

Soliman and Perseda

SOLIMAN: This present pleaseth more than all the rest,
And were their garments turned from black to white,
I should have deemed them Juno's goodly swans,
Or Venus' milk-white doves, so mild they are,
5 And so adorned with beauty's miracle.
Here, Brusor, this kind turtle shall be thine;
Take her and use her at thy pleasure;
But this kind turtle is for Soliman,
That her captivity may turn to bliss.
10 Fair locks, resembling Phoebus' radiant beams;
Smooth forehead, like the table of high Jove,
Small penciled eyebrows, like two glorious rainbows;
Quick lamp-like eyes, like heaven's two brightest orbs;
Lips of pure coral, breathing ambrosia;
15 Cheeks, where the rose and lily are in combat;
Neck, whiter than the snowy Appenines;
Breasts, like two over-flowing fountains,
'Twi't which a vale leads to the Elysian shades,
Where under covert lies the fount of pleasure
20 Which thoughts may guess, but tongue must not profane.
A sweeter creature nature never made;
Love never tainted Soliman till now.
Now, fair virgin, let me hear thee speak.

PERSEDA: What can my tongue utter but grief and death?

25 SOLIMAN: The sound is honey, but the sense is gall;
Then, sweeting, bless me with a cheerful look.

PERSEDA: How can mine eyes dart forth a pleasant look,
When they are stopped with floods of flowing tears?

SOLIMAN: If tongue with grief, and eyes with tears be filled,
30 Say, virgin, how doth thy heart admit
The pure affection of great Soliman?

PERSEDA: My thoughts are like pillars of adamant,
Too hard to take an new impression.

SOLIMAN: Nay, then, I see, my stooping makes her proud;
35 She is my vassal, and I will command.
Coy virgin, knowest thou what offense it is
To thwart the will and pleasure of a king?
Why, thy life is done, if I but say the word.

PERSEDA: Why, that's the period that my heart desires.

40 SOLIMAN: And die thou shalt, unless thou change thy mind.

PERSEDA: Nay, then, Perseda grows resolute:
Soliman's thoughts and mine resemble
Lines parallel that never can be joined.

SOLIMAN: Then kneel thou down,
45 And at my hands receive the stroke of death,
Doomed to thyself by thine own willfulness.

PERSEDA: Strike, strike; thy words pierce deeper than thy blows.

SOLIMAN: [*Aside*] Her milk-white neck, that alabaster tower;
'Twill break the edge of my keen scimitar,
50 And pieces flying back will wound myself.

PERSEDA: O Christ, receive my soul.

SOLIMAN: She calls on Christ;
I will not send her to him. Her words are music,
The self-same music that in ancient days
55 Brought Alexander from war to banqueting,
And made him fall from skirmishing to kissing.
No, my dear, Love would not let me kill thee,
Though Majesty would turn desire to wrath.
There lies my sword, humbled at thy feet;
60 And I myself, that govern many kings,
Entreat a pardon for my rash misdeed.

PERSEDA: Now Soliman wrongs his imperial state;
But if thou love me, and have hope to win,
Grant one boon that I shall crave of thee.

65 SOLIMAN: Whate'er it be, Perseda, I grant it thee.

PERSEDA: Then let me live a Christian virgin still,
Unless my state shall alter by my will.

SOLIMAN: My word is past, and I recall my passions;
What should he do with crown and Emperie
70 That cannot govern private fond affections?
Yet give me leave in honest sort to court thee,
To ease, though not to cure, my malady.

Lust's Dominion

Enter Zarack, Baltazar, two Moors taking tobacco, music sounding within. Enter Queen Mother of Spain with two Pages, Eleazar sitting on a chair suddenly draws the curtain.

QUEEN MOTHER: Why is my love's aspect so grim and horrid?
Look smoothly on me,
Chime out your softest strains of harmony,
And on delicious music's silken wings
5 Send ravishing delight to my love's ears,
That he may be enamoured of your tunes.
Come, let's kiss.

ELEAZAR: Away, away!

QUEEN MOTHER: No, no, says I; and twice away says stay:
10 Come, come, I'll have a kiss, but if you strive
For one denial you shall forfeit five.

ELEAZAR: Nay prithee good Queen leave me;
I am now sick, heavy, and dull as lead.

QUEEN MOTHER: I'll make thee lighter by taking something from thee.

15 ELEAZAR: Do, take from me this ague and these fits, that hanging on me
Shake me in pieces, and set all my blood
A boiling with the fire of rage: away, away!
Thou believ'st I jest and laugh'st, to see my wrath wear antic shapes.
Begone, begone.

20 QUEEN MOTHER: What means my love? Burst all those wires! Burn all those
instruments!
For they displease my Moor. Art thou now pleased,

Or wert thou now disturbed? I'll wage all Spain
To one sweet kiss; this is some new device
To make me fond and long. Oh! You men
25 Have tricks to make poor women die for you.

ELEAZAR: What? Die for me? Away!

QUEEN MOTHER: Away? What way? I prithee speak more kindly.
Why dost thou frown? At whom?

ELEAZAR: At thee!

30 QUEEN MOTHER: At me? Oh why at me? For each contracted frown
A crooked wrinkle interlines my brow.
Spend but one hour in frowns and I shall look
Like to a beldam of one hundred years.
I prithee speak to me and chide me not,
35 I prithee chide if I have done amiss,
Kiss
But let my punishment be this, and this.
I prithee smile on me, if but a while,
Then frown on me, I'll die. I prithee smile.
Smile on me, and these two wanton boys,
40 These pretty lads that do attend on me,
Shall call thee Jove, shall wait upon thy cup
And fill thee nectar; their enticing eyes
Shall serve as crystal, wherein thou maist see
To dress thyself, if thou wilt smile on me.
45 Smile on me, and with coronets of pearl,
And bells of gold, circling their pretty arms
In a round ivory fount these two shall swim,
And dive to make thee sport.
Bestow one smile, one little, little smile,
50 And in a net of twisted silk and gold

In my all-naked arms, thyself shalt lie.

ELEAZAR: Why, what to do? Lust's arms do stretch so wide
That none can fill them; I'll lie there, away.

QUEEN MOTHER: Where hast thou learned this language? That can say
55 No more, but two rude words: away, away.
Am I grown ugly now?

ELEAZAR: Ugly as hell!

QUEEN MOTHER: Thou lovedst me once.

ELEAZAR: That can thy bastards tell.

60 QUEEN MOTHER: What is my sin? I will amend the same.

ELEAZAR: Hence strumpet, use of sin makes thee past shame.

QUEEN MOTHER: Strumpet?

ELEAZAR: Aye, strumpet.

QUEEN MOTHER: Too true 'tis, woe is me.
65 I am a strumpet, but made so by thee.

ELEAZAR: By me? No, not by these young bawds; fetch thee a glass
And thou shalt see the balls of both thine eyes
Burning in fire of lust; by me? There's here
Within this hollow cistern of thy breast
70 A spring of hot blood, have not I to cool it
Made an extraction to the quintessence
Even of my soul, melted all my spirits,
Ravished my youth, deflowered my lovely cheeks.

And dried this, this to anatomy
75 Only to feed your lust, (these boys have ears)
Yet wouldst thou murder me.

QUEEN MOTHER: I murder thee?

ELEAZAR: I cannot ride through the Castilian streets
But thousand eyes through windows, and through doors
80 Throw killing looks at me, and every slave
At Eleazar darts a finger out,
And every hissing tongue cries, there's the Moor,
That's he that makes a cuckold of our King,
There goes the minion of the Spanish Queen;
85 That's the black prince of devils, there goes he
That on smooth boys on masks and revelling
Spends the revenues of the King of Spain.
Who arms this many headed beast but you?
Murder and lust are twins, and both are thine;
90 Being weary of me thou wouldst worry me
Because some new love makes thee loathe thine old.

QUEEN MOTHER: Eleazar!

Othello

Enter OTHELLO

DESDEMONA: How is't with you, my lord?

OTHELLO: Well, my good lady. [*Aside*] O, hardness to dissemble!--
How do you, Desdemona?

DESDEMONA: Well, my good lord.

OTHELLO: Give me your hand. This hand is moist, my lady.

5 DESDEMONA: It yet hath felt no age nor known no sorrow.

OTHELLO: This argues fruitfulness and liberal heart:
Hot, hot and moist. This hand of yours requires
A sequester from liberty, fasting and prayer,
Much castigation, exercise devout;
10 For here's a young and sweating devil here,
That commonly rebels. 'Tis a good hand,
A frank one.

DESDEMONA: You may indeed say so,
For 'twas that hand that gave away my heart.

OTHELLO: A liberal hand. The hearts of old gave hands,
15 But our new heraldry is hands, not hearts.

DESDEMONA: I cannot speak of this. Come now, your promise.

OTHELLO: What promise, chuck?

DESDEMONA: I have sent to bid Cassio come speak with you.

OTHELLO: I have a salt and sorry rheum offends me;
Lend me thy handkerchief.

20 DESDEMONA: Here, my lord.

OTHELLO: That which I gave you.

DESDEMONA: I have it not about me.

OTHELLO: Not?

DESDEMONA: No, indeed, my lord.

OTHELLO: That's a fault. That handkerchief

Did an Egyptian to my mother give.

She was a charmer, and could almost read

25 The thoughts of people. She told her, while she kept it,

'Twould make her amiable and subdue my father

Entirely to her love, but if she lost it

Or made gift of it, my father's eye

Should hold her loathed and his spirits should hunt

30 After new fancies. She, dying, gave it me;

And bid me, when my fate would have me wive,

To give it her. I did so; and take heed on't;

Make it a darling like your precious eye.

To lose't or give't away were such perdition

35 As nothing else could match.

DESDEMONA: Is't possible?

55 DESDEMONA: Why, so I can, but I will not now.
 This is a trick to put me from my suit:
 Pray you, let Cassio be received again.

 OTHELLO: Fetch me the handkerchief! My mind misgives.

 DESDEMONA: Come, come!
60 You'll never meet a more sufficient man.

 OTHELLO: The handkerchief!

 DESDEMONA: A man that all his time
 Hath founded his good fortunes on your love,
 Shared dangers with you –

65 OTHELLO: The handkerchief!

 DESDEMONA: In sooth, you are to blame.

 OTHELLO: Away!
Exit Othello.