
THE DEBATE BETWEEN FOLLY AND LOVE.

Translated out of French by Robert Greene, Master of Arts.

The Argument.

Jupiter made a great feast at the which all the gods were commanded to be present. Love and Folly arrive at one instant at the gate of the palace, which was shut, having nothing open but the wicket. Folly, seeing Love ready to enter in, passeth before, which repulse driveth Love into choler. Folly avoucheth that of right she ought to be the foremost. Whereupon they enter into disputation of their power, dignity, and superiority. But Love, not able to get the conquest by words, taketh his bow in hand and shooteth at her, but in vain, for Folly became invisible, and in despite pulleth out Cupid's eyes. And for to cover this deformity, shadoweth his face with a veil, so framed by the Destinies that it was not possible to take it away. Venus complaineth of Folly unto Jupiter, who appointeth Apollo and Mercury to plead the case of these two clients, whose discourse being heard, he pronounceth his sentence.

Folly.

I fear greatly that I shall be the last at the feast of Jupiter, where all the gods no doubt do attend me. And yet methink I see the son of Venus which is as late as I. I will pass before him, lest they call me sluggish and slothful.

Love.

What fool is this that repulseth me so rudely? Take heed lest haste make waste, and that thy rashness cause thee not cry *Peccavi*.

Folly.

Oh sir, blame me not though I make haste, for I go before to tell the gods that you come at leisure.

Love.

Nay, that which is easily begun is not always lightly ended, for before thou escape me I will revenge this thy injurious jesting.

Folly.

Let me go, fond Love, and stay me not, for as it is a shame to quarrel with a woman, so it is more discredit to take the foil.

Love.

The foil? What boasting brags be these? Who hath ever adventured to despise me, much less to defy me? But dost thou know what I am?

Folly.

Thou art Cupid, the son of Venus.

Love.

How darest thou then vaunt thyself against me, which how little soever I be, am the most redoubted of all the gods?

Folly.

Thy words are great whatsoever thy works be, but tell me, what or wherein lieth this thy great power?

Love.

The heavens and the earth, fond fool, are witnesses of my words; there is no place where I have not left trophies in sign of triumph. Look into heaven and demand if any of the gods have escaped my hands. Begin with old Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Apollo, and end with the demigods, satyrs, fawns and sylvans. Nay, the goddesses themselves will not shame to confess somewhat. Look upon the earth and see if thou canst find one which hath not been foiled by my means. Behold in the furious seas how Neptune and his Tritons do yield me obeisance. Yea, and lastly look into hell itself if I have not forced Pluto, that infernal prince, to steal away Proserpina, the daughter of Ceres. And to the end thou doubt not with what engines I have achieved these victories, behold this bow and these arrows only which have won me these worthy conquests. I have no need that Vulcan do temper my tools. I am not accompanied with the Furies and Harpies to cause me to be feared before the combat. I have not to do with chariots, soldiers, captains, men of arms, nor great troops of horsemen, without the which mortal men cannot triumph. No, I have no other counsel, munition, nor aid but myself. When I see mine enemies in the field, I present myself with my bow, and let fly my bolts, and the victory is always gotten at the first stroke.

Folly.

I excuse thy youthful years, poor Cupid, or else I would blaze thee for the most presumptuous patch in the world. It seemeth by thy vain vaunting that everyone holdeth his life of thy mercy, and that thou art the only lord and sovereign both in heaven, earth, the sea, and hell, but many things are spoken which are never believed.

Love.

And art thou so hard of belief to deny that which everyone confesseth?

Folly.

I have not to do with other men's opinions, but this I am sure, that it is not by thy force and prowess that so many miracles are wrought in the world, but by my industry, by my means, and by my diligence, although thou knowest me not. But if thou dost continue long in this thy choler, I will let thee understand that thy bow and thy arrows whereof thou vauntest so much are more weak than wax if I bend not the one and temper the other.

Love.

Dost thou think by this scoffing to pacify mine anger, or by contemptuous threatening to qualify my choler? Hast thou ever (fond fool) handled my bow or directed my bolts? Is it thy prowess and not my force which performeth such valiant conquests? But since thou regardest me and respectest my force so little, thou shalt presently feel the proof thereof.

Folly maketh herself invisible so that Love cannot hit her.

Love.

But where art thou become? How hast thou escaped me? This only is the strangest case that ever chanced unto me. I had thought that amongst all the gods I only could have made myself invisible. But now I see I am deceived.

Folly.

Did not I tell thee before that thy bow and thy arrows are of no force but when it pleaseth me, and that by my means thou always obtained the conquest? Marvel not if I be invisible, for if I list the eyes of the eagle or of the serpent of Epidaurus cannot espy me, for chameleon-like I take the shape of them with whom I do remain.

Love.

Truly as I conjecture thou art some sorceress or some enchantress, some Circe, some Medea, or some fairy.

Folly.

Well, since thou dost thus recklessly rail upon me, know that I am a goddess as thou art a god; my name is Folly; I am she which raiseth thee up and casteth thee down at my pleasure. Thou unloosest thy bow and lettest fly thine arrows in the air, but I place them where it pleaseth me. Thou dost address thyself against Jupiter, but he is of such puissance that if I both guided not thy hand and tempered thy arrow, thy feeble force

could little prevail against his prowess. Indeed thou didst force Jupiter to love, but I caused him to change himself into a swan, into a bull, into gold, into an eagle. Who caused Mars and thy mother Venus to be taken in bed together by the limping cuckold Vulcan but I? If Paris had done no other thing but loved Helena, Sparta had never rejoiced nor Troy been brought to ruin. But did not I cause him to go to Menelaus under colour of embassy to court unto his wife to lead her away by force, and after to defend his unjust quarrel against all Greece? Who had spoken of the love of Dido if he [sic?] had not devised to go a-hunting that she might have the better commodity to communicate with Aeneas, that by such private familiarity he might not be ashamed to take from her that which long before most willingly she would have given him. I believe no mention had been made of Artemisia if I had not caused her drink the cinders of her husband's dead carcass, for else who had known whether she had loved her husband more than other women? The effect and issues of things always make them to be praised or dispraised. If thou makest men to love, yet I am oft-times the chiefest cause. But if any strange adventure or great effect chanceth, in that thou hast no part, but the only honour belongeth unto me. Thou rulest nothing but the heart; the rest I govern; yea, I lead thee, I conduct thee, and thine eyes serve thee to no more use than the beams of the sun to a blind man. But to the end thou know me from henceforth, and that thou mayest give me thanks for conducting thee carefully, behold now how greatly thine eyes do profit thee.

Folly putteth out Cupid's eyes.

Love.

Alas, Jupiter, O my mother Venus, what availeth it to be thy son so feared, so redoubted both in heaven and in earth, if I be subject to be injured as the most vile slave in the world; alas, have I thus lost mine eyes by an unknown woman?

Folly.

Take heed, fond fool, another time to rail upon those who perhaps are of more force and puissance than thou. Thou hast offended the queen of men; thou hast outraged her who governeth the heart, the brain, and the mind, under whose shadow everyone once in his life shroudeth himself and there remaineth either long or short time according to his merit; thou hast displeased her who procureth thy renown; thou hast contemned her who hath advanced thee, and therefore hath this misfortune fallen upon thy head.

Love.

Alas, how is it possible for me to honour her whom I never knew, or to reverence that person whom before I never saw, but if thou hast borne me such great goodwill as thou sayest, pardon this my offence and restore my sight.

Folly.

To restore thee thine eyes is not in my power, but I will cover the place to hide the deformity.

Folly covereth Cupid's face with a scarf and giveth him wings.

And in lieu of this hapless luck, thou shalt have these wings which shall carry thee whither thou wilt wish.

Love.

But where hadst thou this veil so ready to cover my deformity?

Folly.

It was given me as I came hither by one of the Destinies, who told me it was of that nature that if it were once fastened, it could never be unloosed.

Love.

How [sic?] unloosed? Am I then blind forever? O vile and traitorous wretch; could it not suffice to pull out mine eyes but to take away the means that the gods cannot restore them? Now I see the sentence verified on myself that it is not good to take a present at the hand of an enemy. O cruel Destinies, O cursed day; shall not the heavens, the earth, and the seas have cause to wail sith Love is blind? But why do I complain here in vain? It is better for me to sue to the gods for revengement.

The Second Discourse.

Love goeth from the palace of Jupiter, lamenting to himself his mischief.

Love.

Alas, in what miserable case am I; what can either my bow or mine arrows avail me? Now can I not cause whom I list to love, but without respect of persons everyone is in danger of my darts? Hitherto I have only caused dainty damsels and young youths to love; I did choose out the bravest bloods and the fairest and most well-featured men; I did pardon vile and base persons; I excused the deformed creatures, and let old age remain in peace. But now thinking to hit a young gallant, I light upon some old doting lecher; instead of some brave gentlemen, I strike some filthy foul lurdan. And it shall happen (I doubt) that they shall be most fortunate in their love so that by patrimony, presence or wealth they shall soonest win the favour of women, and by this means my kingdom shall come to ruin when men see in it such disorder and evil government.

Venus having long sought Cupid, now meeteth him.

I have carefully long sought thee, my dear son, marvelling what the cause should be that thou hast not been present at the banquet of Jupiter. Who is greatly incensed against thee, not only for thy absence, but for the complaints which are poured out against thee by sundry poor artificers, labouring men, peasants, slaves, handmaids, old men, and toothless aged women, crying all unto Jupiter that they love, thinking themselves greatly injured in this respect, that the passion which is proper to worthy and noble men should be inflicted upon them which are of the base and vildest sort.

Love.

Had not the great misfortune which is chanced unto me happened, I had neither been absent from the banquet, nor these grievous complaints had not been inferred against me.

Venus.

Why, and art thou hurt? Who hath thus veiled thine eyes?

Love.

Folly hath not only pulled them out, but also hath put this band before mine eyes which can never be taken away.

Venus.

O cursed enemy of all wisdom, O hapless wretch, unjustly called a goddess and more unrightly termed immortal, hast thou deprived me of my chiefest delight and felicity? O disaster love, O dissolute mother, O woeful Venus, who seest thy son, thy joy, and only care, thus cruelly deprived of his sight. Well, since thy mishap is so great, I vow that everyone that shall love (what favour or happy success soever he shall have) shall not be without some care, trouble, or calamity, that he vaunt not himself to be more happy than the son of Venus.

Love.

Cease off, good mother, from these sorrowful complaints, & redouble not my grief by these your dolorous discourses; suffer me to bear mine own misfortune, and wish not evil unto them which shall be my subjects.

Venus.

Well, let us then go to Jupiter, and complain of thy cursed enchantress.

The Third Discourse.

Venus.

If ever thou hadst pity of my complaints, most just Jupiter, when thou sawest me labour to save my son Aeneas from the fury of the raging seas and to defend him from other dangers in the which he was present at the siege of Troy, if my tears for the death of my dear Adonis moved thee to compassion, the surpassing sorrow that I do conceive for the great injury offered to Cupid I hope shall move thee to pity. If tears would suffer me I would bewray the cause of my sorrow, but behold my son, in what plight he is, and thou shalt easily perceive the cause of my complaint.

Jupiter.

Alas, my dear daughter, what do these tears prevail? Knowest thou not what fatherly affection I have always borne thee? What, dost thou distrust that I will not succour thee, or that I cannot?

Venus.

No, I neither doubt the one nor distrust the other; I only demand justice against Folly, the most outrageous fury in the world, which hath thus grievously abused Cupid.

Folly.

Most mighty and sovereign Jupiter, behold I am here ready to answer to Venus' complaints, and to debate my right against Cupid.

Jupiter.

Folly, I will neither accuse nor excuse thee until I have heard the defence of the one as well as the plaint of the other, else I should be thought partial; neither for the more avoiding of injustice in the matter will I suffer you to plead your own cases, but Venus, choose you one of the gods, and Folly, take you another.

Venus.

I choose Apollo to defend my cause.

Folly.

And I Mercury to maintain my right.

Jupiter.

Then Apollo & Mercury, prepare yourselves to plead well in your clients' cases, and Apollo, since you take the plaintiff's part, let us hear what you can say.

Apollo.

The common people, right sovereign Jupiter (although their minds be sotted & almost senseless, yet they have alway had love in such sacred estimation that they have carefully rewarded them with the titles of honour & dignity which have excelled in that holy affection, esteeming this only virtue (if so rightly it may be termed) sufficient of a man to make one a god. The Scythians for this cause canonized Pylades & Orestes, erecting temples unto them & calling them the gods of amity. Castor & Pollux were made immortal by this means, not in that they were brothers, but in that (which is rare) their love was inviolable. Now hath fame blazed abroad the love of David & Jonathas, the amity of Pythias & Damon, & of Titus & Gysippus. But the better to make manifest the force of love & amity, I will allege the saying of Darius, who opening a pomegranate, being demanded whereof he would have as many as there were grains within, answered, of Zopyres; this Zopyre was his faithful friend, by the means of whom he conquered Babylon. I remember also a certain Syrian demanding a maid in marriage, and being willed to show of what wealth he was, said that he had no other riches but two friends, esteeming himself rich enough with such possessions to crave the daughter of a great lord in marriage. Did not love cause Ariadne save Theseus' life, Hyperminestra [sic?] to redeem Lynceus from danger, & Medea free Jason from peril? Have not many poor soldiers been advanced to high dignities by the means of love? Yea, doth not all pleasure & profit proceed to man by love, causing him to look with amiable countenance, to speak pleasantly, and to be curious in his gestures, although by nature he be dull, sottish, & of a fierce look? What causeth a man to go brave & fine in his apparel, seeking every day new fashions, but love? What procureth gentlewomen to have their hair frizzled, crisped, and embroidered with gold, to be dressed after the Spanish, French, or Italian fashion, but love? Painting their faces if they be foul with lively colours? But if they be fair, they so carefully keep their beauty from the parching heat of summer, from the chilling cold of winter, from wine [sic], rain, and age, as they remain almost ever young, not so much as forgetting to have their shoes made fine and neat (because the curiousness of men is such as they leave not to look from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot), to have their gems, jewels, ouches, rings, perfumed gloves, and what not? In fine, what beauty or bravery is in the apparel either of man or woman, all proceedeth of love. Shall I say that music was only invented by love? Yea, truly, for either it mitigateth the passions wherewith men are perplexed, or else augmenteth their pleasure, so that daily they invent divers kinds of instruments, as lutes, citterns, viols, flutes, cornets, bandoras, whereon they play madrigalis [sic?], sonnets, pavins, measures, galliards, and all these in remembrance of Love, as he for whom men do more than for any other. What causeth men to joust, tourney, run at tilt, and combat, but love? Who caused comedies, shows, tragedies, and masques to be invented, but Love? Whereof cometh it that men delight to rehearse their amorous chances and strange passions, and to relate them to their companions, some praising the courtesy of his lady, another condemning his mistress' cruelty, yea, recounting a thousand mishaps which happen in their loves, as letters disclosed, evil reports, suspicious jealousy, sometimes the husband coming home sooner than either the lover would or the wife doth wish, sometimes conjecturing without cause, and other times believing nothing, but trusting upon his wife's honesty. To be short, the greatest pleasure after love is to tell what perilous dangers are passed. But what maketh so many poets in the world? Is it not love, the which seemeth to be the plain-song

whereon all poets do descant, yea, there is few which write upon any serious matter but they close up their work with some amorous clause, or else they are the worse accepted. Ovid hath celebrated the fame of Cupid, Petrarch and Virgil, Homer and Livius, Sappho, yea, & that severe Socrates wrote somewhat of his love, Aspasia. Tush, who rightly can deny that love is not the cause of all the glory, honour, profit, and pleasure which happeneth to man, and that without it he cannot conveniently live, but shall run into a thousand enormities?

All this happy success came by Love, as long as he had his eyes, but now, being deprived of his sight and accompanied with Folly, it is to be feared, nay certainly to be beloved [sic], that he shall be the cause of as many discommodities, mischiefs, and mishaps as hitherto he hath been of honour, profit, and pleasure. The noblemen which loved their inferiors and the subjects which dutifully served their lords shall be marvellously changed by the means of Folly, for the master shall love his servant only for his service, and the servant his master only for commodity. Yea, there is none so addicted unto virtue but if once he love he shall presently commit some foolish touch, and the more straight and firm love is, the greater disorder there shall be by the means of Folly. There will return into the world more than one Byblis, more than one Semiramis, than one Myrrha, than one Canace, than one Phaedra. There shall be no place in the world unspotted. The high walls and trellised windows shall not keep the nuns and vestal virgins in safe-guard. Old age shall turn her aged affections into fond fancies and wanton desires. Shame shall live as an exile. There shall be no difference between the noble and the peasant, between the infidel and the Moor, the Turk and the Jew, the lady, the mistress, and the handmaid. But there shall ensue such a confused inequality that the fair shall not be matched with the well-featured, but shall be oft-times joined with foul and deformed persons. Great ladies and noble dames shall fall in love with them whom before they would disdain to accept as their servants. And when the loyal and faithful lovers have long languished in the love of some beautiful dame whose mutual goodwill they have gained by desert, then folly will cause some fickle & false flatterer to enjoy that in one hour which in all their life they could not attain. I pass over the continual debates and quarrels that shall ensue by Folly, whereof shall spring wounds, massacres, and most fearful murders. And I greatly fear that whereas Love hath invented so many laudable sciences and brought forth so many commodities, that now he will bring great idleness accompanied with ignorance, that he will cause young gentlemen to leave feats of arms, to forsake their service of their prince, to reject honourable studies, and to apply [sic] themselves to vain songs and sonnets, to chambering and wantonness, to banqueting and gluttony, bringing infinite diseases to their bodies and sundry dangers and perils to their persons, for there is no more dangerous company than of Folly.

Behold, O sovereign Jupiter, the mischiefs and miseries that are like to ensue if Folly be appointed companion to love. Wherefore I, in the person of all the gods, beseech your Majesty to grant that Love may not be joined with her, and that Folly may grievously be punished for the outrage she hath done to Cupid.

As soon as Apollo had ended his oration, Mercury in defence of folly beginneth to speak in this wise.

Mercury.

Whereas (right worthy Jupiter) Apollo hath with his painted eloquence set out the praises of Love, and hath sought with his filed phrases to discredit Folly, I hope when your Majesty shall throughly hear the cause decided, you will commend his eloquence more than his reasons. For it is not unknown unto you and all the gods that Folly is no whit inferior unto Love, and that Love should be of no force without her, neither could his kingdom endure without her help, aid, and counsel. I pray you call to remembrance how Folly, incontinently after Pan was placed in paradise, began most imperiously to rule, and hath ever since continued in such credit as never any goddess had the like, reigning and ruling amongst men from time to time, from age to age, as the only princess of the world. Insomuch that who have been more honoured than fools? Who was more subject unto folly than Alexander the Great, which feeling himself to suffer hunger and thirst, to be subject to sorrow and sickness, not able to keep himself from drunkenness, yet would be honoured for a god? What kind of people hath been in greater credit than philosophers, and who more fools? Did not Aristotle most foolishly die for sorrow because he knew not the ebbing and flowing of the sea? Did not Crates, in casting his treasure into the sea, commit a wise deed? What folly showed Empedocles by his strange conjectures? What say you to Diogenes' tun, and to Aristippus' flattery? Whoso throughly considereth their opinions shall find them subject to the state of folly. How many other sciences are there in the world which are altogether foolish, and yet the professors of them had in high reputation amongst men? They which are calculators of nativities, makers of characters, casters of figures, are they not friars of this fraternity? Is it not folly to be so curious as to measure the heaven, the height of the stars, the breadth of the earth, and the depth of the sea, and yet the professors hereof are highly esteemed, & only by the means of Folly. Nay, how could the world continue if the dangers, troubles, calamities, and discommodities of marriage were not covered by folly? Who would have coasted the seas if folly had not been his guide, to commit himself to the mercy of the wind, the waves, to live in danger of fearful surges and and [sic] perilous rocks, to traffic with savage and barbarous people, only incensed by the means of folly? And yet notwithstanding by this means the commonwealth is maintained, knowledge and learning augmented, the properties of herbs, stones, and birds, beasts, [sic?] perfectly searched out. What folly is it most dangerously to pass into the bowels of the earth to dig for iron and seek for gold? How many arts and occupations should be driven out of the world if Folly were banished? Truly, the most part of men should either beg for want or die for hunger. How should so many advocates, procurators, sergeants, attorneys, scriveners, embroiderers, painters, and perfumers live, if Lady Folly were utterly exiled? Hath not Folly invented a thousand devices to draw a man from idleness, as tragedies, comedies, dancing-schools, fencing houses, wrestling places, and a thousand other foolish sports?

Hath she not made men hardy & venturous to fight with lions, boars & bulls, only to gain honour & to pass other in folly? What did Anthony and Cleopatra when they strave who should spend most in beastly banqueting? What caused Caesar lament that he had not begun to trouble the world in that age wherein Alexander had conquered the greatest part? Why did divers seek to fill up the valleys, to make plain the mountains, to dry up

rivers, to make bridges over the sea, as Claudius the Emperor did? What made Rhodope build the pyramids, and Artemisia frame the sumptuous sepulchre, but folly? In fine, without this goddess man should be careful, heavy, and wholly drowned in sorrow, whereas Folly quickeneth his spirit, maketh him sing, dance, leap, and frame himself altogether to pleasure. It is not possible that Love should be without the daughter of youth, which is Folly. For love springeth of sudden and sundry causes, by receiving an apple, as Cydippe; by looking out at a window, as Scylla; by reading in a book, as the Lady Frances Rymhi; some fall in love by sight, some by hearing, but all living in hope to obtain their desire. And yet some have loved without any natural cause, as Pygmalion, who fell in love with his marble picture, & I pray you, what *sympathia* could there be between a lively youth and a dead stone. What was it then but folly that kindled this flame? What forced Narcissus to fall in love with his own shadow but folly? Yea, what adventure is passed in love without folly? For the philosophers define folly to be a deprivation of wisdom, and wisdom is altogether without passions, of the which when love shall be void, then no doubt the sea shall be without waves, and the fire without heat.

Consider but a young man which only placeth his delight in amorous conceits, decking, dressing, and perfuming himself most delicately, who passeth out of his lodging fraught with a thousand sundry fancies, accompanied with men and pages, passing to the place where he may have a sight of his mistress, obtaining for his travail no gain but perhaps some amorous glance, making long suits, spending his time and his treasure, consuming his wit and wasting his wealth, and yet reaping nothing but disdain and discredit. But if it chance that his mistress condescend unto his requests, she appointeth him to come at some suspicious hour which he cannot perform without great peril. To come with company were to bewray his secrets; to go alone, most dangerous; to go openly, too manifest, so that he must pass disguised, sometime like a woman, other times like a peasant or some vild person, scaling the walls with ladders, climbing up to the windows by cords, yea, continually in danger of death if folly did not hold him up by the hand. It is not also unknown unto you how many sundry passions do perplex the poor passionate lovers, all which proceed of folly, as to have one's heart separated from himself, to be now in peace and then in war, now covering his dolour, blushing one while and looking pale another, fraught wholly with fear, hope, and shame, seeking that carefully which he seemeth to fly, & yet doubtfully dreading not to find it, to laugh seldom, to sigh often, to burn in cold & freeze in heat, to be crossed altogether with contraries, which be signs not only of folly but of frenzy. Who shall excuse Hercules' handling so carefully the distaff of Omphale, or Solomon for cumbering himself with so many concubines, Hannibal in submitting himself to his love, Aristotle in obeying Hermia, and Socrates in yielding to Aspasia, and many other which we see daily to be so blinded as they know not themselves, and what is the cause hereof but Folly, so that we see that it is she which maketh Love to be so feared & redoubted, it is she that honoureth him, exalteth his name, and causeth him to be counted as a god. Further, whosoever loveth must apply himself to the affection of his mistress, although it be contrary to his natural constitution; if he be quiet, wise, and discreet, yet if his love please to have him change his state, he must turn his stern and hoise his sail to go with another wind; Zethius and Amphion could not agree for because the delight of the one was a despite to the other until Amphion left his music. If the lady whom thou lovest be covetous, thou must change thyself into gold, and so fall

into her bosom; if she be merry, thou must be pleasant; if sullen, thou must be sad. All the servants and suitors to Atlanta were hunters because she delighted in that sport. Many gentlewomen, to please their lovers which were poets, left the rock and the needle and took in hand pens and books; now tell me if these strange metamorphosis [sic] be not mere points of folly? Do you think that a soldier which goeth to the assault marketh the trenches, thinketh of his enemies, or of a thousand harquebuses whereof every one is sufficient to destroy him? No, he only hopeth to win the conquest, and doth not so much as once imagine the rest. He which first invented sailing doubted not of the perilous dangers, and he that playeth, never thinketh to become a loser, yet are they all three in danger to be slain, drowned, and undone. But what then? They neither do see nor will see what is hurtful unto them. So we must conjecture the like of losers, for if they did see the dreadful dangers & the fearful perils wherein they are, how they be deceived and beguiled, they would never honour Love as a god, but detest him as a devil, and so should the kingdom of Love be destroyed, which now is governed by ignorance, carelessness, hope, & blindness, which are all the handmaids of Folly. Remain in peace, then, fond Love, and seek not to break the ancient league which is between thee & Folly. For if thou dost, thy bow shall be broken, thy darts shall be of no force, *Contemteq. faces et sine luce iacent.*

When Mercury had finished the defence of Folly, Jupiter seeing the gods to be diversly affected, that some held with Cupid and some with Folly, to decide the doubt he pronounced this sentence.

For the difficulty and importance of this difference and diversity of opinions, we have remitted the deciding of it until three times seven tunes [sic] and nine ages be past; in the meanwhile we straightly command you to live friendly together without offering injury one unto another. And Folly shall guide and conduct blind Love whither she seemeth best, and for the restoring of his eyes, after we have spoken with the Destinies it shall be decreed.

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