

HEROICALL EPISTLE

Sapho to Philænis

Where is that holy fire, which Verse is said
To have? is that enchanting force decai'd?
Verse that drawes *Natures* workes, from *Natures* law,
Thee, her best worke, to her worke cannot draw.
Have my teares quench'd my old *Poétique* fire; 5
Why quench'd they not as well, that of *desire*?
Thoughts, my mindes creatures, often are with thee,
But I, their maker, want their libertie.
Onely thine image, in my heart, doth sit,
But that is waxe, and fires environ it. 10
My fires have driven, thine have drawne it hence;
And I am rob'd of *Picture*, *Heart*, and *Sense*.
Dwells with me still mine irksome *Memory*,
Which, both to keepe, and lose, grieves equally.
That tells me 'how faire thou art: Thou art so faire, 15
As, *gods*, when *gods* to thee I doe compare,
Are grac'd thereby; And to make blinde men see,
What things *gods* are, I say they're like to thee.
For, if we justly call each silly *man*
A *litle world*, What shall we call thee than? 20
Thou art not soft, and cleare, and strait, and faire,
As *Down*, as *Stars*, *Cedars*, and *Lillies* are,
But thy right hand, and cheek, and eye, only
Are like thy other hand, and cheek, and eye.
Such was my *Phao* awhile, but shall be never, 25
As thou, wast, art, and, oh, maist be ever.
Here lovers swear in their *Idolatrie*,
That I am such; but *Griefe* discolors me.
And yet I grieve the lesse, least *Griefe* remove
My beauty, and make me 'unworthy of thy love. 30
Plaies some soft boy with thee, oh there wants yet
A mutuall feeling which should sweeten it.
His chinne, a thorny hairy unevennesse
Doth threaten, and some daily change possesse.

Thy body is a naturall *Paradise*, 35
 In whose selfe, unmanur'd, all pleasure lies,
 Nor needs *perfection*; why shouldst thou than
 Admit the tillage of a harsh rough man?
 Men leave behinde them that which their sin showes,
 And are as theeves trac'd, which rob when it snows. 40
 But of our dallyance no more signes there are,
 Then *fishes* leave in streames, or *Birds* in aire.
 And betweene us all sweetnesse may be had;
 All, all that *Nature* yields, or Art can adde.
 My two lips, eyes, thighs, differ from thy two, 45
 But so, as thine from one another doe;
 And, oh, no more; the likenesse being such,
 Why should they not alike in all parts touch?
 Hand to strange hand, lippe to lippe none denies;
 Why should they brest to brest, or thighs to thighs?
 Likenesse begets such strange selfe flatterie,
 That touching my selfe, all seemes done to thee.
 My selfe I embrace, and mine owne hands I kisse,
 And amorously thanke my selfe for this.
 Me, in my glasse, I call thee; But, alas,
 When I would kisse, teares dimme mine *eyes*, and *glasse*.
 O cure this loving madnesse, and restore
 Me to mee; thee, my *halfe*, my *all*, my *more*.
 So may thy cheekes red outweare scarlet dye,
 And their white, whitenesse of the *Galaxy*, 60
 So may thy mighty, amazing beauty move
 Envy'in all *women*, and in all *men*, *love*,
 And so be *change*, and *sicknesse*, farre from thee,
 As thou by comming neere, keep'st them from me.