tmolus laugh at the homely music of Pan as wonder at the heavenly melody of Apollo. The mind wearied with weighty affairs seeketh as soon to be recreated with some pithy conceits as with any deep contemplations, & rather with slight devises to procure mirth than with solemn shows to foster melancholy. They which offered gifts unto Alexander presented him with some warlike munition. None contented Crassus so much as they which brought him strange characters. Nigidius being demanded why he gave Antonius Pius the bud of an alive readily answered: Because he is the flower of clemency. So (right honourable) it is not possible that your Honour, being a Maecenas of learning, should want the trouble of scholars, neither that being such a worthy favourer of good letters, even the meanest (amongst whom I rest) should not endeavour their simple skill to show how dutifully they are affected to your Honour's noble and virtuous disposition. Which consideration of this your rare and singular mind hath forced many to present the fruits of their labours to your Lordship's patronage, so that all they which reap profit by others' pains, and gain knowledge by the works of them which have waded the depth of Minerva's labyrinth, are bound to praise and extol your Honour, whose courteous favour towards learning hath forced them to discover their skill for your Lordship's private pleasure but the commons' public commodity. These premises thoroughly weighed, although my ignorance might justly abash me from troubling your Honour with such frivolous trash, yet the dutiful and humble affection wherewith I find myself bound to such a worthy patron of good letters hath emboldened me to present your Honour with this pamphlet, being a planetomachia or general opposition of the seven planets wherein is astronomically deciphered their nature & essence, and plainly showeth (that sith every man is naturally born under the influence and irradiate constellation of one of these wandering stars, and that one is always predominant in the configuration of every nativity) what proper qualities each particular planet doth appropriate, painting out what affectionate desires Jupiter doth allot to them that are jovialists, and what qualities Saturn doth infuse upon them which are saturnists, together with the diseases incident to their constitution and complexion. But as Horace always sung his satires upon the lute, and Phidias painted black Vulcan sitting in an ivory chariot, as Protagenes carved the counterfeit of Irus in a wedge of gold, and Demosthenes sauced his weighty invectives with some pretty & pleasant inventions, so (right Honourable) I have mixed melancholy with music, and tempered the brawls of the planets with pleasant though tragical histories, which if your Honour shall accept, my travail shall be so requited as if I had obtained most rich treasures. And thus hoping your

Honour will pardon my rashness, and think of my mind more than of the matter, I commit your Honour to the Almighty.

Your Honour's in all dutiful service to command, Robert Greene.

To the gentlemen readers, health.

I present here (gentlemen) unto your wonted courtesies a civil conflict between the seven planets, not discovering in this pamphlet any strange or miraculous news of the opposition or aspect of the stars, but only showing their nature and essence, and what proper qualities their celestial configuration and influence doth infuse into human bodies, so that their proper dispositions once known, it shall be easy by their outward affects to judge what planet is chiefly predominant in his natural constitution, but that I might not be too tedious to young minds I have interlaced my astronomical discourse with pleasant tragedies, that your profitable harvest may be gleaned together with delightful pains. And thus committing myself and my labours to your courtesy, I most heartily and humbly bid you farewell.

Yours to use, Robert Greene.

[Greek quotation]

In eos qui vetustam Astrologiae scientiam derident.

*Telluri coelum si saecula prisca maritant?
Si sine vi coeli, si sine sole nihil?
E coelo vires si stirpibus atq. metallis?
Cynthia si morbos iudicat vna tuos?
Si coelo tellus substernitur? infima coelum?
Si mouet: & proprio temperat arbitrio?
Si inferiora vigent radijs, moderata supernis
Cur coelum sordet, sordida terra placet
Cessa sacrilego coelum infectarier ore,
Et fratrem Astrologum nosere perge tuum.
Multa tibi Astrologi debent Grene atq. reponent,
Crede mihi meritis praemia digna tuis:
Qui te percupide rogitant (O Grene) Rogari
Si tamen a doctis tu bene ferre potes:
Vt quos in magno numero noctesque diesque
Describis libros adere nil dubites
Optati venient, relegendur non sine laude:
Ac immortalis nomine, viue, vale.*

P.H. Armiger.

In Praise of the Author and his Book.

*If wise Ulysses with his wit
did purchase lasting fame,
And sacked the wealth of wisdom's store
to burnish out his name,
If Virgil's poems wan him praise
for mixing mirth with skill,
Or Ovid's jests with sage advice
did polish out his quill,
If Horace' wits, whose sacred dooms
were interlaced with sport,
Did get him for his pleasant vein
a name of rare report,
No doubt then justly Greene may gain
more happy fame than those,
Who seeks of deep astrology
the secrets to disclose,
To show what every planet yields,
what force he doth infuse
To human minds, what properties
the jovialists do use,
What solemn fits the saturnists,
what qualities they have,
How Mars with choler much adust
doth cause his crew to rave,
And what diseases incident
by every planet reign,
The cause, th' effects, and proper name
of every grief and pain;
But this his skill with rare delight
is sauced in such sort
As graver heads may counsel find,
and younger years disport,
Both by his learned censure may
most pleasant profit gain,
With friendly speech and praises due,
then recompense his pain.*

FINIS. Henry Gale, Master of Arts.

In Epicureos.

*Fond Epicurus with thy crew,
which scorns the course of heavenly frame,
Bend down thine eye and take a view,
peruse this work, and blush for shame
To see thy doting dooms refelled,
which taste of naught but earthly slime,
And now by right and force compelled
to yield to truth in this our time,
Wherein astrology her famous lore
doth justly claim her sacred due,
As Greene hath proved she did before,
and now her praises doth renew
With such surpassing wit and skill
as shall display thy brutish will.*

FINIS. George Meres, gentleman.

In [Greek word].

*Ride Epicure deum, gere nescia pectore fati,
singe nihil coeli significare faces
Crede mihi, ad nigrum quando raptaberis orcum:
Hic tua quod plectat scommata Numen erit.*

Sultum [sic?] pecus est, non homo, quicumque Astronomiae studio non tenetur: cuius neminem nisi deum authorem & repertorem faciudum puto.

Plato.

A Brief Apology Of The Sacred Science Of Astronomy.

Glazomenius Anaxagorus, being demanded wherefore he was born, answered: To behold the heavens, and that whither his feet could not carry him, he might with sight and mind arrive, thinking that man was therefore framed with an upright countenance to behold the heavens, and as it were in a glass to contemplate the glorious majesty of his Creator, that he might not wholly addict himself to the fading pleasures of this world nor be drowned with doting on the momentary delights of these earthly felicities, but apply his actions and thoughts in considering the divine essence which might draw him to love and honour such a God as had wrought such a miraculous frame. But inquiry hath so greatly altered the state of times, and such is the perverse nature of man, that he wholly forgetteth the cause of his creation, and with Polyphemus in Homer do almost deny that there is any God, or careth for the sight or knowledge of the heavens, and with the Epicures placeth his content in his vineyards and granaries, gaping after pelf, and thinking his contemplation high enough in gazing after the painted shadows of fading riches, in which (because waking he doth sleep, and sleeping he doth watch, being hungry, yet filled, and though never so full, yet with the thirsty serpent hidaspis, is never satisfied) he doth with Antiphanes pronounce this sentence, *Mortalia mortales decent*. Esteeming the contemplations of the heavens & heavenly mysteries to be vain and ridiculous, and with doting Democritus carrying in their minds this peevish paradox.

*Mitte Arcana Dei, Coelumque inquirere quid sit:
Cum sis mortalis, quae sunt mortalia cura.*

But this sentence, *quam Epicurismum oleat*, let the learned judge, whose divine thoughts reach up to the skies and there with secret contemplation doth condemn the base minds of such as with the scarab fly delighteth only to live in dung and mire, whose peevish disposition Tully in his *Somnio Scipionis* doth exclaim against where he feigneth that Scipio, being translated up to the heavens, and seeing the vanity of these fond worldlings, doth cry out against their folly and condemn them as madmen which wonder at any mortal thing when only those heavenly and superior marvels are to be contemplated and admired. Thrice unhappy than we he thought, who are not delighted with this sweet and pleasant contemplation, and whose minds are not moved with the wonderful works of God and nature. He is a foolish beast, not a man, saith Plato, which is not delighted with the study of astronomy whereof God himself is the author, in which opinion is Marcus Manilius in his astronomical discourse to Augustus Caesar where he denieth it to be possible that the knowledge of things so far different from us should be comprehended by any mortal man without a divine inspiration given unto them from God, which he noteth in these words.

*Foelix qui ad sydera mittit
Sydereos oculos, propiusque aspectat Olympum:
Cognatamque sequens mentem se quaerit in Astris.*

But no marvel though the ignorant do inveigh against this sacred science whenas the learned men themselves do neither make account of astrology nor yet exercise it, but

when by chance they happen upon any that do for want of skill prognosticate anything amiss, they straight condemn the stars and hate astrology itself, judging it rather false and frivolous than either true or necessary, much like them which hearing an unskilful musician sing, rashly without reason do despise music itself. As touching the antiquity of this sacred science and the first inventors thereof, I will make brief report, that both the ignorant and learned may perceive in what credit it hath been with our ancestors. The first finders-out of the secret mysteries of astronomy were the Ethiopians, the cause thereof proceeding partly of the wisdom of that nation (for in all other things they have a marvellous provident foresight), partly of the opportunity of the region wherein they inhabit, for because with them there is a continual clearness of the sky without any mutation of the year, measured with an equal and temperate proportion, so that when they first saw the moon not always appearing with the same countenance but of a variable shape, changing from one form into another, they thought this matter worthy with great diligence to be sought out, in which quest after they had waded awhile with industry, they found that the moon had no proper light of her own, but borrowed it of the sun. They also sought out the course of the stars which we call wandering stars or planets, discovering their essence, nature, effects, and qualities, giving them names according to their proper and peculiar virtues. These things first the Ethiopians found out in the heavens; then they taught this art (although then imperfect) to the Egyptians, who found out the reason of divination, increasing the science greatly, showing the perfect course and motion of every star, the number of the years, months, and hours, measuring the month by the course of the moon, and the year by the annual revolution of the sun. To which also they added great matters, setting down the order of the wandering stars and fixed stars, appointing the zodiac and the twelve signs through which they pass by course, painting them forth in divers shapes and figures, some representing men. others fowls, beasts, and fishes, whereof the Egyptians did vary in their holy rites. For all the Egyptians did not divine generally by all the twelve signs, but did severally each one use his particular. Therefore they honoured a ram which divined by Aries, they eat no fishes which take any annotation by Pisces, neither do they kill a goat which respect Capricornus. What other thing did their idol Apis portend but their astronomical conjectures by Taurus? Thus the Egyptians profited greatly in this science, wherein presently after the Libyans began to excel, and after them the Babylonians, who affirm they were the first finders-out of astronomy, but I think the science was long used by the Ethiopians before the Babylonians had any perfect sight therein. The Grecians neither received the knowledge of astrology of the Ethiopians nor Egyptians, but Orpheus, the son of Aegar and Calliope, was their first schoolmaster, who taught them no plain way, but in dark problems and mysteries, for he instituted certain feast called *orgia* wherein upon his harp he delivered them in sonnets the principles of astrology. Furthermore, by his harp, which had seven strings, he did represent the consent of the moveable stars, which when he did strike he did overcome all things, and moved both stones, birds, and beasts. The poets by this signified his great skill and industry in music, & the Grecians, willing to honour him, appointed him a place in the heavens wherein a few stars, being conjoined in one circle, is called Orpheus' harp for that if ever you shall see Orpheus either carved in a stone or painted out in colours, he sitteth in the midst like a musician holding a harp in his hand, & about him a great multitude of creatures, amongst which there is a man, a bull, and a lion, representing that part of the zodiac nearest unto the [sic]

which he doth approach. It is reported also that Tiresias the Boeotian was very famous in the art of divination, and the poets feign that he was both man and woman, but for no other cause than that he found out how the signs and planets were some feminine and some masculine. It is evident also how greatly the Grecians esteemed the science of astrology, whenas Atreus and Thyestes, striving for their father's kingdom, were by a common consent of the Argives allotted that whether of them excelled others [sic?] in astronomy should enjoy the empire. Then Thyestes showed them of the sign of Aries in the zodiac, whereof it was feigned that Thyestes had a golden ram. But Atreus told them of the course of the sun, and of his rising and setting, that he was the midst of the planets, and gave light to the rest, of his motion and swiftness, and of his peculiar virtues and properties, whereof the Argives made him king and honoured him greatly. The like I suppose of Bellerophon, who I think did not ride on a winged horse, but being skilful in this science was contemplating daily among the stars, so that he ascended into heaven, not by a flying horse, but by a wise and conceiving mind. The same is to be thought of Phrixus, the son of Athamantes, whom the poets report was carried up & down in the air upon a ram. And as for Daedalus the Athenian, I esteem him to be a perfect astrologer, in which science he greatly excelled in his time, and instructed his son therein. But Icarus, tickled forward with the heat of youth and trusting too much in his unperfect skill began at the first to search the depth of astrology, and to wade so far in the intricate mysteries thereof that climbing too high he erred from the truth and fell headlong into the deep sea of supernatural conceits, whereof the Grecians said he was drowned in the sea called Mare Icarium; neither do I think that Pasiphae fell in love with a bull and by the means of Daedalus obtained her incestuous pleasure, but that hearing by his report of the sign Taurus placed in the zodiac she fell in love with the science of astrology, and by the means of Daedalus had skill in the same, so that she was said *copulare cum Tauro*. Amongst them which have been favourers of this art, some have laboured in one part and some in another, one seeking to know the perfect course of the moon, some of the sun, others of the rest of the planets, according to their particular disposition, as Endymion, whom they feign to have slept with Luna, and Phaeton to be the son of Sol, but these being fables, did yet allude unto their astronomical qualities wherewith these men were severally endued. For who is so simple to think that Aeneas was the son of Venus, or Minos the son of Jupiter, Ascalaphus of Mars, or Autolycus of Mercury, but that in the configuration of their nativities, Venus was predominant in the one, Jupiter and Mars in the others, that as in the begetting or procreation of children they take some likelihood of their parents, so being born under one of the planets they borrow of them their form, shape, valour, minds, and actions, for by the happy aspect of Jupiter Minos became a king, Aeneas born fair by the favour of Venus, Autolycus given to deceit and robbery through the malignant influence of Mercury. Furthermore, neither did Jupiter cast Saturn into bonds, nor throw him headlong into hell, nor offer him these unnatural injuries which the poets feign. But Saturn is very slow and dull in his motion, and is far removed from our horizon, so that his motion may hardly be marked of mortal men, and for this cause is said to stand as though bound in chains. But whoso narrowly considereth the sacred and mystical verses of Homer and Hesiod shall find their fictions did tend to the discovery of astrology. For whereas he telleth of the chain of Jupiter, and of the darts of Sol, I do think he meaneth their irradiation; in showing the cities which Vulcan did engrave in the target of the adultery of Mars and Venus, and their disclosing by all the gods, respecteth

only the mysteries of this science. And although Homer hath showed of the concurrence of Venus and Mars, yet in other verses he severally describeth their divers influence, as thus:

Tute Venus iucunda magis connubia cura.

Then as touching martial affairs:

Cuncta haec curae fuerint Marti atq. Myneruae.

These things moved our ancestors greatly to esteem of astrology so that they neither builded cities, made or edified any walls, killed any man, nor married any wives before they had asked counsel of the astronomers. Yea, the very oracles of the profane gods were not different from the art of astrology. For at Delphos every virgin delivered the meaning of Apollo's dooms, which represented the sign Virgo, & in Didymus he had a temple which signified the figure of Gemini; in fine, astrology was so honoured, and counted so holy a thing, that Lycurgus the lawgiver of the Lacedaemonians did partly direct the government of his commonweal by the course of the heavens, instituting a law that when they would invade any foreign nation they should not go to war before the full of the moon, thinking that the administration of a city was not all one in the full and in the wane. But although our ancestors were thus studious of astronomy, and delighted greatly in the science, yet in these our days we affirm that it is impossible to find any end of this art because it is neither certain nor true, and that neither Mars nor Jupiter are moved in the heavens for our cause, neither have the planets any care of human actions, but are necessarily carried about in their globes & spheres. Unto which foolish objection not I, but Ptolemy, doth answer:

Aio stellas in coelo, suo quidem motu volui: Caeterum obiter euis motus effectum ad nos peruenire. An vis equo currente, & gallinis, aut hominibus tumultuantibus, lapides subsilire, stipulasque moueri ventis cursu concitatis, & syderum vertigine nihil aliud effici, quam pro motu proposito? Quum modici ignis ad nos calor defluat, nec prorsus nostra causa ignis ardeat (non enim cura(?) illi est nostra calefactio) cur syderum nullum(?) recipiemus defluxum? sane fieri non potest, vt per astrologiam ex malis bona faciamus, neq. mutare quicquam earum rerum, quae ab illis ad nos demanant. Thus much Ptolemy. Now I think that according to Ptolemy this science is very profitable to them which use it well. For whenas by a perfect calculator prosperity and fortunate success is prognosticated unto us, they breed in us a delightful hope that they shall ensue, but when any sinister mishaps are foreshowed and foreseen, then they are less grievous because they are warely looked for, and so by time the burden of such ensuing dangers by a provident foresight is sometimes mitigated, and this is my simple censure of astrology, which I conclude with the golden verses of Ovid in his first book *De Fastibus*.

*Foelices animae quibus haec cognoscere primum(?),
Inque domos superas scandere cura fuit:
Credibile est illis(?) pariter vitijsq. Iocisq.(?),
Altius humanis exeruisse(?) caput.*

*Non Venus & vinum sublimia pectora fregit:
Officiumque fori, militiaeue labor:
Non(?) leuis ambitio, perfusaque gloria suce(?):
Magnarumque fames sollicitauit opum.
Admouere oculis distantia sydera nostris(?):
Aetheraque ingenio proposuere(?) suo.*

AMICO SVO AMANTISSIMO FRANCISCO HANDO
IN ARTIBVS MAGISTRO

Dialogus sanequam venustus ex operibus Ioan: Iovi: Ponta: brevissimae excerptus
Dicatus.

Quo docetur quatenus Coelestium prognosticorum significatione procedant. Et quod
voluntas solius hominis propria illis nequaquam subjiciatur: modo sensuum
titillationibus, & cupiditatum illectamentis non acquieuerit.

Robertus Greenus: & Franciscus Handus.

[Lengthy Latin dialogue in the original text not reproduced here.]

Saturn. Jupiter. Mars.

Sol.

Venus. Mercury. Luna.

Saturn.

I am sorry, Venus, that thou art descended from me, being a god, or that the destinies (not to be controlled) have appointed thee for a goddess, but especially that thou art one of the vii planets, whose celestial influences are predominant in terrestrial creatures. I hear the complaints of them which are skilful in the calculation of nativities exclaiming against thy thrice accursed constellation, for by thee, Venus, the prime of years which ought to be spent in virtues is consumed in idle vanities. Youth which in the golden age delighted to try their virtues in hard armours take their only content in delicate and effeminate amours; through thee young minds are blinded with lascivious love, and aged years pestered with fresh affections; thou dost enchant the hearts of men with unfit fancies, and layest beauty as a snare to entrap virtue. Love (as they whom hapless experience hath taught make report) is the only plague which infecteth the minds of mortal men, and what dangerous events proceed of this frantic impression spring, fond Venus, of thy accursed influence, so that if the gods would be ruled by me, thou shouldst not only be deprived of thy place among the planets, but exiled from all dignity in the heavens, and denied to have any more power upon earth.

Venus.

Saturn, if gods might wax old as they are immortal, I would think age had made thee dote, but I need not deceive myself, for it is thy accustomed melancholy that driveth thee into these bitter invectives. Thou art sorry that I am come of thy line, and I therefore dissent because the destinies have appointed my progeny from such a peevish parent, whose celestial (but infortunate) impression, joined with a perpetual unluckly irradiation, breedeth both in men's minds and bodies such hapless passions, sauced with so bitter and woeful events, as I sorrow to hear their cursing complaints, and shame to descend from the race of such a despised planet. Whereas, contrary, in the course of all configurations, whether I be in some improper and sinister house, or my virtue darkened with some unluckly aspect either in conjunction or opposition, yet the mildness of my influence doth always mitigate, though not extinguish, the cruel disposition of all other infortunate stars. And further, sir, to show that your invective savoureth more of rancour than of reason, I say that those nativities which are favoured with my happy aspect dispose the mind to a continual proneness and forwardness, unto pity, friendship, amity, and love. Love? Yea, love, I say, as neither god nor man justly can gainsay, which oft-times pacifieth displeasures among heavenly powers, and appeaseth debates among earthly creatures. It is the enemy to dissension, the friend to quiet, yea, the preserver & conserver of human actions, so that what is done well either is love, or proceedeth from love. But Saturn, let those two crabbed philosophers who hated love and fed upon gall and melancholy, I

mean Timon and Aparmantus [sic?], come forth, and thou shalt hear them with bitter curses accuse thy saturnine complexion to be the spur that pricked them forward to their desperate philosophy.

Mars.

Tush, Venus, & therefore Saturn for a while by the consent of his own son Jupiter was most justly exiled, for that through his peevish frowardness neither could the gods agree in heaven nor men upon earth.

Jupiter.

Mars, you mistake the matter; my father Saturn is the most noble of all the planets, for his influence is principally predominant in age, wherein vain thoughts and fresh affections are suppressed, and wisdom only bears sway, breeding in men's minds a hateful contempt of vice and a happy desire of virtue, & therefore the golden age wherein all lived justly was called Actas [sic?] Saturnea.

Luna.

Tush, Jupiter, blame not Mars; his hand is on his halfpenny; he playeth like the Lydian-stone, which rubbed with the juice of mandrake becometh hot where before it is most cold. Venus is the goddess of beauty, and will love; Mars a god, & must love; let not his broken coin stand for sterling, for he speaketh of affection; all the gods either do know it or may know it.

Mars.

Luna, your reproach may be counted a praise, for there is no hold to be taken at your words, whose verdict is so variable that ere Jupiter can turn his back you will change your tale, never singing one song nor remaining in one mind lest if your censure should at any time be all one, you might to be thought not to be Luna. But it is for you to talk with the goddesses, not with the gods.

Saturn.

Mars, Luna hath reported as much as she can prove, and yet not more than we know, but letting her defend her own quarrel, I say that respecting your own luckless constellation, it were most fit for you to hold with Saturn, for wrath, envy, wars, choler, blood, murder, hatred, proceedeth from your influence.

Mercury.

Not so, sir, in this I will speak for Mars; he breedeth in men's minds valour, prowess, magnanimity, courage, constancy, resolutions without fear, & settled determination without change.

Jupiter.

And you, Mercury, policies, sleights, fair promises & small performance, causing men by your variable impression to flatter friend or foe, to swear in mouth and forswear in heart, to bear two faces under a hood, to carry a lamb in his shield and a tiger in his bosom, with the one hand to present spice and with the other hemlock.

Sol.

Is it not a shame, right mighty gods, that your gravities should be so blinded with raging choler as to your own discredit to rip up those things which ought not so much as in secret to be thought or named? Cease then from these spiteful taunts, and let us wash down these bitter words with a cup of sweet nectar.

Saturn.

Not so, Sol, we will have Venus' wanton toys discovered in heaven, that her lascivious allurements may be avoided on earth. I will prove her by invincible arguments to be the most pernicious of all the planets, and if she and the rest of the gods be content, sith in order thou art placed in the midst of us all, thou shalt be moderator in our controversies.

Venus.

No doubt, Saturn, a good motion, for now though I cannot revenge thy unjust injuries by force, yet I may plague thee with my tongue in telling the truth. I am content to accept Sol as an indifferent judge, whose doom once pronounced shall stand without controlment. I will, therefore, to confirm my former reasons, first make a perfect description of Saturn's essential estate, then show by a history not unknown to you all what hapless mischiefs proceed from his infectious influence.

Sol.

Sith I am by these sacred gods appointed moderator in this controversy, I ordain first that Venus say her mind both in the description of Saturn's essence and in rehearsing her history, until the end whereof, without any quarrellous interruptions, I enjoin you all to silence.

Venus' Astronomical Description Of Saturn.

Right mighty gods, the Chaldeans, Arabians, Grecians, and Latinists, most skilful interpreters of celestial mysteries, do with Claudius Ptolomeus and Galen call the star of Saturn intemperate, infortunate, and ill-affected, perhaps for the melancholy humour which with a secret violence doth rage and reign in human bodies, procuring by his saturnine influence both cold and dryness, as Ptolomeus in Libro primo *Apotelesmaton* doth witness in these words: [Greek words], etc.

The star of Saturn is especially cooling & somewhat dry, which two improper qualities, though proper to his nature, how they do *ex diametro* repugn those two precious temperatures of human life, I mean heat and moisture, there is no man so simple which doth not perceive. The nature of this star therefore is most prone to infect and corrupt, and yet of force I must confess that this melancholy humour doth not in all things and through all things so equally exercise his force and vigour, nor so totally and determinately make such dismal infusion, but that he hath his particular commodities. For as with confections tempered by art the physicians sometimes procure good and wholesome effects, so from this star (although infortunate), joined in good and perfect temperature, mixtion and irradiation with other stars, do ensue no mean and small commodities, but *haec aliena non sua sunt*, whereby we evidently perceive that to what art or science soever the saturnists apply their minds & diligence, in that, for the most part, they do easily excel all others, to aver the which, Plato and Aristotle do agree, writing that they which in all ages have flourished in wit, philosophy, government of commonweals, poetry, or any other arts were all of a melancholic constitution, as Socrates, Pericles, Demosthenes, Archimedes, Ulysses, Scipio, Ajax, Aeneas, Democritus, Galen, Caesar, Virgil, Hercules, and innumerable other of the same sort, whom for their continual studies, incessant labours, profound inventions, and deep cogitations the historiographers have reported to be such.

Here further it is to be noted that Saturn with his melancholy humour doth not erect in all bodies his influence equally, but representeth and resembleth the nature of wine, which for a certain idiotropian of bodies and variety of natures doth not affect all with the selfsame manner of drunkenness, for some it moveth unto babbling, some to strife, other to vomit, some to silence, many to sleep or laughter, and some unto rage and choler. So Saturn with his melancholy humour doth move some unto laughter, as Democritus; some unto tears, as Heraclitus; others to prattling, as Thersites; some to eloquence, as Nestor; to patience and silence, as Socrates and Ulysses; to fear, as Pisander; to mirth, as Lucullus; to sadness, as Crassus; to musing, as Archimedes; in fine, it moveth divers men to divers affects according to the proportion of the quantity or quality predominant, all which affects are stirred up by certain fumes and vapours proceeding from saturnine and melancholy blood which ascend unto the tower of the mind and there trouble the vital spirits and the brain which, as Galen saith, is the storehouse of the senses and vital actions, whereof ensue diverse doubts, thoughts, reasons, discourses, opinions, studies, and fantasies, according (as I said before) to the variable nature in quantity & quality of the said melancholy blood puffing up such gross fumes and vapours as it were out of a hot and fiery matter. For we evidently see that more gross smokes and smells do proceed from burnt oak than from alder, from sea-coal than from wood, from sulphur than from frankincense, because of the diversities of their substance proper to their particular natures, so this star procureth diverse effects according to his divers temperature, for sometime it procureth boldness, as in Hercules, and being much adust, fearful cruelty, as in Ajax, continuing long for the abundance of the terrene quality therein predominant, but and if it exceed more in coldness than either in heat or dryness, it engendereth fear and slothfulness, as in Pisander & Thersites. By these former reasons it is evident (ye mighty gods) that the infortunate influence of Saturn with his melancholy humour conceived

intemperately in a gross and thick matter turneth, as it were, to infectious poison, which in some living bodies lieth dead, as sulphur removed from the fire, and in other some flameth out as burning brimstone, which not only burneth but also infecteth all things with his troublesome vapours and smokes. To be short, Saturn of himself is wholly intemperate, infortunate, and ill-affected, and if it happen that he procureth any good effects, it cometh by the perfect temperature, mixtion, and irradiation of other fortunate planets. But seeing I have astronomically described the essential nature of Saturn, I will now lay open the dispositions of his melancholy disciples.

A Marvellous Anatomy Of Saturnists.

These saturnists are strange-affected men, laughing once in their life with Crassus, making slow haste in all things, carrying vinegar in their breasts, and buying hope with gold, everywhere holding the wolf by the ears, as full of eyes as Argus, smelling at onions yet eating the seed, in friendship doubtful, smally regarding their neighbours' profit, rejecting the oxen yet using the cart, brought up in Heraclitus' house, and taught in the school of the Areopagite, determining one thing while they sit and another as they stand, hardly with old foxes caught in the snare, preferring hate before love, and with one breath blowing both hot and cold, hardly granting their right hand to any man, more inexorable than Rhadamentus [sic?], more cruel in speech than the Scythians, uncertain in sure matters, always knitting their brows and looking down to the ground, supping with Hecates and taking counsel in the night, gaping for dead carcasses as vultures, seeing both before and behind as Janus, having eyes in their hands, which believe nothing but that they see, and as the Latin proverb saith: *Nihil nisi quod Aristophanis & Cleantis lucernam oleat emittentes*, in covetousness insatiable, straining all things through a sieve, bearing hope in their face and sorrow in their hearts, known more by name than by manners, tithing mint and aniseed, in delays surpassing Scipio and Fabius, changing all into gold as Midas, so many words, so many senses, as hardly changing their hair as the wolf, skilful artificers in resembling or dissembling, delighting to feed on sour grapes, carrying bread in the one hand and a stone in the other, as unthankful as swallows, instead of a fish giving a scorpion, haters of company, doing nothing well but when they die, thinking the favour of any gain to be sweet, preferring profit before shame, and requiring tribute of the dead, having many ears and many eyes, bearing a head without a tongue, more dumb than fishes, at talk and company not uttering one word, and yet *Sardonio risu omnia condientes*, reaping that which other men sow, ignorant in that they chiefly know, answering all things in three words, fearing their own shadows and starting at flies, licking up salt and feeding upon gall, giving hair for wool, seeking a knot in a rush, in life resembling cockles, and doing sacrifice without any smoke, and thus much for their disposition. Now as concerning the diseases incident to the saturnine constitution which commonly proceed of too much black choler, adust or corruption of blood, crudity or rawness, imbecility of heart, excess of cold and dryness, or abundance of gross phlegm, they be these: quartans, falling-sickness, leprosies, morphews, cankers, apostumes, dropsy, palsies, haemorrhoids, bloody flux, pain of the guts and reins, with other more. As concerning other things, the saturnists have their pulses slow and small, sweat sour and heavy; black dejections, terrible dreams, as of death, carcasses, sepulchers, darkness, torments, devils, and black things. As touching the four faculties

of human life, for his secret malice Saturn challengeth none, although there be some physicians and astrologers that do attribute unto him the faculty retentive. In these few words, I have deciphered Saturn's malignant disposition, and now by your patience mean to confirm my reasons with a pleasant, though tragical, history.

Venus' Tragedy.

There dwelled in the city of Ferrara a duke called Valdracko, favoured of his citizens more for fear, as they were subjects, than for love, as they were freemen, honoured of strangers who had cause to traffic in his territories, otherwise hated of all whom neither duty nor profit had entangled, for this Valdracko, being stricken in age, was of such a melancholic disposition as he ruled more after the crabbed frowardness of his own doting will than directing his course to minister justice with mercy. Yet in this one thing deserving great commendation, that he was never found to be partial to any; I mean not that he used such a due proportion of justice, but that he loved none but himself. Politic he was (taught by experience of many years), hardly admitting any into familiarity unless he might sell his courtesy for profit, and they buy his favour with repentance. But in private and secret counsel he used no friend but himself, fearing to find that in others which he found rooted in his own cankered stomach, so skilful to shadow his spiteful practices with glossing(?) colours as, resembling the pyrite stone, he burned sorest when he was thought most cold. To trust any he thought was to despise security and to desire mishap, and therefore known more for his authority than by his manners. He carried his thoughts sealed up with silence, pained with that which he most liked, namely fearful distrust. He counted great gifts little gods, caring not, if he might gain, what means he did use to get, counting all things honest that were profitable, and thinking gall most sweet if it were tempered with gold, as the event of his wretched life did make manifest. For this Valdracko, although despited by the gods and nature for placing such odious qualities in such an old carcass, yet was he favoured by fortune in possessing large and sumptuous revenues, and not only advanced with the title of honour and dignities, but also, wherein he most joyed, he had one only child called Pasylla, a lady so furnished with outward shape of the body and inward qualities of the mind, so decked with the gifts of nature and adorned with sundry exquisite virtues, as Ferrara did not so much despise her father for his vicious disposition as they did extol her fame for her virtuous sincerity. For she (although to her great grief) seeing into her father' lawless actions, how with pretenced flattery, like to the hyena, he had snared some to their utter mishap, and that under colour of law with exacted extortion he had oppressed the poor, sought not only as far as she durst to pull her father from such inordinate gains, but also secretly made recompense to such as her father unjustly had almost brought to ruin. This Pasylla, flourishing thus in happy and deserved fame, was generally loved of all, but particularly liked of one called Rodento, only son and heir to an earl in Ferrara called Il Conte Coelio, who on a time passing by the palace of Valdracko chanced to have a sight of the Lady Pasylla as she stood in a window talking with a young gentlewoman, her cousin-german, called Pandyna. Rodento, amazed at the sight of such a heavenly creature, stood a long while astonished at her excellent beauty, insomuch that Pasylla, casting her eye aside, espied him, and with that shut the casement, which somewhat daunted the mind of the young gentleman, to be so suddenly deprived of that object which so greatly pleased his

eyes. But taking this her modest discourtesy in good part, he passed on to the church, where having devoutly heard divine service he returned home, feeling in his mind a sparkling heat of affection which he took as a toy of youth rather to be laughed at for the sudden passion than to be prevented for any ensuing danger. But after he had taken his repast with the earl his father, he withdrew himself into his chamber, thinking to beguile the long summer's day with a few sweet slumbers, which fell out otherwise, for being once solitary he felt his mind perplexed with more vehement and strange passions; whereas before his affection was scarce warm, now his fancy began to flame; the idea of Pasylla's comely personage presented itself so lively into Rodento's imagination as he felt himself half snared with her singular beauty, which crafty Cupid noting, having his wings plumed with time's feathers, lest he might let slip occasion, seeing this young novice at discover, thought to strike while the iron was hot, and so drew a bolt to the head and hit Rodento at the very heart, which pierced so deep as no means but death could ever after cure his malady, for then the fame of Pasylla's virtuous life began to allure him, the report which all Ferrara made of her courtesy was a chain to entangle his freedom; her honour, birth, parentage, and incomparable beauty gave such fierce assaults to his perplexed fancy as no defence of reason was able to withstand these violent impressions. Rodento, seeing himself pained with these unacquainted fits, was driven into a quandary whether he should valiantly resist the enchanting tunes of Cupid's sorcery, and so stand to the chance whatsoever the maim were, or else yield to the alluring call of beauty, and so spend his youth in seeking and sing [sic?] for doubtful, though desired, favours. Tossed awhile in these contrary thoughts, he began to consider at last that to fix his fancy upon Pasylla was with the young gryphons to peck against the stars, and with the wolves to bark against the moon, for there had been such a perennity between the house of the Valdracci and the Coelii that neither the duke would condescend his daughter should match with him, nor yet the earl his father be content that he should fancy Pasylla. Further, he knew that as the herb spattania no sooner sprouteth above ground but it bloometh, and the eggs of the lapwing are scarce [sic] hatched before the young ones can run, so women, resembling the apples of the tree pala, are scarce ripe before they desire to be plucked, and their years not able to discern love before they be half drowned in love, whereof he might gather that Pasylla, being so young, beautiful, and a woman, could not live so long but ere this time affection had pulled her by the sleeve; if then this his conjecture were true, his love should reap but loss, & his pain be requited with travail. These considerations began somewhat to repress his dotting fancies, but Cupid, not willing to take so slender a repulse, sought straight to race out these despairing thoughts with the comfortable conserves of hope, and to draw Rodento out of the labyrinth of distrusting fear with the assured possibility of achieving his enterprise. He therefore began to encourage his champion with these plausible conjectures: that although there had been a perpetual dissension between their two houses, yet there might grow as great friendship in their hearts that the enmity of the parents could not hinder the amity of the children; that Pasylla was a woman, and therefore to be won, if beautiful, with praises, if coy, with prayers, if proud, with gifts, if covetous, with promises; in fine, that as there is no stone so hard which cannot be cut, no hawk so ramage which cannot be manned, no tiger so fierce which cannot be tamed, so there is no woman so infected with the bitter poison of self-will, none so spotted with the stain of hellish cruelty, nor so wedded unto wilful frowardness, but they may be drawn to

the lure by some of the forenamed practices. Rodento, pricked forward with these pithy persuasions, and yet driven back with the fear of some hopeless denial, stood diversly perplexed whether he should with a momentary content sue after loss, or with a long disquiet seek after gain; remaining awhile in these doubts, half frantic with such unaccustomed fits, he fell into these passionate complaints.

Ah Rodento, how art thou diversly perplexed, driven either to purchase hapless content with fading pleasures, or to gain a happy disquiet with ensuing profits; if thou choose the first, thou art like to repent at the last; if the other, sure with Hercules after painful labours to obtain fame and quiet. The Caspians, fearing to be stifled with sweet savours, wear in their bosoms buds of hemlock; the people Pharusii, doubting to surfeit with drinking the juice of liquorice, prevent such perils with chewing rhubarb. It is better to be pained with the sting of a snake and recover, than be tickled with the venom of the tarantula and so die laughing. Hard, yea, hard it is, Rodento, to ride on Sejanus' horse for his beauty, and then perish, or to gain the gold of Tolosse with assured mishap. Better it is for a time with sorrow to prevent dangers than to buy fading pleasure with repentance. Repentance? Why, Rodento, what cause shalt thou have to repent? Is pain always a companion to pleasure; is danger the handmaid to love; is fancy never painted but treading upon thorns? Yes, no doubt, as Cupid hath arrows that do pierce, so they make sweet wounds. Venus, I grant, hath a wrinkle in her brow, but ii dimples in her cheeks; she frowns not upon them that sacrifice at Paphos, but pains such as despise her deity. Love, Rodento, why, dost thou love? Yea, alas, and therefore unhappy because in love, a passion so unfit for thy young years as if thou yield to Cupid's allurements thou shalt have cause either to curse the destinies for appointing him a god, or accuse the gods for creating thee a man. For love, whatsoever the luck be, is always tempered with loss; if thou win, thy gains shall be like theirs who buy honey mixed with gall, the sweetness not half so much pleasing the taste as the bitterness infecteth the stomach. Parrasius, drawing the counterfeit of love, painteth her tickling youth on the left side with a feather and stinging him on the right with a scorpion, meaning that they which are sotted with the sorceries of Cupid reap for one dram of gold a pound of dross, & for one pint of pure oil, a whole tun of infectious poison, being a fading pleasure mixed with bitter passions, and a misery tempered with a few momentary delights. It is for youth, Rodento, to spend their flourishing years in virtues, not in vanities, to delight in hard armours, not in delicate and effeminate amours, not to dally in the chamber with Paris, but to march in the fields with Hector, to wish they could love love, not to repent they have loved. Hercules won his fame not with recounting his lawless and licentious loves but by achieving strange and invincible labours, the one winning him endless renown, the other untimely death. Seek then to bridle fancy with reason, and to restrain doting affections with due counsel; quench the flame of appetite with wisdom, and reaching at honour, spurn at beauty; so mayest thou say Venus' flames are but flashes, and call Cupid a despised boy, not a redoubted god.

Rodento, thinking thus with blaspheming curses to shake off fancy's shackles, went out of his chamber to sport himself with his companions, where he passed away the day in playing at chess, but although he gave the check, he was fain at last to take the mate, for Venus, hearing with what despiteful terms he abused her deity, thought, seeing he

despised love, to make him yield unto love, & with panting sighs to crave pardon where with bitter speeches he had railed; she therefore, seeing that he began to make a rampire against fancy, thought to give a fresh assault to his half-defended fortress, & to send desire as a herald to make the challenge, that beauty as a champion might perform the charge, which done, Rodento, willing still to withstand her power, passed three or four days in perplexed passions, counting love as a toy which, being taken in a minute, might be left off in a moment, but he found that as the abeston stone once kindled can never be quenched, as the gryphon if he once soar into the air will never come down without his prey, so if Venus give the assault it is impossible to escape without sacking, if love display her flag she never returns without victory, which forced Rodento to present them with prayers whom he had plagued with curses, and where he had shed the blood, there to offer the sacrifice. For the remembrance of Pasylla's beauty so fired his affections that as the fly pyralis cannot live out of the flame, nor the bird trochiles keep from the infectious crocodile, so unless he might enjoy that which he feared to possess, no means but death could cure his malady. Rodento, pining a long while in these doubtful thoughts, began once again to debate with himself in this sort.

O poor & infortunate Rodento, thou art perplexed thou knowest not how, pestered with unfit fancies, and pained with fond affections, wishing to possess with an unwilling mind, & in a hot desire troubled with a cold disdain. Alas, thou reachest at that with thy hand which thy heart would fain refuse, playing like the bird ibis in Egypt, which hateth serpents, yet feedeth on their eggs. Thou lovest Pasylla, a thing far unfit for thy years, thy calling, thy thoughts. Consider, consider Rodento, thou art the son of Conte Coelio, who had rather see thee taken away with untimely death than attained with such unhappy love; the one should breed but his momentary sorrow, the other his & thy perpetual misery. Yet love is a virtue; truth, if it be measured with dutiful choice, not if it be maimed with wilful chance. Is there none to love but Pasylla, the daughter of Valdracko, between whom & thy father there hath been such a mortal enmity? Will she consent to love, who already is sworn to hate? Will Coelio agree, or Valdracko condescend? No, nor if thou be wise, wilt persist in such unnatural passions, for better were it for thee to die by concealing love than live and enjoy such unfit love. The bull and the hyena cannot be fed together in one stall. The elephant eateth not where the mouse hath crept. The eagle & the dove perk not on one branch. These brute beasts, moved only by sense; thou a man, and not to be persuaded by reason? Cease then, Rodento, to love her whom thou oughtest to hate; let rigour blast fancy's blossoms, and envy's shadows spot beauty's colours with disdain; play like the tree cytissus, that suffereth no fly to light upon his flower; let thy mind be like Hercules' temple, whereinto no dog can enter; suffer not love to scale that fort wherein freedom hath taken charge; so shalt thou both escape ensuing dangers, and prove thyself a dutiful child. Ah Rodento, what dost thou mean to measure the heavens with a line, or to furrow the seas with a plow? Seekest thou to extinguish love by force, or to prevent fancy by counsel? Dost thou mean to quench the fire with a sword, or to stop the wind with a feather?

Thou knowest love is to be feared of men because honoured of the gods. Jupiter could not resist fancy, nor Apollo withstand affection; they gods, and yet in love, thou a man, and appointed to love. It is an impression, Rodento, not to be suppressed by wisdom

because it is not to be comprehended by reason; without law, and therefore above all law; strive not then against the stream, feed not with the deer against the wind, seek not to appease Venus with slanders, but with sacrifice. Pasylla is beautiful & virtuous, to be won with entreaty if thou fear not to attempt. What though Valdracko frown; may not she favour; he stifled by Saturn, and therefore must hate, she stirred by Venus, and therefore will love? If Pasylla like, pass not if he lour; yea, let both your parents mislike, so you two rest in contented quiet.

Rodento had no sooner uttered these words but he felt his mind half eased with flattering himself thus in his follies, so that from doubting if he might love, he fell to devising how to obtain his love; he began to consider that Valdracko was his enemy, and that he might not go to his house lest he should procure his secret harm, for the flattering of an enemy is like the melody of the sirens, who sing not to stir up mirth, but to allure unto mishap. Rodento, I say, doubting that Valdracko's melancholy disposition could carry in a painted tomb rotten beams [sic?], durst not venture too far for slipping over his shoes, thinking also that if the earl his father should know by any means of his pretence, he would straight seek to prevent his purpose. Seeing then that at this breach there was no way to give the assault, he determined to meet her as she went abroad, and to reveal unto her the sum of his suit; this devise was not so soon invented but it was as readily disliked, knowing that she went continually accompanied with such guard of the duke's household that he should hardly be admitted to her speech, and if he were, yet he should neither have fit time nor opportunity to move so weighty and secret a matter; well, Rodento having a spur in his side to prick him forward in his enterprise, could take no rest till he might find some means how to manifest his affections. At last after sundry fond thoughts he determined to send her a letter, which he knew was such a secret servant as would neither blab nor blush in delivering his master's message, but to whom he should commit the charge he knew not, so that he passed three or four days in careful thoughts till at last he called to remembrance that there dwelled hard by the duke's house an old gentlewoman called Clarissa who made often repair unto the Lady Pasylla; she, he thought, was the fittest person to bring about his purpose, knowing that old women oft-times were more greedy of coin than chary of conscience, that for lucre they would not stick to allure young minds even unto vanities, and that not only she might deliver the letter secretly, but also temper Pasylla's mind (if she were obstinate) with some forcible persuasions. This politic invention pleased Rodento so well that he determined with all speed to put his devise into practice; he therefore presently went into his study and there framed a letter to this effect.

Rodento Coelii to the Lady Pasylla, health and happiness.

If the gods (Pasylla) had appointed as well salves to cure the inward passions as they have medicines to mitigate the outward maladies, neither should I have been forced with hope to gape after uncertain bliss nor with despair to fear assured misery. But such dismal decrees are allotted to men by the unjust destinies that the griefs of the mind are neither to be salved by cunning nor appeased by counsel, neither to be redressed by help of physic nor relieved by advice of friends. I speak this, Pasylla, by proof, and curse the gods for such hapless experience, because if I should have ease of my passion, I should

surfeit with too much joy, and if find the disease incurable, die with too great sorrow. It may be, Pasylla, thou wilt marvel at this strange malady that is pestered with such contrary principles, but I have more cause to moan that am pained with such crooked passions.

Thy beauty, thy beauty Pasylla, hath made the wound, and thy sweet consent must appease my torments; the impression of thy virtues, and thy mind fraught with such singular qualities, hath so enchanted my affections, and so snared my freedom in the bands of fancy that, being wholly devoid of liberty, I remain thy loyal servant. Yea, such a breach hath love made into the bulwark of my breast that the shape of thy exquisite perfection is so shrined in my heart as no means but death can stain it with oblivion. I had thought that as the eagle cannot be hurt with lightning, nor the olive with thunder, so a free mind could not have been pierced with fancy, but now I try by proof that as the plainest table is most apt to receive any form, as the clearest glass is most brittle, the purest chrysolite soonest wrought, & the whitest lawn most subject to moles, so the mind which rangeth with most security in the large lees of liberty, & abhorreth Cupid as a fury, shall soonest be bound in the painful fetters of affection, and be forced to honour Venus as a goddess. For Pasylla, after I had (I hope by happy chance) taken a view of thy outward shape, & thy inward qualities imprinted in my mind, thy beauty and virtue, thy personage and parentage, my senses were so sotted with the consideration of this excellency that ever since I remain a captive to love and loyalty. It may be, Pasylla, and I fear it will be, that Rodento shall be suspected of thee for a flatterer, and no doubt hated of thy father as an enemy, but would to God I might as soon obtain his favour as by time try mine unfeigned affection, & then would I hope to enjoy that I wish, & eschew that I fear. Alas, Pasylla, it is not for Rodento to flatter in his loves lest he falter in his life, yet were it to me far more ease though less credit, but I hope thou wilt not misconstrue of my affection nor distrust my protestations, but in recompense of my goodwill, like a little, though not love so much as I would, and in this hope I rest, feeling some comfort in this, that if thy courtesy cure not my malady, yet thy cruelty by speedy death shall cut off my misery.

*Thine though never thine,
Rodento Coelii.*

Rodento had no sooner ended his letter but with all speed he posted to the house of Clarissa, whom he found sitting solitary in her parlour; Clarissa seeing Rodento, half amazed at his unlooked for arrival, rose up and reverently gave him a courteous welcome, saying that there could no man in all Ferrara have come to her house whose presence would more have contented her desire, protesting that she was for sundry causes so bound unto the earl his father that she would think herself happy if her poor service in any wise might make a requital of his benefits, and some show of her goodwill. Rodento, glad to hear her dutiful and friendly protestation, thought that now all things would fall out according to his wish, and therefore thinking to give her grass for hay, soothing up her doting flatteries with as fair promises, taking her by the hand first charged her upon her oath and honesty that she should most secretly conceal whatsoever at that present time he should make manifest. Then with careful looks and far-fetched sighs he brake

the matter unto her, promising that if she stood his friend with careful diligence secretly to deliver his message, and with some forcible persuasions to procure Pasylla to take pity of his passions, he would so largely and bountifully requite her friendly travail as she should have cause to think she dealt for a thankful person. Rodento had not half uttered his mind ere Clarissa with solemn oaths began to protest that she thought herself happy that now she should have some means to show how dutifully she was affected to the house Coelii, commending greatly the noble mind of Rodento, that being young he had made so wise and worthy a choice, promising not only secrecy in so weighty a matter, but also to use all possible persuasions to the stirring up of such a lucky bargain. Rodento, driven into an ecstasy for joy of Clarissa's forward diligence, thinking it best in extremities to give a spur to a trotting horse, greased her in the fist with a few angels, which precious ointment so suppld her old joints that it was no need to bid the old wife trot, for she presently began to trick up herself towards her journey, which Rodento perceiving, took his leave, and departed till the next day, when he promised to return for an answer of his letter. Clarissa bidding him farewell, after she had taken counsel of her glass to paint out her wrinkled face with a few fresh colours (a disease rooted in women from their swathing-clouts, and not worn out until they come in their winding-sheet), posted, and in all haste, to the palace of Valdracko, whither she was courteously entertained by the Lady Pasylla and her cousin Pandyna whom she found walking in the gallery, for commonly young gentlewomen are delighted with old wives' doting fables, and directed after their secret counsels, counting their saying as oracles, & thinking that age hath taught them that which as yet their youth cannot conceive, so that they esteem it a religion to observe their fond and superstitious principles, which moved Pasylla greatly to honour & reverence Clarissa, so that taking her by the hand, & withdrawing themselves aside to a bay window, they fell into long and serious talk, but at last Clarissa, willing while the fish was wanton to cast forth the baits, presented Pasylla with this letter, desiring her to read it secretly in her chamber and the next day to deliver her a friendly and favourable answer, saying that partly she knew the contents, which was a suit so fitting for her honour that if she could condescend to the request, no doubt she should prove herself as wise as fortunate. Pasylla, half amazed at this unlooked for message, began with the gosling to perceive what the old goose meant by her winking, and to fear that the old pander, suborned by some lewd mate, had attempted to persuade her to some unlucky match, so that at the first she refused the letter, till at last forced by the earnest entreaty of Clarissa to take it, she put it up in her pocket, promising if it contained nothing prejudicial to her honour she would the next day redeliver an answer. And with that being both satisfied, they went again to Pandyna, who all that while was walking alone in the gallery, passing away the afternoon in such endless chat as women when they meet can discourse of, till the night drawing on, Clarissa took her leave and departed, Pandyna and Pasylla being presently called to supper, where having taken their repast with the duke, they withdrew themselves to their lodgings, Pandyna into her bed-chamber, and Pasylla into her closet, where she no sooner came but in haste she unripped the seals and found the contents so strange and unlooked for that she both mused and marvelled at Rodento's sudden passion and Clarissa's fond persuasion, laughing at her foolish attempt and at his (as she thought) dissembled affection, thinking that the young gentleman, inflamed with a secret hate, sought to spoil her honesty under the coloured pretence of amity, and with the crocodile to weep rose-water at the first and to spit venom

at the last, for she knew that there had been such mortal hatred betwixt the Count Coelio and her father that as the flames of Eteocles and Polynires [sic] did part in their funerals, so there could never grow any perfect affection between her & Rodento. Yet the fame of his exquisite perfection and virtuous qualities, the renown of his valiant prowess and bountiful courtesy, was so blazed abroad throughout all Ferrara that as his friends had cause to commend him for his valour, so his very foes could not condemn him because of his virtues. Pasylla calling to mind the perfect proportion of his person was half tickled with a consenting affection, so that if her will might have stand for a law Rodento had not missed of his love, but as fancy forced her to listen to his suit, so duty drave her to deny his request, yet with such modest courtesy as the young gentleman should have no great cause to mislike of her answer; being in this good mind, she took pen and ink and writ him a letter to this effect.

Pasylla to Rodento Coelii wisheth as she ought.

It is impossible, Rodento, with music to allure Ulysses because with peril he hardly escaped the sirens' melody; when the eagle fluttereth, doves take not their flight, neither will the deer stand at the view of a dog, though he fear not to gaze at the sight of a bolt; where hateful suspicion breedeth enmity, there it is hard with painted shadows to procure amity. Sinon's mouth savoured of honey when his heart was seasoned with gall. Cassius had a dimple in his cheek when he had a dagger in his hand, and they which covet most bitterly to betray must first seek most sweetly to entrap. I speak this, Rodento, because I see thy infectious poison presented in rich plate, thy filthy dross covered with gold, and thy crooked meaning with a coloured motion. Can the house of the Coelii favour Valdracko, or canst thou love where thy father hath always sought to hate? Nay, shall Pasylla be so mad to think thy glozing truth other than guileful treachery, or thy sacred desire to obtain other than a secret despite to revenge; if she should, thou mightest well have great occasion to laugh, but she far more cause to repent. It had been good, Rodento, to have halted, but not before a cripple, and if thou wouldst needs flatter (fancy, thou sayest), to have drawn the plot for some other person, for thou mightest think if I spied no deceit, I were too fond, and if I doubted no dissembling, too credulous; sith then thy hook being bare thou canst catch no fish, thou mayest sit down and play with thine angle. But put case Rodento doth love; shall therefore Pasylla begin to like: no, she hath learned to be blind at proffers, and deaf at promises, to hear little and believe less, lest in hearkening to the charmer she hap to be enchanted. It is not for fools to play with swords, or for maids to dally with love, lest the one have cause to cry and the other to repent. There is nothing sweeter than liberty, nor anything more sooner lost, which men seek to obtain with flattery and to reward with falsehood, yet I will imagine Rodento doth love and Pasylla could love; will Valdracko grant he should enjoy his daughter; no, he had rather prevent her with untimely death than pretend such an unlikely demand; he would sooner consent to pain her with some hellish misery than place her in such a hapless marriage. But alas, what is this to the purpose? Rodento doth love, and must enjoy his love, or else, poor fool, die for love. Truly, either the man's mind is very weak that will pine away with such a passion, or his body very feeble that will perish for so small a malady, but sith your stomach, Rodento, is so queasy, I will give you this comfortable principle, that as it is hard for women not to consume with care, so it is

impossible for men to die of a conceit, the one's mind melting like wax, the other's hardened like adamant. And yet howsoever the case stands, though I neither can nor may love thee, Rodento, yet I will not hate thee, but wish that our parents were as assured friends as the children might be perfect lovers, and so farewell.

*Her own and not possible to be yours,
Pasylla.*

Pasylla having thus finished her letter, feeling her eyes to be half closed with drowsy sleep, went to her bed, thinking to beguile the long night with sweet slumbers, but it fell out otherwise, for Venus, willing to favour such a forward champion as Rodento, thought to yoke the neck which as yet never yielded and to fire that fancy with a lusting desire which hitherto had been frozen with a chaste disdain; she therefore presented unto Pasylla the beauty and young years of Rodento, the virtuous disposition of his mind, wherein he was simple, and the perfection of his outward shape, wherein he was singular, in the one excelling most, in the other, inferior to none, which duly considered, drave her to debate thus doubtfully with herself.

Ah, unhappy Pasylla, whose mind is pained with unacquainted passions and whose head is troubled with unequal thoughts, shall thy virgin's state be stained with fond desires, or thy young years darkened with Cupid's shadows? 'Tis fit for thee, Pasylla, to spend thy youth in labours, not in loves, to pace solemnly after Vesta, not to gad wantonly after Venus. Maids must have denial in their mouth and disdain in their hearts; so shall they safely remain free, and securely despise fancy; Diana is painted kissing virtue, and spotting beauty's face with a pencil. Virgins must delight in ancient counsels, not amorous conceits, lest in smelling upon sweet violets they stumble on bitter rue. Truth, Pasylla; thou givest good precepts if thou canst follow thine own principles. Thou art persuaded by Rodento to love, but take heed of such baleful allurements; arm thyself against his charming desire with a chaste disdain; so shalt thou be sure that as he which weareth laurel cannot be hurt with lightning, nor he that carrieth the pen of an eagle perish with thunder; so shall neither love nor fancy pain thee with hapless passions. Think this: Rodento is a man, and therefore inconstant, and as he saith, a lover, and so a flatterer, as fickle as the wolves of Syria, which forget their prey ere they are half satisfied, and as dissembling as Jupiter, who feedeth Alcmena for a while with nectar, and then killeth her with fire. Sith then, Pasylla, to love is to lose, fear not Venus as a goddess, but despise her as a wanton; entreat not Cupid with prayers, but with curses tell fancy thou wilt reject her as a vassal, not regard her as a virtue. For Rodento, rail against him as thy foe, and wear him not as a friend; burn his letters to despise him, and instead of courtesy, present him with Medea's enchanted casket; who is enemy to thy father but Conte Coelio, and who can wish thy mishap but his son? Doth Rodento love Pasylla; no, he hateth Pasylla, he feigneth love to procure thy loss, he flattereth to try thy folly, and if he find thee too fond he will bring thee asleep with melody and then strike off thy head with Mercury. Ah Pasylla, condemn not Rodento without cause; if thou meanest not to love him, delight not to lack him; proffer him not nettles sith he presents thee with roses; if he yield thee honey, rub not his hive with gall, and wear him friendly though thou strain courtesy to flatter, for sweet promises please more than sour gifts, and pleasant potions

are better taken, though infectious, than bitter pills, though most wholesome. And know this, Pasylla, that the flame of the hill Chimaera is to be quenched with hay, not with water, the mountain in Harpasa to be removed with one's finger, not with the whole strength, and love to be driven out with reason, not to be thrust out with force, lest in striving against Venus she play the woman and seek to revenge.

Pasylla had scarce uttered these last words but, wearied with doubtful thoughts and bitter passions, she fell asleep, passing away the night with slumbering dreams till the morning that [sic?] she woke, and assaulted afresh by Cupid, had fallen to her old complaints had not one of her gentlewomen brought her word that Clarissa had waited there a good space to speak with her. Pasylla, smiling at the diligent haste of the old pander, commanded she should be brought in, but she no sooner was within the door but Pasylla, as one in choler, starting up in her bed, told her she was more soon come than welcome, and that it was far unfitting for her aged years to be a messenger in such a foolish matter, how, as she had before honoured her for her grave counsels tending unto virtue, so now she would despise and abhor her as a doting fool, alluring young minds unto vanity, that if Valdracko should know of her rash attempt, he would not only forbid her his house, but also punish her as a spectacle that others should beware to solicit any such fond and unlawful suits, but sith it was the first offence she was content to pardon the fault and to put up the injury with silence; marry, if either she should presently utter any words in her own defence, or ever hereafter trouble her with any such trash, she would cause her father with rigour to revenge it to the uttermost, and with that she cast her the letter she had made, charging her to carry it to Rodento, and to tell him that after she had opened his letter and saw from whom it came, she disdained to read the contents, so that whatsoever his suit were, he might keep it secret to himself, and with that she laid down again, telling Clarissa sith she had heard her mind, she might depart at her pleasure. Clarissa, seeing Pasylla in such a fury, durst not stand to defend her former attempt for fear of further danger, but humbly craved pardon if she had done amiss; promising both with all dutiful service to make her amends, and also never to be a stiffler in the like cause, with a submissive reverence she took her leave and departed. Pasylla, seeing how fearful the old gentlewoman was, smiled at herself that she could so cunningly dissemble, thinking she had done very well in not disclosing her mind to such a doting fool, for she knew that old women, though by many years they knew how to speak, yet no time nor age could learn them to be secret, that they wear their hearts in their hands, and carry their thoughts in their tongue's end, that they covet to hear, & fear not to speak, participating their private counsels to everyone that calls them gossip. This consideration moved Pasylla rather to make a small scar by speaking little than a deep wound by blabbing to any, and musing thus in these thoughts, she fell again asleep. But Clarissa, trudging home with a flea in her ear, found Rodento at her house, whom after reverent salutations done, she nipped on the pate with this heavy news, telling him that Pasylla was so strange as she would not so much as vouchsafe to read the contents of his letter, but after she knew from whence it came, redelivered it with great choler, charging her in hard & bitter terms never hereafter to solicit any such suit lest she made her father privy to her alluring practices. And therefore she earnestly entreated him either to cease off from his suit, or else to use some other messenger, for she never durst attempt hereafter to break the matter. Rodento, hearing this heavy news, & seeing, as he thought, his letter returned without an answer,

sat a long while as one in a trance, tormented with such pinching assaults of fancy as Clarissa might easily perceive how the poor gentleman was perplexed; at last, thinking it best to cover a discontented mind with a contented countenance, & with the bright colours of mirth to blot out the dark shadows of sorrow, he began faintly to smile, & looking upon the letter threw it down on the ground, and treading on it with his foot told Clarissa that he hoped not to set that at his heart which Pasylla set at her heel, but as she requited his affection with despite, so he meant to rase out fancy with disdain, & not only to cease off from such heedless suits, but from such hapless loves, yet promising to remain her friend for her forward willingness. He took his leave of Clarissa and went home to his lodging, where he no sooner arrived but looking more narrowly on the letter, perceived by the folding that either it was not his, or else Pasylla had opened it and read the contents, wherefore breaking up the seals he found that Pasylla had either penned down the happy censure of his perpetual felicity or else the dismal doom of his endless mishap; wavering thus between fear and hope he read her answer, viewing and reviewing over every line, weighing every word, & making a construction of every syllable, till at last he found bitter gall tempered with honey, and willing consents shadowed with wilful denials, perceiving that Pasylla could be content to love if her father would condescend to like, that although the first lines were as stiff as steel, yet the conclusion was as pliable as wax, that her hard words to Clarissa were to shadow her own secrets, not to reject his lawful suits. These happy considerations of Pasylla's letter so salved the sorrowful mind of Rodento that where before he did sink in despair, now he did swim in bliss; his restless disquiet was turned to contented peace, hoping that in time Pasylla would be trained to fancy and so repay him with mutual affection, intending that this faint repulse should not drive him from assaulting the fort, lest in fearing at the first shot he might be thought not worthy to vanquish; marry, he meant not to deal any more with Clarissa because he perceived Pasylla doubted of her secrecy, but to seek some other means to obtain his purpose, and in this contented hope he rested till time and opportunity might further his pretence. But fortune, who knoweth no mean, seeing Rodento begin to climb unto happiness, thought to lift him up to the skies that she might with more violence push him down lower than hell, & to bring this to pass she thus laid her platform. It fortun'd that within few days Pasylla and her cousin Pandyna being walking together in the garden, Valdracko, thinking his daughter had been in her closet, went up to speak with her, but finding the door unshut, which Pandyna by forgetfulness had left open, & none within, stepped into the closet and began to rifle among the loose papers which were lying on the board, and at last by unhappy luck light on the letter which Rodento sent to Pandyna [sic], which after he had throughly perused, and perceived by the contents the sum of his suit, he searched further, and found the copy of his daughter's answer, containing so mild a repulse and so friendly denials that he was pained with strange and uncertain thoughts, thinking if he should with rigour reprove his daughter's folly it were but to make her over-fervent in affection, knowing that women fly frowardly from those things whereunto they are persuaded, and willfully attempt those actions from which with sensible reasons they are forewarned. To forbid Rodento to prosecute his suit was to stop swift streams with a sword, and to stay the blasts of the winds with a veil of silk, so that he was doubtful what to do, yet in this resolute: rather than his enemy should triumph in obtaining his purpose, to prevent his pretence with the untimely death of his own daughter. Being in this quandary he laid down the letters and went to his bed-chamber,

where being solitary, surcharged with melancholy dumps, he fell to sundry strange devises; at last after he had leaned awhile on his elbow, he determined to colour his secret grief with the baleful shadow of despite, and now to repay his old hate with a speedy and bloody revenge, hoping under the pretenced colour of friendship [sic] not only to procure his own gain & good fortune, but also utterly to subvert & extinguish the whole house and family of the Conte Coelio, which wretched pretence he wrought in this wise. The citizens of Ferrara, I mean both the nobility & commonalty, were appointed to meet & assemble in the guild-hall, there to debate of some weighty matters pertaining to the profit of the weal-public, whither at the day appointed amongst the rest repaired the earl as one in greatest authority next the duke in all Ferrara, who after the citizens had agreed upon such matters as were in question, ready to depart, was stayed by Valdracko, who after some unaccustomed courtesy requested the Conte that if his leisure could permit he would stay awhile, that they two might have some private conference. Coelio, half astonished at this strange kindness of the duke, told him that whatsoever his leisure was, he was ready to make attendance to know his Grace's pleasure, & with that both of them stepping aside, Valdracko tricking up his currish mind with coloured speeches, began to frame his trothless talk to this effect.

I need not rehearse, Conte Coelio, the hateful dissension that hath continually bred between our ancestors most hapless & bloody events, & the sparks remaining in us, a burning fire of revenge, so that by our dismal and daily jars both our houses have been distempered, & the whole city of Ferrara greatly disturbed. As of late musing with myself I duly considered the cause of this endless strife, & weighed with myself what woeful enormities ensued of such reckless choler; finding my predecessors wrongfully giving the occasion of this mischievous quarrel, moved with the sting of conscience I thought good, as the debate sprang from my parent, so it should end in the child, and therefore if it please you to accept my proffer, I here am content to remit all former injuries, & as we have been hitherto dissevered by enmity, so we may be united by amity, that not only Ferrara, but all Italy, shall have cause both to muse and marvel at this our sudden metamorphosis, and that you shall not think I mean with painted shadows to make a gloze upon the text, for the confirming of this my proffered and unfeigned friendship, I will bestow my daughter Pasylla upon your son Rodento.

Valdracko had no sooner uttered these words but Conto Coelio was driven into a maze, greatly marvelling at these unlooked for proffers & joying at this unaccustomed friendship, yet fearing to find a pad in the straw and a burning spark amongst cold ashes, knowing that the cat's half-waking winks are but trains to entrap the mouse, that where the eagle hideth his talons most close, then he means to seize upon his prey, that Valdracko was a wily fox, and could shadow the dark colours of revenge with the glistering hue of reconciled amity, how he was of a melancholic constitution, & therefore not to be trusted, that his demure countenance foreshowed most despiteful rancour, that Caesar feared more Brutus for his secret & solemn behaviour than all his foreign foes for their force & prowess. These considerations feared Conte Coelio from venturing too far into an unknown ford, yet weighing with himself that the duke neither would nor could dissemble sith he meant to confirm his promise with such a good pledge, he thought best

to accept of his proffer, and to unite their two houses by so happy a match. He therefore returned him this courteous and friendly answer.

Marvel not (right mighty duke) if I stand in a maze at this strange and unlooked for motion, sith at our first meeting I rather expected opprobrious words of spiteful enmity than any such friendly speeches of desired amity. But sith it hath pleased your Grace to pass over all former dissentious quarrels long time continued between our two houses, which hath bred such civil mutinies and secret slaughters in Ferrara, I not only accept of your happy and fortunate proffer, but yield condign thanks for your Grace's long-desired courtesy, offering my son and myself to rest wholly and faithfully yours in all duty to command.

With that Valdracko embraced the earl, swearing that he made such account of his friendship as he would observe that day as the most fortunate in all his life. The senate, who all this while waited when either these 2 enemies should part, or else fall into their accustomed choler, seeing their friendly embracements were all amazed with sudden joy, & driven as it were into an ecstasy at this strange metamorphosis, yet greatly astonished because they were not privy to their secret conference, which the duke perceiving, to put them out of their musing dumps told them how that they two, which neither by the fear of authority nor friendly persuasions could be reconciled, had now, casting all old grudges aside, renewed a perfect league of amity, and to confirm the same they were agreed to unite their houses, and to marry Pasylla with Rodento.

This happy news greatly joyed the senators' minds, and also the whole city of Ferrara, that they sorrowed not so much before their hateful dissension as they now rejoiced at their loving agreement. Well, Valdracko, covering the bloody mind of a gripe under the simple pens of a dove, carried the Count Coelio home with him to dinner, where the duke entertained him with such sumptuous cheer and solemn courtesy as the poor earl thought such hearty friendship could not be feigned. But when Pasylla saw with what entertainment her father cheered up the count, she marvelled at this strange courtesy and blushed at her own conceits, calling to mind her friend and lover Rodento, thinking that since their parents of enemies were become friends, that the children might of dissembled foes grow to be professed lovers. As thus she was quickening her wits with these amorous conceits, Valdracko and the earl having taken their repast, the duke calling his daughter unto him began to make her partaker of his new determination, how he meant, if she could fancy, to match her with young Rodento, a gentleman of worthy parentage and comely personage, endued with wit and singular qualities to content her mind, enriched with wealth and large possessions to maintain her estate, both young, beautiful, & rich, great gifts sufficient to content, & little gods able to command even Vesta herself to leave her virginity; if then she could consent to love & like so brave a gentleman, he would think her dutiful obedience did requite his fatherly providence; otherwise, if she should mislike of his choice, and upon wilful frowardness oppose herself against his mind, he would not only repay her fond mislike with the like despite, but also disinherit her of all his possessions.

Pasylla, who was easy to entreat, told the duke that the command of the father was a constraint to the child, that parents' wills were laws, so they passed not all laws, & therefore she was content to frame her fancy as it pleased his Grace to dispose; this dutiful and modest answer of Pasylla pleased the duke, insomuch that to strike the iron while it was hot, lest anything might fall out between the cup and the lip, they sent for Rodento, who marvelling to hear that his father was a guest to such an unacquainted host, came with all speed, and being admitted into the chamber of presence found Valdracko, his father, and Pasylla in secret talk. The duke no sooner espied Rodento but he arose from the table and embracing him gave him most friendly and courteous entertainment, telling him what match they had made if it pleased him with a willing consent to knit up the bargain. Rodento, half stifled with the joy of this happy motion, most willingly accepted their proffers, & taking Pasylla in his arms lovingly sealed up the match with a few sweet kisses, to their & their fathers' happy content. Well, all things thus fortunately finished, the marriage appointed to be celebrated the next spring, Coelio went home to his lodging, leaving his son Rodento passing away the time in amorous conceits with his love & lady Pasylla. But fortune, grudging at this happy success, crossed their sweet and delicious favours with bitter and spiteful frowns, for Valdracko, noting the prosperous estate of Coelio, began to think that unless he might traitorously bereave him of his life neither should his house flourish nor his mind be satisfied with revenge. To breed therefore his own content & the final confusion of the earl, he determined to appoint some desperate ruffian to murder him, which done, he should not have any man in Ferrara that would withstand him, and he might use Rodento as it pleased him; passing many days in this bloody intent, sometime haled from such treachery with the sting of conscience, & then incensed to such villainy with the spur of cruel hate, he fell at last thus to debate with himself.

What dost thou mean, Valdracko, to trouble thy mind with such baleful passions, or so much as in thought to intend such desperate attempts, the performance whereof is so unnatural as such bloody actions, if there be any gods, cannot escape without some deadly & direful revenge? Consider, Valdracko, thou hast promised Coelio a fish, and wilt thou present him a scorpion? Hast thou newly sworn to be his friend, & wilt thou be his foe? Is the son betrothed to thy daughter, and wilt thou betray the father unto death? What will Ferrara think at this thy treachery; nay, will the gods suffer thee to practise such mischief? No, no, assure thyself, Jupiter wanteth not plagues to punish such loathsome offences. Tush, fond fool, if thou stumble at a straw thou shalt never leap over a block; if thou fear to practise thou shalt never perform; it is lawful to dissemble with thine enemy, and to revenge is commendable. Why, Valdracko, is Coelio thine enemy? No, he hath yielded himself with submiss courtesy to rest at thy command. And hast thou not yet, doting fool, learned that it is better to trust an open enemy than a reconciled friend, that injuries may not be forgotten as long as the scars remain, that foes must never be admitted as friends in countenance? Why then shouldst thou stay thy intent for Coelio's dissembled friendship? No, dispatch him, and then shalt thou be sure; fortune herself cannot daunt thee with mishap.

Valdracko remaining resolute in this his bloody purpose chose out a desperate ruffian in the city to put this his determination in practice, promising him for his pains three

thousand crowns and to convey himself [sic?] out of the country. The varlet, with whom necessity prevailed more than either conscience or honesty, condescended without any denial to the duke's request, swearing that as soon as time and place would serve, he would make a dispatch of the earl, which indeed within few days he brought to pass. For as the Count Coelio was passing through a blind lane of the city, he shot him through with a pistol, and with that fled, but the citizens, rising in an uproar at the report of this hapless murder, apprehended the ruffian and brought him before the duke and the senate, who with wailing (but feigned tears), sorrowing for his friend's mishap, exclaimed against such treacherous cruelty, and rising up as one in a fury commanded one of his men to cut out his tongue, at which sentence the vild wretch, amazed, perceived the duke's policy, and therefore would have revealed his villainy had he not been prevented by the officers, who cutting out his tongue, cast it at the duke's feet. And by that, the report of Coelio's death was come to the ears of Rodento, which so tormented him as he fell down in a sound, so perplexed as he almost lost his senses; Pasylla also hearing of this mishap, surcharging herself with sorrow, went yet to comfort her beloved Rodento. The duke himself, and the senate, yea, all the nobility of Ferrara sought to persuade the young gentleman, but such was his tender love towards his father as no counsel or comfort could appease his sorrow. Valdracko, to cover his guilt, caused first the murderer, instead of three thousand crowns, to be put to death with most cruel torments, and then took great care for the solemn funerals, providing them with such sumptuous cost & charges as all Ferrara spake of his friendship. Well, the funerals being ended, and Rodento's sorrow decreasing by tract of time, he repaired again to his beloved Pasylla, greatly appeasing his heavy passions by her desired presence, and was more carefully entreated of the duke than before, for within short time Valdracko provided for the marriage, which was solemnized with such magnificence as belonged to such great and worthy personages. The noblemen, to show their dutiful goodwills to the duke, appointed jousting and tourneys for the honor of the bride, and the citizens shows and triumphs to signify their loving obedience, passing many days in sports and pastimes, Valdracko requiting their affections with such sumptuous cheer and prodigal expenses as all Italy had cause to praise his liberality.

The marriage at last consummated and ended, Pasylla and Rodento remaining in such happy estate as lovers may which have the fruition of their loves, thought their bliss so propped up with prosperity as sinister fortune could never breed their mishap, but it fell out otherwise. For Valdracko, after that his daughter had been married about five months, felt the sparks of revenge to be raked up in the dead cinders of hate and malice, which stirred abroad, began again to grow to a great flame, so that he thought his mind not sufficiently glutted with revenge unless he might utterly race out the name of the Coelii, & so he himself enjoy all their possessions, thinking if he might without suspicion dispatch Rodento he should have most happy success in all his affairs, neither fearing God nor regarding the love of his daughter, so he might finish up his baleful tragedy. Where, by the way, we may note the pestilent & spiteful disposition of these saturnists, who under the colour of a secret & solemn profession hide a hateful and revenging dissimulation, proffering to Caesar with Cassius in one hand a scroll, in the other a bodkin, kissing love in the streets and murdering him in corners, playing like the herb baaran which beareth a fair flower but infecteth with the smell. But leaving them to their

doting fancies, again to Valdracko, who still persisting in his purpose, the better to put it in practice, went to a grange house of his three miles distant from Ferrara, where after he had remained three or four days he secretly dispatched a letter to his cup-bearer, willing him in any wise upon his life and allegiance to poison his son-in-law Rodento, who after he had received the letter and read the contents, seeing the alluring promises of the duke if he performed his command, and the cruel threatenings if he denied his request, the next morning provided an infectious powder and gave him a deadly & fatal draft, whereupon Rodento straight sickened, and within four hours died, Pasylla tearing her hair & scratching herself, seeking to kill herself had not her ladies & gentlewomen kept her from such desperate actions. The cup-bearer, having performed this filthy fact, felt such a hell in his conscience that taking some of the powder drank it up, & so began to faint with the pains of death. Now when he was speechless, he sent for Pasylla, unto whom he delivered her father's letter, & then turning his head yielded up the ghost. Pasylla, reading the letter & perceiving her father's villainous treachery, began to fall from folly unto fury, & with raging terms to curse such a peevish parent, at which time Valdracko came home, & hearing this heavy news began to feign a kind of sorrow, & with weeping tears to bewail the death of Rodento. Pasylla, grudging at these crocodile's tears, somewhat appeased her sorrow with the hope of speedy revenge, which she performed in short time. For her father being gone to bed & fallen in a sound sleep, she came into his chamber, & pulling off her garters, bound him hand and foot, & then waking him out of his dreams, as one incensed with some hellish fury, staring on his face she breathed out these ghastful speeches. Though the gods (vile & accursed Valdracko) are so patient that they spare to revenge thy bloody massacres with speedy miseries, yet the destinies, not to be controlled, have appointed me as a cruel and unnatural minister of thy fatal mishap. I know, & I sigh and sorrow that I had cause to know, that nature requireth obedience in children and yet willeth love in the parents, that where duty wanteth, there the gods are not slow to revenge. But I deny to be obedient to such a tyrant who digresseth from nature, and defy thee for my father which hast so displeased the gods. Forgetting therefore lawfully all dutiful affection, I exclaim against thee, injurious traitor, who by treachery hast slain the good Count Coelio, and by poison hast murdered my sweet husband Rodento, covering under a fair face a false mind, and under the colour of aged virtue the substance of hateful villainy; could no fear of God nor dread of man drive thee from such detestable dealing; could no sting of conscience deter thee from such deeds, no love to thy child prohibit thee from such hellish practices? But why does thou prattle, Pasylla; thou seest they could not. Grant not to the treacherous wretch, then, so much favour as to let him enjoy one moment of life, but revenge his wickedness, and end thine own woe. And with that Valdracko was about to speak, but Pasylla, incensed with a furious spirit, heaved up the sword and wounded him sore, and after many bloody blows he yielded up the ghost. When she had thus cruelly murdered her father, yet justly requited the injury, she took pen and ink and wrote the effect of this tragical discourse, that all might know the cause of this bloody fact, which finished, she fell grovelling on the sword, and so ended both her life and her miseries.

Saturn. Jupiter. Mars.

Sol.

Venus. Mercury. Luna.

Venus had no sooner ended her tale but Saturn, rising out of his seat, as one in a chafe, fell into these choleric terms.

Saturn.

Venus, you play like them which seeking to shoot against the stars are wounded with their own arrows in the fall, or like the envious porcupine, who coveting to strike others with her pens, leaveth herself void of any defence; you have here told a tale of Valdracko which showeth not my crabbed influence but your own crooked constellation, for it was the wilful forwardness [sic] of Pasylla in her doting fancies, and her lascivious love in liking her father's enemy, that procured these hapless events; yea, it was the unbridled affection of stayless youth, not the careful wisdom of settled age, that wrought this tragical discourse.

Venus.

Saturn, if old men could blush, no doubt all the gods should perceive thou wert more ashamed in defending so false a cause than in hearing me rehearse the case, but I will not say you dote because you are old, but dissemble because you are wise; so shall I both excuse your fondness, and commend your wit, but this I hope I may say without prejudice, that your arguments savour as much of reason as Luna doth of constancy.

Luna.

You might have said, Venus, as you do of honesty, and so all the gods would have thought his arguments of small force, but were his reasons as full of substance as you of light qualities, it were against Aristotle to deny either premises or conclusion.

Venus.

You learned this logic, Luna, of Endymion, but let that pass, and seeing Sol is appointed moderator in this our controversy, I think he cannot but say that the hapless and tragical events of this history came by the predominant influence of Saturn, for was it not the melancholy disposition of Valdracko that nourished so long the glowing sparks of revenge toward the Conte Coelio, and his saturnine constitution that with a coloured show of amity repaid most faithful friendship with cruel enmity; did he not carry in the one hand bread, and in the other a stone, and prefer his private injuries before public credit or honesty; yea, did not such melancholic impressions pester his mind as he was the cause of the most tragical and bloody massacres?

Mercury.

Truth, Venus, such is the crabbed disposition of Saturn as they which are born under his influence delight in tragical treacheries performed with most subtile and secret attempts, so that Caesar feared more the two saturnists, Brutus & Cassius, than all his foreign foes of any other constitution.

Jupiter.

Mercury, you speak without commission; I am glad you are so greatly beholding unto Venus; indeed, she cannot want counsellors nor champions, she allows them such large fees. But I pray you, wherein is my father Saturn so greatly to be blamed; was not Valdracko forced by the disordinate affection of his daughter Pasylla to his enemy's son Rodento rather to prevent mishap by some sinister means than to bring his whole house and family to most miserable decay and ruin?

Mars.

Jupiter, if large fees may make bold champions or brawling counsellors, you have greatest cause both to fight & chide in Venus' behalf; she hath given you many a fat present, as Europa, Danae, Alcmena; I have named enough, I think to stop your mouth.

Luna.

Mars, what Jupiter hath gotten, I know not, but what Vulcan got with his net, we all know, not a fish but a god. But it is well you defend not her honesty, but her arguments.

Sol.

Cease from these biting quips; they are fit for brabbling sophisters, not for the gods, and hear my verdict: I am of this mind, that the hapless events of this tragical discourse came by Saturn's sinister influence, that Coelio's death proceeded of a malicious and secret hate, that Rodento's baleful mishap sprung from a saturnine revenge predominant in the configuration of Valdracko's nativity, imprinting in his aged mind a melancholy despite which brought to pass this woeful and unnatural tragedy. This is my censure, but now sith Venus hath ended her tale, Luna, I charge you to report her astronomical description because Saturn will speak more of rancour than of reason.

Saturn.

Sol, we have agreed that your censure shall stand for a sentence, and therefore I will not inveigh against your verdict, but am content to bear the blame of Valdracko's ill nature, yet that you & the rest of the gods may know that there cometh more harm by disordinate & lawless Venus than by me, I will rehearse an history wherein you shall easily perceive that love sotteth the senses, infecteth youth, destroyeth age, and is the very plague both to the mind and body.

Luna's Astronomical Description Of Venus.

The star of Venus (right mighty gods) is so simply called, as Tully avoucheth, *quod ad res omnes venias*, and the ancient Arabians call it *astrum genitale* or *prolificum* for the temperate moisture and favourable influence that it distilleth upon all human bodies, for the nature of Venus is to infuse into all inferior substances while then are engendered or nourished a certain *humidatum succum*, or delicate moisture, yet notwithstanding so thin and subtile that it shall rather bedew than any whit overflow, and follow more the nature of dew than of showers, which natural and proper quality in my judgement caused the ancient poets to attribute this epitheton unto Venus: *Alma: ab alendo*. Now as concerning her other quality of coldness, we must first note that as we have in natural heat placed one that doth cherish and nourish, as is Sol and his irradiate star Jupiter, so we have set down another which doth burn and scorch intemperately, as doth Mars with his adust and yellow choler, so likewise in the nature of coldness we do appoint Venus to be temperate and favourable, and Saturn with his melancholy humour to be infortunate and malignant, of the which opinion are Ptolomeus, Galen, and the Chaldees, saying that amongst the planets there are two favourable, well-affected, and friends to nature, namely Jupiter and Venus, and two, Saturn & Mars, unwholesome, bitter, luckless, and ill-affected. To confirm the which I will rehearse Ptolomeus' own sentence in the end of his first *Apotelesmaton*. There are four humours (saith he) or first natures, whereof two are fruitful, fortunate, and lucky, that is to say, heat and moisture, by which all things do increase & prosper; the other two dismal, malign, and dangerous (namely) cold & dryness, by which all things are weakened and ruinate. The ancient astrologers constitute Venus and Jupiter temperate in nature for their heat and moisture, Saturn & Mars intemperate for the nipping cold of the one & the burning, inflamed, and adust heat of the other. And thus far Ptolomeus himself, by whose verdict we are induced to think and affirm that the influence of Venus is moist without any excess, with a small and temperate warmness, which the poets perhaps respected when they feigned Venus to come of the foam of the sea, calling her Aphrodite, but Euripedes thinks she is so called (*quod Aphrones sint*), and of an imperfect mind that suffer themselves to be overcome by Venus' allurements. Of the faculties she doth challenge unto her the appetitive, & of humours, phlegm, but yet douce, unsavoury, & natural, yea, such as Asclepiades affirmeth that may easily be changed into blood, and for the native heat may be easily decocted, and thus much for her essential description. Now as concerning the peculiar affections of those men in whom she is predominant.

They be pleasantly disposed, and endued *Attica quodam lepore*, knowing rather the manners of their friends than hating them, delighting in flowers and precious ointments, carrying about them the purse of Cupid tied with the blade of a leek, scratching their head with one finger and, to use the Latin proverb, *melle peruncti Lesbianur*, & *Corinthiantur*, eating lettuce, and stalking on their tiptoes, *Lidio more viuentes*, careful to increase beauty, and somewhat tickled with self-love, carrying honey in their mouths, and like spaniels flattering with their tails, in their right ears bearing oil, having twinkling eyes and soft delicate hair, apt to get children and given to propagation, applying their minds to songs & sonnets, addicted to pity, mercy, and favour. *Et in vtramvis, aurem, &*

vtrunque oculum Dormientes. The peculiar diseases to this star are catarrhs, coryza, branchy, lethargies, palsies, apoplexies, *gonorrhoea passio*, obstructions of the reins, bladder, & belly, with pains in the secret parts, quotidian fevers, pains in the head, *lienteriae diarrhoea*, diabete, dropsies, & other more, proceeding of crudities, excess, and abundance of phlegm, windiness, imbecility of heat, perfrigerations, & such others. As touching their pulses, they be small, slow, & soft; their sweat, unsavoury; urine, pale and thin; their dejections white, moist, and full of crudity, dreaming for the most part of waters, baths, fishings, snakes, and suchlike.

Saturn's Tragedy.

The city of Memphis is highly commended for the nurse of good letters because in that place learning was rewarded with her due deserts, & ignorance, as near as might be, so utterly exiled as every mechanical man was able to yield a reason of the principles of his science. In this city, famous in those days for learning and virtue, dwelled an infamous strumpet called Rhodope, descended of good parentage, and of comely personage, honourable for her birth, and renowned for her beauty, but her outward hue was so spotted with inward vice as her praise was not such for the perfection of her body as the discredit was for the lascivious disposition of her mind, which was so stained with wanton affections that I think Venus herself could not have passed her in vanities. This Rhodope, racking her honesty to maintain her pomp and pride, forgetting shame and conscience (two virtues long since exiled from Venus' court), set her body to sale, and in the prime of her years became a professed courtesan, so that for the appointed price every straggling stranger might prey upon such loathsome carrion. This shameless strumpet took small delight to be seen in the city, but when she went abroad to take a view of the streets she passed in such sumptuous sort that the citizens a long time after had matter enough to talk of her magnificence. It so fell out on a day that she determined to go sport herself at a fountain (which is dedicated unto Venus) a mile's distance from Memphis, whither she went accompanied with such young youths as were snared in her alluring beauty; being come to the place which for the situation seemed to be an earthly paradise, after they had refreshed themselves with store of dainty delicates which were provided by Rhodope, they passed away a great part of the day with amorous conceits and pleasant parles, till at last the weather waxing somewhat warm, Rhodope, desirous to bathe her feet in the cool fountain, caused one of her maids to pull off her shoes, which were embroidered with gold and richly beset with stones, which she diligently doing, as she laid them on the green grass, very necessary to help her mistress off with her hose, an eagle soaring aloft and seeing the glistening of the gold soused suddenly down and carried away her right shoe in her gripe, which sudden sight greatly amazed Rhodope, marvelling what this strange and prodigious chance should pretend, beginning straight conjecturally to construe this hap to the worst, but her companions were of another opinion, for some of them said it was a sign of good luck, other that it was a token of honour and dignity, all (herself excepted) said the best, because women are most pleased with praises and promises, and she rested to think the best whatsoever in outward countenance she did portend. Well, after they had diversly descanted upon this event, she with her company returned to the city of Memphis, but the eagle with the shoe took her flight to the court of Psamnetichus, who at that very moment was walking alone in his privy garden; as soon

as she came over the king's head, not by chance, but by some infortunate and dismal destiny, she let the shoe fall, and with a marvelous cry soared again into the air, which sudden and prodigious sight so amazed the old king, and so astonished his senses as they which gazed at the ghastly head of Gorgon. At last come to himself, he took up the shoe, marvelling whether it did belong to some heavenly nymph, or some mortal creature. The shape pleased his fancy, the glistering beauty thereof delighted his eyes; (to be short) Cupid, the accursed son of Venus, seeing him at discover, drew a bolt to the head and struck Psamnetichus at the very heart, which pierced him so deep that he began not only to like the shoe, but to love the owner of such a precious jewel, feeling a tickling affection to enter into his mind, whereupon he began to smile at his own folly, that he should be so fond now in his age to dote more than he did in his youth.

Where by the way we may note the despiteful malice of Venus, who perceiving that her infortunate and ill-affected influence is hindered by a virtuous disposition, and that although her accursed configuration be of great force to infuse a certain proneness to unlawful venery, yet being prevented by a provident and well-disposed mind it doth little avail, *quia sapiens dominabitur astris*. Then incensed with an envious rage she seeketh to entrap virtue with the stumbling-blocks of vice, and to enchant the minds of the wise with her poisoned and alluring sorceries, letting pass neither time nor toil till she hath brought wisdom to such a bay as either she must yield to her masking folly or buy her quiet with perpetual torment. But leaving Venus to her vanities, again to Psamnetichus, who seeking to shake off this new-found affection flung out of the garden into the chamber of presence where he found his son Philarkes and other noblemen dancing with the ladies and gentlewomen, unto whom both he showed the shoe and revealed the chance, promising that what lady could pull it on should have what lawful demand she would make. All, desirous of gain and glory (believe me, two idols that women most honour), assailed to win the prize, but it was as easy for them as for Vulcan to draw on Thetis' slipper on his polt-foot, whereat Philarkes and the noblemen smiled, but Psamnetichus, pinched with an unacquainted passion, began to imagine what heavenly creature she was to whom this shoe did belong, feeding himself in this musing humour until such a burning desire crept into his mind that neither reason nor counsel could assuage, so that withdrawing himself into his secret chamber, holding the shoe in his hand he cast himself on his bed where he murmured out these or suchlike complaints.

Ah, thrice unhappy Psamnetichus, what unfit fancies be these for thy aged years, what fond thoughts for thy grey hairs, what unmeet musings for thy stayed mind; wilt thou seek to rake for quick coals among dead cinders, to search for fresh flowers among withered weeds, to sow youthful desires in aged minds; if thou do this, Psamnetichus, think, though thou hast but a short time to live, yet thou shalt have a long time to repent. For love in age is like fire among dry sticks, which kindled with the least puff is quenched in the least moment. Love, Psamnetichus; why, are thou in love; yea, with whom? Alas, I know not, and therefore the more infortunate is my love. Pygmalion fell in love with his marble picture, an affection so strange as he was both blamed and pitied for doting on such a senseless image. A senator's son in Rome loved extremely the ivory picture of Vesta, which wrought him such discredit as he was exempted for bearing office in the city. Were my case such, I would think myself fortunate. But a shoe of gold is the

only thing that bewitcheth my mind; such a strange fancy as time hath never made report of the like. Tush, Psamnetichus, it is not the shoe, but the dame that oweth the shoe which hath enchanted thy affection; it is the idea of her person which by a secret imagination is imprinted in thy mind that hath pierced thy heart; seek then by some means to free thyself from those fetters which unless thou unloose thou canst not but lose. Die then, Psamnetichus, for nothing can free thee from love but death. It is no earthly creature but some heavenly goddess that oweth this jewel; the excellent shape of her to whom this precious gem doth belong was never placed on earth, but enthronized amongst the heavens; the worse is thy hap, and the less cause hast thou to hope. To hope? Why not, Psamnetichus; no doubt she is a woman, and therefore to be won with praises or promises, for that she is a woman.

As thus he continued his complaints, his son Philarkes came into the chamber, whereupon Psamnetichus ceased, and for that time made no show of sorrow, but passed away the day with other talk. The night being come, feigning himself not well at ease, he, giving his son and the other noblemen the good night, went to his bed, thinking by sleep to have driven away such fond affections, but he was no sooner laid, but waking slumber and half-dreaming thoughts so tormented him that he could take no rest, whereupon he began to cast a thousand doubtful conjectures in his mind what he had best to do; at last he found out this devise.

He called to remembrance that there was in his court a certain skilful magician called Nestos, who by his secret science might not only be a means to discover what lady was the owner of the shoe, but also, if through frowardness (a disease common to Venus' darlings) she refused his proffer, might by some amorous potions aid him to obtain his purpose. This politic conceit pleased him passing well, so that on the morrow (fearing that delay might breed danger) he sent for this old doting Nestos, who coming to the king's presence, and with great reverence doing his obeisance, craved to know his Majesty's pleasure; Psamnetichus, courteously resaluting him, took him by the hand and led him into his privy garden, where charging him first upon his life and allegiance most secretly to conceal whatsoever he should in that place make manifest, then he broke with him in the matter, promising if he could tell him by his art who owed the shoe, he would reward him so largely as he should have cause to speak of his bounty; otherwise, if by negligence he should be found slack, he would so bitterly revenge his froward disobedience as he should have cause to curse both himself and his science. Nestos, allured with the large promises of the king, and feared with his sharp and cruel threatenings, made answer that what were able to be done by art should with all skilful diligence be performed, and hereupon he craved three days to make a show of his cunning. Psamnetichus (such was the heat of his new-kindled fancy) thought it a long time to yield so small a verdict, yet he was content, hoping by this means he should be fully satisfied. Nestos, leaving the king in his dumps, hied him home to his lodging, and entering into his study began to fall to erecting of figures, to take the elevation of the pole, and the hour wherein the shoe was found, but these superstitious ceremonies would not show what he sought for, so that in fine, from consecrating he was fain to fall to flat conjuring, wherein after he had sweat like a dog to adjure the devil, he perceived by the oracle that he had made an end of his work, which he had no sooner done but with all

speed that might be he posted to the court, where being admitted to Psamnetichus' presence, all the nobles commanded to avoid the chamber, he uttered these words.

I am sorry (right mighty prince) that I cannot justly conceal that your Grace hath straightly commanded me to reveal, my allegiance forbidding the one, & your Highness so strictly urging the other. I have done what learning & science can allow, yet unwilling to show what the froward destinies do allot. But I hope wisdom shall prevent that which fancy seeketh to pretend. The lady which oweth this shoe is one whose perfection of body is greatly darkened with the imperfection of the mind, and whose singular beauty is such, yet so stained with the spot of lascivious vanity, as all may judge she was framed by nature to despise virtue. It is Rhodope, that infamous strumpet of Memphis. Nestos had scarce uttered these words but Psamnetichus (as one enraged with a frantic passion) began in most cruel terms to exclaim against love and fortune, braying out such bitter curses against Venus & her unequal laws that poor Nestos, seeing his unbridled fury, was more afraid to persuade him than to conjure a devil, trembling awhile for fear that the king should wreak his wrath on his old carcass. At last, when Psamnetichus had somewhat appeased his furious passions, he rewarded Calchos [sic] and licenced him to depart, withdrawing himself into a secret place where he poured forth these complaints.

Ah, unjust Venus, and most accursed Cupid, whose hateful delight is to drown men in unequal thoughts, and to make them dote in unfit fancies, seeking most to assail those minds which think themselves most safe under the shield of virtue, coveting with bitter pleasures to procure sweet torments, and with servile affections to entangle free minds. Alas, I see, and I sigh and sorrow to see, that there is no dignity, honour, age, nor years which can resist the alluring charms of love. Love, Psamnetichus? Why, dost thou love? It is a word unmeet for thy mouth, but a passion far more unfit for thy mind. Thy grey hairs are fruits for death, not blossoms for Venus. Thy years are to be spent in repenting thy former follies, not in renewing fresh and amorous fancies. It is more fit for thy age to cast how to die than to care how to love. Peace, Psamnetichus, do not so much as once name love. Why not? Trees may have roots, though no leaves, and though flowers fall, herbs may have sap. Love in age is a virtue, so it be not blemished with unequal choice. Truth, fond fool, but what choice hast thou made? Of some famous princess? Oh no, it were too well. Of some beggar? Were she virtuous, why not? Oh, Psamnetichus, would to God it were so well. No, no, thou hast chosen Rhodope, a strumpet, not half so famous for her beauty as infamous for her vanity, one whose honesty, nay dishonesty, is to be bought by every straggling stranger. Love is unfit for thy years because thou art old, but such love is unmeet for thee wert thou never so young. What will the peers of Egypt say if they hear but of thy doting thoughts; will not thy poor subjects sorrow to be ruled by such a queen? But alas, what will Philarkes do? Surely either seek to cut her days short with untimely death, or to end his own life with continual grief. Ah, Psamnetichus, it were more honourable for thee to die by concealing love than live and enjoy such hapless love.

And with that he fetched such a deep sigh as it might well witness how he sought with hateful disdain to quench such fond desires, striving with reason to bridle appetite, and with wisdom to suppress affection, flying from that by his own will whereunto he was led

by an infortunate influence, but he found that to wrestle with love was with the crab to swim against the stream, and with the deer to feed against the wind, whereupon feeling such a deep impression to enter into his heart as neither counsel nor reason could race out, he yielded an unwilling consent to love, though the only thing he sought to hate. Pinched a long time with these contrary passions, his care and sorrow so increased, sorrowing that he had made so ill a choice, yet careful how he might obtain his choice, that his aged and feeble complexion, weakened with a more heavy burden than he was able to bear, had almost yielded unto death. His son Philarkes, marvelling at his father's unaccustomed dumps, seeing that he had made a change of his wonted pastime and pleasures for solitary thoughts and contemplations, cast divers conjectures in his head what might be the cause of his father's sudden sorrow; sure he was it could not be for want of honour in that he was a king; if gold might make one merry, as no doubt it is the only whetstone to mirth, his father wanted no treasure. Egypt was not pestered with civil tumults, nor troubled with foreign invasions. All which things duly considered, he could not conjecture what should be the occasion of his father's sorrow, so that desirous to know what should be the cause of his care, and willing (if it lay in his power) to redress it, finding his father within few days alone in the garden at his accustomed dumps, he brake with him to know the cause of his dolour, craving reverently of his father, if it were his pleasure, that he would make him partaker of his griefs, seeing that there is no better remedy for a troubled mind than to participate his care to some secret friend, promising (as it was his duty by the law of nature to protest) that if his life might be a means to appease his heavy passions, he would most willingly free him from those perplexed sorrows.

Psamnetichus, hearing the dutiful obedience of his son, & noting with what unfeigned protestations he uttered these words, partly for the joy he conceived of his son's good nature, and partly for the remembrance of his own dotting affections, he burst forth into tears, yet seeking to conceal that shame forbade him to reveal, finding this excuse most fit for the time and his strange passions.

Philarkes, thou knowest everything is measured by his due time. The spring hath fresh flowers and pleasant gleams. Autumn withered leaves and bitter storms. Youth is painted gazing at the stars, age looking down to the ground. Pleasant conceits are the blossoms of young years, and melancholy thoughts the fruits of grey hairs. I tell thee, Philarkes, when I was young I delighted in mirth and labour, and now being old, I joy in ease and sadness. Thou marvellest how I can be so subject to dumpish thoughts, and I wonder how thou canst be so free from care and griefs. It is not want of prosperity but the experience of many years that hath taught me in age to think how to die. The joy of my youth and the comfort I should have had being old is gone, I mean thy mother, Farina, the remembrance of whose death makes me as sorrowful as thy life and obedience makes me joyful. Cease then, good Philarkes, to enquire the cause of my care, and seek not to redress that which nature denieth to have any remedy.

Philarkes was satisfied with his father's answer, but Psamnetichus more troubled with his son's demand, so that he could take no rest, but lingered in doubtful thoughts, till at last, reason yielding to appetite, and wisdom to affection, he determined to enjoy a full

content, though he both overthrew himself and his kingdom. Being resolute in this determination, for the better bringing to pass of his purpose, he appointed that his court should be kept at the city of Memphis, and hereupon commanded that with as much speed as might be, the court should remove. The courtiers willing, because the winter drew on, to sojourn in the city, used great diligence in dispatching their affairs, and the citizens hearing that the king should come, willing to show themselves dutiful subjects to so loving a sovereign, endeavoured to receive him in the most sumptuous and solemn manner they could, providing shows, jousts, tourneys, and triumphs, sparing no expenses to show their dutiful affections. Psamnetichus, perceiving by outward actions the inward goodwill of his citizens, requited their kindness with such friendly courtesy & princely magnificence that with one general assent they all praised his bounty and virtue.

Psamnetichus, settled thus in Memphis, began now only to care how he might enjoy the sight of Rhodope, hoping that when he had glutted his eyes with her beauty he should free himself from the snare of disordinate fancy. To send for her to the court was the ready means to reveal his folly to the whole world, and to repair unto the house of a courtesan was to dishonour his princely dignity with a servile discredit, but to remain still in the [sic?] hellish passions was in life to suffer far worse pains than death. At last, seeing his troubled mind could find out no shifty devise, he thought it best to make some of his trusty servants privy to his affections, who perhaps by some subtile policy might procure him to obtain his purpose, and he thought none so fit for the participating of such a weighty matter than his chamberlain Zorastes, unto whom on a day when he found fit time and opportunity he revealed the whole matter, laying before him two baits, preferment and death, promising that if in secret wise he could help him to the sight of Rhodope, he would bountifully reward him with livings and dignities; otherwise, if either he should halt or be found slack in the performance of his command, all tortures and torments should be too easy for the revenge of his disloyalty. Zorastes, hearing with sorrow this hapless pretence of the king, knowing that he was so resolute in his purposes as no reason or counsel could divert from his determination, thought persuasions would little prevail, and therefore told him that if his Majesty would follow his devise he would that night bring him to the sight of Rhodope in such secret sort that no man but they two should so much as once suspect the matter. For the fulfilling of this his promise he advised the king to feign himself sick, and to give a special charge that none, no, not his son Philarkes, should trouble him unless they were sent for by Zorastes. This done, he willed Psamnetichus to disguise himself in the attire of one of his gentlemen, and then they two, passing out at a postern gate which opened into a dark lane, might without danger or suspicion go unto the house of Rhodope.

This pretty policy greatly pleased the king, so that without any further consultation he put Zorastes' devise in practice, for as soon as the night came he changed both his apparel & countenance so cunningly as he might be taken rather for some stale courtier than for so mighty a potentate. Having thus made an unfit metamorphosis of himself, accompanied with Zorastes he passed through the postern and went straight to the house of Rhodope. Where we may note the intemperate and malicious influence of Venus, who by her irradiate constellation do work such strange affects in men's minds as after they have yielded a little to her allurements, neither wisdom, age, reason, counsel, dignities, nor

honour can race out her dismal and malign impression; yea, her infused working is of such force that whoso is pricked forward by her enticing persuasions seeth no danger or discredit so hapless which he will not adventure to obtain his purpose. But now to Rhodope, who being certified by one of her maids that a gentleman of Psamnetichus' court was at the door, attiring herself with most costly jewels, and perfuming her house with most sweet odours, she sent for him with such amorous glances & lascivious courtesies that he began both to marvel and smile at the artificial sleights of such an infamous strumpet; seeing with what cunning dissimulation she began to show a feigned kind of affection, and how gain had taught her to allure the minds of every stranger, he began to conceive a loathing hatred of her lewd life, that desire was ready to turn to disdain had not wanton and lascivious Venus, with the enticing charm of beauty, enchanted his doting affections.

For when he had gazed awhile on her excellent perfection, seeing there was nothing in her, her mind excepted, but that was singular, he exclaimed against the gods, that to despite nature had placed such hellish conditions in such a heavenly creature. But such was the force of unbridled fancy that he could not conceive such disdain at her vanity as he did desire to her beauty. For his senses were so besotted with this alluring siren that he lost at last not only his liberty but his life by her pernicious treacheries. Well, Psamnetichus passing away the evening with Rhodope in such hapless pleasures as he then thought most happy, having somewhat satisfied himself with her desired presence, at last took his leave, and giving her the farewell, with an unwilling congee departed speedily and secretly to the palace, whither being come, no sooner he was entered into his chamber but casting himself upon his bed, the beauty and perfection of Rhodope gave him such fierce assaults as he could take no rest, but at last he burst forth into these complaints.

Psamnetichus, would to God either thou hadst been born to less dignities or more wisdom; so should thy hap have been better, or thy discredit less, but where will is a subject to folly, wishes are counted but too fond. Thou art a king, Psamnetichus, and aged; thy honour might persuade thee to more virtue, and thy years dissuade thee from such vanity. Wilt thou yield to love her whose stayless affection neither likes any, nor loves herself; if thou wilt have a concubine, choose such a one as may only be at thy will, not at every base vassal's command. Indeed Rhodope hath done amiss; what then? May she not make amends? Yes, no doubt, though she hath flattered them which are subjects, she will, nay she dare do no otherwise, but fancy thee which art her sovereign. Rest then content, Psamnetichus; Rhodope may be won, and what canst thou wish more? Alas, yes, for unless she be my wife, neither can I like, nor she love. Thy wife? Will thy council and commons agree to such inconvenience, will thy son consent to such an unequal match; will they, fond fool? Nay, they shall; in despite of them my will shall stand for a law, and I will follow content, not counsel. Rhodope is worthy to be a queen, and I say that none in Egypt dare gainsay: she shall be a queen.

And with that, feeding himself in his humour, he fell asleep, passing away the latter part of the night with many pleasant dreams. On the morning, as soon as he got up, he assembled the dukes and nobles of Egypt, and commanded them upon their allegiance

they should not depart from the court till they heard further of his pleasure. The same day he caused writs to be directed into every part of his kingdom to summon the lords and barons to a parliament which should be holden within xv days. This strange and sudden news made the lords of the council to marvel what weighty affairs the king had to enact by statute which he would not make them privy unto; so many men, so many wits; everyone yielded his verdict, but all missed the cushion; especially Philarkes began to muse that his father had not told him the cause of this sudden convocation, but seeing it was the king's pleasure to conceal the secret to himself, they rested content till it might be made manifest in the open assembly.

The day of the parliament being come, the nobility, arrayed in their robes, attended upon the king to the parliament-house where, everyone set in his degree, as the common speaker was ready to have made his oration, the king willed him to silence, commanding that Rhodope should be sent for, and that then he would declare the cause of their assembly. This drove them all into dumps, everyone whispering to other their verdict of the king's will. Some thought there was some great complaints made to the king against her for her lascivious life. Other thought she had pretended some treason against his person, all by imagination suspecting the worst, yet not half so ill as the sequel proved. The message was no sooner delivered to Rhodope but quaking fear possessed all her joints, doubting she had committed some heinous fact which deserved death, or that because she was a common courtesan, the king meant to confiscate her goods to the crown. These & suchlike doubts daunted her mind, yet cheering herself somewhat for that she knew she was guiltless from murder or treason, decking herself in rich and costly attire she went with the guard to the parliament-house, whereinto as soon as she was entered, with reverent obeisance kneeling before the king, she fearfully attended to hear his Majesty's pleasure. The dukes and lords of Egypt were driven in a maze at the excellent beauty of Rhodope, cursing & accusing the gods of injustice that had blemished such excellent perfection with such imperfect qualities. But Psamnetichus, gazing a long while on her face, began almost to fall asleep in sweet conceits, till at last putting such thoughts out of his mind, with a stern and disdainful look he uttered these speeches.

It is no marvel if you stand amazed (right mighty princes of Egypt) to see your king, who was wont to crave your consent in small affairs, without your counsel now to begin a thing of such great importance, I mean a parliament, but he that seeketh to have his purpose unprevented must not plume his actions with time's feathers, lest either fortune or counsel hinder his enterprise. Many things fall out between the cup and the lip, and danger is always a companion to delay. To take away therefore all occasions of hindrance, I have upon the sudden assembled you, not only to hear what I can say, but without either doubt or denial to confirm what I shall say, death having deprived me of her in my latter years who was my only joy in the prime of my youth, I mean your good queen Farina. And although I am old, yet not so stricken in age but that I must and can yield to affection, so that I intend, nay I will, in despite of all men, take Rhodope here present to my wife, and before we depart from this session she shall be crowned queen. It may be, nay I am assured, you all will greatly mislike of the match, & grudge that your king should marry with a courtesan. But I charge you all in general, & I wish each one

that loveth his own life, neither with counsel nor reason to persuade me from that I have purposed, lest he incur further danger and my perpetual displeasure.

Psamnetichus uttering these words with a furious countenance drave the noblemen to silence, but Rhodope into a greater maze, that the king upon so small acquaintance should choose her for his wife, whereupon conceiving an unspeakable joy (for a woman's heart swelleth with nothing more than honour) she with humble reverence, kneeling upon her knees, extolled Psamnetichus' courtesy, that he would vouchsafe, being a king, to look on so base and infamous a creature as she was, promising to remain his handmaid pressed to perform what his Grace could either wish or command if the loss of her life might accomplish his desire. But Philarkes, who sat nipped on the pate with this strange news, enraged with wrath and choler could scarce keep his hands from preventing his father's misery by the violent death of such a vile strumpet, which Psamnetichus partly perceived [sic] by his countenance, wished him to speak his mind without controlment, whether he liked of the match or no, promising to pardon whatsoever was said. Philarkes, with a face fraught full of fury, and a mind inflamed with choler, choosing (if he might) rather present death than to see his father's dignity attainted with such dishonour, uttered his mind briefly in these words.

May it please your Highness, I fear to offend if I say what I should, & yet were loath to flatter in saying what I would not, but sith I may have free liberty to speak what I think, my verdict shall be soon given. I confess that what pleaseth the father ought to content the son, and therefore I count Psamnetichus' will a law to Philarkes, yet as obedience wisheth a consent, so nature willeth with a friendly denial to dissuade from things that offend not only men, but are even hateful to the gods. I say therefore that Psamnetichus should get more honour by exiling such an infamous strumpet, not only from Memphis, but out of all the confines of Egypt, than if he had obtained more triumphs than that invincible Caesar. No doubt your Grace shall soon, nay, I fear too soon, find my words to be true, that in hoping to get a sweet content you shall gain a sour disquiet, like to them which pleased with the colour of the tree lotos are poisoned as soon as they taste of the apples.

Psamnetichus, such was his love, or rather unbridled lust, as he would not suffer Philarkes to speak any word more, but in great choler protested if his promise had not been passed he would have made him repent those opprobrious speeches. The noblemen, seeing the king's fury, were all in their dumps, and durst not for fear of death gainsay that which he had said, so that presently Rhodope was apparelled in rich and princely robes, and by two of the chief dukes of Egypt led from the parliament-house to the temple of the god Appollin, where the arch-flamen, as his office was, not only crowned her queen, but also with the sacred rites celebrated & finished up the marriage, in the honour whereof the noblemen, making a virtue of their necessity, appointed certain triumphs and shows, dissembling their inward sorrow with outward conceits, and shadowing the counterfeit of grief with pleasure's colours. But poor Philarkes, pinched to the heart with his father's dotting folly, spent the whole day in blubbering forth bitter tears, so that he was fain to absent himself from the banquet, whereas Psamnetichus, feeding his eyes more with gazing on the incomparable beauty of his new foreworn(?) spouse than his stomach with

any dainty delicates, feasted his citizens and subjects the space of twelve days so sumptuously as they might perceive he spared for no cost to show his liberal mind. But as the longest summer's day hath his evening, so this feast being ended, and everyone departed to their houses, Psamnetichus and Rhodope lived with such sweet content as two such new-married couples can enjoy. This secure quiet continued by the space of one whole year till Venus, either grudging at their half-honest love, or disdaining that Rhodope had begun to leave her accustomed vanity and was waxen more chary and less amorous, thought to show her lawless power by some more unlawful means; she therefore sought to yoke that neck which as yet was never tamed, and to inflame that heart with a burning desire which hitherto had been frozen with a cold disdain, to bring which to pass she wrought this hapless means.

It fortuned that on a day as Rhodope looked out of her chamber-window she espied young Philarkes playing at the barriers with diverse noblemen his companions, wherein he behaved himself so valiantly as he showed that he was far superior to them all in courage and valour. Rhodope, commending in her mind both his prowess and perfection, began to be tickled with a more than accustomed affection towards him, for the grey hairs of Psamnetichus had already glutted her fancy, and the young years of Philarkes began to sharpen her half-pined stomach, for women's affections are not fed with kingdoms or treasure, but with youthful conceits & sweet amours. Age may be allotted to gaze at beauty's blossoms, but youth must climb the tree and enjoy the fruit. Well, Rhodope being a woman, and therefore both amorous and inconstant, shamed not to disdain the father and desire the son, yielding herself captive to lust at the first alarm. To be short, Venus had so snared her in the beauty of her son Philarkes as her only joy was in enjoying the sight of his person, yet as there is no weed so bad which serveth not to some use, nor confection so deadly which hath not one good simple, so in Rhodope's mind, wholly stained with vice, there were some sparks of virtue, for she considered with herself that Psamnetichus, of a common and infamous strumpet, had without any desert, but upon mere affection, made her a queen, and if she should so falsify her faith, the gods would not suffer such disloyal ingratitude to be unrevenged. Further, the impossibility of obtaining such incestuous love was a means to persuade her from such lascivious thoughts. But she whom Venus had blinded with shameless affection cared not for these considerations, but followed her own forward [sic?] will, seeking not to repress her lust, but how to enjoy her love, so that she began to show Philarkes more than accustomed favours, painting her beauty out with fresh colours, & seeking to entrap the young prince with alluring flatteries and amorous glances. Philarkes, whose young years were apt for love, began more narrowly to mark the beauty of Rhodope than he had done before, seeing her singular perfection to be such, and her beauty to be so rare, that she stained not only all the ladies in Egypt, but as he thought in all the world, resembling rather a heavenly nymph than a mortal creature, insomuch he thought his father not to be blamed for making so good a choice, and wishing himself, if ever he married, as happy a chance. These sparks of affections [sic?] grew by time to a great flame, so that he began not only to like but to lust after Rhodope, which he sought to repress with these reasons. First he persuaded himself that incestuous adultery was a sin so repugnant to nature as the very brute beasts did abhor the committing of such a fact, and that it was so odious both to the gods and men as it were better to commit either sacrilege or murder, but these thoughts

could not quench that which injurious Venus had once set on fire, for he felt his mind so passionate with the beauty of his mother-in-law as no counsel might appease his malady, yet nature and virtue so much prevailed that he chose rather to die than to consent unto such unnatural disloyalty; his grief so increased by concealing his disordinate fancies that he fell into a dangerous sickness, having his head so weakened with continual care and irksome passions that he was almost brought into a frenzy. Psamnetichus, seeing his son thus perplexed, sent for the most learned physicians in all Egypt, but neither could they conjecture his disease, nor redress his malady, which so grieved the king as he took no delight but in sorrowing for his son Philarkes. Rhodope, who was more than half sick with the same disease, intending to see if she could sift out the cause of his sickness, decked herself in her bravest attire and went to visit Philarkes; coming into his bed-chamber and finding him lying as one in a trance, she commanded all to avoid the chamber for a while. Philarkes no sooner saw Rhodope but he start up in his bed, and staring in her face fetched a deep sigh. She who by her former occupation was a great calculator of such secret passions knew without feeling of his pulse where his greatest pain was; sitting therefore down upon his bed, taking him by the hand, she entreated him with sugared speech & amorous persuasions to unfold the cause of his sickness, promising not only to conceal it, were it never so secret, but to redress it if it lay in her power, were it never so dangerous. Philarkes hearing Rhodope utter these unfeigned protestations hoped that he might have some success in his suit, but shame of his unlawful request enjoined him a long time to silence, till at last, affections banishing fear, with bashful face and blubbering tears he revealed unto her the cause of his sorrow, how her beauty had so enchanted his mind and bewitched his senses that unless her consent were a conserve to cure his care, there were no means to free him from his passions but death. Rhodope no sooner heard Philarkes utter these words but as one in a rage she rose up, railing with bitter terms against his folly whereas, God knows, it was the only thing she desired; a woman's fault, to thrust away that with her little finger which they pull to them with both their hands. Although Philarkes saw her in such a chafe, yet he would not give over the chase at the first default, but stood fast to his tackling, insomuch that, after a few consenting denials, she agreed as soon as place and time would serve to fulfil his request. Philarkes, sealing up the bargain with a few sweet kisses, rested content with this desired consent, and in short time recovered his former health, to the great joy of his father Psamnetichus, and his mother-in-law, Rhodope.

Well, these two hapless lovers living awhile in their supposed happiness, the gods grudging at such unnatural actions revenged their brutish disloyalty with a speedy & cruel punishment, for so it fell out that Psamnetichus spied in short time their (not to be named) villainy on this wise.

The king, being gone on progress, left the queen at home, as he thought, half sick (for what cannot women feign to fulfil their fancies), and commanded his son Philarkes to bear her company until his returning, not thinking to repair to Memphis till a month were fully expired. Psamnetichus being gone, the two lovers floated in bliss, having such fit opportunities for the fruition of their loves as they could wish or imagine. But the king, doting on the beauty of his young wife, had not been absent ten days but that he took post-horse and rode very secretly and speedily to Memphis, where being arrived, passing

in at the postern gate only accompanied with Zorastes his chamberlain, he found Rhodope and Philarkes in bed together fast on sleep. Which strange & unnatural sight so daunted the old king as, a quaking cold possessing his limbs, he stood trembling for the horror of such a brutish fact till his chilling fear turning into a flaming choler, he fell almost into a raging frenzy, yet he somewhat appeased his fury till he had sent for two or three of his noblemen which he had left at the court to be attendant in his absence upon the queen, that they might be witnesses of this unnatural incest. They were no sooner come but with raging threats he wakened the two hapless lovers out of their sweet slumber, who, seeing Psamnetichus and the noblemen standing by as beholders of their villainous adultery, were so amazed as they could not utter one word. The king, disdainful to debate of the matter with these vile wretches, pulling forth his arming-sword, at two strokes dispatched them both, a punishment too good for such a heinous offence, and a death not sharp enough for such incestuous traitors.

Psamnetichus had no sooner finished this tragical stratagem, but ashamed at his own dotting folly, and sorrowful that his son had so far transgressed the law of nature, went presently into his study, and there finding a vial of poison to release himself from ensuing miseries, ended his days with that deadly confection.

Saturn. Jupiter. Mars.

Sol.

Venus. Mercury. Luna.

As soon as Saturn had ended his tragical history, Jupiter with a smiling countenance began to upbraid Venus in this sort.

Jupiter.

Venus, it is better, they say, to sit still than to rise up and fall, and more honour to put up injuries with quiet than to revenge with loss; in seeking to dishonour my father Jupiter [sic] you have wrought your own discredit, resembling the wolf which whilst he lurketh to devour the lamb is himself sore bitten with the panther. What hapless and unnatural actions do proceed from your incestuous influence the gods may perceive by the sequel of Saturn's tragical history, wherein he hath drawn such a perfect anatomy of lawless love as no doubt it is the only spite that displeaseth the gods in heaven and pestereth men upon earth.

Venus.

Sir, you mistake the matter, for these tragical events proceed not from the effects of love, but by the fleeting inconstancy of Luna, whose mutable influence breedeth in love a fickle desire to sport in change, for the often jars between you and Juno come not in that you are lovers, but because Luna, having a place in every nativity, setteth down this sentence as an infallible principle: *Est natura hominum nouitatis auida*.

Mars.

Well said, Venus; let Jupiter put that in his eye he hath got by thine answer, for Luna's spiteful inconstancy hath made poor Juno wear the horn in her crest and the cuckoo in her shield, yea, and caused Jupiter himself to be thought less honest than men, and too dishonest to be a god.

Luna.

Was it Luna's inconstancy (good sir) that cause Psamnetichus to dote in the love of a common strumpet? Or came it by my influence that Philarkes was tickled with such incestuous lust towards his mother-in-law, Rhodope? Do inconstancy go before choice, or change before affection? Tush, Mars, were you not afraid that if you spoke troth, Venus would take the toy and put you out of commons, you would not be of this mind, but I bear with you more than either Vulcan can or will.

Saturn.

Luna, thou hast touched Mars at the quick, for indeed he is so pinned to Venus' sleeve that although he rage and rail, yea, and say more than he knows against all the gods, yet he dare not say what he think if Venus hold up her finger. But I marvel greatly that Mercury is so silent; surely I commend him, he loves not to wrangle in a wrong cause.

Mercury.

I am glad you are so pleasant, Saturn, but you mistake my meaning, for when Venus and Mars hit the nail on the head by attributing Psamnetichus' and Philarkes' miseries to Luna's inconstant influence, I confirmed their censure by silence, for you know, *Qui tacet consentire videtur*.

Sol.

What needs these cross-blows in so plain a case? It is evident by the sequel of Saturn's tragedy that love bringeth with it many enormities, breeding in old age doting affections, in young years wanton and lascivious thoughts, enchanting the minds of men with such unbridled affections as neither wisdom nor reason can restrain. Some by love are brought from prosperity to mishap; others from dignities to discredit; all gain loss, some fading pleasures, but none in the end perpetual quiet. Whereof I infer that those hapless events which chanced to Psamnetichus, Philarkes and Rhodope was through the bitter delights of wanton Venus.

Jupiter.

Sol, thou art worthy to give oracles sith thy censure is yielded without partiality, but because Mars standeth so stiffly in defence of Venus, I will first make a description of the essential nature of Mars, then show what tragical mishaps proceed by his bloody influence.

Sol.

We are content, Jupiter (I answer for all); your pain shall be to rehearse the events, and we to attend with silence.

Jupiter's Astronomical Description Of Mars.

The Grecians (right mighty gods) do make manifest even by the epitheton which they attribute to the star of Mars [Greek word], that it is of a fiery and inflamed nature, annexed with such burning heat and hurtful intemperancy, stirring in men's bodies such hot and adust choler, and infusing qualities together with his irradiation more apt to destroy than to engender or nourish. Which the ancient astrologers have noted in terming Mars [Greek words] of infecting or corrupting one, as Phurnitus affirmeth, [Greek words], of loss and mishap. Therefore Galen and Ptolemy do judge his [sic?] as well or rather more than Saturn to be an infortunate and unlucky planet, since by his intemperate heat he doth burn and inflame, breeding such abundance of yellow and adust choler that

thereof do spring many enormities, as well to the mind as to the body. For by the intemperate heat and vehement motion of choler do proceed innumerable perturbations whereof do ensue violent actions and inconsiderate affections and passions, as brawlings, contentions, murders, wars, and suchlike, so that the poets fitly have figured Mars to be the god of wars, and Bellona to be his sister. But leaving them to their fictions, let us see what can proceed of immoderate heat but choleric inflammations, which are apt to burn, dry, and consume, procuring hapless and dangerous passions which Ptolemy in his first book *Apotelesmaton* noteth in these words: *Martis stella & arefacit, & vrit sicut congruit igneo ipsius calori, & solis vicinitati vt qui illius sphaerae subiectus sic.* And for this cause, as I conjecture, the ancient astrologers have denied Mars, for his appropriate malice, to challenge any of the faculties animal, as also they have done to Saturn, yet of those which are natural they have granted him the faculty attractive; of the inward parts he hath the liver, or rather the bladder, wherein the gall lieth, which the Grecians call [Greek words], the Latins, *bilis folliculum*, or rather *biliosi humoris armariolum*. And thus much briefly for the astronomical description of Mars. Now as touching the disposition of the martialists.

They are commonly over-rash, not fearing to rush through sword and fire, seeking to move immovable things, carrying a head without a brain, impatient in injuries, doing all things with preposterous advice, being variable in their purposes, prodigal of their own, and desirous of other men's, enterprising great matters, making of loathsome sinks lofty towers, lifting up their brows everywhere, touching the heaven with their fingers, and speaking tragically as giants, wearing hay in their horns, and mingling the heavens with the earth, having their feathers far bigger than their nests, carrying wains loaden with reproachful slander, wearing nettles in their nose and whetting their teeth upon bitter sorrel, enraged as though they were stung with a breeze, and more imperious than Phalaris, as cruel to them which yield as wolves, giving to those which run a spur, wearing a body without a breast, whetting iron with iron and putting fire to tow, quenching flames with oils, bearing gall in their mouth, fire in their hearts, and cutting large thongs out of other men's leather.

As touching the diseases incident to martialists, they be tertian fevers, jaundice, frenzies, hot agues, inflammations, bloody flux, megrims, hotness of urine and suchlike, which commonly proceed of the quantity or quality of yellow choler abounding, of aduston of blood, of fiery and choleric evaporations. Further, they which participate of the nature of Mars have their pulses great and swift; urine yellow, fiery, and biting; sweat sharp, salt, and bitter; dejections yellow; the tongue commonly dry; their dreams of fire, burning, slaughters, strife, wars, armours and suchlike. Thus I have described Mars his malign disposition, and mean to confirm my sayings with a tragical history.

Jupiter's Tragedy.

In those days when taking the shape of a man I visited the poor house of Philemon and Baucis, coasting divers countries haply I arrived in Scythia whereof after Tomyris was queen; being nighted in those parts, I chanced on a fair and sumptuous palace situated hard by the sea-side; coming to the gates I found the wicket open, whereon was engraven

this posy: *Entrance is denied to none*. Seeing such a free passage, I passed through the base-court and came into the hall, where I found a young and beautiful lady accompanied with six damosels, all overgrown with grief, doing sacrifice (as I thought) to some of the gods, but drawing more nigh, I espied the lady (which by her port seemed to be the mistress to them all) burning frankincense upon coals, and holding the heart of a man in her hand, she violently stabbed it through in many places, which when she had done, two of her maids presented unto her two dead men's skulls full of wine, whereof when she had drunk a little of either, gushing forth abundance of tears, she called for a lute, whereon she played and warbled out this woeful ditty.

*What more mishap can fret the mind
 than wish each day to die,
 And yet to live in lingering grief?
 alas, such life lead I,
 Whose life, if life, thrice worse than death,
 is fraught with such annoy
 As pined with care can never taste
 one dram of happy joy;
 I rue to see that most I wish,
 most hateful words I blenge,
 My surest joy to weep my fill,
 my greatest wealth, revenge;
 Thus do I lead a hapless fate,
 content with woe, enriched with hate.*

As soon as she had ended this mournful madrigal, she gave the lute to one of her maids and the rest ready to depart, but casting her eye aside she espied me, wherewith she came pacing toward the place where I stood, and with a courteous and princely countenance she gave me a friendly welcome, and taking me by the hand led me into her bed-chamber where supper was already provided; after we had taken our repast, I, desirous to know the strange manner of her sacrifice, made request to know the cause of her continual sorrow, what both the piercing of the heart and the drinking of the dead men's skulls did mean. She, nothing coy to condescend to a stranger's entreaty, began her talk in this manner.

In this country of Scythia there reigned a king not long since called Evandrus, who by his natural inclination was wholly addicted unto martial prowess, taking such delight in bloody wars and cruel skirmishes as he thought himself unfortunate when either his enemies for fear, or he for want of some just occasion, was driven to live in unwilling quiet. This Evandrus had such happy success in his attempts as by his valour and courage he had made a conquest of all the kingdoms adjacent to his dominions, Libya only excepted, which was possessed [sic] by a cruel and merciless tyrant named Charaxes, who seeing that fortune without any check had long time favoured Evandrus, thought that after great calms would ensue little storms, that low ebbs followed high tides, and that fortune, after so many sweet favours, could not but show some sour frowns, whereupon he levied a mighty host and made a sudden invasion into the borders of Scythia, burning and spoiling all the country, thinking by his desperate attempt to make the king shrink

and seek for truce. But the event fell out contrary to his expectation. For Evandrus, hearing how Charaxes had attempted the conquest of his country, gathered a great army to the number of a hundred and fifty thousand footmen and four thousand horsemen, manfully marching forward to defend his country and withstand the force of his injurious enemy. Wherein fortune, not willing at this time to give him the foil, showed him such accustomed favour that he valiantly discomfited Charaxes and all his host, yea, and took the king himself prisoner, returning into Scythia with such triumphs that his subjects had both cause to fear and honour such a king. Charaxes being thus brought prisoner into Scythia, Evandrus, as he was fortunate in obtaining the conquest, so he was favourable in using the victories, thinking it as kingly to pardon as to conquer, and as great renown to be gotten by showing mercy to professed foes as courtesy to assured friends. For he entreated not Charaxes as a wretched captive but as a worthy prince, entertaining him with such friendly familiarity as the Libyans had great cause to extol his clemency. Evandrus bathing thus in the streams of bliss, sitting firmly on the fickle top of prosperity, had the check given him by fortune on this wise.

He had by his wife which was the [sic] lately deceased three children; two were sons, born twins at one instant and in such a moment that it was almost hard to guess which was the eldest, the one was called Fresnitus [sic], the other Romphanus, his daughter named Lyndana, a lady of such exquisite perfection and singular beauty that she stained not only in those days the fairest dames of Scythia, but almost of all the world. This Lyndana, seeing that there had been a perpetual enmity between her father and the predecessors of Charaxes, and that it was not yet extinguished in the son, grudging not only that contrary to his desert he was entreated so courteously, but sorrowed that it was not in her power with rigour to revenge his presumptuous attempt. Yet thinking to play a woman's part, she detested him with a secret and deadly hate. But Charaxes contrariwise resembled the bears [sic], which looking and smelling a long while at the herb moly, at the least eateth it and is poisoned, so he gazing on the singular perfection of Lyndana was suddenly stricken with the sight of her beauty, and so snared with the due consideration of her virtuous qualities that he remained far more perplexed by being a captive unto Lyndana than that he was vanquished by Evandrus. For he doubted not of the one's assured courtesy, but greatly feared the other's half-suspected cruelty; he thought the king was to be persuaded by reason, in that he was a man. The princess he knew was a woman, and therefore led by unbridled rage of froward wilfulness, either flaming into much love, by no counsels to be quenched, or freezing into great heat, by no prayers to be kindled. Therefore these contrarieties greatly daunted the mind of Charaxes, and drave him into such doubtful passions that at last he fell into these bitter complaints.

Charaxes, thou seest now by experience that hapless fortune knoweth no mean, but either she straineth her strings so high that they crack or else lets them so that they will give no sound, either flourishing her counterfeits with such fresh colours as dim the sight, or tricking up some to the skies with sweet and inconstant favours, and driving some lower than hell with bitter and assured frowns. Happy, yea, thrice happy are they whose estate is so tempered by the stars that they they [sic] may both despite and despise this unjust and deceitful goddess. It had been better for thee, Charaxes, to have died by the sword in the field and have gained glory than perish by love in the chamber and reap discredit.

Ah, Lyndana, thy beauty hath so bewitched my senses and enchanted my affections as no means but thy sweet consent can express my hapless passion. O despiteful fortune [sic], was it not sufficient to use me as thy captive, but to make me a servile slave unto love, who ruleth her subjects not with reason but with rigour, and being lawless rageth over them without law; what, Charaxes, dost thou count it slavery to serve so brave a dame as Lyndana, whose inward virtues and outward perfection is such as she deserves to be a mate for the most famous prince of the world; yet in love, whatsoever the luck be, there is no gains but loss, yielding a pleasure mixed with bitter passions and a misery tempered with a few momentary delights, breeding a fading content to some but at last a perpetual dislike to all. Why Charaxes, if thou dost sorrow at thy chance, seek to eschew the charm. If thou fearest to perish by hearing the sirens sing, stop thine ears against their melody, or play like eagles, which surfeiting on spices, bite upon the blades of hemlock, or as the inhabitants of Tryca, who when they have cloyed their stomachs with eating sweet dates, purge themselves with feeding on stinking garlic. So if thou art snared with beholding the virtues of Lyndana, free thyself by considering her vanities. She is beautiful, yea, but thine enemy, and one that seeketh to despise thee with a secret hate, the daughter of him who with a flattering courtesy covets perhaps to breed at last thy bane and misery. Tush, Charaxes, if thou seekest by counsel to cure love, thou shalt as much prevail as he that goeth about to bind the wind in fetters of silk. Thou lovest Lyndana; seek then to enjoy her love, unless if thou strive against love thou perish in seeking after love. She is a woman, and therefore to be won; thou hast time, place, and opportunity; despise not then fortune's favours, lest if by delay the grass be cut from under thy feet, thou repent when had-I-wist shall come too late.

Charaxes having uttered these words felt his new gall to grow to a greater grief, and that the continual presence of Lyndana so perplexed him as he pined with restless passions, sometimes daunted with fear, now incensed with hope, presently trusting to obtain if he did sue, and then despairing to seek lest he should not obtain; tossed a long time with these contrary thoughts, at last he determined to give the assault whatsoever his chances were. Well, fortune, intending to further him in his purpose, brought it so to pass that within a few days he went to recreate himself in the garden where he found Lyndana walking solitarily in an arbour of juniper, whom after he had saluted with a submissive courtesy, he entertained in these terms.

Lyndana, I cannot but marvel what delight you take in these solitary dumps unless either you make this arbour a place for your private prayer, or else your head be troubled with some loving passions; if I guess right at the first, I were loath to hinder your devotion; if at the last, I am glad my company shall cut off your musing fancies.

Lyndana frowning at this hap to be troubled with such an unwelcomed guest, casting a coy look on her new lover, made him this short and sharp answer.

Sir, if you marvel at my dumps, I cannot but muse at your rash conjectures that either devotion or love must breed solitariness, but I think your logic is as much as my Latin, and then no marvel you make such simple distinctions. Well, admit I were at my prayers,

you are not the saint to whom I mean to make my petitions, and if I be in love, take no thought your mother's son may take his chance for all my choice.

Charaxes, hearing Lyndana's sharp reply, had a help [sic?] cast in his way for heaving it any more at maw, so that he stood nipped on the pate with this new speech as if he had with Medusa's presence been turned into a marble picture, which Lyndana espying, she began to laugh, not at his present folly, but, as she thought, at his ensuing misery, hoping that if he were entangled with her beauty and that he were snared with the due consideration of her excellent proportion, then she might have time to show how she desired both to hate and revenge Charaxes. As thus he for fear and she for disdain ceased to pass away the time in any familiar conference, there came into the garden her brethren Frestinus and Romphanus, who saluting Charaxes very friendly, spent the morning while dinner-time in divers kind of exercise, wherein Charaxes was very active, as one framed by nature wholly to Mars and marital exploits. Well, the tables being covered, the king commanded these three companions to be sent for, who with humble obeisance sitting down at the table took their repast but only Charaxes, whose sorrow and grief was such as he could not but chew upon his raging choler and feed upon gall and melancholy, flattering love persuading him to march on for all the first repulse, and hateful disdain willing him to retire before any stroke were struck, so might he, though he obtained no conquest, yet not with disgrace lose the field. Troubled with these divers doubts, as soon as dinner was ended he got him into his chamber, where being alone by himself he began to consider the crooked disposition of Lyndana, and her froward crabbedness in crossing him continually with despiteful overthwarts, how for desire she requited him with disdain, and for love with hate, that although being a prisoner he was courteously entertained by Evandrus, yet the undeserved cruelty of Lyndana was such a hell to his conscience as he would not live long in such servile subjection. Whereupon he began to fear that the familiar friendship of the king was but a cloak to cover his revenging mind, and that no doubt for all his flattery he meant to prevent him by untimely death, so that he determined to seek all means possible to escape into his own country, in which determination fortune furthered him in this wise. It so fell out that the king, who greatly delighted in chasing of the wild boar, went on a time to see some sports into a forest not far off from his palace, only accompanied with Charaxes, Frestinus, Romphanus, and three of his gentlemen; they had not long beaten up and down the forest but they roused a mighty great boar so huge and monstrous as it half amazed the king to see the bigness, and so stout in courage as he would not flee one foot from the dogs, but held them all at a bay, hurting divers of them very sore, whereat the king, somewhat chafed, pricking his horse and charging his spear, ran furiously upon him and hit the boar upon the shoulder, yet piercing him very little, but the beast, afraid with the stroke, fled, and the dogs after in chase, every man pressing to be foremost to have most view of the sport, galloping through the thickets so fast that within two or three hours all the company was dissevered, none remaining with the king but only Charaxes, who seeing that now he might have occasion to draw himself out of the king's danger, began diversly to conjecture with himself what he should do. First he considered with himself the great courtesy of Evandrus in using the victory, that whereas with rigour he might have revenged the burning of his borders, yet overcome with clemency he forgot all such injuries and entertained him with most friendly familiarities, that being taken prisoner he

did not use him as a captive, but granted him the liberty of a king. These things moved Charaxes not so much as in thought to give any offence to his Highness, thinking that if he should reward the courtesy of the king with treachery not only his enemies but even his very friends and subjects would despise him as an unthankful person. But as he was thus virtuously persuaded by the good inclination of his mind, so he was enforced by a secret rancour to imagine that to be captive in fetters of gold was to live in a glistening misery, so that he thought no means, howsoever unlawful it was, to be neglected for the recovering of his former freedom, which hellish thought overcoming his former intent drave him into such a desperate mind that seeing the king ride before him, he charged his boar-spear, and came thundering so fast upon Evandrus that before he could turn his horse he ran him quite through, and threw him out of the saddle dead upon the ground; when he had committed this heinous and bloody fact, drawing the king into a thicket he spurred his horse and coasted out of the forest, and with as much speed as might be fled out of the confines of Scythia, and so secretly and safely within short space arrived in Libya. But leaving Charaxes to his good luck, again to Frestinus and Romphanus, who with great sport so hotly pursued the boar that within three or four hours they killed him and sent him to the court by two of the gentlemen there present, which done, missing the king their father, they straight thrust into the thick of the forest to go seek him, but coasting and coursing through each holt and lawn, find him they could not, yet not leaving off to hallow and to blow their horns, but they could not hear any reply except the chatting echo, who always returned them the last end of their measures. At last Romphanus began to persuade his brother Frestinus that no doubt the king and Charaxes were gone to the court, upon which persuasion they both went home, where they no sooner arrived but they met their sister Lyndana, who asked where her father was. Is not the king then (quoth Frestinus) come home? We have this day been hunting the boar, and in the midst of our chase we lost sight of the king and Charaxes, whom since we could never see nor hear. Pray God (quoth Lyndana) that Libyan traitor hath not by any sinister means procured his mishap. This sudden motion so troubled the minds of the two princes that they were perplexed with divers passions, fearing that which afterward to their great mishap proved but too true. Whereupon they caused a troop of gentlemen to go in quest of the king, and they two accompanying the rest came to the forest where every man as love and duty bound them did their endeavour to be the first that should find out their liege and sovereign, but fortune, willing to show her dismal despite, brought it so to pass that after a long time they had laboured in vain Romphanus happened to pass by that thicket wherein the king lay dead, and casting his eye aside espied a dead corps all weltered and bathed in blood, which hapless sight so amazed Romphanus' mind that, daunted with the terror of such a fearful spectacle, he had not the power to alight from his horse to look who it should be that was so cruelly murdered, but stood still gazing as one in a trance, till one of the gentlemen came by, who seeing Romphanus so amazed, and espying the dead body, alighted, and perceived straight it was their king and sovereign Evandrus; then gushing forth streams of tears he wailed and wrung his hands, cursing and accusing that day as most dismal and infortunate. Romphanus, seeing that it was his father, fell from his horse in a pasme, and was hardly recovered by the gentlemen [sic?], yet at last coming to himself, pulling out the boar-spear (for as yet it remained in the wound), he would have ended his days with violent death as means to cure his unspeakable grief had he not been hindered by him that was present, who persuaded him

with friendly advice to despise fortune with patience, and in extreme mishaps to make a virtue of necessity, but he talked to the wind, and played with Orpheus to the senseless stones, for Romphanus could no way be pacified, but still raged and railed against the cruel destinies who by their rigorous dooms had appointed his father such a vild and hapless death. As thus he was wetting his father's corps with tears came his brother Frestinus, who, seeing this monstrous massacre, was no less pained with pinching grief than Romphanus, yet such was his inward sorrow as he could not shed one tear, but sitting down by his father, taking the boar-spear in his hand, uttered these woeful words.

O hapless and thrice accursed fortune, who anointest the cradle with honey, and rubbest the saddle with gall, who if if [sic] thou sportest with youth always despitest age, who pampereest at the first with sweet pleasures, and poisonest at the last with bitter mishaps; was there no means to revenge but by death, no frowns but baleful blows, nothing to glut thee withal but my father's blood? Ah now I see, and I sorrow and sigh to see, that where thou favourest much, there thou flatterest most, that thy painted casks are filled with sour wine, that when thou carriest in the back of thy hand a lamb, thou hidest in the palm a tiger; unhappy are they that find thee most fortunate, because in thy greatest glory lies closed up most baleful misery. Oh Evandrus, was Caesar more fortunate than thou in thy life, or could he be more infortunate at his death, he triumphing for his victories, and thou invincible for thy conquests, he slain by his supposed friends, and thou by thy reconciled foes, both advanced by fortune as a flattering goddess, and both by her driven to mishap as a merciless fury? Happy, yea, thrice happy then are they who despise fortune for that they are too low for fortune. The highest cedars have the greatest falls, the tallest reeds are most shaken with the wind; low shrubs withstand great tempests, and little minnows may safely swim through the fisher's net. Irus feared not to drink of every dish, but Alexander was poisoned in his own cup; content is great riches, and patient poverty is the enemy to fortune. Honour is the first step to disquiet, and dominion is fettered with envy; glory gapeth at mistrust, and kings are fortune's bondslaves. More happy then had Evandrus been if he had enjoyed a poor life with prosperity than a prince's state with such direful misery. But alas, what availeth it to condemn fortune when she triumpheth in our bitter curses? It is for me with patience to despise that injurious goddess, and with rigour to revenge that treacherous traitor Charaxes, who most villainously hath betrayed his assured friend. And with that such was his grief as he was not able to utter any more words, but at last, seeing his brother Romphanus so impatient in his passions, dissembling as much as he could his outward sorrow, began with counsel to appease his complaints, and to comfort him in that case wherein he himself needed a medicine; yet somewhat salving his brother's sore, they left off their dolour, and taking up the king, carried him home to the court, at which sight both the nobles and commons cried out for the loss of their sovereign. But Lyndana, as one half lunatic or enraged with some hellish fury, fell into such frantic passions that her sorrow could by no means be appeased, for women's sorrows are either too extreme, not to be redressed, or else tricked up with dissimulation, not to be believed. The comfortable counsels of her brother could not prevail, the persuasions of her ladies and gentlewomen were in vain, so that she went to her bed, where, wearied with wailing tears, grief and watching so weakened her wits that she fell almost into a frenzy. But Frestinus, salving his care with patience, provided a rich and sumptuous tomb for his father's corps, enriching his funerals with such

magnificent provision necessary for the entombing of such a potentate as all the subjects, sorrowing for the loss of their king, yet rejoiced that they should be governed with a prince of such virtuous and natural disposition. Frestinus, careful that nothing should want to the beautifying of the tomb, caused an epitaph to be engraven in a marble pillar wherein stood a king all armed in rich plate, holding in the right hand a diadem beset with precious stones whereat hanged a great globe of lead fastened with a very small wire; round about the globe was written this poesy.

Ad astra honor. Ad orcum miseria.

In the other hand he held a lady blinded with a veil, which stood upon a round bowl with smiling and delightful countenance, putting with her right hand a flower to his nose, and with her left striking him into the back with an arrow; on her breast was written this poesy.

Fauere videor: nocere sentior.

In the midst of this marble pillar did hang a table wherein was curiously engraven this epitaph.

*Here lies in tomb a peerless king
by fortune placed in happy state,
Who never [sic?] felt the sting of dire mishap,
but triumphed still secure by fate,
In honour, wealth, and conquest such
as envy feared at him to grutch,
But fortune by inconstant spite
repaid at last his joys with pain,
For by mishap this peerless prince
was by a traitorous caitiff slain;
Then trust not fortune when she smile,
for then she works most spiteful guile.*

Well, the funerals being most richly and sumptuously finished, after a few days were passed in bewailing Evandrus' death, Frestinus summoned a parliament unto which all the nobility with certain of the commons elected generally repaired, wherein as eldest son and heir apparent he was by the consent of them all rightly crowned king of Scythia. This thing with others concluded, the day of his coronation being come, according to the custom of the country the diadem was set on his head to the great joy of all his subjects, who showed their dutiful goodwill and obedience in appointing jousts and tourneys, in making rare and strange shows, performed with such cost and diligence as it bred a great content to all men. But Romphanus, whose heart was puffed up with a greedy desire of glory, thought he was not born to be a subject, but a sovereign, and that since it was hard to judge by the momentary space of their birth whether was the eldest, he was hardly dealt withal that he was not either elected king, or else at the least had the kingdom divided betwixt them. This motion greatly troubled the mind of Romphanus, yet he a

long while smothered this aspiring envy till he might find some just occasion to utter his cankered stomach, and as well as the rest showed the love of a brother and the duty of a subject till it fell out by the despiteful means of fortune that a certain lord in Scythia called Pasquino, being somewhat hardly dealt withal by Frestinus (for indeed he was somewhat tyrannous to his subjects) made a mutiny and raised an insurrection against the king, gathering a great host which grew in short time to a huge multitude because Romphanus, taking time lest the grass might be cut from under his feet, joined himself with Pasquino, so that their two powers being united was of great force. Frestinus, troubled with this sudden tumult, hearing that his brother Romphanus was joined to the rebels, was greatly grieved, yet no whit dismaying himself, levied a mighty army and marched towards the camp where the Duke Pasquino and his brother lay; they hearing of the king's power, and understanding by a herald that the next day they must either flee or give him battle, set their soldiers in good array and went into the field, where when the armies were almost ready to meet, Romphanus began to exhort his soldiers to consider what they had taken in hand, that they were to fight against Frestinus their king, who had not governed them with mercy but with rigour, whose will in all actions was a law, to whom if now they should yield, he would not take pity of them as a loving sovereign, but torment them as a cruel tyrant, that they were to fight for their freedom and liberty, their lands, children, and wives, how it was not upon the part of a subject they did rise, but for one to whom of right the crown did belong, who if he should obtain the victory would reward them with present coin and ensuing favour and courtesy; with these and suchlike persuasions he encouraged his soldiers, and so animated them with fear and hope that as it were in a desperate mind they ran upon their enemies, and after a sore and dangerous battle, many being slain of either part, Frestinus was put to flight and hardly escaped with his own life, yet by the swiftness of his horse he secretly fled into the country, where for a time he lurked in divers places till at last, fearing his brother's fury, he coasted over into Libya. Romphanus in the meantime, having obtained the conquests, thought now with Caesar if he could not settle himself by right to place himself with force and rigour; therefore he first cut off all those of the nobility which he knew were his brother's familiars, and placed in their offices his chiefest friends; then summoning a parliament, was straight elected and crowned king. Safely and securely settled thus in his kingdom, he little feared or thought of his brother Frestinus, who lying unknown in the borders of Libya, hearing what was done by Romphanus, thought rather to offer his kingdom to his enemy Charaxes than put up his brother's treacherous injuries. Whereupon he presently went to Charaxes, who seeing Frestinus in such estate was greatly amazed, yet he most courteously and kingly embraced him and demanded the cause of his so strange and unlooked for arrival. Frestinus unfolded unto him the cause of his coming, how Romphanus his brother had seditiously driven him out of his kingdom and country, and possessed himself of the crown and diadem, and that if it pleased him to take the matter in hand, and by force repossess him of his dominions, he would acknowledge himself his subject and pay him yearly tribute. Charaxes, seeing the way laid open before him to enjoy the kingdom of Scythia, made answer to Frestinus that he would for his sake give Romphanus such a breakfast as he should never be able to digest it, bidding him be of good cheer, for what he had promised he would with all speed perform. Upon this Frestinus rested, and Charaxes, smiling in his sleeve, mustered all Libya, and gathered a mighty host of good and valiant soldiers, furnishing them with such armour, and his camp

with such warlike artillery and munition, as was able to affray the greatest prince in those parts. Being thus provided, he protracted no time, but passed into Scythia, where he raced down divers towns which withstood him, putting all to the edge of the sword that obeyed not to the herald sent under the name of their lawful king Frestinus. This bloody invasion terrified so the Scythians that he quietly passed through a great part of the country without any skirmish, but at last Romphanus met him with a great power and joined battle, between whom was a dangerous and cruel conflict, the Scythians fearing the tyranny of Frestinus and Charaxes, and the Libyans hoping for no mercy if they remained vanquished, the combat continuing still doubtful till the two brothers Romphanus and Frestinus met, between whom there was a mortal combat; at last Frestinus, feeling himself in some peril, redoubled his strength and slew Romphanus, who no sooner was dead but his soldiers began to faint and to flee, whereupon the Libyans pursued them so fast that they made a monstrous massacre, leaving of all the army few or none alive. Constrained at last by the approaching of the night to retire, the Libyans went home to their tents with great joy and triumph, amongst whom went Frestinus as a worthy conqueror, joyful for so happy a conquest. Well, the soldiers banqueting and making cheer for their good success, Charaxes and Frestinus supped together as good friends, and departed not while late in the night. But upon the next morning Charaxes, being early up, came into Frestinus' tent accompanied with divers of his nobles, whom he found fast asleep in his bed, and drawing out his arming-sword, without respecting either law of God or man, smote off his head, leaving the body weltering in his blood, which when he had done, he called straight for a herald at arms, and taking the heads of the two brothers, sent them speedily to the Lady Lyndana, with a letter to this effect.

Charaxes of Libya to the Scythian Princess Lyndana, granteth life.

As it is valour, Lyndana, to conquer, so it is wisdom to use the victory; 'tis better rigorously to return with triumph than to be thought courteous and lose the conquest. If thy father Evandrus had known as well how to have used the sword in peace as in war, his untimely death had been foreseen, and thy brothers' miseries prevented, but his mishap hath bid me to beware, and rather to strike with the sword than to be beaten with the scabbard. Thy brothers are both slain; if my word can carry no credit, let their heads which I have sent be witness to my speeches. My power and force is such that I can far more easily subdue Scythia than thou art able to defend. My council willeth me to take away thy life lest hereafter it procure my loss, yet lest thou shouldst think I ever loved to hate, I will continue my former goodwill, for such continually hath been the affection that I have borne towards thee, yea, thy beauty hath so fettered my freedom and thy singular perfection hath so battered the bulwark of my breast as no persuasion is able to dissuade me from thy love. Consider, Lyndana, I may command thee by force, and yet I entreat thee by prayers, for that I know constrained fancy is like to the lute-string, which reached too high cracketh before it giveth any sound. Sith then, Lyndana, thy beauty hath [sic] enchanted my affections and bewitched my senses, yield to grant love for love, and become my concubine; so shalt thou enjoy a trusty lover and save thine own life; otherwise, if through froward wilfulness thou deny my request, thou art like to end thy days in endless misery.

*Thine as thou usest him,
Charaxes of Libya.*

The herald, taking the heads and the letter, went with all speed to Syraaca [sic?], the chief city of Scythia, where being admitted to the presence of Lyndana he first requested her on his knee that although he brought his message from a most merciless tyrant, yet it would please her Grace to pardon him as a servant, and with that presented the heads and the letter. This strange sight struck such a desire to revenge into the heart of Lyndana that, as one nothing amazed, she took her brothers' heads and kissed them, and without changing countenance or letting fall one tear delivered them to one of her ladies, and then opening the letter read the contents, which after she had throughly perused, she put in her pocket, and told the herald that he should not only have an answer, but also return without harm, charging her servants with great courtesy to entertain him. This strange demeanour of Lyndana drave the herald into a great maze, that such a princely valour should be shrouded under so beautiful a creature. Well, Lyndana, withdrawing herself into her chamber, took pen and ink and returned him this answer.

Lyndana of Scythia to the tyrant Chiraxes, disdain.

Charaxes, if thy fortune were not better than thy valour, or thy treachery more than thy courage, my father's mishap had been less, and thy misfortune more. But such is thy villainous mind as, like the bastard wolves of Syria, thou sparest not to prey on dead carrion. Thou reprovest my father for using the victory, and thy reproach consisteth in thy conquests. For thy justice is tyranny, and thy martial prowess reckless treason. Thou hast slain my father and murdered my two brethren, and what glory shalt thou gain but infamy and discredit; yet the gods have spared my life, that I may revenge thy loathsome discourtesy. Vild coward, dost thou think to conquer Scythia; no, no, unless my quarrel were worse, or thy courage better, thou shalt know and find I will plague thy treacherous cruelty with most despitiful misery. Thou hast sent me my brother [sic] heads, but I hope shortly to pull out thy heart, which shall gain me honour for dispatching a traitor. Do thy council wish thee to take my life; no doubt hardy men, that will beat them which are absent. But thy love and affection is such as no means but death can hinder thy fancy. Truth, thou art like unto them which, liking the fruit, cut down the tree, and which, loving the eggs, killeth the fowl. But would to God thou wert in love, and that thy desire were as great as my disdain; then, false traitor, shouldst thou know with what liking I would requite thy love. But disdain to write unto so vile a wretch, I defy thy force, and protest I live to hate, and hope to revenge.

Thy protested foe, Lyndana, Princess of Scythia.

The herald, having received the letters, hasted back again to the camp, where being arrived, he delivered them to Charaxes, who unwrapping [sic?] the seals, found how little Lyndana passed for his love or threats. Whereupon falling from desire to disdain, and from love to hate, he made a solemn protestation to race the walls of Syranca within two days, to spare neither old nor young, and as for Lyndana, no torture should be sufficient

to requite her cruelty. Hereupon he marched forward with his host toward the city, and within two days encamped about it, laying siege very nigh to the walls, and on the next morrow with battering pieces and rams of iron assayed to beat it down, the which Lyndana perceiving, willing rather to end her days by untimely death than to fall into the hands of such a tyrant, assembled all the citizens, and there exhorted them to be valiant, and to consider that Charaxes had first slain their lord and sovereign Evandrus, then his two sons Frestinus and Romphanus, and now meant not only to spoil her and the whole country, but also to put them and their wives and children to the edge of the sword, so that it were better for them to die valiantly in the field and so prevent ensuing mishap than to fall into the hands of such a tyrant and live in perpetual misery. This persuasion of a woman so animated the Scythians' minds that they became not only resolute but desperate, preferring death before captivity, and choosing rather to perish in combat with glory than yield to Charaxes with slavish discredit. And hereupon, setting themselves in array, they valiantly issued out of the city. Lyndana standing in a turret upon the walls to encourage them the more, minding (if her citizens were overcome) to throw herself headlong from the top of the tower. The Libyans, seeing them issue out, smiled at their rash folly, and marching forward, thought to have daunted them at the first dash, but the Scythians manfully rushed upon their enemies, and in short time made such slaughter of the Libyans that they were fain to retire, the Scythian horsemen pursuing so hotly that they brake the ranks, and Charaxes, seeing his soldiers go to the worst, began to fly, but he was followed by two noblemen of Scythia so fast that he was taken alive, all the rest of his soldiers without mercy put to the edge of the sword, that there was not so much as one left to carry news home to Libya. Lyndana, seeing this unlooked for conquest, rejoiced greatly, but especially when she saw Charaxes taken prisoner, whom after she had in her custody she put to death with sundry kinds of tortures, and taking out his heart alive, worketh her endless revenge on it in this manner, and to satisfy her love to her brethren drinketh wine out of their skulls. Thus, sir, (quoth the lady) you hear the strange manner of my sacrifice, which I have and will use to my perpetual content.

Saturn. Jupiter. Mars.

Sol.

Venus. Mercury. Luna.

Jupiter had no sooner ended his tragedy but Mars, rising up from his seat, began with furious terms to taunt Jupiter in this sort.

Mars.

Jupiter, your tragedy with his bitter and woeful events hath not driven such passionate impressions into the minds of these sacred gods but that they can afford to laugh at your fond and fantastical applications, seeing in coveting to conquer, the victory returneth to another man's glory, and shooting at the fort, you faint in the weakness of your own force, as though, most wilful-wise Jupiter, it came through my infectious influence that Evandrus was slain by the villainous treachery of Charaxes, or that the intestine jars

which rose between the two brothers Frestinus and Romphanus happened for that I was predominant in the calculation of their nativity, but rather that honour (the first step to mishap) forced Charaxes to enterprise that dismal mischief, and the desire to rule bred the civil dissension between the two princes, for if Evandrus had been content with the limits and bounds of his own country, neither had his mishap nor his children's misery so infortunately chanced.

Saturn.

Mars, your reasons can neither be of any great weight nor of any stayed wisdom because they are fiery, proceeding from such a burning planet, and furious, yielded by such a choleric god. But hearing your natural inclination so fitly and rightly deciphered by Jupiter, we are forced to bear with your folly because we must allow you to be Mars.

Venus.

Saturn, I think you have rubbed your brows with the sweat of a bull because you are so light in the brains, or smelled to the herb anyta, that purgeth melancholy, you are so pleasant; you run descant on Mars his dooms, disallowing them without any reason, and yet not able to disprove them by any right, but 'tis your old custom, when your [sic] are weary with plodding in your dumpish moods, then you fall through crookedly to traverse in your dotting merriments.

Luna.

Venus, no doubt your skill in simples is very good, you are so perfect in declaring the [sic?] secrets. How Saturn hath rubbed his brows we know not, but that Vulcan is a buck of the beast [sic?] head, every fond forester can discern. 'Tis pity the poor smith's head is fain to be a subject for Mars to work upon, but 'tis no great matter, for Vulcan revengeth in painting out the discredit of the one and the dishonesty of the other.

Mercury.

'Tis happy, Luna, your course is in the night, for else your lickerous lips would be thought to savour of the same lettuce, but letting that pass, I pray you tell me how this tragedy can happen by the sinister constellation of Mars sith the the [sic] cause is always judged by the effects; what forced both Evandrus and Charaxes to make such mutual invasions, the martial influence of Mars? No, but rather Jupiter's ambitious infusion, which wrought in them both a greedy desire of glory.

Jupiter.

Mercury, you speak of affection; was it not first a martial and hateful mind in Evandrus, who never thought himself content unless in imbruing his hands in bloody battles, and thinking himself then only infortunate when he was driven to live in unwilling quiet? Was not Charaxes of a merciless and furious disposition, to repay Evandrus' courtesy

with such hellish cruelty, and having once obtained Libya [sic?], to seek the life of the lovely Lady Lyndana? But I appeal to the verdict of Sol.

Sol.

Jupiter and ye mighty gods, my censure is that the events of this bloody and baleful tragedy came by the intemperate influence of Mars, for Evandrus and Charaxes, by the configuration of their nativities (as the success of their actions make manifest), were mere martialists, given to debate and dissension, to broils and tumults, feeding upon gall and choler, and as for Romphanus, it is evident it was not the desire of glory and dominion, but a bloody and envious mind which sought with secret malice to breed his brother's mischief, so that I conclude all these sinister and tragical massacres came by the baleful influence of Mars.

Mars.

Sol, I rest content with your doom, but sith Jupiter stands so much upon his pantofles, I will first make an astronomical description of Jupiter's essence, and then prove by a true and authentical tragedy that most hapless miseries come by the desire of honour and ambition.

Sol.

Not so, Jupiter [sic], for you see the night hath cast her dusky mantle on the sky, and Thetis standeth waiting where I shall wet my glistening rays in the ocean, so that we must at this time dissolve this sacred parliament, but as soon as Aurora waketh me from my drowsy nest I will meet in this present place, and moderate your controversies, until when I wish you all to remain as friends without any quarrellous dissensions.

FINIS. Robert Greene.

Text of the third tragedy transcribed from Bratchell, D.F., *Robert Greene's Planetomachia and the text of the third tragedy*, Avebury Publishing Company, 1979.

Modern spelling edition copyright Nina Green, September 2003.