FACSIMILE REPRINT OF
COMUS, A MASKE
BY JOHN MILTON
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Literature Series, No. I

Milton's "Comus," 1637
This Edition is limited to Five Hundred and Twenty Copies, of which Twenty are on Japan paper
COMUS

"A Maske Presented at Ludlow Castle, 1634"

By JOHN MILTON

Reproduced in Facsimile from the First Edition of 1637

With an Introductory Note by

LUTHER S. LIVINGSTON

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Introductory Note

MILTON'S little play Comus, the first edition of which is herewith reproduced in facsimile, is the author's first book and, after Paradise Lost, is considered his most important work. In this first edition, as will be seen, it is called simply "A Maske presented at Ludlow Castle," etc., and in the two collected editions of Milton's minor Poems published during his lifetime, the first in 1645 and the second in 1673, the title is the same. Comus, the name of one of the principal characters, was, it seems, given to the "Maske" by some later editor.

At the time Comus was written and acted, "1634, on Michaelmasse Night," the 29th of September, Milton was in his twenty-sixth year. Although he had already written a number of pieces both in English and Latin, only one had, apparently, been printed. This was his little poem of sixteen lines, An Epitaph on the Admiraible Dramatick Poet, W. Shakespeare, which is found, but without author's name, among the prefatory verses in the Second Folio, printed in 1632.

Even when this little play was printed in 1637 Milton seems to have been diffident about acknowledging the authorship. It was very probably printed with his permission, as the motto on the title, from Virgil, was evidently selected by him. Masson paraphrases this:

"Ah! wretched and undone! Myself to have brought
The wind among my flowers!"

The dedication, it will be noticed, is written and signed by H. Lawes, whose reason for printing is said to be "that
the often copying of it hath tir’d my pen to give my several friends satisfaction.” This Lawes was one of the most famous composers of music of the time in England, and it was under his direction and to his music that the “Maske” was produced at Ludlow Castle. The occasion was the celebration of the entry of the Earl of Bridgewater upon the Welsh Presidency, and the place was the Great Hall of Ludlow Castle, in which, according to tradition, the elder of the two Princes murdered in the Tower had been proclaimed King, with the title of Edward V, before commencing his fatal journey to London.

The play contains six speaking parts only. Of these, the most important, “The Attendant Spirit,” was taken by Lawes, the director of the play and author of the music. The part of “The Lady” was taken by Lady Alice Egerton, youngest daughter of the Earl, then about fifteen years of age. The parts of the “Elder Brother” and the “Second Brother” were played by the two younger brothers of Lady Alice, Viscount Brackley, to whom this printed edition is dedicated, and Mr. Thomas Egerton. These two young noblemen had already had a taste of stage acting, having taken juvenile parts in Carew’s Coelum Britannicum, which had been performed the previous February in the royal Banqueting-house at Whitehall, in which the King himself, Charles I, took part.

The stage-copy, or one of them, perhaps in Lawes’ own autograph, is still preserved in the library at Bridgewater House, and the music of five of the six songs, in Lawes’ own autograph, is in the British Museum.

An earlier draft of the poem in Milton’s own handwriting is preserved in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge, in that precious thin folio of forty-six pages (besides eight blank pages), mostly in Milton’s own hand, and containing all but a few of the minor English Poems.

The first edition is, needless to say, very rare, only one copy having been offered at auction in America. That, a fine one, bound by Matthews, brought $425.00 in the Ives
Introductory Note

sale in 1891. A copy sold at Sotheby's in 1894, in the sale of the library of Sir Joseph Hawley, brought £123, and another in 1899, from the library of the Rev. William Makellar, brought £150. This latter copy is now in the library of Mr. E. D. Church, of New York city. We are indebted to him for the privilege of making this facsimile.

L. S. L.
A MASKE
PRESENTED
At Ludlow Castle,
1634:
On Michaelmasse night, before the
RIGHT HONORABLE,
JOHN EARLE of Bridgewater, Vicount Brackly,
Lord President of WALEs, And one of
His MAJESTIES most honorable
Privie Counsell.

Eheu quid volui miser o miki: storibus austrum
Perditus

LONDON,
Printed for HUMPHREY ROBINSON,
at the signe of the Three Pidgeons in
Pauls Church-yard. 1637.
TO THE RIGHT
HONORABLE,
JOHN Lord Vicount BRACLY,
Son and heire apparent to the Earle,
of Bridgewater, &c.

My Lord,

His Poem, which receiv'd its
first occasion of birth from your selfe, and others of your noble familie, and much honour from your own Person in the performance, now returns againe to make a finall dedication of it selfe to you. Although not openly acknowledg'd by the Author, yet it is a legitimate off-spring, so lovely, and so much desired, that the often copying of it hath tir'd my pen to give my severall friends
The Epistle Dedicatory.

friends satisfaction, and brought me to a necessitie of producing it to the publick view; and now to offer it up in all rightfull devotion to those faire hopes, and rare Endowments of your much-promising Youth, which give a full assurance, to all that know you, of a future excellence. Live sweet Lord to be the honour of your Name, and receive this as your owne, from the hands of him, who hath by many favours beene long oblig'd to your most honour'd Parents, and as in this representation your attendant Thyrsis, so now in all reall expression

Your faithfull, and most humble Servant,

H. Lavves.
A MASKE
PERFORMED BEFORE
the President of W a l e s
at Ludlow, 1634.
The first Scene discovers a wild wood.

The attendant Spirit descends or enters.

Before the starrie threshold of loves Court
My mansion is, where those immortall shapes
Of bright aereall Spirits live insphear'd
In Regions mild of calme and serene aire,
Above the smoake and stirre of this dim spot
Which men call Earth, and with low-thoughted care
Confin'd, and pester'd in this pin-fold here,
Strive to keepe up a fraile, and feaverish being
Unmindfull of the crowne that Vertue gives
After this mortall change to her true Servants
Amongst the enthron'd gods on Sainted seats.
Yet some there be that by due steps aspire

To
To lay their just hands on that golden key
That ope's the palace of Eternity:
To such my errand is, and but for such
I would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds
With the rank vapours of this Sin-worne mould.

But to my task. Neptune besides the sway
Of every falt Flood, and each ebbing Streame
Tooke in my lot 'twixt high, and neither love
Imperial rule of all the Sea-girt Iles
That like to rich, and various gemms inlay
The unadorned bosome of the Deepe,
Which he to grace his tributarie gods
By course commits to severall government
And gives them leave to weare their Saphire crowns,
And weild their little tridents, but this Ile
The greatest, and the best of all the maine
He quarters to his blu-hair'd deities,
And all this tract that fronts the falling Sun
A noble Peere of mickle trust, and power
Has in his charge, with temper'd awe to guide
An old, and haughtie Nation proud in Armes:
Where his faire offpring nurs'd in Princely lore
Are comming to attend their Fathers state,
And new-entrusted Seepter, but their way
Lies through the perplex'rt paths of this dreare wood,
The nodding horror of whose shadie brows
Threats the forlorne and wandring Passinger.
And here their tender age might suffer peril
But that by quck command from Soveraigne love
I was dispatcht for their defence, and guard,
And listen why, for I will tell yee now
What never yet was heard in Tale or Song.

From
From old, or moderne Bard in hall, or bowre.

Bacchus that first from out the purple Grape
Crush't the sweet poysion of mis-used Wine
After the Tuscan Mariners transform'd
Coasting, the Tyrrenhe shore, as the winds lifted,
On Circes Island fell (who knowes not Circe
The daughter of the Sun: whose charmed Cup
Whoever tasted lost his upright shape,
And downward fell into a growling Swine)
This Nymph that gaz'd upon his clashing locks
With ivie berries wreath'd, and his blith youth
Had by him, ere he parted thence, a Son.
Much like his Father, but his Mother more,
Whom therefore she brought up and Comus nam'd,
Who ripe, and frolick of his full growne age
Roaving the Celtick, and Iberian fields
At last betakes him to this ominous wood,
And in thick shelter of black shades imbowr'd
Excolls his Mother at her mightie Art
Offering to every weare Traverler
His orient liquor in a Chrystall glasse
To quench the drouth of Phæbus, which as they taft
(For most doe taft through fond intemperate thirst)
Soone as the Potion works, their humane count'ance
Th'expressre resemblance of the gods is chang'd
Into some brutish forme of Wolfe, or Beare
Or Ounce, or Tiger, Hog, or bearded Goat,
All other parts remaining as they were,
And they, so perfect in their miserie,
Not once perceive their foule disfigurement,
But boast themselves more comely then before
And all their friends; and native home forget
To rule with pleasure in a sensuall rie.
Therefore when any favour'd of high love
Chances to passe through this adventrous glade,
Swift as the Sparkle of a glancing Starre
I shooe from heav'n to give him safe convoy,
As now I doe: but first I must put off
These my skie robes spun out of Iris wooffe,
And take the weeds and likenesse of a Swaine,
That to the service of this house belongs;
Who with his soft Pipe, and smooth-dittied Song,
Well knows to still the wild winds when they roare,
And hush the waving woods, nor of lesse faith,
And in this office of his Mountaine watch,
Likeliest, and neerest to the present aide
Of this occasion. But I heare the tread
Of hatefull steps, I must be viewlesse now.

Comus enters with a Charming rod in one hand,
his Glasse in the other, with him a roust of
Monsters headed like sundry sorts of wilde Beastes,
but otherwise like Men and Women, their apparell
glistening, they come in making a riotous and unru-
ly noise, with Torches in their hands.

Comus. The starre that bids the Shepheard fold,
Now the top of heav'n doth hold,
And the gilded Carre of Day
His glowing Axle doth allay,
In the sleepe Atlantik streame,
And the slope Sun his upward beame
Shoots against the duskie Pole,
Pacing toward the other gole
Of his Chamber in the East.
Meane while welcome Joy, and Fear,
Midnight shout, and revelrie,
Tipte dance, and Jollitie.
Braid your Locks with rosie Twine,
Dropping odours, dropping Wine.
Rigor now is gone to bed,
And Advice with scrupulous head,
Strict Age, and sovre Severitie
With their graue Sawes in slumber lie.
We that are of purer fire;
Immitate the starrie quire,
Who in their nightly watchfull Spheares,
Lead in swift round the Months and Yeares.
The Sounds; and Seas with all their sannie drove,
Now to the Moone in wavering Morrice move,
And on the tawny lands and shelves,
Trip the pert Fairies and the dapper Elves;
By dimpled Brooke, and Fountaine brim,
The Wood-nymphs deckt with daisiestrim,
Their merry wakes, and pastimes keepe,
What hath night to doe with sleepe?
Night hath better sweetes to prove,
Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.
Come let us our rights begin
'Tis onely day-light that makes Sin
Which these dun Shades will ne're report.
Haile Goddess of Nocturnall sport
Dark-vaiid Cotytto, t'whom the secret flame
Of mid-night Torches burnes; mysterious Dame
That ne're at call'd, but when the Dragon woome
Of Stygian darkness spets her thickest gloome

And
And makes one blot of all the aire,
Stay thy clowdie Ebon chaire,
Wherein thou rid'st with Hecat', and befriend
Vs thy vow'd Priests, till utmost end
Of all thy dues be done, and none left out
Ere the blabbing Eastern scout
The nice Morne on th' Indian steepe
From her cabin'd loop hole peepe,
And to the tel-tale Sun discovery
Our conceal'd Solemnity.
Come, knit hands, and beate the ground
In a light fantastick round.

The Measure.

Break off, break off, I feel the different pace
Of some chaff footing neere about this ground,
Run to your shrouds, within these Brakes, and Trees
Our number may affright: Some Virgin sure
(For so I can distinguish by mine Art)
Benighted in these woods. Now to my charmes
And to my wilie trains, I shall e're long
Be well flock't with as faire a Heard as graz'd
About my Mother Circe. Thus I hurle
My dazzling Spells into the spungie aire
Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion,
And give it false presentments, left the place
And my quaint habits breed astonishment,
And put the Damself to suspicious flight,
Which must not be; for that's against my course;
I under faire pretents of friendly ends,
And wel plac't words of glozing courtesie
Baited with reasons not unplausible

Wind
Wind me into the easy hearted man,
And hug him into snares; when once her eye
Hath met the vertue of this Magick dust,
I shall appeare some harmlesse Villager
Whom thrift keepes up about his Country geare
But here she comes, I fairly step aside
And hearken, if I may, her businesse here.

_The Ladie enters._

This way the noife was, if mine ear be true
My best guide now, me thought it was the sound
Of Riot, and ill manag'd Merriment,
Such as the jocond Flute, or gameome Pipe
Stirs up among the loose unleter'd Hinds
When for their teeming Flocks, and granges full
In wanton dance they praise the bounteous _Pan_,
And thanke the gods amisse. I should be loath
To meet the rudeness, and will'd insolence
Of such late Wassailers; yet o where else
Shall I informe my unacquainted feet
In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?
My Brothers when they saw me wearied out
With this long way; resolving here to lodge
Vnder the spreading favour of these Pines
Stept as they se'd to the next Thicket side
To bring me Berries, or such cooling fruit
As the kind hospitable woods provide.
They left me then, when the gray-hooded Ev'n
Like a sad Votarist in Palmers weeds,
Rose from the hindmost wheels of _Phaebus_ waine.
But where they are, and why they came not back
Is now the labour of my thoughts, tis likeliest
They had ingag'd their wandring steps too far,
And envious darkness, ere they could returne,
Had stolen them from me; else theevish Night
Why shouldst thou, but for some felonious end
In thy darke lanterne thus close up the Stars,
That nature hung in Heav'n, and fill'd their lamps
With everlasting oile to give due light
To the mistled, and lonely Travailer.
This is the place, as well as I may guesse
Whence even now the tumult of loud Mirth
Was rise, and perfect in my listening eare,
Yet nought but single darknesse doe I find,
What might this be? a thousand fantasies
Begin to throng into my memorie
Of calling shapes, and beckning shadows dire,
And ayrie tongues, that syllable mens names
On Sands, and Shoars, and desert Wildernesses.
These thoughts may startle well, but not astound
The vertuous mind, that ever walks attended
By a strong fiding champion Conscience.
O welcome pure-ey'd Faith, white-handed Hope
Thou flickering Angel girt with golden wings,
And thou unblemish'd forme of Chastitie
I see ye visibly, and now beleive
That he, the Supreme good, t'whom all things ill
Are but as slavish officers of vengeance
Would send a glistening Guardian if need were
To kepe my life, and honour unaffai'd.
Was I deceiv'd, or did a fable cloud
Turne forth her silver lining on the night?
I did not erre, there does a fables cloud
Turne forth her silver lining on the night
And
And casts a gleame over this tufted Grove.
I cannot hallow to my Brothers, but
Such noise as I can make to be heard farthest
Ile venter, for my new enliv'nd spirits
Prompt me; and they perhaps are not farre off.

Song.

Sweet echo, sweetest Nymph that liv'st unseen
Within thy airy shell
By slow Meander's margent green,
And in the violet-imbroider'd vale
Where the love-lorn Nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad Song mourneth well.

Canst thou not tell me of a gentle Paire
That likest thy Narcissus are?
O'f thou have
Hid them in some flowrie Cave,
Tell me but where
Sweet Queen of Parlie, Daughter of the Sphere,
So maist thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all Heav'ns Harmonies.

Com. Can any mortall mixture of Earths mould
Breath such Divine enchanting ravishment?
Sure something holy lodges in that brest,
And with these raptures moves the vocal aire
To testifie his hidden residence;
How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of Silence, through the emptie-vaulted night
At every fall smoothing the Raven downe
Of darkness till she smil'd: I have oft heard
My mother Circe with the Sirens three
Amidst the flowrie-kirtl'd Naiades
Culling their Potent hearbs, and balefull drugs
Who as they sung, would take the prison'd soule
And lap it in Elysium, Scylla wept,
And chid her barking waves into attention,
And fell Charybdis murmur'd soft applause:
Yet they in pleasing slumber lull'd the sense
And in sweet madness rob'd it of it selfe,
But such a sacred, and home-felt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss
I never heard till now. He speake to her
And she shall be my Queene. Haile foraine wonder
Whom certaine these rough shades did never breed
Unlesse the Goddess that in rural shrine
Dwell'st here with Pan, or Silvan, by blest Song
Forbidding every bleak unkindly Fog
To touch the prosperous growth of this tall wood.

La. Nay gentle Shepherd ill is lost that praise
That is address'd to unattending Eares,
Not any boast of skill, but extreame shift
How to regaine my fever'd companie
Compell'd me to awake the courteous Echo
To give me answer from her mossie Couch.
Co. What chance good Ladie hath bereft you thus?
La. Dim darkness, and this leavie Labyrinth.
Co. Could that divide you from neere-ushering
La. They left me weary on a grasse terre. (guides?
Co. By falshood, or discourtesie, or why?
La. To seeke i'th vally some coole friendly Spring.
Co. And left your faire side all unguarded Ladie?
La. They were but twain, & purpos'd quick return.
Co. Perhaps fore-stalling night prevented them.
La. How else my misfortune is to hit!
Co. Imports their loss, beside the present need?
La. No lesse then if I should my brothers lose.
Co. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom?
La. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips.
Co. Two such I saw, what time the labour'd Oxe
In his loose traces from the furrow came,
And the twink't hedger at his Supper feast;
I saw them under a green mantling vine
That crawls along the side of you small hill,
Plucking ripe clutters from the tender shoots,
Their port was more than humane: as they stood,
I tooke it for a faërie vision
Of some gay creatures of the element
That in the colours of the Rainbow live
And play 'th plighted clouds, I was aw-struck,
And as I past, I worshipt: if those you seeke
It were a journey like the path to heav'n
To helpe you find them. La. Gentle villager
What readiest way would bring me to that place?
Co. Due west it rises from this shrubie point.
La. To find out that good shepheard I suppose
In such a scant allowance of starre light
Would overtask the best land-pilots art
Without the sure guesse of well-practiz'd feet.
Co. I know each lane; and every alley green
Dingle, or bushie dell of this wild wood,
And every boskie bourne from side to side
My daylie walks and ancient neighbourhood,
And if your stray attendance be yet lodg'd
Or shroud within these limits, I shall know

Ere
Ere morrow wake, or the low-roofed lark
From her thack't palate rowse, if otherwise.
I can conduct you Ladie to a low
But loyall cottage, where you may be safe
Till further quell'. La. Shepheard I take thy word,
And trust thy honest offer'd courtesie,
Which oft is sooner found in lowly shed
With smoakie rafters, then in taplirie halls,
And courts of Princes, where it first was nam'd,
And yet is most pretended: in a place
Less warranted then this, or lesse secure.
I cannot be, that I should feare to change it,
Eye me blest Providence, and square my triall
To my proportion'd strength. Shepheard lead on.---

The two Brothers.

Eld bro. Unmuffle yee saint stars, and thou fair moon
That wontst to love the travailers benizone
Stoope thy pale visage through an amber cloud
And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
In double night of darkneffe, and of shades;
Or if your influence be quite damm'd up
With black usurping mists, some gentle taper
Though a rush candle from the wicker hole
Of some clay habitation visit us
With thy long levell'd rule of streaming light
And thou shalt be our starre of Arcadie
Or Tyrian Cynostre. 2 Bro. Or if our eyes
Be barr'd that happinesse, might we but heare
The folded flocks pen'd in their wasted cores,
Or sound of pastoral reed with oaten fllops,
Or whistle from the Lodge, or village cock

Count
Count the night watches to his featherie Dames,
T'would be some solace yet, some little chearing
In this close dungeon of innumerous bowes.
But o that haplesse virgin our lost sister
Where may she wander now, whether betake her
From the chill dew, amongst rude burs and thistles?
Perhaps some cold banke is her boulster now
Or 'gainft the rugged barke of some broad Elme
Leans her unpiillow'd head fraught with sad fears.
What if in wild amazement, and affright
Or while we speake within the direfull graspe
Of Savage hunger, or of Savage heat?

Bld: bro. Peace brother, be not over exquisite
To cast the fashion of uncertaine evils;
For grant they be so, while they rest unknowne
What need a man forestall his date of griefe
And run to meet what he would most avoid?
Or if they be but false alarms of Feare
How bitter is such selfe-delusion?
I doe not thinke my sister so to seeke
Or so unprincipl'd in vertues book
And she sweet peace that goodnesse bosoms ever
As that the single want of light, and noife
(Not being in danger, as I trust she is not)
Could stir the constant mood of her calme thoughts
And put them into mil. becomming plight.
Vertue could see to doe what vertue would
By her owne radiant light, though Sun and Moon
Were in the flat Sea sunck, and Wisdoms selfe
Oft seeks to sweet retired Solitude
Where with her best nurse Contemplation
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings

C 3
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all to ruff'd, and sometimes impair'd.
He that has light within his owne cleere brest
May sit i' th center, and enjoy bright day,
But he that hides a darke soule, and foule thoughts
Benighted walks under the mid-day Sun,
Himselfe is his owne dungeon.

2. Bro. 'Tis most true
That musing meditation most affects
The Pensive secrecie of desert cell
Farre from the checrfull haunt of men, and heards,
And sits as safe as in a Senat house
For who would rob an Hermit of his weeds
His few books, or his beades, or maple dish,
Or doe his gray hairs any violence?
But beautie like the faire Hesperian tree
Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
Of dragon watch with unenchanted eye
To save her blossoms, and defend her fruit
From the rash hand of bold Incontinence.
You may as well spread out the unfusd heaps
Of misers treasure by an outlaws den
And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope
Danger will winke on opportunitie
And let a single helpleffe mayden passe
Uninjur'd in this wild surrounding waste
Of night, or lonelyness it recks me not
I feare the dred events that dog them both,
Left same ill greeting touch attempt the person
Of our unowned sister.

Eld. Bro. I doe not brocher
Inferre, as if I thought my sisters state

Secure
Secure without all doubt, or controversy:
Yet where an equal poised hope, and fear
Does arbitrate th' event, my nature is
That I encline to hope, rather then fear
And gladly banish squint suspicion.
My fitter is not so defenceless left
As you imagine, she has a hidden strength
Which you remember not.

2. Bro. What hidden strength
Unless the strength of heav'n, if meane that:
   Eld. Bro. I meane that too, but yet a hidden strength
Which if heav'n gave it, may be term'd her owne:
'Tis chastitie, my brother, chastitie:
She that has that, is clad in compleat steele,
And like a quiver'd nymph with arrows keen
May trace huge forrests, and unharbour'd heaths
Infamous hills, and sandie perilous wilds
Where through the sacred rays of chastitie
No savage fierce, bandit, or mountaineer
Will dare to foyle her virgin purity
Yea there, where very desolation dwell
By grots, and caverns frag'd with horrid shades.
She may passe on with unblench't majesty
Be it not done in pride, or in presumption.
Some say no evil thing that walks by night
In fog, or fire, by lake, or moorish fen
Blew meaner hag, or stubborn unlay'd ghost
That breaks his magicke chains at curfew time
No goblin, or swart Faerie of the mine
Has hurtfull power o'er true virginity.
Doe yee believe me yet, or shall I call
Antiquity from the old schools of Greece
To testify the armes of Chastitie?
Hence had the huntresse Diana her drest bow
Faire silver-shafted Queene for ever chaft
Wherewith we tam'd the brinded lionesse
And spotted mountaine pard, but set at nought
The frivolous bolt of Cupid, gods and men
Fear'd her sterne frowne, & she was queen oth' woods.
What was that snakie headed Gorgon sheild
That wise Minerva wore, unconquer'd virgin
Wherewith she froze'd her foes to congeal'd stone?
But rigid looks of Chait austeritie
And noble grace that dash't brute violence
With sudden adoration, and blancke aw.
So deare to heav'n is faintly chastitie
That when a soule is found sincerely so,
A thousand liveried angels lackie her
Driving farre off each thing of sinne, and guilt,
And in cleere dreame, and solemnne vision.
Tell her of things that no grosse eare can heare,
Till oft converse with heav'nly habitants
Begin to cast a beame on th' outward shape
The unpolluted temple of the mind
And turns it by degrees to the soules essence
Till all bee made immortal; but when lust
By unchaft looks, loose gestures, and soule talke
But most by leud, and lavish act of sin
Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
The soule growes clotted by contagion,
Imbodies, and imbrutes, till the quite loose
The divine propertie of her first being.
Such are those thick, and gloomie shadows damp
Oft seen in Charnell vaults, and Sepulchers
Hovering,
Hovering, and sitting by a new made grave
As loath to leave the body that it lov'd,
And link't it selfe by carhall sensualitie
To a degenerate and degraded state.

2 Bro. How charming is divine Philosophie!
Not harsh, and crabbed as dull fools suppose,
But musicall as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetuall feast of nectar'd sweets
Where no crude surset reigns. El:bro. Lift, lift I heare
Some farre off hallow breake the silent aire.

2 Bro. Me thought so too, what should it be?
Eld: bro. For certaine
Either some one like us night founder'd here,
Or else some neighbour wood man, or at worst
Some roving robber calling to his fellows.

2 Bro. Heav'n keepe my sister, agen agen and neere,
Best draw, and stand upon our guard.

Eld: bro. Ile hallow,
If he be friendly he comes well, if not
Defence is a good cause, and Heav'n be for us.

The attendant Spirit habited like a shepheard.

That hallow I should know, what are you, speake,
Come not too neere, you fall on iron flakes else.

Spir. What voice is that, my yong Lord? speake agen.
2 Bro. O brother 'tis my father Shepheard sure.

Eld: bro. Thyrfs? whose artfull strains have oft de-
The huddling brook to heare his madrigale, （layd
And sweeten'd every muskrose of the dale,
How cam't thou here good Swaine, hath any ram
Slip't from the fold, or yong kid lost his dam,
Or straggliag weather the pen't flock forlook,

D

How
(18)

How couldst thou find this darke sequester'd nook?

Spire. O my lov'd masters heire, and his next joy
I came not here on such a triviall toy
As a strayd Ewe, or to pursue the slealth
Of pilfering wolfe, not all the fleacie wealth
That doth enrich these downs is worth a thought-
To this my errand, and the care it brought.
But o my virgin Ladie where is she,
How chance she is not in your companie?

Eld. bro. To tell thee sadly shepeheard without blame
Or our neglect, wee loft her as wee came.

Spire. Aye me unhappie then my fears are true.

Eld. bro. What fears good Thrys? prethee briefly

Spire. Ile tell you, 'tis not vaine, or fabulous (shew.
(Though so esteem'd by shallow ignorance)
What the sage Poëts taught by th'heav'ly Muse
Storied of old in high immortall verse
Of dire Chimera's and enchanted Iles
And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to hell,
For such there be, but unbelief is blind.

Within the navill of this hideous wood
Immur'd in cyrepsee shades a Sorcerer dwells
Of Bacchus, and of Circe borne, great Comus,
Deepe skil'd in all his mothers witcherries,
And here to every thirstie wanderer
By the enticement gives his banefull cup
With many murmurs mixt, whose pleasing poison
The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
And the inglorious likenesse of a beast
Fixes instead, unmoulding reasons mintage
Character'd in the face; this have I learn't
Tending my flocks hard by i'th hilly crofts
That brow this bottome glade, whence night by night
He and his monstrous rout are heard to howle
Like stabl'd wolves, or tigers at their prey
Doing abhorred rites to Hecate
In their obscured haunts of inmost bowres.
Yet have they many baits, and guilefull spells
T'inveigle, and invite th'unwarie sense
Of them that passe unweeting by the way.
This evening late by then the chewing flocks
Had ta'ne their supper on the favourite herbe
Of Knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold
I fate me downe to watch upon a bank
With ivie-canopied, and interwove
With flaunting hony-suckle, and began
W rant in a pleasing fit of melancholy
To meditate my rural minstrelsie
Till fancie had her fill, but ere a close
The wonted roare was up midst the woods,
And filld the aire with barbarous dissonance
At which I ceas't, and listen'd them a while
Till an unusual stop of sudden silence
Gave respit to the drowsie frighted steeds
That draw the litter of close-curtain'd sleepe.
At last a soft, and soleime breathing sound
Rose like a steame of rich distill'd Perfumes
And stole upon the aire, that even Silence
Wastooke e're she was ware, and wish't she might
Deny her nature, and be never more
Still to be so displac't. I was all eare,
And took in strains that might create a soule
Vnder the ribs of Death, but o ere long
Too well I did perceive it was the voice
Of my most honour'd Lady your deare siter.
Amaz d I stood, harrow'd with griefe and feare,
And ò poore haplesse nightingale thought I
How sweet thou singf't, how neere the deadly snare!
Then downe the lawns I ran with headlong haft
Through paths, and turnings often trod by day
Till guided by mine eare I found the place
Where that dam d wizzard hid in flie disguise
(For so by certain signs I knew) had met.
Alreadie, ere my beft speed could prævent
The aidleffe innocent Ladi's his with't prey,
Who gently ask't if he had see'n such two
Supposing him some neighbour villager;
 Longer I durst not stay, but soone I guess't
Yee were the two she mean't, with that I sprung
Into swifft flight till I had found you here,
But farther know I not. * 2 Bro. O night and shades
How are yee joyn'd with hell in triple knot
Against th'unarm'd weaknesse of one virgin
Alone, and helpleffe! is this the confidence
You gave me broth'rn? * Eld. brö. Yes, and keep it still,
Leave on it safely, not a period
Shall be unfaid for me; 'against the threats
Of malice or of forcerie, or that power
Which erring men call Chancé, this I hold firme,
Vertuè may be affail'd, but never hurt,
Surpriz'd by unjust force, but not enthral'd,
Yea even that which mischiefe meant most harme,
Shall in thehappietriallprove most glorie,
But evill on it selfe shall backe recoyle
And mixe no more with goodnesse, when at last
Gather'd like scum, and letl'd to it selfe.
It shall bee in eternall restlesse change
Selfe fed, and selfe consum'd, if this faile
The pillar'd firmament is rottenesse,
And earths base built on stubble. But come let's on
Against th' opposing will and arme of heav'n
May never this just sword be lifted up,
But for that damn'd magician, let him be girt
With all the greifixly legions that troope
Vnder the footie flag of Acheron,
Harpyies and Hydra's, or all the monstrous bugs
'Twixt Africa, and Inde, He find him out
And force him to restore his purchase backe
Or drag him by the curles, and cleave his scalpe
Downe to the hipps.

*spir.* Alas good ventrous youth,
I love thy courage yet, and bold Emprise,
But here thy sword can doe thee little stead,
Farrè other arms, and other weapons must
Be those that quell the might of hellish charms,
He with his bare wand can untred thy joynts
And crumble all thy sinewes.

*Eld. Bro.* Why prethee the shepheard
How durft thou then thy selue approach so neere
As to make this relation:

*spir.* Care and utmost shifts
How to secure the Ladie from surprisall
Brought to my mind a certaine shepheard lad
Of small regard to see to, yet well skill'd
In every venrous plant, and healing herbe
That spreds her verdant leaves to th' morning ray,
He lov'd me well, and oft would beg me sing,
Which when I did, he on the tender grass.

Would
Would fit, and hearken even to extasie,
And in requitall ope his leather' n scrip,
And shew me simples of a thousand names
Telling their strange, and vigorous faculties,
Amongst the rest a small unlightly root,
But of divine effect, he cull'd me out;
The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,
But in another Countrie, as he said,
Bore a bright golden flower, but not in this foyle:
Unknowne, and like esteem'd, and the dull swayne
Treads on it dayly with his clouted soone,
And yet more med'cinal is it then that 
That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave,
He call'd it Harmony, and gave it me
And bad me keepe it as of soveraine use
Gainst all enchantments, mildew blast, or damp
Or gaffly furies apparition;
I purs't it up, but little reck'ning made
Till now that this extremity compell'd,
But now I find it true, for by this means
I knew the foule inchanter though disguis'd,
Enter'd the very lime twigs of his spells,
And yet came off, if you have this about you
(As I will give you when wee goe) you may
Boldly assault the necromancers hall,
Where if he be, with dauntlesse hardihood
And brandish't blade rush on him, breake his glasse,
And shed the luscious liquor on the ground
But sease his wand, though he and his curt crew
Fierce signe of battaille make, and menace high,
Or like the sons of Vulcan vomit smoake,
Yet will they soone retire, if he but shrinke.
Eld. Bro. Thyrsis lead on apace I'll follow thee,
And some good angel bear a shield before us.

The Scene Changes to a stately palace set out with all
manner of delicious nesse, soft musicke, tables spread
with all dainties. Comus appears with his rabble,
and the Lady set in an enchanted chair to whom he
offers his glass, which she pass by, and goes about
to rise.

Comus. Nay Lady sit; if I but wave this wand,
Your nerves are all chain'd up in alabaster,
And you a statue; or as Daphne was
Root bound that fled Apollo.

La. Foole do not boast,
Thou canst not touch the freedome of my mind
With all thy charms, although this corporall rind
Thou haft immanac'd, while heav'n fees good.

Co. Why are you vex'd Lady, why doe you frowne?
Here dwell no frowns, nor anger, from these gates
Sorrow flies farre: see here beall the pleasures
That fancie can beget on youthfull thoughts
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
Brisk as the April buds in primrose season.
And first behold this cordial julep here
That flames, and dances in his crystall bounds
With spirits of balme, and fragrant syrops mixt.
Not that Nepenthes which the wife of Thone:
In Egypt gave to love borne Helena:
Is of such power to stirre up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.
Why should you be so cruell to your selfe,

And
And to those dainty limbs which nature lent
For gentle usage, and soft delicacy:
But you invert the cov'nants of her trust,
And harshly deale like an ill borrower
With that which you receiv'd on other termes,
Scorning the unexempt condition,
By which all mortall frailty must subsist,
Refreshment after toile, ease after paine,
That have been tir'd all day without repast,
And timely rest have wanted, but faire virgin
This will restore all soone.

La. T'will not false traitor,
T'will not restore the truth and honestie
That thou haft banifi'd from thy tongue with lies,
Was this the cottage, and the safe abode
Thou told'ft me of? what grim aspects are these,
These ougly-headed monsters? Mercie guard me!
Hence with thy brewd enchantments foule deceiver,
Haft thou betray'd my credulous innocence
With vifor'd falshood, and base forgerie,
And wouldft thou seek againe to trap me here
With lickerish baits fit to ensnare a brute?
Were it a draft for Juno when she banquets
I would not taff thy treasonous offer; none
But such as are good men can give good things,
And that which is not good, is not delicious
To a wel-govern'd and wise appetite.

Co. O foolishnesse of men! that lend their cares
To those budge doctors of the Stoick sffe,
And fetch their precepts from the Cynick tub,
Praising the leane, and sallow Abstinence.
Wherefore did Nature powre her bounties forth

With
With such a full and unwithering hand,  
Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks  
Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable  
But all to please, and sate the curious tast  
And set to work millions of spinning worms,  
That in their green shops weave the smooth-hair'd silk  
To deck her Sons, and that no corner might  
Be vacant of her plentie, in her owne loyns  
She hutch't th'all worship ore, and precious gems  
To store her children with; if all the world  
Should in a pot of temperance feed on Pulse,  
Drink the clear stremes, and nothing weare but Freize,  
Th'all-giver would be unthank't, would be unprais'd,  
Not halfe his riches known, and yet despis'd,  
And we should serve him as a grudging master,  
As a penurious niggard of his wealth,  
And live like Natures bastards, not her sons,  
Who would be quite surcharg'd with her own weight,  
And strangl'd with her want fertility; (plumes,  
Th'earth cumber'd, and the wing'd aire dark't with  
The heards would over-inmultitude their Lords,  
The sea ore-frught would (well, and th'unsoht dia-  
Would so emblaze the forehead of the Deep, (monds  
And so bestudd'd with stars that they below  
Would grow inur'd to light, and come at last  
To gaze upon the Sun with flameless brows.  
Lift Ladie be not coy, and be not cosen'd  
With that fame vaunted name Virginitie,  
Beautie is natures coine, must not be hoored,  
But must be currant, and the good thereof  
Consists in mutuall and partaken blisse,  
Unfavourie in th'injoyment of it selfe

E
If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
It withers on the stalk with languish't head.
Beautie is natures brag, and must be showne
In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities
Where most may wonder at the workmanship;
It is for homely features to keepe home,
They had their name thence; coarse complexions
And cheeks of forrie graine will serve to ply
The sampler, and to teize the huswifes wooll.
What need a vermeil-tinctur'd lip for that
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the Morne
There was another meaning in these gifts?
Thinke what, and be advis'd, you are but yong yet.

La. I had not thought to have unlockt my lips
In this unhallow'd aire, but that this Jugler
Would thinke to charme my judgement, as mine eyes
Obruding false rules pranckt in reasons garbe.
I hate when vice can bolt her arguments
And vertue has no tongue to check her pride:
Impostor doe not charge most innocent nature
As if she would her children should be riotous
With her abundance, she good catereffe
Means her provision only to the good
That live according to her sober laws
And holy dictate of spare Temperance,
If every just man that now pines with want
Had but a moderate, and besteeming share
Of that which lewdly-pamper'd Luxurie
Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,
Natures full blessings would be well dispenc't.
In unsuperfluous even proportion,
And she no whit encomber'd with her store,
And then the giver would be better thank't,
His praise due paid, for swinish gluttony
Ne'r looks to heav'n amidst his gorgeous feast,
But with belotted base ingratitude
Cramms, and blasphemes his feeder. Shall I goe on?
Or have I said enough? to him that dares
Arme his profane tongue with reproachfull words
Against the Sun-clad power of Chastitie
Faine would I something say, yet to what end?
Thou haft nor Eare, nor Soule to apprehend
The sublime notion, and high mysterie
That must be utter'd to unfold the sage
And serious doctrine of Virginitie,
And thou art worthy that thou shouldst not know
More hapinesse then this thy present lot.
Enjoy your deere Wit, and gay Rhetorick
That hath so well beene taught her dazling fence,
Thou art not fit to heare thy selfe convince't;
Yet should I trie, the uncontrouled worth
Of this pure caufe would kindle my rap't spirits
To such a flame of sacred vehemence,
That dumb things would be mov'd to sympathize,
And the brute Earth would lend her nerves, and shake,
Till all thy magick structures rear'd so high
Were shatter'd into heaps or thy false head.

co. She fables not, I feele that I doe feare
Her words set off by some superior power;
And though not mortall, yet a cold shuddring dew
Dips me all o' e, as when the wrath of Jove
Speaks thunder, and the chains of Erebus
To some of Saturns crew. I must dissemble,
And try her yet more strongly. Come; no more,

This
This is meere morall babble, and direc't.
Against the canon laws of our foundation,
I must not suffer this, yet 'tis but the lees
And setlings of a melancholy blood;
But this will cure all aight, one sip of this
Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taft.—

The brothers rush in with swords drawne, wrest his
glasse out of his hand, and break it against the
ground; his rout make signe of resistance, but are
all driven in; the attendant Spirit comes in.

Spir. What, have you let the false enchanter scape?
O yee mistooke, yee should have snatcht his wand
And bound him fast; without his rod revers't,
And backward mutters of dislevering power
Wee cannot free the Ladie that fits here
In stonie fetters fixt, and motionlesse;
Yet stay, be not disturb'd, now I bethinke me,
Some other meanes I have which may be us'd,
Which once of Melibaus old I learnt
The soothest shepheard that ere pipe't on plains.
There is a gentle nymph not farre from hence
That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream,
Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure,
Whilome shee was the daughter of Locrine,
That had the scepter from his father Brute.
She guiltlesse damfell flying the mad pursuitt;
Of her enraged stepdam Guendolen,
Commended her faire innocence to the flood.
That stay'd her flight with his crosse-flowing course,
The water Nymphs that in the bottome playd
Held up their pearled wrifts and tooke her in,
Bearing her straie to aged Nereus hall
Who piteous of her woes reaad her lanke head,
And gave her to his daughters to imbathe
In nectar'd lavers strewd with asphodil,
And through the porch, and inlet of each sense
Dropt in ambrosial oyles till she reviv'd,
And underwent a quicke, immortal change
Made goddesse of the river; still she retains
Her maiden gentlenesse, and oft at eve
Visits the heards along the twilight meadows,
Helping all urchin blasts, and ill luke signes
That the shrewd medling elfe delights to make,
Which she with precious viold liquors heals.
For which the shepheardes at their festivalls
Carroll her goodnesse lowd in rusticke layes,
And throw sweet garland wreaths into her streame
Of pancies, pinks, and gaudie daffadills.
And, as the old Swaine said, she can unlocke
The claspinge charme, and thaw the numming spell,
If she be right invok't in warbled Song,
For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift
To aid a virgin such as was her selfe
In hard besetting need, this will I trie
And adde the power of some adjuring verse.

Song:

Sabrina faire
Listen where thou art sitting.
Under the glasse, coole, translucent wave,
In twisted braids of lilies knitting.

E 3

The
The loose traine of thy amber-dropping haire,
Listen for deare honours sake.
Goddess of the silver lake
Listen and save.

Listen and appeare to us
In name of great Oceanus,
By th' earth shaking Neptune's mace
And Taythys grave majestick pace,
By hoarie Nereus wrinkled looke,
And the Carpathian wisards hooke,
By scale Triton's winding shell.
And old sooth saying Glauceus spell;
By Leucothea's ovely hands,
And her son that rules the stronds,
By Thetis tinsel-flipp'rd feet;
And the songs of Sirens sweet,
By dead Parthenope's deare tomb;
And faire Ligea's golden comb,
Wherewith the fits on diamond rocks
Sleeking her soft alluring locks,
By all the Nymphs that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wilie glance,
Rise, rise and heave thy rose head
From thy coral-paven bed,
And bridle in thy headlong wave
Till thou our summons answerd have.

Listen and save.

Sabrina rises attended by water Nymphes and sings.
By the rashie fringed banke,
Where grows the willow and the oser dancke
My sliding chariot stays,

Thick
(31)

Thicke set with agas, and the azurne sheene
Of turkis blew, and Emrould greene
That in the channell strayes,
Whils from off the waters fleet
Thus I set my printlesse feet
Ore the cowslips velvet head,
That bends not as I tread,
Gentle swaine at thy request
I am here.

Spir. Goddesse deare
Wee implore thy powerfull hand
To undoe the charm'd band
Of true virgin here distreft,
Through the force, and through the wile
Of unblest inchanter vile.

Sab. Shepheard tis my office best
To helpe innared chastitie;
Brightest Ladie looke on me
Thus I sprinkle on thy brest
Drops that from my fountaine pure
I have kept of precious cure,
Thrice upon thy fingers tip,
Thrice upon thy rubied lip,
Next this marble venom'd seate
Smear'd with gummes of glutinous heate
I touch with chaft palines moist and cold,
Now the spell hath lost his hold.
And I must haft ere morning houre
To waite in Amphitrite's bowre.

Sabrina
Spir. Virgin, daughter of Locrine
Sprung of old Anchises line
May thy brimmed waves for this
Their full tribute never misse
From a thousand pettie rills,
That tumble downe the snowie hills:
Summer drouth, or singed aire
Never scorche thy tresses faire,
Nor wet Octoberes torrent flood
Thy molten crystal fill with mudde,
May thy billowes rowle a shoare
The beryll, and the golden ore,
May thy iortie head be crown'd
With many a tower, and terrasse round,
And here and there thy banks upon
With groves of myrrhe, and cinnamon.

Come Ladie while heaven lends us grace,
Let us fly this cursed place,
Left the sorcerer us intice
With some other new device.
Not a waft, or needless found
Till we come to holyer ground,
I shall be your faithfull guide
Through this gloomie covert wide,
And not many furlongs thence.
Is your Fathers residence,
Where this night are met in state
Many a freind to gratulate
His wish't presence, and beside
All the Swains that there abide,
With Liggs, and rural dance resort,
Wee shall catch them at their sport,
And our suddaine comming there
Will double all their mirth, and cheer.
Come let us haft the starrs are high
But night fits monarch yet in the mid skie.

The Scene changes presenting Ludlow towne and the
Presidents Castle, then come in Countrie dancers, af-
ter them the attendant Spirit with the two Brothers
and the Ladie.

Song.

Spir. Back shepherds, back enough your play,
Till next Sun-shine holiday,
Here be without duck or nod,
Other trippings to be trod
Of lighter toes, and such Court guise
As Mercury did first devise
With the mincing Dryades
On the lawns, and on the leas.

This second Song presents them
to their father and mother.

Noble Lord, and Lady bright,
I have brought yee new delight,
Here behold so goodly grown.
Three faire branches of your owne,
Heav'n hath timely tri'd their youth,
Their faith, their patience, and their truth.

F

And
And sent them here through hard assays
With a crown of deathlesse Praise,
To triumph in victorious dance
Ore sensual Folly, and Intemperance.

The dances ended, the Spirit Epilogizes.

Spir. To the Ocean now I flie,
And those happie climes that lie
Where day never shuts his eye,
Vp in the broad fields of the skie:
There I suck the liquid ayre
All amidst the gardens faire
Of Meletemus, and his daughters three
That sing about the golden tree,
Along the crisped shades, and bowres
Revells the spruce and jocond Spring,
The Graces, and the rosie-bofora'd Howres.
Thither all their bounties bring,
That there eternall Summer dwells
And west winds, with muskie wing
About the cedar'n alleys fling
Nard, and Caffia's balmie smells.
Tris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks that blow
Flowers of more mingled hew
Then her purfl'd scarfe can shew,
And drenches with Elysian dew
(Lift mortalls, if your cares be true)
Beds of Hyacinth, and roses)
Where young Adonis oft reproves:
Waxing well of his deepe wound
In slumber soft, and on the ground

Sadly
(35)

Sadly fits th' Assyrian Queene;
But farre above in spangled sheene
Celestiall Cupid her fame'd Son advanc't,
Holds his deare Psyche sweet intranc't
After her wandring labours long,
Till free consent the gods among
Make her his æternall Bride,
And from her faire unspotted side
Two blissfull twins are to be borne,
Youth, and Ioy; so love hath sworne.

But now my taske is smoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run
Quickly to the greene earths end,
Where the bow'd welkin low doth bend,
And from thence can soare as soone
To the corners of the Moone.

Mortalls that would follow me,
Love vertue, she alone is free,
She can teach yee how to clime
Higher then the Sphærie chime;
Or if vertue feeble were
Heav'n it selfe would stoope to her.

The principall persons in this Maske were

The Lord Bracly, The Lady Alice
Mr. Thomas Egerton, }

The End.
Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
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