
GWYDONIUS

THE CARD OF FANCY

Wherein the folly of those carpet knights is deciphered which, guiding their course by the compass of Cupid, either dash their ship against most dangerous rocks, or else attain the haven with pain and peril.

Wherein also is described in the person of Gwydonius actual combat between nature and necessity.

By Robert Greene, Master of Arts in Cambridge.

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To the right honourable Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxenford, Viscount Bulbeck, Lord of
Escales and Badlesmere, and Lord Great Chamberlain of England, Robert Greene
wisheth long life with increase of honour.

That poor Castilian, Frontino, (right Honourable), being a very unskilful painter, presented Alphonsus, the Prince of Aragon, with a most imperfect picture which the King thankfully accepted, not that he liked the work, but that he loved the art. The paltering poet Choerilus dedicated his duncing poems to that mighty monarch Alexander, saying that he knew assuredly if Alexander would not accept them in that they were not pithy, yet he would not utterly reject them in that they had a show of poetry. Caesar oft-times praised his soldiers for their will although they wanted skill, and Cicero as well commended stammering Lentulus for his painful industry as learned Laelius for his passing eloquence, which considered (although wisdom did will me not to strain further than my sleeve would stretch), I thought good to present this imperfect pamphlet to your Honour's protection, hoping your Lordship will deign to accept the matter in that it seemeth to be prose, though something unsavoury for want of skill, and take my well-meaning for an excuse of my boldness in that my poor will is not in the wane, whatsoever this imperfect work do want. The Emperor Trajan was never without suitors because so courteously he would hear every complaint. The lapidaries continually frequented the court of Adobrandinus because it was his chief study to search out the nature of stones. All that courted to Atlanta were hunters, and none sued to Sappho but poets. Wheresoever Maecenas lodgeth, thither no doubt will scholars flock. And your Honour, being a worthy favourer and fosterer of learning, hath forced many, through your exquisite virtue, to offer the first-fruits of their study at the shrine of your Lordship's courtesy. But though they have waded far & found mines, and I gadded abroad to get nothing but mites, yet this I assure myself, that they never presented unto your Honour their treasure with a more willing mind than I do this simple trash, which I hope your Lordship will so accept. Resting therefore upon your Honour's wonted clemency, I commit your Lordship to the Almighty.

Your Lordship's most dutifully to command,
Robert Greene.

To the gentlemen readers, health.

Pan, blowing on his oaten pipe a little homely music, and hearing no man dispraised his small cunning, began both to play so loud and so long that they were more weary in hearing his music than he in showing his skill, till at last to claw him and excuse themselves, they said his pipe was out of tune. So gentlemen, because I have beforetime rashly reached above my pitch, & yet your courtesy such as no man have accused me, I have once again adventured upon your patience (but I doubt so far) as to be rid of my folly you will at the least say as Augustus said to the Grecian that gave him oft-times many rude verses: Thou hadst need (quoth he) reward me well, for I take more pains to read thy works than thou to write them. But yet willing to abide this quip because I may countervail it with your former courtesy, I put myself to your patience, and commit you to the Almighty. Farewell.

Robert Greene.

Ad Lectorem in laudem Authoris.

Pvllulat en stirpi similis speciosa propago
 Aureolusq. nouo reuirescit ramus amoris
 Vere: (tuo vere iam V E R E dicandus honori):
 Ista salus Iuueni, Comiti sit gloria nosse
 Accepisse decus: Comites vbi passibus aequis
 Ales amor virtusq. sagax decurrere norunt,
 Ventilat iste faces, restinguit at illa furentes
 Taedas. Nec taedet. Pueri sic taedia caeci
 Fallere, qui caecis conuoluit viscera flammis,
 Ergo refer grates qui deuitare cupi'sti
 Spumosos Veneris fluctus, scopulosq. minaces
 Qui fragilem tumidis cymbam mersisse procellis
 Possent. Hac iter est, hac dirige, tutior ibis.

Richardus Portingtonus.

Translation by Tom Holland in *Gwydonius, or the Card of Fancy*, edited with introduction and notes by Carmine G. Di Biase, Barnaby Riche Society Publications 13 (Ottawa: Dovehouse Editions, 2001), p. 201.

To the Reader, in Praise of the Author

Behold, a beauteous shoot, resembling its stock, is sprouting, and a gilded branch of love once more grows green in early spring: (now in SPRING it must be truly consecrated to your honor). Let it be the salvation of the young man, and the boast of his companion, that he knew how to receive the glory of that occasion when winged Love and wise Virtue knew how to accompany him as comrades with equal steps. Love fans his torches, but Virtue extinguishes these fires of madness. There is no offence in the deceiving, wearisome behavior of the blind Boy, who wraps hearts in unseen flames of passion. Therefore give thanks, you who wished to avoid the foamy waves and threatening reefs of Venus, which could have sunk your fragile bark in the swelling squalls. This way lies your journey, steer this way and you will travel more safely.

Richard Portington.

The Card of Fancy.

There dwelled in the city of Metelyne a certain duke called Clerophontes, who through his prowess in all martial exploits waxed so proud & tyrannous, using such merciless cruelty to his foreign enemies and such modeless rigour to his native citizens, that it was doubtful whether he was more feared of his foes for his cruelty or hated of his friends for his tyranny. Yet as the worst weed springeth up more bravely than the wholesomest herb, and as the crookedest tree is commonly laden with most fruit, so this rigorous duke was so favoured and fostered up by fortune, his estate being so established with honour and so beautified with wealth, so decked with the diadem of dignity and endued with fortunate prosperity, having in wars such happy success against his foes, & in peace such dutiful reverence of his friends (although more for fear than favour), as he seemed to want nothing that either fortune or the fates could allow him, if one only sore which bred his sorrow could have been salved. But this grief so galled his conscience and this cursed care so cumbered his mind that his happiness was greatly surcharged with heaviness to see the cause of his care could by no means be cured.

For this Clerophontes was endued with two children, the one a daughter named Leucippa, and the other a son called Gwydonius. This Leucippa was so perfect in the complexion of her body, and so pure in the constitution of her mind, so adorned with outward beauty and endued with inward bounty, so polished with rare virtues and exquisite qualities, as she seemed a seemly Venus for her beauty and a second Vesta for her virginity. Yea, nature and the gods had so bountifully bestowed their gifts upon her as Fame herself was doubtful whether she should make greater report of her excellent virtue or exquisite beauty. But his son Gwydonius was so contrary to his sister Leucippa (though not in the state of his body, yet in the stay of his mind) as it made all men marvel how two such contrary stems could spring out of the selfsame stock. His personage indeed was so comely, his feature so well framed, each limb so perfectly couched, his face so fair, and his countenance so amiable, as he seemed a heavenly creature in a mortal carcass. But his mind was so blemished with detestable qualities and so spotted with the stain of voluptuousness that he was not so much to be commended for the proportion of his body as to be condemned for the imperfection of his mind. He was so endued with vanity and so imbrued in vice, so nursed up in wantonness & so nuzzled up in wilfulness, so careless to observe his father's command and so reckless to regard his counsel, that neither the dread of God's wrath nor the fear of his father's displeasure could drive him to desist from his detestable kind of living. Nay, there was no fact so filthy which he would not commit, no mischief so monstrous which he would not enterprise, no danger so desperate which he would not adventure, no peril so fearful which he would not perform, nor no action so devilish which he would not execute, so immodest in his manners, so rude in his gestures, yea, and so prodigal in his expenses as mines of gold were not able to maintain such witless prodigality.

This loathsome life of Gwydonius was such a cutting corrosive to his father's careful conscience and such a hapless clog to his heavy heart that no joy could make him enjoy any joy, no mirth could make him merry, no prosperity could make him pleasant, but

abandoning all delight and avoiding all company he spent his doleful days in dumps and dolours which he uttered in these words:

Now, quoth he, I prove by experience the saying of Sophocles to be true, that the man which hath many children shall never live without some mirth nor die without some sorrow, for if they be virtuous he shall have cause whereof to rejoyce, if vicious, wherefore to be sad, which saying I try performed in myself, for as I have one child which delights me with her virtue, so I have another that despites me with his vanity; as the one by duty brings me joy, so the other by disobedience breeds my annoy. Yea, as the one is a comfort to my mind, so the other is a fretting corrosive to my heart, for what grief is there more griping, what pain more pinching, what cross more cumbersome, what plague more pernicious, yea, what trouble can torment me worse than to see my son, mine heir, the inheritor of my dukedom, which should be the pillar of my parentage, to consume his time in roisting and riot, in spending and spoiling, in swearing and swashing, and in following wilfully the fury of his own frantic fancy? Alas, most miserable & lamentable case; would to God the destinies had decreed his death in the swaddling-clouts, or that the fates had prescribed his end in his infancy. Oh, that the date of his birth had been the day of his burial, or that by some sinister storm of fortune he had been stifled on his mother's knees, so that his untimely death might have prevented my ensuing sorrows and his future calamities, for I see that the young fry will always prove old frogs, that the crooked twig will prove a crabbed tree, that the sour bud will never be sweet blossom, how that which is bred by the bone will not easily out of the flesh, that he which is careless in youth will be less careful in age, that where in prime of years vice reigneth, there in ripe age vanity remaineth.

Why Clerophontes, if thou seest the sore, why dost thou not apply the salve, and if thou dost perceive the mischief, why dost not prevent it with medicine? Take away the cause, and the effect faileth; if Gwydones [sic] be the cause of thy ruth, cut him off betimes lest he bring thee to ruin; better hadst thou want a son than never want sorrow. Perhaps thou wilt suffer him so long till he fall sick of the father, and then he will not only seek thy lands and living, but life and all if thou prevent not his purpose, yea, and after thy death he will be through his lascivious life the overthrow of thy house, the consumer of thy dukedom, the wrack of thy commonweal, and the very man that shall bring the state of Metelyne to mischief and misery. Sith then thy son is such a sink of sorrows in whose life lies hid a loathsome mass of wretched mishaps, cut him off as a graceless graft, unworthy to grow out of such a stock.

Alas, Clerophontes, shalt thou be so unnatural as to seek the spoil of thine own child? Wilt thou be more savage than the brute beasts in committing such cruelty? No, alas, the least misfortune of our children doth so move us that as the spider feeleth if her web be pricked but with the point of a pin, so if they be touched but with the least trouble we feel the pains thereof with pricking grief to pinch us. Why hath not nature then caused love to ascend as well as to descend, and placed as dutiful obedience in the child as loving affection in the father?

And with that he fetched such a deep sigh that it was a sign of the extreme sorrow he conceived for his son's witless folly. But as he was ready again to enter into his doleful discourse, to aggravate his grief the more and increase his care certain complaints were brought him by sundry citizens of the outrageous behaviour of his son Gwydonius, which being attentively heard, he in great choler called for his son, against whom he thundered out such threatening reproaches, laying before his face the misery that would ensue of such reckless mischiefs, & promising that if he directed not his course by a new compass and levelled his life by a new line he would not only repay his folly with the penalty of the law but also by consent of the commons disinherit him of his dukedom, that Gwydonius, greatly incensed with the severe censure of his father, broiling with furious rage, sturdily burst forth into these stubborn terms:

Sir, quoth he, if Terence his Menedemus were alive and heard these your fond and fantastical reasons, he would as readily condemn you of crabbedness as he accused Chremes of currishness, for as he by too much austerity procured his son's mishap, so you by too much severity seek to breed my misfortune. You old men most unjustly, or rather injuriously, measure our stayless mood by your stayed minds, our young years by your hoary hairs, our flourishing youth by your withered age, thinking to direct our doings by your dotings, our wills by your wits, our youthful fancies by your aged affections, and to quench our fiery flames by your dead coals and cinders, yea, supposing that the leveret should be as skilful in making of a head as the old hare, that the young cubs should as soon tapish as the old fox, that the young fry should as well avoid the net as the old fish, and that the young wantons should be as wary as the old wizards. But this, sir, is to make fire frost, to change heat to cold, mirth to mourning, singing to sadness, pleasure to pain, and to tie the ape and the bear in one fetter. Sith then young stems will not be set on a withered stock, that the young twig liketh not under the old tree, that the toyish conceits of youth are unfit for the testy cogitations of age, I mean for your satisfaction and my solace to depart from the court and to spend my days in travel.

Clerophontes no sooner heard this determination of his son Gwydonius but his sorrow was half salved and his care almost cured, thinking that by travel he should either end his life or amend his lewdness, and therefore both hearted and hastened his son in this his new course lest delay might breed danger or time by some toy cause him turn his tippet, furnishing & finishing all things necessary for his son's journey, who ready to go (more willing to travel than his father to entreat him) had this friendly farewell given him by Clerophontes:

Son, quoth he, there is no greater doubt which doth more deeply distress the mind of a young man than to determine with himself what course of life is best to take, for there is such a confused chaos of contrary conceits in young wits that whiles they look for that they cannot like, they are lost in such an endless labyrinth as neither choice nor chance can draw them out of their wished desires, for so many veins, so many vanities. If virtue draweth one way, vice driveth another way; as profit persuades them, so pleasure provokes them; as wit weigheth, will wresteth. If friends counsel them to take this, fancy forceth them to choose that, so that desire so long hangs in doubt as either they choose one or else chance on the worst. But in my opinion the fittest kind of life for a young

gentleman to take (who as yet hath not subdued his youthful conceits of fancy, nor made a conquest of his will by wit) is to spend his time in travel, wherein he shall find both pleasure and profit, yea, and buy that by experience which otherwise with all the treasure in the world he cannot purchase. For what changeth vanity to virtue, stayless wit to staid wisdom, fond fantasies to firm affections, but travel? What represseth the rage of youth and redresseth the witless fury of wanton years but travel? What turneth a secure life to a careful living, what maketh the foolish wise, yea, what increaseth wit and augmenteth skill, but travel, insomuch that the fame Ulysses won was not by the ten years he lay at Troy but by the time he spent in travel.

But there is nothing, Gwydonius, so precious which in some respect is not perilous, nor nothing so pleasant which may not be painful. The finest gold hath his dross, the purest wine his lees, the bravest rose his prickles. Each sweet hath his sour, each joy his annoy, each weal his woe, and every delight his danger. So travel, Gwydonius, is a course of life very pleasant and yet very perilous, wherein thou mayest practise virtue if thou take heed, or purchase discredit if thou beest careless, where thou mayest reap renown if thou beest virtuous, and gain reproach if thou be vicious, whereout do spring wisdom and folly, freedom and bondage, treasure and trash, fame and discredit, honour & shame, according to the disposition of him which either useth it to his profit or abuseth it to his discommodity. Sith then thou shalt bear sail in such perilous straits, take heed lest thou dash thy ship against most dangerous rocks. It is a saying, Gwydonius, not so common as true, that he which will hear the sirens sing must with Ulysses tie himself to the mast of a ship, lest happily he be drowned. Whoso means to be a suitor to Circes must take a preservative unless he will be enchanted. He that will fish for the torpedo must anoint his hand with the oil of nemiphar lest he be charmed, & whoso meaneth to enter combat with vanity must first surely defence himself with the target of virtue unless he mean to be a captive to care or calamity. I speak this, Gwydonius, by experience, which afterward thou shalt know by proof, for in travel thou shalt find such subtile sirens as will endanger thee, such sorcering Circes as will enchant thee, such poisoned torpedos as will not only charm thy hand but thy heart if by my experience and other men's perils thou learn not to beware.

First, Gwydonius, be not too sumptuous lest thou seem prodigal, nor too covetous lest they count thee a niggard, for by spending in excess thou shalt be thought a vainglorious fool, and by too much sparing, a covetous peasant. Be not wilful in thy doings, that they count thee not witless, nor too rash, that they think thee not devoid of reason. Be not too merry, that they count thee not immodest, nor too sober, lest they call thee sullen, but show thyself to be an old man for thy gravity and a young youth for thy activity. So shall all men have cause to praise thee for thy manners, and commend thee for thy modesty. Be not too curious, Gwydonius, that they deem thee not proud, nor too courteous, lest they call thee counterfeit. Be a friend to all & a foe to none, and yet trust not without trial, nor commit any secret to a friendly stranger, lest in too much trust lie treason, and thou be forced by repentance to cry Peccavi. The sweetest musk is sour to be tasted, the finest pills most bitter to be chewed, and the flattering friend most tickle being tried. Then beware lest fair words make fools fain, & glozing speeches cause had-I-wist come too late. Lend not, Gwydonius, a listening ear to the alarums of love, nor yield not thy

freedom to the assault of lust. Be not dazzled with the beams of fading beauty, nor daunted with the desire of every delicate damsel, for in time such bliss will prove but bane, and such delightful joy but spiteful annoy. Lust, Gwydonius, will prove an enemy to thy purse and a foe to thy person, a canker to thy mind and a corrosive to thy conscience, a weakener of thy wit, a molester of thy mind, a besotter of thy senses, and finally a mortal bane to all thy body, so that thou shalt find pleasure the pathway to perdition, and lusting love the loadstone to ruth and ruin. Seek not then, Gwydonius, greedily to devour that bait whereunder thou knowest a hurtful hook to be hidden; frequent not the pleasure which will turn to thy poison, nor covet not the company which will convert to thy confusion, lest through such folly thou have cause in time be sad, and I to be sorrowful.

Now, Gwydonius, that thou hast heard the advertisement of a loving father, follow my advice as a dutiful child, and the more to bind thee to performing my former precepts, that this my counsel be not drowned in oblivion, I give thee this ring of gold wherein is written this sentence: Praemonitus, praemunitus, a posy pretty for the words and pithy for the matter, short to be rehearsed and long to be related, inferring this sense, that he which is forewarned by friendly counsel of imminent dangers is forearmed against all future mishap and calamity, so that he may by forewarning prevent perils if it be possible, or if by sinister fortune he cannot eschew them, yet he may bear the cross with more patience and less grief. Keep this ring, Gwydonius, carefully, that thou mayest show thyself to respect thy own case and regard my counsel, and in so doing thou shalt please me, and pleasure thyself.

Clerophontes having thus ended his discourse, embracing his son with fatherly affection and giving him his blessing, went secretly into his chamber, the more to cover his grief which he conceived for his son's departure, unwilling his son should perceive by his sorrow how unfeignedly he both liked and loved him.

Well, Gwydonius having taken his leave of his father, furnished both with counsel and coin, with advice of wisdom and aid of wealth, passed on his journey very solemnly until he was past the bounds of his father's dukedom, and then as merry as might be he travelled by the space of seven weeks without any residence until he came to a city called Barutta where (whether he were delighted with the situation of the place or deluded with the persuasion of some parasitical persons) he securely settled himself by the space of a whole year, in which time he so carelessly floated in the seas of voluptuousness and so recklessly ranged in licentious and lawless liberty, thinking himself a peasant if he were not prodigal, counting nothing comely if not costly, nothing seemly if not sumptuous, using such monstrous excess in all his actions that the citizens of Barutta noted him for a mirror if [sic] immoderate life and a very pattern of witless prodigality. Yea, his excessive expenses daily so increased that mines of gold had not been sufficient to maintain his pompous magnificence, insomuch that the magistrates of Barutta not only marvelled where he had coin to countervail his expenses but also began to suspect him either for some skilful alchemist or that he had some large commission to take up those purses that fell into lapse for want of sufficient defence, whereupon being called before the magistrates and strictly examined what trade he used, why he stayed so long in the

city, and how he was able to maintain so princely a port as he carried, Gwydonius, unwilling to have them privy to his parentage, began to coin a scuse, yet not so cunningly but he was trapped in his own talk, and so cast in prison, where he lay clogged with care and devoid of comfort, having not so much as one trusty friend amongst all those trothless flatterers which in prosperity had so frequented his company, the ingratitude of whom so perplexed his molested mind as, surcharged with sorrow, he burst forth into these terms:

Alas, quoth he, now have I bought that by hapless experience which if I had been wise I might have got by happy counsel. Now am I taught that with pain and peril which if self-love had not besotted my senses I might have learned with profit and pleasure, that in the fairest sands is most fickleness, out of the bravest blossom most commonly springeth the worst fruit, that the finest flower seldom hath the best smell, that the most glistering stone hath oftentimes the least virtue, and that in the greatest show of goodwill lies oft-times the smallest effect of friendship, in most flattery least faith, in the fairest face the falsest heart, in the smoothest tale the smallest truth, and in the sweetest glazes most sour ingratitude.

Yea, I see now, quoth he, that in trust lies treason, that fair words make fools fain, and that the state of these feigned friends are like to the marigold, which as long as the sun shineth openeth her leaves, but with the least cloud beginneth to close; like the violets in America, which in summer yield an odoriferous smell and in winter a most pestilent savour, so these parasites in prosperity profess most, but in adversity perform least. When fortune favoureth they laugh, when she frowneth they lour, at every full sea they flourish, but at every dead neap, they fade, like to the fish palerna, which being perfectly white in the calm, yet turneth passing black at every storm; to the trees in the deserts of Africa, that flourish but while the south wind bloweth; or to the celidony stone, which retaineth his virtue no longer than it is rubbed with gold.

Sith then, Gwydonius, quoth he, thou finds such falsehood in friendship, and such faithless deeds in such painted speeches, shake off these fawning curs with the flag of defiance, and from henceforth try ere thou trust.

Aye, but, quoth he, it is too late to apply the salve when the sore is incurable, to cry alarum when the city is overrun, to seek for covert when the storm is past, and to take heed of such flattering mates when already thou art deceived by such fawning merchants. Now thou wilt cry Cave when thy coin is consumed, and beware when thy wealth is wracked. When thou hast nothing whereof to take charge, thou wilt be chary, and when folly hath already given thee a mate, thou wilt by wisdom seek to avoid the check, but now thou tryest it true that thy father foretold thee, that so long thou shouldst be careless as at last repentance would pull thee by the sleeve, and then had-I-wist would come too late.

Well, Gwydonius, sith that which is once past can never be recalled again, if thou hast by folly made a fault, seek by wisdom to make amends, & heap not care upon care, nor add not grief to sorrow by these thy pitiful complaints, but cheer up thyself and take heart at

grass, for the end of woe is the beginning of weal, & after misery always ensueth most happy felicity.

Gwydonius having thus dolorously discoursed with himself remained not above ten days in prison but that the senate, taking pity of his case and seeing no accusations were inferred against him, set him free from his purgatory and gave him good counsel that hereafter he should beware by such witless prodigality to incur such suspicion. Theseus never triumphed more after he had escaped the danger of the perilous labyrinth than poor Gwydonius did when he was set free from this pernicious limbo. Now the bitterness of bondage made his freedom seem far more sweet, and his danger so happily escaped caused his delivery seem far more delightful, yet he conceived such discourtesy against the citizens for repaying his liberal goodwill with such loathsome ingratitude that the next morning he departed from Barutta, not stored with too much money for molesting his mind, nor overcharged with coin for cumbering his conscience with too much care, but having remaining of all his treasure only that ring which his father gave him, travelling very solemnly toward Alexandria.

Where at that time there reigned a certain duke named Orlanio, who was so famous and fortunate for the peaceable government of his dukedom, administering justice with such sincerity, and yet tempering the extremity of the law with such lenity, as he both gained the goodwill of strangers in hearing his virtue & won the hearts of his subjects in feeling his bounty, counting him unworthy to bear the name of a sovereign which knew not according to desert both to cherish and chastise his subjects.

Fortune and the fates, willing to place him in the palace of earthly prosperity, endued him with two children, the one a son named Thersandro & the other a daughter called Castania, either of them so adorned with the gifts of nature and beautified with good nurture as it was hard to know whether beauty or virtue held the supremacy. But lest by this happy estate Orlanio should be too much puffed up with prosperity, Fortune, sparing him the mate, yet gave him a slender check to warn him from security, for before his daughter came to the age of fourteen years his wife died, leaving him not more sorrowful for the loss of her whom he most entirely loved than careful for the well bringing up of her whom he so dearly liked, knowing that as his court was a school of virtue to such as bridled their minds with discretion so it was a nurse of vice to those tender years that measured their wills with witless affection, esteeming liberty as perilous to the stay of youth as precious to the state of age, and that nothing so soon allured the mind of a young maid to vanity as to pass her youth without fear in security. Feared with the consideration of these premises, to avoid the inconveniences that might happen by suffering Castania to lead her life in lawless liberty, he thought it best to choose out some virtuous lady to keep her company who might direct her course by so true a compass, and level her life by so right a line, that although her young years were very apt to be entangled in the snares of vanity, yet by her counsel & company she might steadily tread her steps in the trace of virtue, and none he could find more fit for the purpose than a certain old widow called Madam Melytta, honoured for her virtuous life throughout all Alexandria, who being sent for to the court he saluted on this manner:

Madam Melytta, quoth he, the report of thy honest conditions and the renown of thy virtuous qualities are such as thereby thou hast not only purchased great praise but won great credit throughout all the country, insomuch that I, incensed by this thy singular commendation, I have selected thee as the only woman to whom I mean to commit my chiefest treasure, I mean, Melytta, my daughter Castania, to whom I will have thee be both a companion and a counsellor, hoping thou wilt take such care to train her up in virtue and trace her quite from vice, to win her mind to honesty and wean her quite from vanity, that she in her ripe years shall have cause to thank thee for thy pains, and I occasion to regard thee as a friend and reward thee for thy diligence.

First, Melytta, so that she lead her life both charily and chastely, let her not have her own will lest she prove too wilful, nor too much liberty lest she become too light. The palm-tree pressed down groweth notwithstanding but too fast. The herb spattania, though trodden on, groweth very tall, and youth, although strictly restrained, will prove but too stubborn. The vessel savoureth always of that liquor wherewith it was first seasoned, and the mind retaineth those qualities in age wherein it was trained up in youth. The tender twig is sooner broken than the strong branch, the young stem more brittle than the old stock, the weak bramble shaken with every wind, and the wavering will of youth tossed with every puff of vanity, ready to be wracked in the waves of wantonness unless it be cunningly guided by some wise and wary pilot.

Then, Melytta, [+sith] youth is so easily entrapped with the alluring train of foolish delights, and so soon entangled with the trash of pernicious pleasures, suffer not my daughter to pass her time in idleness, lest happily being taken at discover she became a careless captive to security, for when the mind once floateth in the surging seas of idle conceits, then the puffs of voluptuous pleasures and the stifling storms of unbridled fancy, the raging blasts of alluring beauty and the sturdy gale of glozing vanity, so shake the ship of reckless youth that it is daily in doubt to suffer most dangerous shipwreck. But let her spend her time in reading such ancient authors as may sharpen her wit by their pithy sayings, & learn her wisdom by their perfect sentences, for where nature is vicious, by learning it is amended, and where it is virtuous, by skill it is augmented. The stone of secret virtue is of greater price if it be bravely polished, th[e] gold, though never so pure of himself, hath the better colour if it be burnished, and the mind, though never so virtuous, is more noble if it be enriched with the gifts of learning. And Melytta, for recreation' sake let her use such honest sports as may drive away dumps, lest she be too pensive, & free her mind from foolish conceits, that she be not too wanton. Thus, madam, as you have heard my fatherly advice, so I pray you give my daughter the like friendly advertisement, that hereafter she may have both cause to reverence thee, and I to reward thee.

Melytta, having heard with attentive heed the mind of Orlandio, conceived such joy in this new charge & such delight in this happy chance as with cheerful countenance she repaid him this answer:

Sir, quoth she, although in the largest seas are the sorest tempests, in the broadest ways most boisterous winds, in the highest hills most dangerous haps, and in the greatest

charge the greatest care, yet the duty which I owe you as my sovereign, and the love I bear you as a subject, the care I have to please you as my prince and to pleasure you as a potentate, the trust you repose in my truth without sufficient trial, the confidence you put in my conscience without sure proof, the courtesy your Grace doth show me without any desert, have so inflamed the forepassed fire of dutiful affection, and so encouraged me to encounter your Grace's courtesy with willing constancy, that there is no hap so hard which I would not hazard, no danger so desperate which I would not adventure, no burden so heavy which I would not bear, no peril so huge which I would not pass, nor no charge so great which both willingly and warily I would not perform. For since it hath pleased your Grace to vouchsafe so much of my simple calling as to assign me for a companion for your daughter Castania, I will take such care in the chary performance of my charge, and endeavour with such diligence both to counsel and comfort Castania, as your Grace shall perceive my duty in pleasing you and my diligence in pleasuring her.

The duke, hearing the friendly and faithful protestation of the good lady Melytta, told her that although it were great trouble for one of her age to frame herself as a companion to such young youth, and that some care belonged to such a charge, yet he would so countervail her painful labour with princely liberality that both she and all Alexandria should have cause to speak of his bounty.

Melytta, thanking the duke for such undeserved courtesy, setting her household affairs in good order, repaired to the court as speedily as might be. But leaving her with Castania, again to Gwydonius, who now having arrived at Alexandria, pinched with poverty and distressed with want, having no coin left wherewith to countervail his expenses, thought it his best course, if it were possible, to compass the duke's service. Repairing therefore to the court, he had not stayed there three days before he found fit opportunity to offer his service to Orlandio, whom very dutifully he saluted on this manner:

The report (right worthy prince) of your incomparable courtesy and peerless magnanimity is so blazed abroad throughout all countries by the golden trump of fame that your Grace is not more loved of your subjects which taste of your liberal bounty than honoured of strangers which only hear of your princely virtue, insomuch that it hath forced me to leave my native soil, my parents, kindred, and familiar friends, and pilgrim-like to pass into a strange country to try that by experience here which I have heard by report at home. For it is not (right worthy sir) the state of your country which hath allured me (for I deem Bohemia, whereof I am, no less pleasant than Alexandria), neither hath want of living or hope of gain enticed me, for I am by birth a gentleman, and issued of such parents as are able with sufficient patrimony to maintain my estate, but the desire not only to see but also to learn such rare courtesy and virtuous qualities as fame hath reported to be put in practice in your court is the only occasion of this my journey. Now if in recompense of this my travail it shall please your Grace to vouchsafe of my service, I shall think myself fully satisfied, and my pains sufficiently requited.

Orlandio hearing this dutiful discourse of Gwydonius, marking his manner and musing at his modesty, noting both his excellent courtesy and exquisite beauty, was so inflamed with friendly affection toward this young youth that not only he accepted of his service

but also preferred him as a companion to his son Thersandro, promising that since he had left his country and parents for this cause, he would so countervail his dutiful desert with favour and friendship as he should never have cause to accuse him of ingratitude.

Gwydonius repaying hearty thanks to the duke for this undeserved courtesy, being now brought from woe to weal, from despair to hope, from bale to bliss, from care to security, from want to wealth, yea, from hellish misery to heavenly prosperity, behaved himself so wisely and warily, with such courtesy in conversation and modesty in manners, that in short time he not only purchased credit and countenance with Orlandio but was most entirely liked & loved of Thersandro.

Now there remained in the court a young knight called Signor Valericus, who by chance casting his glancing eyes on the glittering beauty of Castania was so fettered in the snare of fancy, and so entangled with the trap of affection, so perplexed in the labyrinth of pinching love, and so enchanted with the charm of Venus' sorcery, that as the elephant rejoiceth greatly at the sight of a rose, as the bird halcyons delighteth to view the feathers of the phoenix, and as nothing better contenteth a roebuck than to gaze at a red cloth, so there was no object that could allure the wavering eyes of Valericus as the surpassing beauty of Castania, yea, his only bliss, pleasure, joy and delight was in feeding his fancy with staring on the heavenly face of his goddess. But alas, her beauty bred his bane; her looks, his loss; her sight, his sorrow; her exquisite perfections, his extreme passions, that as the ape by seeing the snail is infected, as the leopard falleth in a trance at the sight of the locust, as the cockatrice dieth with beholding the chrisolito, so poor Valericus was pinched to the heart with viewing her comely countenance, was griped with galding [sic] grief and tortured with insupportable torments by gazing upon the gallant beauty of so gorgeous a dame. Yea, he so framed in his fancy the form of her face, and so imprinted in his heart the perfection of her person, that the remembrance thereof would suffer him take no rest, but he passed the day in dolour, the night in sorrow, no minute without mourning, no hour without heaviness, that falling into pensive passions he began thus to parle with himself:

Why how now, Valericus, quoth he, art thou haunted with some hellish hag or possessed with some frantic fury, art thou enchanted with some magical charm or charmed with some bewitching sorcery, that so suddenly thy mind is perplexed with a thousand sundry passions, alate free and now fettered, alate swimming in rest and now sinking in care, erewhile in security & now in captivity, yea, turned from mirth to mourning, from pleasure to pain, from delight to despite, hating thyself and loving her who is the chief cause of this thy calamity? Ah, Valericus, hast thou forgot the saying of Propertius that to love, howsoever it be, is to lose, and to fancy, how chary soever thy choice be, is to have an ill chance, for love, though never so fickle, is but a chaos of care, and fancy, though never so fortunate, is but a mass of misery, for if thou enjoy the beauty of Venus thou shalt find it small vantage, if thou get one as wise as Minerva, thou mayest put thy winnings in thine eye, if as gorgeous as Juno, thy accounts being cast thy gain shall be but loss. Yea, be she virtuous, be she chaste, be she courteous, be she constant, be she rich, be she renowned, be she honest, be she honourable, yet if thou be wedded to a woman, think thou shalt find in her sufficient vanity to countervail her virtue, that thy

happiness will be matched with heaviness, thy quiet with care, thy contentation with vexation, that thou shalt sow seed with sorrow and reap thy corn with sadness, that thou shalt never live without grief nor die without repentance, for in matching with a wife there is such mischiefs, and in marriage such miseries, that Craterus the Emperor, wishing some sinister fortune to happen upon one of his foes, prayed unto the gods that he might be married in his youth and die without issue in his age, counting marriage such a cumbersome cross and a wife such a pleasant plague that he thought his foe could have no worse torment that to be troubled with such noisome trash.

Oh Valericus, if the consideration of these premises be not sufficient to persuade thee, if the sentence of Propertius cannot quench thy flame nor the saying of Craterus cool thy fancy, call to mind what miseries, what mischiefs, what woes, what wailings, what mishaps, what murders, what care, what calamities have happened to such as have been besotted with the baleful beauty of women, enjoying more care than commodity, more pain than profit, more cost than comfort, more grief than good, yea, reaping a tun of dross for every dram of perfect gold. What careless inconstancy ruled Eriphila [=Eriphela]? What currish cruelty reigned in Philomela? How incestuous a life led Aeuropa [=Aerope]? And how miserable was that man that married Stheuolea [sic for Stheneboia]? What gains got Tereus in winning Progne [=Procne] but a loathsome death for a little delight? Agamemnon in possessing the beauty of Crecida [=Chryseis] caused the Grecian army most grievously to be plagued. Candaules was slain by his murdering wife whom so entirely he loved. Who was thought more happy than the husband of Helena, and yet who in time less fortunate? What hapless chances ensued of the chastity of Penelope? What broils in Rome by the virtue of Lucretia? The one caused her suitors most horribly to be slain, and the other that Tarquin and all his posterity were rooted out of their regal dignities. Phaedra in loving killed her hapless son Hippolytus, & Clytemnestra in hating slew her loving husband Agamemnon. Alas, Valericus, how dangerous is it then to deal with such dames, which if they love, they procure thy fatal care, and if they hate thee, thy final calamity?

But, ah, blasphemous beast that I am, thus recklessly to rail & rage without reason, thus currishly to exclaim against those without whom our life, though never so luckily, should seem most loathsome, thus Timon-like to condemn those heavenly creatures whose only sight is a sufficient salve against all hellish sorrows. Is this right, to conclude generally of particular premises? Is it justice to accuse all for the offence of some? Is it equity to blame the stay of virtuous women for the state of vicious wantons? Dost thou think, Valericus, to shake off the shackles of fancy with this folly, or to eschew the bait of beauty by breathing out such blasphemy? No, no, assure thyself that these thy raging reasons will in time be most rigorously revenged, that the gods themselves will plague thee for braying out such injurious speeches. Alas, love wanting desire maketh the mind desperate, and fixed fancy bereaved of hope turneth into fury. The loyal faith I bear to Castania and the loathsome fear of her ingratitude, the deep desire which enforceth my hope and the deadly despair which infringeth my hap, so tosseth my mind with contrary cogitations that I neither regard what I say to my harm, nor respect what I do to my own hurt, yea, my senses are so besotted with pinching love and my mind so fretted with frying fancy that death were thrice more welcome than thus to linger in despairing hope.

And with that, to pass away those pensive passions, he flung out of his chamber with his hawk on his fist, thinking by such sport to drive away this melancholic humour which so molested his mind. But as he was passing through the court he was luckily encountered by Melytta and Castania, who minding to have some sport with Valericus before he did pass had the onset thus pleasantly given him by Castania:

It is hard, Signor Valericus, quoth she, to take you either without your hawk on your fist or your heart on your halfpenny, for if for recreation you be not retrieving the partridge with dogs you are in solemn meditation driving away the time with dumps, neither caring for company to solace your sadness nor pleasantly discoursing of some amorous parle, which makes the gentlewomen of this court think that you are either an apostata to love, as was Narcissus, or have displayed the flag of defiance against fancy, as did Tyanaeus. If these their surmised conjectures be true, Valericus, I warn thee as a friend to beware by other men's harms, lest if thou imitate their actions thou be mangled with the like misery, or maimed with the like misfortune.

Valericus hearing his saint pronouncing this sugared harmony, feeling himself somewhat touched with this quipping talk, was so rapt in admiration of her eloquence and so ravished in the contemplation of her beauty that he stood in a maze, not able to utter one word, until at last gathering his wits together he burst forth into these speeches:

Madam, quoth he, what it pleaseth the gentlewomen of this court to surmise of my solitariness I know not, but if they attribute it to curiousness or coyness, to strangeness or stateliness, either that I am an enemy to love or a foe to fancy, that I detest their bounty with Narcissus or contemn their beauty with Tiancus [sic for Tyanaeus], they offer me great injury so rashly to conjecture of my disease before rightly they have cast my water. But to put your Ladyship out of doubt what is the cause of my dumps, so it is that of late ranging the fields my heart (my hawk, I should say, madam) hovered at such a princely prey, and yet missed of her flight, that since she hath neither pruned herself nor I taken any pleasure. Marry, if the fates should so favour me or fortune so shroud me up in prosperity that my desire might obtain her wish, I would not only change my mourning to mirth, my dolour to delight, and my care to security, but I would think to have gotten as rich a prey as ever Caesar gained by conquest.

Surely, Signor Valericus, quoth Melytta, no doubt the prey is passing princely since the value thereof is rated at so precious a price, and therefore we have neither cause to condemn your hawk of haggardness for want of pruning, nor you of foolishness for want of pleasure. And if your heart (your hawk, I should say, Signor Valericus) hath reached farther with her eye than she is able to mount with her wing, although I am no skilful falconer, yet I think you had better keep her on the fist still, and so feed her with hope, than let her miss again of her flight, and so she turn tail and be foiled.

Indeed, madam, quoth Valericus, your counsel is very good, for as there is no better confect to a crazed mind than hope, so there is no greater corrosive to a careful man than despair, and the falconers also jump with you in the same verdict, that the hawk which

misseth her prey is doubtful to soar aloof and prove haggard. Yet if she were so tickle as she would take no stand, so ramage as she would be reclaimed with no lure, I had rather happily hazard her for the gaining of so peerless a prey, though I both lost her and wanted of my wish, than by keeping her still in the bines to prove her a kite, or me a coward.

Indeed, sir, quoth Castania, fortune ever favoureth them that are valiant, and things the more hard, the more haughty, high and heavenly; neither is anything hard to be accomplished by him that hardily enterpriseth it. But yet take heed that you fish not so fair that at length you catch a frog, and then repentance make you mumble up a Mass with Miserere.

No, madam, quoth he, it is never seen that he which is contented with his chance should ever have cause to repent him of his choice.

And yet, quoth she, he that buys a thing too dear may be content with his chaffer, and yet wish he had been more chary.

Truth, madam, quoth Valericus, but then it is trash and no treasure, for that which is precious is never overprized, and a bad thing, though never so cheap, is thought too chargeable.

Oh, sir, quoth Melytta, and is it not an old saying that a man may buy gold too dear, and that jewels, though never so precious, may be set at too high a price? I see if you had no better skill in manning of a hawk than in making of a bargain you would prove but an ill falconer. But since we have so long troubled you with our talk, we will now leave you to your sport, and so bid you farewell.

Valericus, with a courteous congee repaying their courtesy, and with a glancing eye giving his goddess the doleful *A dio*, went solitarily into the secret woods, where laying him down in the shade he fell into these musing meditations:

What greater prosperity, quoth he, can happen unto any earthly wight than if he be crossed with care, to find a confect to cure his calamity; than if he be pinched with pains, to get a plaster for his passions; if he be drenched in distress, to find a means to mitigate his misery, which I see by proof performed in my silly self, for the sight of my goddess hath so salved my forepassed sorrows, her sweet words hath so healed my heavy wounds, that where before I was plunged in perplexity, I am now placed in felicity, where before I was oppressed with care, I am now refreshed with comfort. O friendly fortune, if from henceforth thou furiously frown upon me, if thou daunt me with disaster mishap, or cross me with perpetual care, yet this thy friendly courtesy shall be sufficient to countervail all future enormities.

But alas, I see every prosperous puff hath his boisterous blast, every sweet hath his sour, every weal his woe, every gale of good luck his storm of sinister fortune, yea, every commodity his discommodity annexed. The blood of the viper is most healthful for the

sight and most hurtful for the stomach, the stone celonites is very precious for the back and very perilous to the brain, the flower of India pleasant to be seen but whoso smelleth to it feeleth present smart, so as the joy of her presence procureth my delight, the annoy of her absence breedeth my despite, yea, the fear that she will not repay my love with liking and my fancy with affection, that she will not consent to my request, but rather means to stifle me with the raging storms of repulse and daunt me with the doom of deadly denials, so fretteth my hapless mind with hellish fury that no plague, no pain, no torment, no torture can worse molest me than to be distressed with this dreadful despair.

Alas, her calling is too high for me to climb unto, her royal state is far above my reach, her haughty mind is too lofty for me to aspire. No doubt if I offer my suit unto her she will prove like the stone of Silicia, which the more it is beaten the harder it is, or like the spices of Ionia, which the more they are pounded the less savour they yield, like to the isiphilon, which yieldeth forth no juice though never so well bruised, so though I should with never so great devotion offer up at her shrine prayers, promises, sighs, sobs, tears, troth, faith, freedom, yea, and my heart itself as a pledge to plead for pity, yet she would make so small account of these my cares, and as little regard my ruth and ruin as Eriphila did her faithful friend Infortunio.

But oh, vild wretch that I am, why do I thus without cause condemn Castania? Why do I accuse her of cruelty in whom reigneth nothing but courtesy? Why do I appeach her of coyness in whom bounty showeth small curiousness?

*How friendly, how familiarly, yea, how faithfully did she talk with me, what a cheerful countenance did she carry towards me, what sudden glances, what lovely looks, which no doubt are signs that though she repulse me at the first she will not refuse me at the last, though she be strait in words she will not be strange in mind, though she give me some bitter pills of denial it shall be but for the better trial. And shall I then, being fed with this hope, prove such a meacock or a milksop as to be feared with the tempestuous seas of adversity whenas at length I shall arrive at the haven of happy estate? Shall I dread to have my ship shaken with some angry blasts, hoping to be safely landed on the shore and so have my share of that which the showers of shrewd fortune for a time hath denied me? No, no, *Dulcia non meruit, qui non gustavit amara.* He is not worthy to suck the sweet which hath not first savoured the sour; he is not worthy to eat the kernel which hath not cracked the shell. He deserveth not to have the crown of victory which hath not abid the brunt of the battle; he meriteth not to possess the prey which will not willingly take some part of the pain, neither is he worthy of so heavenly a dame as Castania that would not spend the most precious blood in his body in the pursuit of so peerless a piece.*

Valericus thus mitigating his pain with the mild medicine of hope, and rooting out the dead flesh of despair with the plaster of trust, determined to strike on the stith while the iron was hot, and to pursue his purpose while his mistress was in her good mood. And therefore leaving his sport for this time, hied him to the court in haste, where insinuating himself into the society of the ladies and gentlewomen he showed himself in sport so pleasant, in talk so witty, in manners so modest, in conceits so cunning, in parle so pithy, & in all his conversation so comely, that whereas before he was specially loved of none,

now he was generally liked of all, insomuch that for a time there was no talk in the court but of the metamorphosis of Valericus' mind. Who oftentimes determining in plain terms to present his suit to Castania, when he came to the point, fear of offence and dread of denial disappointed his purpose that he remained mute in the matter, but at last, perceiving delay bred danger, seeing his mistress sit alone in his presence, hovering between fear and hope he began the assault with this march:

Madam, quoth he, for that I see you sitting thus solitary in dumps, I am the bolder to press in place, although the most unworthy man to supply it, hoping you will pardon my rudeness for troubling thus rashly your musing meditations, and count my company the less offensive in that I see you busied with no such serious matters whereunto my presence may be greatly prejudicial. Cyneas the philosopher, madam, was of this mind, that when the gods made beauty they skipped beyond their skill in that they framed it of greater force than they themselves were able to resist. If then there is none so wise or worthy whom beauty cannot wrack, nor none issued of such princely birth whom beauty cannot bend, though I have been entangled with the snare of fancy and have listened to the lure of beauty, I am the more to be borne with and the less to be blamed. For I must of force confess, madam, that the gifts of nature so abundantly bestowed upon you, your excellent beauty and exquisite virtue, have so scaled the walls of my fancy and sacked the fort of my freedom that for my last refuge I am forced to appeal unto your courtesy as the only medicine which may cure my intolerable disease. Nay, incurable I may well call it, for (I speak with tears outwardly and drops of blood inwardly) unless the mizzling showers of your mercy mitigate the fire of my fancy, the drops of your princely favour quench the flame of my affection, and the guerdon of your goodwill give a sovereign plaster for my secret sore, I am like to pass my life in more misery than if I had taken the infernal torments. But I hope it is not possible that out of a sugared fount should distil a bitter stream, out of a fragrant flower a filthy sap, and from such divine beauty should proceed hate and hellish cruelty.

It is, madam, your beauty which hath wrought my woe, & it is your bounty which must work my weal. It is your heavenly face which hath deprived me of liberty, and your courteous consent must be the means to redeem me from captivity, for as he that eateth of the briane leaf and is infected can by no means be cured unless he taste of the same root, as he which is wounded of the porcupine can never be healed unless his wounds be washed with the blood of the same beast, as there is nothing better against the sting of a snake than to be rubbed with an adder's slough, and as he which is hurt of the scorpion seek[s] a salve from whom he received the sore, so love only is remedied by love, and fancy by mutual affection. You, madam, must minister the medicine, which procured the malady, and it only lies in your power to apply the plaster, which inferred the pain. Therefore I appeal to your good grace and favour, and at the bar of your beauty I humbly hold up my hands, resting to abide your sentence either of consent unto life or of denial unto death.

Castania, hearing this solemn discourse of Valericus, was driven into a maze with this unlooked for motion, musing that he would so far overshoot himself as to attempt so unlikely a match, and therefore with disdainful countenance she gave him this daunt:

As your present arrival, Signor Valericus, doth not greatly prejudice my muses, so I think it will as little profit your motion, and as your company pleaseth me regarding the person, so it much misliketh me respecting the parle, that your counts being once cast, you shall find your absence might have more pleased you and better contented me. For it is impossible, Valericus, to call the falcon to that lure wherein the pens of a chameleon are pricked because she doth deadly detest them; it is hard to train the lion to that trap which savoureth of diagredium, because he loatheth it, and it is as impossible to persuade me to enter league with fancy which am a mortal foe to affection, and to vow my service to Venus, which am already addicted to Diana. No, no, sir, I mean not to love lest I live by the loss, nor to choose lest, my skill being small, I repent my chance. She that is free and willingly runneth into fetters is a fool, and whoso becometh captive without constraint may be thought either wilful or witless. It is good by other men's harms to learn to beware, & to look before a man doth leap, lest in skipping beyond his skill he light in the mire. Whoso considereth the fickleness of men's affections & the fleeting fondness of their fading fancy, who carefully looketh at the lightness of their love and marketh the inconstancy of their wavering mind, who readeth the records which make mention of their deep dissemblings, faithless protestations, false vows, perjured promises, feigned love, and forged flattery, how poor Ariadne was abused, how Medea was mocked, how Dido was deceived, how Oenone was rejected, and how Phyllis was forsaken, and yet would be allured to the train with such filthy scraps, I would count her chance too good were her choice never so bad

But leaving these necessary doubts, Valericus, I tell you for troth if I meant to love, it is not you I mean to like; if affection forced me, it is not your person I mean to fancy. Your patrimony is not sufficient to countervail my parentage, nor your bringing up my birth, and therefore I would wish you to sow the seed of your suit in a more fertile soil, for in me you shall find no grafts of grant to grow, nor no consent to be cropped, for I neither like of your unlikely love, nor mean not to be framed to your fancy.

Valericus, being pushed with this pike, thought it a sign of small courage to yield at the first foin, & therefore looking more narrowly to his ward, and gathering himself within his weapon, he stood to his tackling with this reply:

Madam, quoth he, if you condemn me of folly for climbing a staff too high, or accuse me of fondness for laying my love on a person of such princely parentage, if I seem to make an ill market in cheaping such precious chaffer as the price thereof is far above my reach, yet my offence is too small to bear any weighty penance, sith where the fault proceedeth of love, there the pardon ensueth of course, but your beauty shall bear all the blame as the only spur of this my rash enterprise. For as it is impossible for the iron to resist the operation of the adamant, of the silly straw the virtue of the sucking jet, so as impossible it is for a lover to withstand the brunt of beauty, to freeze if he stand by the flame, or to pervert the laws of nature. So that, madam, if you knew what a breach your beauty hath made into my breast, and how deeply I have shrined the idol of your person in my hapless heart, I assure myself, though my person and parentage, my birth and bringing up be far unfit for such a mate, yet you would deem my love and loyalty to

deserve no less. Loyalty, I call it, madam, for as all things are not made of one mould, so all men are not of one mind. As the serpentine powder is quickly kindled and quickly out, so the salamander stone, once set on fire, can never be quenched; as the soft wax is apt to receive every impression, so the hard metal never changeth form without melting. Jason was never so trothless as Troilus was trusty, Paris was never more fickle than Pyramus was faithful, Aeneas was never so light as Leander was faithful. And sure, madam, I call the gods to witness I speak without feigning, that sith your beauty and virtue either by fate or fortune is so deeply shrined in my heart, if it please you to accept me for your slave or servant, and admit me so far into your favour as that I may freely enjoy the sight of your sweet face and feed my fancy in the contemplation of your beauty, in lieu thereof I will repay such dutiful service as the betrothed faith of Erasta [sic for Erasto] to his Perseda shall not compare with the love of Valericus and Castania.

Castania, hearing these perplexed passions proceed from woeful Valericus, pricked forward to take some remorse of his torments, felt within her mind a careful conflict between fancy and the fates, love and the destinies. Fancy persuaded her to take pity of his pains, the fates forced her to give him the repulse; love wished her to return his goodwill with gain, the destinies drave her to deny his request. Tossed thus with contrary cogitations, at last she burst forth into these doubtful speeches:

Valericus, as I am not altogether to reward thy goodwill with hate, so I cannot repay it with love because fancy denies me to like. To marry, I mean not; to retain servants, I may not. Marry, to let thee either to love or look, take this for an answer, I neither can nor will.

And with that she went her way, leaving Valericus greatly daunted with this doubtful answer, with fear and hope so fiercely assailed that, being left alone, he began thus to consider of his amorous conceits:

If ever woeful creature had cause to complain his woeful case, then undoubtedly may I press for the foremost place, for there is no sorrow more sour, no torment more terrible, no grief more grievous, no heaviness more hurtful, than to have desire requited with despite and goodwill with hate, than to like upon hope of courtesy, and to find nothing but hate and hellish cruelty.

Alas, poor Valericus, is thy true love thus triflingly accounted of, is this the guerdon for thy goodwill? Doth thy deep desire merit no better desert? Then hast thou no choice but either to die desperately, or else to live loathsomely?

Why, fond fool, dost thou count her cruel that at the first gives not a free consent? Dost thou think her coy that cometh not at the first call? Wouldst thou have the match made at the first motion? She that is won with a word will be lost with a wind; the hawk that bates at every cast of the lure will never be steadfast on the stond; the woman that frameth her will to every wish will prove but a wild wanton. No, no, Valericus, let not her denials daunt thee, let not the sour taste of her talk quat thy queasy stomach, construe all things at the best. Though her censure was very severe, yet she knit up her talk with a

courteous close. The hound which at the first default giveth over the chase is called but a cur. The knight that finding the first encounter cumbersome giveth over the quest is counted but a coward, and the lover that at the first denial is daunted with despair is neither worthy to obtain his desire nor enjoy his desert.

And with that he flung out of his chamber, both to avoid the melancholy which tormented his mind and see if he could have a sight of his goddess. But Castania altogether unwilling to parle with her new patient, kept herself out of his sight, which Valericus espying was no whit amazed, but like a valiant soldier gave the fort a fresh assault with a new kind of battery, seeking to obtain that with writing which he could not gain with words, and therefore speedily framed a letter to this effect:

Signor Valericus to the Lady Castania, health.

There is no creature (madam Castania) so bereaved of reason or deprived of sense which, being oppressed with direful calamities, findeth not by mere instinct of nature a present medicine for his malady, man only excepted, who by reason of this want may justly accuse the injurious gods of injustice. The tiger, though never so deadly wounded, tasteth the root of tamarisk and is presently cured; the deer, being stricken though never so deep, feedeth on the herb dictamum [sic for dictamnus?], and forthwith is healed. The lion salveth his sickness by eating the sea-wolf, and the unicorn recovereth his health by swallowing up the buds of a date-tree. But man, being crossed with care or oppressed with grief, pinched with fancy or perplexed with love, findeth no herb so wholesome, no medicine so mild, no plaster so perfect, nor no salve so sovereign which by their secret virtues can appease his passions. Which, madam, I know by proof and now speak by experience, for your divine beauty and secret virtue, the perfection of your body and the bounty of your mind hath kindled such a flaming fire in my hapless heart that by no means it may be quenched, but will turn my body into dry earth and cinders unless by the drops of your pity it be speedily redressed. Then, madam, your beauty is my bale. Let it be my bliss, since it hath wrought my woe. Let it work my weal, and let not my faithful service and loyal love be recompensed with such rigorous refusals. Strive not for my life since you have my liberty; seek not my death since you are the saint to whom I offer up my devotion. But good madam, let the sweet balm of your benevolence salve the sore which so painfully afflicteth my careful conscience, and with the dew of your grace redeem him from most hellish misery whose life and death standeth in your answer, which I hope shall be such as belongeth to the desert of my love and the show of your beauty.

Yours if he be Don Valericus.

Valericus, having thus finished his letter, sent it with as much speed as might be by his page to Castania, who finding her at convenient leisure, with most reverent duty delivered it. Castania at the first sight conjecturing the contents, with scornful looks and disdainful countenance unripped the seals, where seeing and reading his deep devotion she perceived that his affection was no less in deed than he professed in word. She

notwithstanding would take no remorse of his torment, but to drive him more into doleful dumps she returned him this damp:

Castania to Signor Valericus.

As it is impossible (Signor Valericus) to strain moist liquor out of the dry flint, to procure flaming heat in that which already is nipped with chilling cold, to force the sturdy streams to run against their common course, so as hard it is to win unwilling love, either with tears for [sic for or?] truth. For if thy birth and patrimony could countervail my parentage, if my father were content to knit up the knot, yet neither his command nor thy entreaty should not make me to choose without my own love or liking. Sith then thou art the man whom I rather loathe than like, cease from thy suit; make a virtue of necessity, and assuage the flame thyself which no other will quench. By importunate persisting in thy purpose where no hope is, thou provest thyself rather a desperate sot than a discreet soldier. To hop against the hill is extreme fondness, to strive against the stream mere folly. Then, Valericus, avoid the one and eschew the other, for if thou wilt seek to gain my goodwill thou shalt turn the endless stone with Sisyphus, and therefore take my nay for an answer, for if I would I cannot, and if I could I will not. And so farewell.

No way yours, Castania.

Valericus, having received this rigorous letter from ruthless Castania, seeing with what great disdain she rejected his dutiful devotion, and how with coy countenance and luring looks she rewarded his loyal love, he began with reason somewhat to repress his rage and with wisdom to redress his witless folly, for comparing her cruelty with his own courtesy and her wilful disdain with his willing duty, his disordinate desire began not only to decay, but his extreme love turned to extreme hate, insomuch that forced with despite he sent her in revenge these raging lines:

Valericus the despised, to despiteful Castania.

Diogenes being demanded why so extremely he hated women answered, because (quoth he) they be women; so if thou ask of me why so rudely I rail against thy reckless folly, I answer because thou art Castania, whose merciless mind is so misled with ingratitude and whose currish nature is foiled with careless inconstancy, that like Menechmus Supreptus [sic for Menaechmus Subreptus?] his wife, thou dost not begin to love ere again thou seekest to hate. Thou playest, Castania, like the young eagles, which being hatched up by the bird osyphaga [sic for ossifraga?], never seek to perk on lofty mounts but to sit in dirty dales, and like the greedy kite which leaveth the sweet flesh to prey on the stinking carrion. But why do I so far forget myself? Is she to be blamed that leaveth her choice to have a better chance, or is the falcon to be accused of bastardy that leaveth the starling to prey on the lark? No, and no doubt such is thy case, for if it be true that all speaketh, or at the least suspecteth, thou art like by thy lover's parentage to become a great potentate, for if arms be the bewrayer of ancient descents, no doubt he is come of an old house. Yea, thy father Orlanio may rejoice if he live to see the day that his daughter shall be so well wedded as to such a wrangling wizard. But Pasiphae preferred

a bull before a king, and Venus a smeared smith before Mars, the god of battle. Tush, Psomneticus [sic for Psamnetichus] was father to Rhodope's children, whosoever begat them, and that cloak is of a coarse spinning that cannot keep off the rain. Farewell.

Living, he hopes, to revenge thy injuries, woeful Valericus.

Castania no sooner had read these despiteful lines of Valericus, but her mind fried with the flames of fury and her breast boiled with raging wrath in such sort that she could not be in quiet nor take any rest, she busied herself so carefully in studying with what kind of revenge she might best wreak her wrath upon him and requite his spiteful speeches. At last, womanlike, she found her tongue the best weapon, and with that she plagued him in this sort:

Castania to Valericus, neither health nor good hap.

The mastiff dog, Valericus, can never quest like a spaniel, but he must always bark like a cur; it is natural for the pie to chatter, for the jay to jangle, and for thee to rail and rage like a frantic fool. Dost thou think, Valericus, by brawling like a beggar to become a king, or by thy modeless folly to obtain my favour? No, as I know thy knavery, so I pass not for thy bravery; neither can those vaunts stand for payment where the party is pricked for a peevish paltering patch. It is no marvel if thy doggish letters savour of Diogenes' doctrine, for in troth thou art such a cynical kind of dunce that thy fond felicity is in biting bitterly those whom otherwise thou canst not revenge. Indeed, gentle Balaam's ass, if I had been so light as to have loved you, I might justly have been accused to have been a cur or a kestrel, for in faith she that feeds her fancy on thy face may only reap this profit, to fill her eyes full with the figure of a fool. For my lover's arms, Valericus, they are emblazed in such a coat as it is hard for thee to control. But I know thou boastest that thou hast gotten thy antiquity by conquest, and keepest thy letters patent in the beggar's box. Thus adieu, Sir Dunce; the more you mislike me, the better I love myself.

Thy detested foe, Castania.

Valericus his heart was so hardened with hate as he was nothing dismayed with this rigorous reply, but thought himself half satisfied that he had thus kindly touched her to the quick, praying the gods that sith it was not in his possibility to make any sufficient revenge, they would by some sinister means requite her cruelty.

But leaving him to his dumps, at last to Gwydonius, who besides the beauty of his body and the bounty of his mind (whereat all Alexandria wondered), had by good government and perfect practice obtained such a dexterity in all things as in feats of arms no man more forward, in exercise none more active, in play none more politic, in parle none more pleasant, amongst his ancients very wise, amongst the youthful who more merry, so that there was no time, person nor place whereto he aptly applied not himself, insomuch that he entered into such favour and familiarity with Thersandro and Castania that he was the only man whose company they desired to enjoy. But especially Castania, who by casting

a gazing glance sometime upon the beauty of Gwydonius felt a certain restraint of liberty in her affections, an alteration of mind, and as it were a civil assault within herself, but having small practice in the pangs of love she could not conjecture the secret cause of these her sudden passions, thinking that as it was a toy lightly taken, so it would as lightly be left. And upon this still she rested, conceiving only an ordinary kind of liking towards Gwydonius, who bathing thus in the streams of bliss, and falsely harboured in the haven of happiness, wanting nothing which might content his mind either for pleasure or profit, thought it a point of mere folly either to seek or wish for more than enough, knowing that to strain further than the sleeve would stretch was but to make the arm bare, and to skip beyond a man's skill was to leap, but not to know where to light. To avoid therefore hastiness in hazarding, he fell a-slumber in the careless seat of security.

But as it is impossible for a man to sleep by the viper and not be envenomed, to gaze upon the cockatrice and not be infected, to stare upon the sun and not be dazzled, to look upon Medusa's head and not be transformed, to wade in the waves and not be drenched, to handle coals and not be scorched, so it was as impossible for young Gwydonius to gaze upon the beauty of Castania and not be galled, to fix his eyes upon her feature and not be fettered, to see her virtuous qualities and not be inveigled, for her courtesy had so encountered him, her modesty had so amazed him, and her chary chastity so enchanted him that whereas he came to Orlandio his court free from affection, he was now become a servile slave to fancy, before a foe to lust, now a friend to love. Yea, he felt such an alienation of his senses and such a strange metamorphosis of his mind as reason was turned to rage, mirth to mourning, joy to annoy, delight to despite, weal to woe, bliss to bale. In fine, such contrary passions so perplexed this doubtful patient as, maugre his face, he yielded the fort to fancy and pulled in the former flag of defiance, entreated for truce and began to enter parle with Cupid on this manner:

O Gwydonius, quoth he, what strange chance, nay, what rare change, what solemn motion, nay, what sudden madness, what foolish frenzy, or rather what frantic affection, hath possessed thee? Is thy lawless liberty turned to a slavish captivity? Is thy freedom fettered? Are thy senses besotted? Is thy wit inveigled? Wert thou of late a defier of Venus, and art thou now a defender of vanity? Didst thou of late renounce beauty as a foe, and wilt thou now embrace her as a friend? Is this the careful keeping of thy father's commandment, or is this thy diligent duty in observing the counsel of thy old sire Clerophontes? Hast thou so soon forgot his fatherly precepts, or committed to oblivion his friendly advertisement? Did he carefully warn thee to beware of love, and wilt thou carelessly wed thyself to lust? Did he show thee what poisoned bane is hidden under the painted baits of beauty, and wilt thou be haled to the hook?

O hapless case! Nay, rather if the chary charge thy father gave thee will be no constraint, if his counsel will not command thee, if his warning will not make thee wary, nor his advice be thy advertisement, yet let imminent perils and ensuing dangers be a precious preservative against future calamities. Consider with thyself, Gwydonius, what difference is between freedom and bondage, between liberty and captivity, mirth and mourning, pleasure and pain, rest and care, happiness and heaviness, and so far doth he which is free from affection differ from him which is fettered in fancy.

Why, but Gwydonius, why dost thou thus recklessly rage against reason? Why dost thou thus fondly exclaim against thine own welfare? Why dost thou condemn thyself of that crime whereof thou art not guilty? Thy father warned thee to beware of fickle fancy, but this thy liking is firm affection. His counsel was to persuade thee from lewd lust, but not from lawful love, from vanity, not from virtue. Yea, his will was to wish thee from liking such a lewd minion who had neither birth, wealth nor virtue, but a little fading beauty to be either her credit or thy countenance, not to warn thee from loving such a chaste maiden, nay a peerless princess, whose birth may countenance thy calling, whose power may promote thee, whose livings may enrich thee, whose virtue may advance thee, yea, in obtaining whom thou shalt gain both honour and perhaps the inheritance of a dukedom. Dost thou think then, Gwydonius, in winning so worthy a piece to purchase thy father's displeasure? Nay, assure thyself, he will not only be content with thy chance but he will think thou hast run a happier race than Hippomenes did in winning Atlanta.

Content with thy chance? Why Gwydonius, art thou so fond a fool as to count the castle conquered that as yet thou hast not compassed, to suppose the city sacked which thou hast not besieged, to think the bulwark beaten which as yet thou hast not battered, or to count the lady won whom as yet thou hast not wooed? Nay, Gwydonius, if thou weigh thy case in the equal balance, thou hast more cause of fear than of hope, of doubt than of assurance, of missing thy pretence than of obtaining thy purpose. The falcon, Gwydonius, seldom perketh with the merlin, the lion seldom lodgeth with the mouse, the hart seldom feedeth with the pricket, Aquila non capit muscas, and a dame endued with nobility vouchsafeth not to match with a man of mean gentility.

Of mean gentility, Gwydonius? Yea, truly, for Castania rather thinketh thee sprung of some poor peasant than of any princely personage. Besides, alas, Fortune herself denieth me any such favour; my goodwill as yet hath deserved no such guerdon, my desire is far above my deserts, my ambition above my condition, and the poor stay of wandering Gwydonius far unfit for the princely state of worthy Castania. But put case she did will as I did wish, that she were pricked in the same vein, caught in the same snare, trapped with the like train, & fired with the like fancy, yet the duke her father will neither condescend to her mind nor consent to my motion, neither think well of her liking nor of my love. Nay, if he should but once hear of such reckless folly, as he hath wrought my promotion so he would work my confusion, as he hath been my friend so he would be my foe, and in troth, Gwydonius, not without cause, for art thou so void of virtue or vowed to vice, so nursed up in vanity or nuzzled up in villainy, as to requite his liberality with such disloyalty, to return the trust which he repositeth in thee with such treason?

Tush, love is above lord or law, friend or faith. Where love leadeth, no master is made account of, no king cared for, no friend forced of, no duty respected, but all things done according to the quality that is predominant. Why, Gwydonius, what doubts are these that thou thus dreamest on? Why dost thou cast beyond the moon and fear before thou art in danger to fall, knowing that love and fortune desireth not them that are dastards, nor careth not for them that are cowards. The captain that retireth from the walls before he hath the repulse shall never return a conqueror, the soldier that fainteth before the

battle be fought shall never vaunt himself of victory. He that feareth every tempest is not fit to be a traveller. He that doubteth every wave shall never prove a perfect pilot, and he that in love dreadeth every chip of mischance may well encounter, but never obtain the conquest. Sith then, Gwydonius, hardy venturing is a sign of happy victory, sound out the march with the trumpet of trust, begin the assault, give the onset. Lay the battering pieces of love against the bulwark of beauty, and no doubt thy success shall be such as thou shalt triumph with Caesar and say, Veni, vidi, vici.

And art thou so presumptuous, fond fool, as to promise thyself the conquest; knowest thou not that the path of love is perilous? And with that he fell into such melancholic passions, such contrary cogitations, such doubtful thoughts, such fearful supposes, that as he which eateth of the gourd root loseth his memory, and as the elephant when he eateth of the helitropion leaf is then very sleepy, so Gwydonius was so perplexed with these unacquainted passions that, contrary to his custom, he had driven mirth into mourning, pleasant conceits into painful cares, laughing into louring, singing into sorrow, as [sic for and?] being thus besotted, to solace himself he went into a park adjoining to the duke's palace, where sitting under the shade of a beech-tree, leaning his head on his hand, he lay as one in a slumber. But Fortune willing somewhat to favour this young novice brought it so to pass that Thersandro, Valericus, Castania and Melytta, with divers other gentlemen, were for recreation' sake ranging in the same park, who espying ghostly Gwydonius sitting as one in a trance, Castania passing before the rest, pulling him by the sleeve, drave him thus out of his dump:

Why, how now, Gwydonius, quoth she, are you dreaming or doubting, or is your mind musing upon some metaphysical motions, that you sit thus as a man half mortified? Your solemn gesture makes me remember the picture of Pygmalion which once I saw portrayed out by a skilful painter, who leaning his head on his marble mistress (that so unfeignedly he loved) sat with his eyes as one in a slumber, having his face notwithstanding so bedewed with brinish tears as his outward plaints did sufficiently bewray his inward passions. In truth, Gwydonius, I had taken thee for Pygmalion if thou hadst had tears as thou wert in a trance, for thou dost not greatly differ from him, neither in countenance nor colour. Well, if it were but a dream, Gwydonius, that thus cumbered thy conscience, or a doubt that made thee thus dumpish, I will divine the one if it be not too dark, or decide the other, if it be not too secret. Marry, if the case be cumbersome, I leave it to the judgment of these gentlemen.

Gwydonius, wakened out of his musing slumber with this sugared harmony, seeing before his eyes his gorgeous goddess, the very saint at whose shrine he was offering up scalding sighs, far-fetched sobs, plaints, prayers and protestations, was so appalled with her presence that as the basilisk loseth his senses with the sight of a naked man, as the tortoise seeing the North star is benumbed, as the ermelin looking on the stone echites is greatly amazed, so Gwydonius seeing the incomparable beauty of his best-beloved Castania, was so astonished, yea, so enchanted with the rare perfection of this heavenly Pallas that as one besotted he sat senseless, not being able to utter one word, until at length revived with the view of her cheerful countenance he repaid her with this pleasant answer:

Madam, quoth he, whereas jestingly you say that at the first sight you had taken me for perplexed Pygmalion by my pitiful plaints and careful countenance, but that I wanted trickling tears to decipher my sorrow, I answer that woe may very well be without watery wailings, for when the stone garatides frieth without, it freezeth within; the germander leaf, when it is most full of moisture, looketh then most dry. Where the stream is most deep, there it is most still, and where is the smallest show of tears, there is the greatest sign of sorrow. And also I call the heavens to witness that when you wakened me out of my dream by your divine eloquence, I took you either for beauty to be Venus, for comeliness to be Pallas, or for port and honour to be Juno, so that both your presence and courtesy daunted my mind, your presence in dazzling my eyes so suddenly with so solemn a sight, your courtesy in that your Ladyship without curiosity would vouchsafe to talk with so mean a gentleman. But, madam, sith that I perceive your skill in navigation to be great in that you made so cunning a conjecture and without any great aiming so rightly hit the mark, to put you out of doubt I confess I was both in a dream and a doubt, wherein sith it pleaseth your Honour to take so much pain, I will crave your aid to divine the one and decide the other.

The Dream.

I was walking (madam Castania) in my dream (as I supposed) solitarily by the sea-side, where as I took delight to see the dolphins leap (which as the mariners say is a sign of imminent tempest), I forthwith espied a rock in the sea whereupon stood a lady arrayed with robes of burnished gold, so formed and framed, so adorned and decked with the gifts of nature as at the first I took her to be Thetis, that had so gorgeously clad herself to welcome home her lover and lord, Neptunus. But viewing her countenance more narrowly, I perceived her to be a mortal creature (though unworthy such divine beauty should be shrouded in the substance of an earthly carcass), which so inflamed my affection, so fired my fancy, & so kindled my desire, that the torments of Tantalus, the torture of Ixion, the sorrow of Sisyphus, were not half comparable to the perplexed passions that pinched my hapless heart when I saw all hope cut away from enjoying this earthly goddess, the sea which compassed the rock was so deep and dangerous, the cliffs so steep-down and fearful as to descend was no less danger than death itself.

Thus as I surged in grief and wandered up and down in woe, I spied a bridge afar off whereby was a passage to the rock, which sight so salved my forepassed sorrow and so revived my daunted mind as I was driven into an ecstasy for joy to see so good means to enjoy my wished desire. Coming to the bridge I found it built of glass so cunningly and so curiously as if nature herself had sought to purchase credit by framing so curious a piece of workmanship, but yet so slenderly as the least weight was able to pash it into innumerable pieces, and underneath the bridge did run so terrible a sea, such bouncing billows, such tumbling waves, such fearful surges, such roaring streams, such hideous gulfs, as it made the passage seem a thousand times more perilous. This terrible sight was such a cooling card to my former conceits as hope was turned to fear, bliss to bale, & supposed happiness to assured heaviness. And yet my fancy was not quenched but rather far the more inflamed, my desire was not diminished but augmented, & my liking

no less, but rather enlarged, so that to live in love without hope was loathsome, to seek redress was loss of life, to want my wish was horror, to enjoy my will was hell, to live in care without comfort was calamity, to seek for cure was more than misery, not to possess the prey was hellish danger, to venture for the prize was hapless death.

Thus crossed with cares & daunted with such divers doubts, desperate hope so repulsed direful fear that encouraged by venturous desire I had either obtained my wish or wanted of my will if your Ladyship had not so suddenly wakened me out of my slumber. Thus, madam Castania, you have heard my dream. Now the doubt is whether it had been better to have ventured upon the brickle bridge, and so either desperately to have ended cares with death or else valiantly to have enjoyed desire with renown, or still like a fearful dastard to have ended my days in lingering love with misery.

Castania, hearing the surmised dream of Gwydonius, both smelled the fetch and smiled at the folly of this young youth, knowing that these fantastical visions and presupposed passions would in time (if he took not heed) prove but too true. To prevent therefore such imminent perils she nipped her young novice on the pate with this parole:

Gwydonius, quoth she, I have listened to thy drowsy dream with deep devotion, by so much the more desirous attentively to hear it by how much the more I find it strange and wonderful, yea, so strange as if I myself had not wakened thee out of thy slumber I would either have thought it a feigned vision or a fantastical invention, but sith these gentlemen here present & mine own eyes are witnesses, & thine own tongue a testimony of thy talk, suffice I believe it, though I cannot divine it. To give a verdict where the evidence is not understood is vanity, to yield a reason of an unknown case is mere folly, and to interpret so strange a dream without great practice is but to skip beyond my skill, and so lay fast in the mire. Yet lest I might seem to promise much and perform nothing, I will decide your doubt if you please to take my doom for a censure.

It is a saying, Gwydonius, not so common as true, that the hasty man never wants woe, and that he which is rash without reason seldom or never sleepeth without repentance. To venture amidst the pikes when perils cannot be eschewed is not fortitude but folly, to hazard in dangers when death ensueth is not to be worthily minded but wilfully moved. Virtue always consisteth between extremities, that as too much fearfulness is the sign of a quaking coward, so too much rashness betokeneth a desperate ruffian. Manhood, Gwydonius, consisteth in measure, and worthiness in fearing to hazard without hope. But to give a verdict by thine own voice, I perceive thou art guilty of the same crime, for when the brickleness of the bridge portended death, and the surging seas inferred loss of life, yet desire drave thee to adventure so desperate a danger. Better it is, Gwydonius, to live in grief than to die desperately without grace, better to choose a lingering life in misery than a speedy death without mercy, better to be tormented with hapless fancy than with hellish fiends, for in life it is possible to repress calamity, but after death never to redress misery. Tully, Gwydonius, in his Tusculans questions, discoursing of the happiness of life and heaviness of death, saith that to live we obtain it of the loving gods, but to die of the unlucky destinies, meaning hereby that life, though never so loathsome,

is better than death, though never so welcome, whereby I conclude, Gwydonius, that to live carefully is better than to die desperately.

Gwydonius, perceiving that Castania's parle was nothing to the purpose, and that she touched not that point whereof he desired most to be absolved, but meant to shake him off with a sleeveless answer, began to draw her to the trap with this train:

Madam Castania, quoth he, I confess that rashness never reigneth without repentance, nor hasty hazarding without hapless harms, that he which adventureth desperate dangers is a fool, & he that passeth inevitable perils is worse than an ass, yet from these so general rules, madam, I exempt these particular exceptions, namely love & necessity, which two are tied within no bonds, nor limited within no law, for whom the devil drives he must needs run, be the passage never so perilous, and whom love or necessity forceth, he must venture, be the danger never so desperate, for as there is no enterprise so easy which to an unwilling man seemeth not very hard to be achieved, so there is no encounter so cumbersome where will wisheth that seemeth not passing easy to be performed. Now this will is with nothing sooner pricked forward than either with the force of love or sting of necessity, so that whosoever adventureth in a danger, though never so desperate, is not to be blamed if enforced by fancy or encouraged by affection, and especially where the peril is in possibility to be passed without death, and in the performance thereof the possession of such a prize as the passionate person more esteemeth than lands, limbs or life itself, be it never so sweet. In which case, madam, my cause consisteth. For the lady who was an heavenly object to my glazing eyes was so beautified with the gifts of nature and so perfectly polished with more than natural perfection that with the only view of such divine beauty my senses were so besotted, my wit & will so inveigled, my affection so inflamed, & my freedom so fettered, yea, love already had made so great a breach into the bulwark of my breast that to obtain so gorgeous a goddess I thought death no danger, though never so direful, nor loss of life no torment, though never so terrible.

Indeed, Gwydonius, quoth Thersandro, I agree with thee in this point, that there is no carpet-knight so cowardly that would not pass most perilous pikes to possess so lively a dame as thou dost decipher, nor no dastard so daunted with dread which would not greatly endanger himself to enjoy so lovely a damsel, in the fruition of whom consisteth nothing but joy, bliss, rest, contentation of mind, delight, happiness, yea, all earthly felicity.

And yet, sir, quoth Gwydonius, your sister Castania condemns me of folly in venturing for so precious a prize whenas hope persuaded me that no hazard could be hapless, and assured me that love and fortune favoureth them that are bold, that the gods themselves seeing my perplexed passions would of pity defend me from those perilous dangers. For if Theseus by divine power were aided against the force of the monstrous Minotaur, or if Jason, who constrained with a covetous desire to obtain the golden fleece, arriving at Colchos was preserved by the gods from the dint of the deadly dragons, no doubt Jupiter himself would either have made the staggering bridge more strong (considering that no hope of wealth, no desire of riches, no greediness of gain, no love of lucre, but beauty herself was the victory I meant to vaunt of), or else if I had soused in the roaring seas, he

would have provided some happy dolphin, that Arion-like I might arrive at the desired rock, and then my dangers should have been turned into delight, my perils into pleasures, my hazarding into happiness, yea, I should have possessed that heavenly paragon and enjoyed the love of that lovely Venus whose only sight were a sufficient salve against all forepassed sorrows.

Stay there, Master Gwydonius, quoth the Lady Melytta, for I see to grant one false proposition is to open a door to innumerable absurdities, and that by suffering you too long of these supposed premises, you will infer some cavilling conclusion to your former reasons. Thus I reply: that I confess necessity to have no law, but I grant not the same of love, for if it be lawless, it is lewd; if without limits, lascivious; if contained within no bounds, beastly; if observed with no order, odious, so that lawless love without reason is the very loadstone to ruth and ruin. Sith then, Master Gwydonius, as yourself affirm, this was the prick that pushed you into peril, how can the effect be good when the cause was naught, or how can you clerkly defend your desperate motion proceeding of such a fond and foolish occasion?

But it was the perfection of her comely person, her exquisite feature and rare beauty, that so kindled thy desire and so bewitched thy senses, for who is so fearful that beauty will not make bold, who so doubtful that beauty will not make desperate, yea, what so hard that a man will not hazard to obtain so divine a thing as beauty? Oh Gwydonius, hast thou not heard the fish remora, listening to the sound of a trumpet, is caught of the fishers, that while the porcupine standeth staring at the glimmering of the stars he is overtaken with dogs, that the deer gazing at the bow is stricken with the bolt, that the leopard looking at the panther's painted skin is taken as a prey, and that he which taketh too much delight to gaze upon beauty is oftentimes galled with grief and misery? Yea, his pleasure shall infer such profit and his goodwill such gain as if he reaped the beautiful apples of Tantalus which are no sooner touched but they turn to ashes. Beauty, Gwydonius, no sooner flourisheth but it fadeth, and it is not fully ripe before it begin to rot. It no sooner blossometh but it withereth, and scarcely being touched it staineth, like to the guaiacum leaf that hath the one half parched before the other half be perfect, to the bird acanthis which hatched white, yet turneth black at the first storm, or like to the stone astites that changeth colour with the only breath of a man.

If then, Gwydonius, beauty be so fading, so fickle, so momentary, so moving, so withering, so waning, so soon passed, and so soon parched, is this the jewel which you count more dear than life, and the gem which you think worthy to be purchased with the danger of death? No doubt, Gwydonius, if you won the victory you might vaunt of a great conquest, and if your long hope were repaid with a great hap it should be much like to his which thinking to embrace Juno caught nothing but a vanishing cloud.

You do well, madam, quoth Castania, to put an 'if' in it, because he that vaunteth of victory before he hath won the field may prove himself a fool, he that brags of gains before the accounts be cast may perhaps put his winnings in his eyes, and he that bloweth the mort before the fall of the buck may very well miss of his fees; so he that counts

himself a speeder before he be a wooer showeth himself a vain person or a vaunting patch.

Might it not be, I pray you, Master Gwydonius, that passing the bridge, scaping the dangerous seas, & happily arriving at the desired rock, yet you might miss of your purpose? Yes, forsooth, for many a man bendeth his bow that never killeth his game, layeth the trap that never catcheth the fowl, pitcheth the net that never getteth the fish, & long time are heavy wooers that never prove happy speeders. So perhaps, Gwydonius, you might be crossed with a chip of the same mischance, and the gorgeous dame whom you adore for a goddess might repay your liking with loathing, your love with hate, your goodwill with despite, and your fixed fancy with small affection, either that she liked you too little, or loved another too much.

All these doubts, Gwydonius, are carefully to be cast, and wisdom it is to fear the worst and find the best, but you, sir, like a lusty champion, think a lady won at the first look, and the goodwill of women gained at the first glance, thinking the gods themselves are to be accused of injustice if they be not aiders to your enterprise, insomuch that if in venturing over the perilous passage you had by disaster fortune fallen into the dangerous seas, you doubted not but that Jupiter would have sent a dolphin, that Arion-like you might escape the fearful surges, but Gwydonius, be not so venturous lest though you harp very long you get not the like hap. These premises considered, if my censure might stand for a sentence, I deem it better to be counted a dastardly coward than a desperate caitiff, better to forsake your goddess than your God, better to live pinched with a few momentary passions than with desperate death to destroy both soul and body, for there is no sore such which in time may not be salved, no care such which cannot be cured, and no fire so great which may not be quenched, no love, liking, fancy or affection which in time may not either be repressed or redressed.

Valericus, hearing this rough reply of Castania, supposed that although she levelled at Gwydonius, yet she shot at him, and fearing the fort should be too much shaken with this fierce assault, he stiffly defended the walls with this fresh alarum:

Madam, quoth he, I see you will sit nigh the walls ere you be thrust out for a wrangler, and that you will speak against your own conscience but you will have the conquest. For my own part, madam, however I seem to like it, I will not say I dislike it, but I am sorry you, Madam Melytta, should so blasphemously emblaze the arms of beauty and so recklessly rail against the sacred laws of love. Take heed for crossing Cupid so crabbedly, for though he forgive and forget, Venus is a woman, and will seek revenge.

Valericus, quoth she, take no care what danger I incur for speaking the truth. If I chance to be harmed it is mine own mishap, and for Venus' revenge, I care for it the less because I fear it not. If I speak against myself, you may see I am the fitter to be a judge because I am not partial, nor have any respect of persons.

These quips, madam, quoth Gwydonius, are nothing to the purpose; therefore in the behalf of myself and beauty thus I answer, that as there is nothing that so soon procureth

a man to loathe as deformity, so there is nothing which sooner persuadeth a man to love than beauty, for the most precious stone is chosen by the most glistering hue, the purest gold by the most perfect colour, the best fruit by the bravest blossoms, and the best conditions by the sweetest countenance, so that where beauty reigneth, there virtue remaineth, and under a fair face resteth a faithful heart. Sith then beauty and bounty cannot be parted, what man is he so brutish whom the least of these will not make to break or bend? And whereas you condemn me of vanity for vaunting before the victory, I say that if fortune had so favoured me that I had gained the presence of my goddess, I would never have doubted to have obtained my desire, for if she had seen the desperate danger which I adventured, and the fearful perils which I passed for her sake, she could not but of conscience repay my love with unfeigned loyalty, and my goodwill with treble gain. And in troth I think it impossible that such heavenly beauty should be eclipsed with cruelty, and such perfect comeliness be blemished with curious coyness.

Why, Gwydonius, quoth she, dost thou call it cruelty not to condescend to the request of everyone that loveth, or dost thou term it coyness not to yield to the assault of every flattering lover? Then in my judgment it were good for every woman to be both cruel and coy, that by cruelty she might avoid the train of trothless wooers, and by coyness eschew the troop of faithless suitors.

And so, madam, quoth Valericus, she should reap small comfort and less credit.

Tush, Signor Valericus, quoth Gwydonius, it pleaseth her thus merrily to jest, whereas I know she doth account more of a courteous dame than of a curious damsel, and that her Ladyship so detesteth the name of cruelty that she would be loath to be thought to have a mind devoid of mercy. And in troth, to leave these particular instances, women in general, or for the most part, are bountiful, courteous, sober, chaste, demure, not imbrued with vice but endued with virtue, so that by how much women's bodies are weaker than men's, by so much their minds are more strong and virtuous.

What, Gwydonius, quoth she, do you think to be a free man in Wales for offering a leek to Saint David, or to bring Pan into a fool's paradise by praising his pipe?

Not so, madam, quoth he, but I hope in extolling a soldier's life to have Saint George to my friend, and in giving verdict with Venus to gain her goodwill, and to reap the reward that Paris had for his censure.

Marry, sir, quoth Castania, if you have no better gettings you may gain long enough and yet live by the loss, for in obtaining one friend you shall reap two foes as Paris did, who was more plagued by Pallas and Juno than pleased by flattering Venus.

And yet, madam, quod he, his mishap shall not make me to beware, for if Venus would grant me but one lady in the world whom most entirely I love, I would neither respect Pallas, Juno nor Diana herself, were she never so spiteful.

Yes, but you would, quoth she, if she pinched you but with Actaeon's plague, to pester your head with as many horns as a hart. It would cause you conjecture your new mistress were too much given to the game, or that thou wert come from Cornetto by descent.

Tush, madam, quoth he, do you count Actaeon's hap such a great harm? The only sight in seeing Diana naked was a recompense for all his ensuing sorrows, and if myself might enjoy my wish and obtain the heavenly dame that so heartily I desire, the plague of Actaeon, nay, the griping griefs that ghostly spirits do suffer, should not countervail the joy I should conceive in enjoying so peerless a jewel.

Truly, quoth Thersandro, thou art worthy, Gwydonius, to be a chapman, that thou bids so well for thy chaffer, and in my mind she is not in Alexandria who for her beauty is so to be loved, or at the least would deem thee not worthy to be liked. But leaving these amorous discourses, let us hie us in haste to the court, least in tarrying Orlandio miss us, and so we be shent. The company, obeying the mind of Thersandro, passed as speedily as might be to the palace, where being arrived they departed every man to his own lodging.

Castania had no sooner conveyed herself closely into her chamber but her mind was moved with a thousand sundry motions, and she felt such a cruel conflict in her hapless heart by the assault of divers contrary passions that how stoutly soever she defended the walls, she found her force too weak to resist the rage of so reckless a tyrant. Now the prayers Valericus poured forth came to effect, now Venus meant to be revenged for the cruelty she used to her valiant Captain Valericus, who so valiantly had sought under the flag of affection and yet could by no means prevail. For Castania, hearing the sugared eloquence which so sweetly flowed from the sappy wit of Gwydonius, framing in her fancy the form of his face and printing in her heart the perfection of his person, was so entangled in the snares of love as she could by no reason redress her misery, but will she, nill she, fell into these bitter complaints:

Alas, witless wretch, quoth she, that I am, what fiery flames of fancy do fry within me, what desire, what lust, what hope, what trust, what care, what despair, what fear, what fury, that to be pained with these perplexed passions, to me that never felt the force of them before, is no less dolour than death itself, be it never so direful. O gods, where are now become those lofty looks I used to Valericus? Where is the disdainful dealings, the coy countenances, the curious congees, the causeless cruelty, yea, the hard heart which so rigorously rejected the love of him which so entirely liked me? Could I, fond fool that I am, valiantly withstand the assaults of a worthy gentleman, & shall I cowardly yield to an unknown stranger? Did I loathe him whose parentage was little inferior to mine, and shall I love another of base and vild birth? Did I disdain to look at the lure, and shall I now stoop without stall, come without call, yea, and to such an empty fist? O lawless love, O witless will, O fancy fraught full of frenzy and fury!

Alas, if I should be so careless as to consent to this frantic toy, what will they say that praised me for my virtue? Will they not as fast dispraise me for my vanity, will not my

father fret, my kinsfolk cry out, my friends be sorry, my foes, and especially Valericus, laugh me to scorn, and triumph of this my mishap? Yea, will not all the world wonder to see me alate given to chastity and now shake hands with virginity, to yield my dearest jewel & chiefest treasure into the hands of a stragglng stranger who came to my father's court without countenance or coin, wealth or worship, credit or calling, yea, who by his own report is but a person of small parentage? Seek then, Castania, to assuage this flame and to quench this fire, which as it cometh without cause so it will consume without reason. For the greatest flow hath the soonest ebb, the sorest tempest hath the most sudden calm, the hottest love hath the coldest end, and of the deepest desire oft-times ensueth the deadliest hate, so that she which settles her affection with such speed as she makes her choice without discretion may cast her corn she knows not where, and reaps [sic?] she wots not what, and for her hasty choosing may perhaps get a heavy bargain.

Alas, I know this counsel is good, but what then? Can I deny that which the destinies have decreed? Is it in my power to pervert that which the planets have placed? Can I resist that which is stirred up by the stars? No, what need I then make this exclamation, sith I am not the first nor shall not be the last whom the frantic frenzy of flickering fancy hath with more wrong and greater vantage piteously oppressed. What though Gwydonius be not wealthy, yet he is wise; though he be not of great parentage, yet he is of comely personage. It is not his coin that hath conquered me but his countenance, not his vading riches but his renowned virtues, & I far more esteem a man than money. Aye, but the duke my father is not so base-minded as to bestow me upon so mean a gentleman; he never will consent that poor Gwydonius should enjoy that which he hopeth some peerless prince shall possess. What then? Shall I prefer my father's weal before mine own wit, his liking before mine own love? No, no, I will choose for myself whatsoever my choice be.

Why, but perchance Gwydonius will no more esteem thee than thou didst Valericus, & repay thee with as small fancy as thou him with affection. Tush, doubt it not, Castania, thou art the dame which he so deciphered in his dream; thou art that Venus which he saw in his vision, thou art that goddess whose beauty hath so bewitched him, thou art that jewel to possess the which there is no hap too hard which he would not hazard, no danger so desperate which he would not adventure, no burden so heavy which he would not bear, nor no peril so huge which he would not pass. And shall not then Gwydonius be my servant, sith I am his saint? Shall not I like him which loveth me, sith he is my joy? Shall I not enjoy him? Yes, Gwydonius is mine, and shall be mine in despite of the fates and fortune.

Castania, having thus pitifully poured out her complaints, would gladly have given Gwydonius intelligence (with modesty, if she might) of her goodwill towards him, & God knows how fain Gwydonius would have discovered his fervent affection if too much fear had not astonished him, & too great bashfulness stayed her. She therefore hovering between fear & hope persevered so long in his [sic] pensive passions & careful cogitations that by covert concealing of her inward sorrow the flame so furiously fried within her that she was constrained to keep her bed. Whereupon Melytta, conjecturing the cause of her care by the colour of her countenance, thought to sift out the occasion of

her sorrow, that by this means she might apply a medicine to her malady, & finding fit opportunity she brake with her in this wise:

Madam Castania, quoth she, since I have by the duke, your father, been assigned to you as a companion, I have in such loving wise both comforted & counselled you as I hope you have just cause to say that I have most carefully tendered your estate, for perceiving how willing you were to follow my direction, I counted your wealth my weal, your pleasure my profit, your happiness my joy, & your prosperity my felicity. Which friendly care, if it were not to be considered, if I should show you what great sorrow I sustain by your heaviness, you would judge my words to proceed either of folly or flattery, but if your sore be such as it may be salved, if your care may be cured, if your grief may be redressed, or your malady mitigated by my means, command me, good Castania, in what I may to pleasure thee, & thou shalt find me so charely to perform my charge as my willing mind shall evidently bewray my well-meaning.

I see, Castania, of late such a strange metamorphosis in thy mind as for pleasant conceits thou dost use pensive cogitations, thy cheerful countenance is changed into louring looks, thy merry devises into mournful dumps, & yet I cannot conjecture no cause of this sudden alteration. If want of riches should work thy woe, why thou swimmest in wealth; if loss of friends, thou has infinite of noble parentage which loves thee most entirely. If thou meanest no longer to lead a single life, no doubt thy father will provide thee of such a princely match as shall content thee for his person and countenance thee with his parentage. But if in all these supposes I have missed the mark and have not touched the case of thy calamity, unfold unto me, Castania, what the pain is that thus doth pinch thee, and assure thyself I will be so secret in thy affairs as ever Lampana was to her lady Cleophila.

Castania, hearing this friendly discourse of Melytta, thought for all this fair gloze the text might be too intricate, & that these painted speeches would prove but rotten pillars. Fearing therefore the fetch, and doubting the worst if she bewray her mind, she framed her this answer:

Madam, quoth she, the incomparable courtesy and unfeigned friendship which since your first coming I have found in you by experience will neither suffer me to suspect your Ladyship of flattery nor myself willingly to be accused of ingratitude, for your diligence hath been so great & my deserts so small that if I might but live to requite some part of your goodwill it were the second felicity I look for in this life. But touching the pensive passions which thus diversly perplexed me, I answer that as he which is wounded of the boar's tusk, if his sore take air is very hardly healed, as he which stricken with a scorpion, if his wound take wind can never be cured, so, madam, many inward maladies carry this nature, that if they be once discovered they are far the more hardly recovered, that it is better to conceal them with grief than reveal them in hope of relief.

Not so, Castania, your principle is not true, for if your passions proceeded of love, which of all other inward sores requireth greatest secrecy, yet undoubtedly the more it is discovered the sooner it is cured, for as the stone of Armenia being covered with sand

burneth most extremely, and no sooner taketh air but it cooleth, so the fiery flames of love raked up in silence fry most furiously, but being by discourse disclosed they soon convert from flame to fume and smoke. Wherefore, good Castania, impart unto me the matter which doth import thee so near, and I swear unto thee by the sacred rites of Caeres, which is so honoured in Alexandria, that if thou dost love where thy friends do not like, and thy wish be contrary to their will, yet I will seek all means possible to redress thy sorrow.

Alas, good madam, rather than you should think me so incredulous or suspicious as not to believe your oath, or doubt of your secret dealing, I will without delay make you privy to the cause of my pain, what peril soever I incur by revealing it. So it is, Melytta, that the perfection of Gwydonius, his exquisite qualities and excellent virtues, have fiercely assaulted the fort of my fancy, as I am perforce constrained to resign my liberty captive unto his courtesy, and to make his person the prison of my heart. This luckless and unlikely love, madam, is the cause of my care & the sum of my sorrow; this frantic affection hath driven my drooping heart to show forth these drowsy looks. This is it which hath made me an enemy to myself, a foe to all good company, & to delight in nothing but sorrow & solitariness, yea, this is the sore which if in time it be not salved will prevent by death all other miseries.

And is this, quoth Melytta, the pain that so greatly perplexeth you? Is this the care which so cumbereth thy conscience? Is this the danger which drives thee into such deep distress? Dost thou think so superstitiously of Gwydonius, or so abjectly of thyself, that thou deemest this matter impossible to be brought to pass? No, no, doubt not, Castania, I myself dare absolutely promise thee that thy love shall sort to such happy success as thou thyself dost seek for.

And with that Melytta stayed by a sudden sight she had of that saint that Castania so heartily served, for Gwydonius was entering in at the chamber door with a dish of delicacies which Orlanio, hearing his daughter was sick, had sent her. Melytta, seeing that Cupid began to favour the cause of his clients in giving them such fit opportunity to discover their cares, went her way, leaving Gwydonius the first man to play his part in this tragical comedy, who seeing his goddess thus surprised with sickness was so galled with grief, so pinched with hellish passions, & so tortured with extreme torments that his colour began to change & he fetched a deep sigh or two, which Castania hearing, she perceived without touching his pulses the cause of these his sudden passions. In fine, such melancholic motions so amazed his mind that he was almost mute in his message, yet at length encouraging himself he presented it unto her in this wise:

Madam, quoth he, the duke your father, hearing of your sudden sickness, in token of his fatherly affection, amongst all his dainties hath sent you this dish which he thinks most meet for your diet, wishing your Ladyship to let no doubtful motions distress your mind nor no careful thoughts cumber your conscience, for you shall lack nothing if you reveal to him your want which either your will or wish can desire. And truly, madam, to manifest my willing duty (if the prayers of a poor gentleman may be heard of the heavenly gods), I wish that before you taste of this food it may turn to nectar, whereby

not only your sickness should be salved, but your divine beauty and virtue according to desert should be crowned with immortality.

Castania, perceiving with what fervent affection Gwydonius uttered these words, began to cheer up herself in hope that her goodwill should not be repaid with ingratitude. Taking therefore the present at his hands, and liking it never the worse for his sake that brought it, she returned him this reply:

Gwydonius, quoth she, as I have cause most reverently to accept of my father's loving courtesy, & to repay his natural affection with most dutiful obedience, so I have cause to thank thee for thy pains, and to think well of thee for thy wish, promising in recompense of thy goodwill, if in any respect I may pleasure thee, to seek and sue to my father for preferment.

Madam, I account the performance of my message no pain, but pleasure, and I think myself as much honoured by this office, & thrice more happy, than if I should in Ganymede's place present the cup to Jupiter. But madam, sith that to stop the stream is to make the flood flow more fiercely, to repress the fire is to make it flame more furiously, and to restrain the force of love is to kindle a greater flame, lest too long delay should breed too great danger, and by concealing my sorrow I should make the sore incurable, I thought good either presently to hear the courteous sentence of my life or the cruel doom of my death.

So it is, madam, that too long gazing upon the beams of your heavenly beauty, & too narrowly construing over your virtuous conditions, I remain so caught in the snare of your bounty & so thrall'd in the thread of your virtue that the stay of my life hangeth in your hands, either to drive me down to hellish misery or to hoist me up to heavenly felicity. For although I have not heretofore by dutiful service made manifest the loyalty of my love, yet since I first framed in my fancy (as in a mirror) the shape of your surpassing beauty, my heart hath been crossed with such cruel camisados for your sake as if with the target of hope I had not withstood the furious force of such raging furies, I had by despair been dashed against most dangerous rocks. Sith then, madam, the sight of your sweet face hath fast fettered my fancy in the links of love as without your means I can neither be redressed nor released, I humbly desire you neither to resist the motion of my well-meaning, nor to reject the devotion of my goodwill, but to accept your poor Gwydonius as a faithful servant.

Castania, hearing diligently the faithful discourse of distressed Gwydonius, perceiving by his sighs the pinching sorrow of his thoughts, and seeing him too fast fettered in folly on a sudden to give her the slip, had that she desired, and now her loving looks was turned to louring glances, her delightful courtesy to disdainful coyness, & she thought to repay the sweetmeat wherewith before she fed him with most sour sauce, not that she misliked of his love, for it was the only thing she desired, but to make him the more fervent in affection, uttering these or suchlike words to herself secretly:

And is not, Castania, the victory most accounted of where the conquest is most doubtful? Is not the castle which abideth the longest battery thought the richest booty? Are not those pearls which are scarcely found & hardly gotten ever of the greatest value? Whatso is gained by peril is thought always precious; hardly come by, warily kept. The maid that by long suit and much travail is obtained, by how much the more she was hard in the winning, by so much the more she will be sweet in the wearing. She which in her virginity is chary of her chastity, in her marriage will be as wary of her honesty. Therefore I will qualify the hot love of Gwydonius with a cold potion, & with that she made him this waspish answer:

Why, Gwydonius, shall the old proverb be verified in thee, that the priest forgets himself that ever he was a clerk, that too much familiarity breeds contempt? I see well if Apelles, that cunning painter, suffer the greasy souter to take a view of his curious work, he will grow so malapert as to meddle with his picture; if the proud centaur Ixion be bidden to the feast of the gods, no less than Juno herself will suffice him for his choice. Set a beggar on horseback they say, and he will never alight. Extol one of base stock to any degree of dignity, and who so proud and haughty? I speak this, Gwydonius, to thy reproof; is thy stomach alate waxen so queasy that no diet will down but my father's own dish? Will no meaner mate suffice thee unless thou match with a prince? Is there no lady will like thee but my love? Is there no coarser dame to covet unless thou court unto me? Did my father promote thee to this thou art from the state of a beggar, and wilt thou now presume to be my better? Have my looks been so loving, my countenance so courteous, my glances so full of goodwill, as to promise so much as thou dost presume? No, but one only countenance in a servile mind is too much encouragement. Dost thou think, Gwydonius, that I account so meanly of my person as to match with a man of thy pitch? Shall I so far crack my credit as to cumber myself with one of thy calling? Shall I so stain my state as to stoop to thy lure? No, where is thy coin to maintain my countenance? Where is thy wealth to uphold my worship? Where is thy patrimony to countervail my personage?

But put case I accepted of thy suit; dost thou think ever to gain my father's goodwill? Dost thou think it is possible to compass his content? Dost thou hope ever to take him in such a vein as he will be willing to give his verdict on thy side? No, Gwydonius, but if he were privy to this thy presumption he would repay thy folly with too much fury; he would unplume thee of all his feathers, that like Aesop's crow thou might'st receive the reward of thy rashness. If therefore thou love thine own welfare, keep thyself within thy bounds, and strive not farther than thy sleeve will stretch, lest in climbing too high thou catch the sorer fall.

Castania, having thus sharply shaken up my young youth Gwydonius, thought she had given him a sufficient cooling card, but he, no whit dismayed with this denial, like a lusty champion entered piecemeal with her in this wise:

Madam, quoth he, the poor shoemaker was not blamed for viewing Apelles' picture, but because in finding fault he went beyond his shoe; the centaur Ixion was not reproved for his familiarity with Juno as he was a guest, but in that his suit tended to the sacking of

her honesty. Familiarity never breeds contempt in a good mind, neither am I to be accused of that crime, for the most servile slave in Alexandria (I call the heavens as witnesses of my words) doth not with more loving duty reverence and honour your person and parentage than doth your poor servant Gwydonius. Well, madam, though my nature and nurture be such in your sight as they bewray my bringing up and birth to be so base as if I mean to draw my descent I must (as you say) emblaze mine arms in the beggar's coat, yet thus much I answer in respect of my parents, and without arrogancy thus far I stand on my pantofles, that the credit I have in your father's court is not coequal with the calling I have in my own country if I did not count it more great credit and honour in that I have sometime enjoyed a courteous countenance of your sweet self since my coming. But if I were the most famous prince in the world, I so esteem your divine beauty and exquisite virtue as I would think myself far unworthy to possess such heavenly perfection, which if I could obtain, the displeasure of your father could no whit discourage me; his thundering threats could no whit amaze me. No, death itself could never daunt my mind were it never so despiteful.

But who (say you) can lay their love where is no desert, and where want breeds a flat denial? Ah, Castania, nature by her secret motion hath endued all creatures with some perfect qualities to supply that want which breeds misliking. The mole deprived of sight hath a wonderful hearing, the hare being very fearful is most swift, the fish having no ears hath most clear eyes, so though want of dignity disgrace me, though want of coin discountenance me, though lack of wealth impairs my credit, yet nature hath given me such a loyal and loving heart as I hope in the perfection of that she hath supplied the want of all the rest, so that, madam, though I want coin I do not want constancy, though I have no lands, yet I lack not loyalty, though I want wealth, yet I want not will to end my life to do you good, or spend my time to do you service.

Gwydonius, having thus pithily replied, drave Castania into a great doubt whether she should presently consent to his demand or still drive him off with delays, whether she should yield the fort at the first skirmish or stand to the doubtful event of battle. At length, lest she should digress from the course of womankind, she thought best to deny that she most of all desired, and therefore then gave him this answer:

Gwydonius, quoth she, in what state you came to my father's court I know; what you are by descent I know not, nor I care not, and if I did, it availeth not, but this I say, that it is hard taking of fowl when the net is descried, and ill catching of fish when the hook is bare. Impossible it is, Gwydonius, to infer belief where no credit will be given, and to deceive her that spieth thy fetch; when the string is broken, it is hard to hit the white, and when a man's credit is called in question, persuasions can little prevail. It is a religion amongst lovers to swear and forswear, to promise mountains and perform molehills, to be ripe without and rotten within, to carry a rusty blade in a velvet scabbard, and a silver bell with a leaden clapper. Therefore, Gwydonius, I had rather mistrust too soon that mislike too late; I had rather fear my choice than rue my chance. I had rather stop at the brim than at the bottom, for the signet being set, it is too late to break the bargain, and fancy being once fixed, it is too late to reclaim affection. For the love of a woman is like the oil of flint which being once congealed will never be dissolved, like the diamond

which being once rubbed with the gum of a pine-tree will never be broken, so if I fancy any, sith I mean not to fleet, it shall be such a one as I need not repent me.

And whereas you say, Gwydonius, that in despite of fortune nature hath given you a loving heart, I myself surely did never deem any less, but thought you of the crew of those lovers that love too much, having as many ladies as they have wits, and that is not a few, who count that every face must have a new fancy, and if they see a thousand they must be all viewed with a sigh, which considered, Gwydonius, I mean not to like nor to love neither you nor any other.

And shall then, madam, quoth he, my merit be repaid with no meed? Shall my goodwill be requited with no gain? Shall I have in lieu of my love no liking? Will you so swerve from justice as not to give everyone according to his desert? At the least, recompense not desire with despite, and hearty love with loathing hate, for as the poet saith, Quis enim succenset amanti?

Well, Gwydonius, as I will not be thy privy friend, so I will not be thine open foe, and as I cannot be so courteous as to requite thee for thy pains, so I will not be so cruel as to despite thee for thy presumption, and whereas thou cravest gains for thy goodwill, I am content to remain thy unwilling debtor.

Yet, madam, quoth he, where the debt is confessed, there remaineth some hope of recovery, for though the creditor be never so unwilling to pay, the debt being due he shall by constraint of law and his own confession (maugre his face) be forced to make restitution.

Truth, Gwydonius, quoth she, if he commence his action in a right case, & the plea he puts in prove not imperfect. But yet take this by the way, it is hard for that plaintiff to recover his costs where the defendant being judge sets down the sentence.

Gwydonius, feeling himself pinched to the quick with this pretty quip, made no further reply, but lest his long tarrying might breed suspicion, wishing his mistress' welfare, took his leave very solemnly and sorrowfully of Castania, who seeing him gone and herself alone, began thus to muse and meditate upon the sharp answers she had given her best-beloved Gwydonius:

Why, Castania, what frantic folly hath made thee thus far to forget thyself? Is the bird enticed to the trap by the show of the nets; is the fox allured to the train by the view of the trap? Will the mouse march under that ensign where the cat proclaimeth herself captain? Will the silly dove lay her eggs in the falcon's nest? Or is it the means to have him to thy friend whom with bitter blows thou dost rebuke; is there no other call for courtesy but cruelty? Does thou find no fitter means to obtain a reasonable request but by a rigorous repulse, or is it the nature of women to defy that outwardly which they most desire inwardly, to loathe that in their mouth which they love in their mind, to reject that with their hand which they most willingly would receive in their heart? Dost thou think, Castania, to draw Gwydonius to thy desire by detesting him? Dost thou think to allure

him to thy love by loathing him? Dost thou suppose to win him to thy will by these waspish answers? No, and what dost thou know what peril will ensue of this repulse, what danger will follow of this denial? Is it like he will put it up patiently? No, sure, either look to have his extreme love turned to extreme hate, or that he will persist no longer in the pursuit of his purpose. Oh, would to God, Gwydonius, thou wert again to begin thy demand, and I to frame mine answer; then would I salve thy sores with sweet syrups, not with cutting corrosives, then would I mitigate thy malady with easy medicines, not with pinching plasters, then would I comfort thee with consent, not daunt thee with denials. But alas, had-I-wist now comes too late, & therefore, Castania, if thou hast made a fault, seek to make amends, and recompense this his injury with most friendly courtesy.

And with that came Melytta, who comforting Castania, passed away the rest of the day in parle.

But Gwydonius, who all this while had a flea in his ear, was driven into a quandary with the taunting quips of his mistress, fearing that although his accounts were great, his gains should be little, & though he made a very long harvest, yet he should reap but a very small crop, thinking that under such sour speeches a sugared mind could not be contained, yet at last entering into deeper consideration with himself, he fell into these terms:

But by the sweet, quoth he, how should we know the sour; but by the black how should we know the white? He never greatly accounteth of prosperity which hath not been before pinched with adversity, which perchance Castania means to make me try by experience, thinking to feed me first with bitter broths that her after dainty fare may more delight me, to daunt me with the raging storms of denial that the calm of her consent may more content me, to make me taste the bitter pills of annoy that hereafter I may enjoy the greater joy, for the chilling cold of winter makes the sprouting springtime seem far more pleasant, the parching heat of summer makes the cool shade more delightful, and the frowning looks of Castania will make her smiling countenance seem more cheerful. Then cease not, Gwydonius, to pursue thy suit with endless pain, either to enjoy her courtesy or taste of her cruelty, to thy great happiness or extreme heaviness.

Gwydonius thus, like a valiant champion never amazed with any chip of misfortune, never feared to give the assault for all the first repulse, but only sought opportunity how he might in close combat once again encounter with Castania, vowing either to return with some sign of victory, or else to put limb and life in hazard. But Fortune, meaning pleasantly to sport with this young novice, would never minister such fit occasion that he might have solitary access to his goddess, for Castania of pretended purpose so waresly avoided his company, and with such disdainful looks so rejected his duty, as Gwydonius was constrained to seek his course by a new compass, delivering unto one of her maids a friendly letter to this effect:

Disdained Gwydonius to his desired Castania, health.

Whoso tasteth (madam Castania) of the river Licos in India feeleth such a continual flame to fry and fret his entrails as it is more torture than to be tormented with the hellish furies, and this grief can never be redressed but with drinking the blood of his dearest friend. And as he that is venomd by the phalanga feeleth such painful passions as he runneth mad, and is only cured by the means of most harmonious music, so, madam, the furious heat of fancy doth so scorch and scale [sic for scald?] my hapless heart, and doth perplex me with such hellish pangs, as death itself were thrice more desired than thus to drive my days in dolour. And I have so greedily swallowed up the sugared poison of your divine beauty as through the extremity of pinching grief which so direfully distresseth me I rest as one distract from his senses, not possible to obtain a cure for this my calamity unless with the dew of mutual affection you mitigate my malady, or with the pleasant harmony of your musical consent you appease my misery.

Sith then, madam, my care proceedeth from your beauty, let my sore be cured by your bounty; sith the perfection of your person hath wrought my bane, let the effect of your courtesy procure my bliss, and reject him not so rigorously which respecteth you so reverently. Loathe him not so hatefully which loveth you so heartily, nor repay not his dutiful amity with such deadly enmity. The pike fatally prosecuteth the fish mugra as his mortal foe, and yet seeing him snared on the fisher's hook he speedily shreddeth the line in sunder to deliver him; the snake most deadly detesteth the field-mouse, and yet she heapeth up in her hold store of provision to prevent her enemy's penury, and shall then, madam, your cruelty so far exceed these senseless creatures? Shall your rigour be so void of reason as to requite your friend with pain when they repay their foes with pleasure, to drive your friends into distress when they redeem their lives from danger? No, madam, I hope you will not countervail my constancy with such discourtesy nor so recklessly regard your poor Gwydonius, whose love and loyalty is so great that as the stones which are found in the river Lyncestis, the louder the wind bloweth & the deeper they are drenched in the water the more they burn and blaze, so the more you seek to cool my fancy with disdain the more my affection is kindled with desire, the more you loathe the more I like, the greater despair you drive me into by denials the greater hope (encouraged by constancy) I have to obtain my request, in which fervent affection I mean to remain without change, craving in lieu of this my loyalty that you will speedily send the messenger of present consolation to him which pineth always, and is yours only and ever.

Still in hope, Gwydonius.

Castania, having received this letter from her assured friend Gwydonius, although she perceived by the contents that his love was not counterfeit but constant, not light but loyal, not floating but faithful, and that she should not find him immutable in prosperity which was so permanent in adversity, yet (whether it were for coyness in consent or chariness of choice, I know not) she once again thought to sound him more deeper, to keep out still the flag of defiance and to spend one volley of shot in the face of her enemy to see if a hot skirmish would make him fly the field. And if like a valiant soldier he did manfully march on, and not refuse the brunt of the battle, she would then resign the fort of her freedom into his hands and yield up the bulwark of her breast which so long he had

battered, that triumphantly he might set up trophies in sign of a most victorious conquest. To put therefore the matter in question she returned him this answer:

Castania to Gwydonius, which hopeth in vain, health.

Master Gwydonius, your letter being more hastily received than heartily read, I perceive by the contents that you are still perplexed with your pen-sick(?) passions, and that your disease is incurable, for if your pains may be appeased or your malady mitigated by no medicine but by my means, you are like either to pay your due unto death or still to linger in distress. My cunning is too small to enterprise the composition of any secret simples, and my calling too great to become a physician to such a paltering patient, so that I neither can nor will cure another man's harm by mine own mishap. To love him whom I cannot like were but to wrest against mine own will; to flatter him whom I mean not to fancy is but a mere trick of extreme folly. What the cause is, Gwydonius, that thy goodwill reaps so small gain, and that so rigorously I repay thy love with hate, I know not, unless the constellation of the stars by some secret influence have so appointed it in the calculation of our nativity. But this I am sure, that as no serpent can abide the smell of a hart's horn, as the panther escheweth the company of the ounce, as the vulture is mortal enemy to the eel, and as it is impossible to hatch up a swan in an eagle's nest, to temper oil & pitch together in one vessel, to mix the blood of a lion and wolf in one bowl, and to procure amity between the falcon called tilo and the fox, so hard is it to procure me by ruthless request to be thy friend which am by instinct of nature thy protested foe, and as hard to win me to thy wife who so little likes of thy love that the very remembrance of thy person makes me fall into most hateful passions. Cease then, Gwydonius, to condemn me of cruelty, and leave off at last to appeal to my courtesy, for thou shalt always be sure to feel the one & never to find the other.

Yet lest thou shouldst accuse me of ingratitude, though I cannot inwardly mitigate thy misery, yet I will outwardly teach thee to apply such plasters as (if the experience of them prove true) shall greatly appease thy pain. Pliny, Gwydonius, reporteth that he which drinketh of the river Averna cooleth and mortifieth his affections, but if the water be touched by any means before it be drunk, the virtue thereof is of no value. He that weareth the feathers of the bird ezalon about him shall ever be fortunate in his love, but if they be not pulled when the sun is eclipsed, they are of no force, and to conclude, there is nothing that sooner driveth away amorous conceits than to rub the temples of the head with the sweat of an ass, which if you can perform it, as no doubt you may put it in practice, I hope you shall be redressed from your intolerable grief, and I released from such an importunate suit.

Forced by the destinies still to deny thee, Castania.

Gwydonius, having viewed and reviewed over this letter, seeing the rigorous resolution of his mistress could by no means be removed, and that a most severe sentence was pronounced against him by a most injurious judge, was driven into a doubt whether he should still with plaints sue for pity, or else blasphemously exclaim against her brutish cruelty, whether he should bewray his parents and parentage to the duke and her, or still

stand to the doubtful chance of fortune. To pursue his purpose still with plaints, her hellish cruelty persuaded him; to blaspheme against her, the sincerity of his love would not let him. To bewray his birth, divers dangers might ensue; to stand to the chance of fortune was still to hazard without hope. Cumbered thus with divers cogitations, at last he determined to break up the battery and to lay to an invincible hold, but to return with as much speed as might be to his father Clerophon's court, there by absence to mitigate the malady which so grievously molested him; yet he thought before his departure to give her a friendly farewell that might both confirm his constancy and condemn her cruelty, which he framed to this effect:

Gwydonius to Castania, prosperous success in all her affairs.

I mean not, most merciless mistress, any longer to sue for mercy nor with pitiful plaints to trouble your patience, sith to stir that which the stars hath stayed is to strive against the stream and to force that which the fates have framed is to covet to be counted a fool, but as one whom fortune means to make a mirror of misery, and over whom Venus herself means to vaunt as of a most hapless vassal, I sorrowfully send you this fainting farewell as a faithful token of my fervent affection, for seeing neither my person can please nor my living like you, nor my base calling content you, nor I myself reap any guerdon for my goodwill, to avoid the remembrance of these passions which renew my pains, & to assuage the rigour of my raging love, I purpose as speedily as wind & weather will permit me to abandon the place of your abode, not incensed by fury, as one in despite, but enforced by the rage of fancy to deprive myself of all delight, either to consume in solitary cares without compassion, or by absence to mitigate some part of my martyrdom, for to hope still I see is but to heap woe upon wretchedness, and care upon calamity.

Yet, madam, thus much I say, that Dido, Queen of Carthage, loved Aeneas, a banished exile and a straggling stranger. Enphinia [sic for Euphinia], daughter to the King of Corinth & heir apparent to his crown, who for her feature was famous throughout all the east countries, vouchsafed to apply a sovereign plaster to the furious passions of Acharisto, her father's bondman. The Duchess of Malfi chose for her husband her servant Ulrico, & Venus, who for her surpassing beauty was canonized for a goddess, disdained not the love of limping Vulcan. They, madam, respected the man and not their money; their wits & not their wealth; their love, not their livings; their constancy, not their coin; their person, not their parentage; & the inward virtue not the outward value. But you are so addicted to the opinion of Danae that unless Jupiter himself be shrouded in your lap under the shape of a shower of gold, he shall have the repulse, for all his deity. Seeing then it is not in my poor power either to perform or practise it, I cease off to seek for impossibilities, promising in what coast or country soever I shall remain to have my heart wholly dedicated to your divine beauty and virtue, both by duty and service, and so commending myself to you, and committing my health to the gods, I bid you farewell.

Yours while he is Gwydonius sans espoir.

Castania, having received this letter from Gwydonius, perceiving the constant mind of the young gentleman, that these his protestations were not vanity but verity, not trifling but troth, not signs of fleeting fancy but of a firm affection, standing awhile in a dump, at last she fell into this discourse:

I now, quoth she, both see and try by experience that there is no fish so fickle but will come to the bait, no doe so wild but will stand at the gaze, no hawk so haggard but will stoop at the lure, no nyas so ramage but will be reclaimed to the lunes, no fruit so fine but the caterpillar will consume it, no adamant so hard but will yield to the file, no metal so strong but will bend to the stamp, no maid so free but love will bring her to bondage and thralldom. And do I call it bondage, fond fool, to be bound unto beauty; is it slavery to be subject unto virtue? Is it thralldom to live in league with him who will like me in my youth and love me in my age, in whom I shall find nothing but pleasure and contentation, who will be the haven of my happiness wherein I may rest, and the port of my prosperity wherein I may be safe harboured from the tempests of froward fortune and shroud me from the bitter blasts of bale? Shall I repent me sith my bargain is good, or complain of the loss of liberty sith I have a change for far more worthy chaffer? Shall I grudge when the gods are agreed, or defer it when the destinies drive it, or frown at it sith fortune frames it? No, Gwydonius is my saint, and him will I serve; he is my joy, and him will I enjoy. He hath laid the siege, and he shall sack the city; he hath abode the battery, and he shall have the bulwark of my breast; he hath fought the combat, and he shall be victor in the conquest. For I cannot be so unnatural to reward his love with loathing, so without reason to defraud him of his right, so devilish for his deep desire to give him a doleful dish of despair. No, no, I have settled with myself that if ever I marry, Gwydonius shall be the man I will match with. And therefore as I have driven him with delays and fed him with folly, so now I will send him a settled answer of my goodwill and favour; as I have given him cutting corrosives, so I will send him confects of comfort. As I have been fearful to show my liking for the better trial, so now I will be bold to show my love in token of a better trust, and with that she wrote him a letter to this effect:

Castania to Gwydonius, wishing him such happy success as either fortune or the fates can allow him.

Plato, Gwydonius, being demanded why he would never condescend to the requests of his most dearest friends without great entreaty & long suit, answered that things lightly granted (though never so costly) are smally accounted of, which saying Gwydonius, I take as a sufficient excuse for my folly, for my straitness in words was no strangeness in mind, my bitter speeches were written with my hand, not wrought with my heart, my denial was only for the better trial, and those rigorous repulses were either to rip up thy feigned fancy or fervent affection, for if thou hadst retired at the first foil, I would have thought thy fancy but a flash, ready to be quenched with the least mizzling dew of misfortune. But since thou hast kept thy course so rightly by thy compass amidst most dangerous rocks, and hast stood to thy tackling against all the blustering blasts of fortune, assure thyself in lieu of this thy love thou hast not heretofore found me so disdainful as hereafter thou shalt find me dutiful, neither did I ever reject thee so

currishly as I will accept thee courteously, being ready to restore the injury I have offered thee with any courtesy that thou mayest either honestly require or I justly afford.

But alas, Gwydonius, what courtesy shall I ever be able to show thee that may countervail thy kindness? How entirely shall I love thee to requite thy loyalty? What duty can be a due recompense to this thy goodwill? Yea, if I by any means can quit this thy love, I never doubt to be deemed ingrateful while I live. Thy worthy constancy (Gwydonius) hath won the castle which many have besieged, & thou hast obtained that which divers have sought to gain, yet it is not the shape of thy beauty but the hope of thy loyalty which enticeth me, not thy fair face but thy faithful heart, not thy comely countenance but thy modest courtesy, not thy words but thy virtues, not thy wealth but thy wit, for she that builds her fancy upon such fading subjects tieth her love to the inconstant wheel of fortune. And what though the duke my father be incensed against me for making (in his mind) so careless a choice? What care I for his friendship, so I have thy favours. Let him fret, let my friends frown, let livings be lost, hap what, hap will, no mizzling showers of mischance, no boisterous blasts of adversity, no terrible tempests of disaster fortune shall make my constant mind in any respect to move. No torments, no travail, no care, no calamity, no penury, no poverty, no, only the loss of life shall diminish my love, in lieu whereof remain thou but constant, and in pledge of my protested goodwill have here my heart and hand to be thine in dust and ashes.

Thine, though the gods say no, Castania.

This letter being most luckily delivered into the hands of Gwydonius, I leave you to judge, gentlemen, into what a quandary this young youth was brought, to see such a sudden change and so happy a chance as to have his hellish bale requited with heavenly bliss, his despiteful annoy with delightful joy, his heaviness with happiness, and doubtful despair turned to assured hope, to see Fortune, which of late defied him as a foe, now to embrace him as a friend and to will that he did wish, to see his mistress' cruelty turned to courtesy, her disdain to desire, her bitter pills to sugared potions, her stormy repulses to calm content, and her contemptuous protestations to most constant promises. For if the careful captive who by the doom of the judge expecteth each hour to die rejoiceth when he heareth his pardon pronounced, no doubt Gwydonius' joy could be no loss [sic for less?] sith denial was his death and consent the conserve to heal his wounds; the greater care, the greater joy; the more pain, the greater pleasure; the more hellish misery, the more heavenly felicity. Yea, Gwydonius was driven into such an ecstasy for joy that he was in doubt whether this letter was preferred to him indeed, or presented to him in a vision, whether he were wrapped into a trance or ravished with some drowsy slumber, but at last perceiving it to be no feigned fantasy, such a deep desire enforced his affection as he thought every moment a month, every hour a year, every day a thousand, until he might freely enjoy the presence and sight of his love and lady Castania.

Fortune, meaning to advance him to the top of her inconstant wheel, brought it so to pass that before the week was ended, he spied Castania walking alone in the garden, which sudden sight so revived his senses that without any dread or doubt he manfully marched

on towards her, and was as hastily & heartily encountered by Castania, who embracing Gwydonius in her arms welcomed his with this salutation:

As the whale (Gwydonius) maketh always sign of great joy at the sight of the fish called talpa marina, as the hind greatly delighteth to see the leopard, as the lion fawneth at the view of the unicorn, and as he which drinketh of the fountain Hypenis in Scythia feeleth his mind so drowned in delight that no grief, though never so great, is able to assuage it, so, Gwydonius, I conceive such surpassing pleasure in thy presence and such heavenly felicity in the sight of thy perfection that no misery, though never so monstrous, is able to amaze me, no dolour, though never so direful, is able to daunt me, nor no mishap, though never so perilous, is able to make me sink in sorrow as long as I enjoy thy presence, which I count a sovereign preservative against all careful calamities. That as he which tasteth of the herb hyacinthus is never cumbered with care, and as he that weareth the stone agathes about him is surely defenced against all ensuing sorrows, so enjoying the sight of thy seemly self, and feeding mine eyes with the form of thy feature, I think myself sufficiently shrouded against all the tempestuous showers of sinister fortune. And to prove these my promises to be no feigned vanities but faithful verity, I commit myself, my stay and state, into thy hands to dispose of me at thy pleasure, wishing rather to live with thee in most distressed penury than to linger here in most fortunate prosperity.

Gwydonius, listening attentively to this sugared harmony, was so ravished with the sight of her sweet face, and so rapt into a trance with the contemplation of her beauty, that as the lion tasting of the gum Arabic becometh senseless, as the bull by browsing on the bark of a juniper-tree falleth asleep, as the camel standeth astonished at the sight of a rat, so Gwydonius seeing in his arms the saint whom in heart he did honour, and embracing the goddess whom with most deep devotion he did adore, was so amazed that he was not able to utter one word as witness of his happiness, until at last gathering in his wits together he began thus to reply:

Castania, quoth he, it is an axiom in philosophy that the colour joined hard to the sight hindereth the sense, the flower put into the nostril stoppeth the smelling, the wine vessel being full lets pass no wine though never so well vented, the water-pot being filled to the brim yields forth no liquor though having a thousand holes, so where the mind is surcharged with overmuch joy or too much pleasure, there the tongue is both tied and the sense so restrained that the heart is neither able to conceive the joy nor the tongue able to express the pleasure. Which, Castania, I now speak by proof and know by experience, for I am so drowned in delight by enjoying that princely gem which I esteem the rarest and richest jewel, not only in Alexandria but in all the world, and so puffed up in pleasure by thy divine presence. Yea, thy faithful and unfeigned affection, the promise of thy constancy and the hope of thy loyalty, the report of thy chastity & the renown of thy modesty, the force of thy beauty & the fame of thy virtue, but above all thy prodigal bounty in bestowing these heavenly perfections on thy poor Gwydonius, being by person and parentage most unworthy to possess them, so surchargeth my silly heart with excessive joy that my tongue not being able in part to express the extreme pleasure of my mind, I am with Philistion, the comical poet, constrained by silence to unfold that affection which in words the filed phrase of Demosthenes were not able to decipher. But

this assure thyself, Castania, that if Juno would advance me to be monarch of the world, if Pallas would prefer me to exceed haughty Hercules in valour, if Venus would present me with some princely piece of heavenly perfection, yet would I not so gladly receive their proffers as I do gratefully accept the promise of thy love and loyalty. No, I account the treasure of Croesus but trash in respect of the guerdon of thy goodwill, I account the fortune of Caesar but folly respecting the fruits of thy favour, I esteem the dignities of Priamus as dregs in respect of thy divine perfection. Yea, Castania, I am so snared with thy beauty and so entangled in the trap of thy bounty as I shall never leave to love thee, nor ever begin to like any other.

It is easy, Gwydonius, quoth Castania, to purchase credit where the party is easily persuaded, and to infer belief where every word is counted an oracle; therefore omitting these frivolous protestations, thus much I say touching the purpose. Cecillius Metellus was wont to say that as it was necessary that old men should be grave in counsel, so it was expedient young men should be secret in love, and therefore when the contract was made between Fulvius and his daughter he sealed up their lips with his signet, meaning that to violate the secret conference of lovers was to commit a second sacrilege. I speak this, Gwydonius, as one careful of thy state and my stay, for if Orlanio my father should but once hear of our love or suspect our liking it would breed thy mishap and my misery, yea, no doubt he would speedily prevent our pretence, which would be thy care and my calamity. Dispose our affairs at thy pleasure, but discover not our purpose. If thou hast won the castle vaunt not of the conquest; if thou hast made a good market, brag not of thy gains, lest by boasting of thy booty thou lose thy prey and be thought a prattler. And Gwydonius, above all men beware of Valericus, lest under the shape of a friend he prove in time thy mortal foe, lest his feigned amity prove faithless enmity, that in trusting too much without trial thou find not treason, and then though thou repent, yet had-I-wist cometh too late, & so thou wish thou hadst never loved, and I never liked.

Tush, Castania, quoth Gwydonius, he that is afraid to venture on the buck because he is tapised in the briars shall never have hunter's hap, and he that puts his doubt in love for every chance shall never have lover's luck. Cannot the cat catch mice without she have a bell hanging at her ear? Cannot the hobby seize on his prey but he must check? Cannot the spaniel retrieve the partridge but he must quest? And cannot we deal so warely but all the world must wonder at it? Yes, it is a subtile bird that breeds among the aerin [sic for aerie?] of hawks, and a shifting sheep that lambs in the fox's den, and he shall look narrowly that spies me halting. Let Orlanio not only weigh our works but our words, and let Valericus both deem our deeds and divine our thoughts, and yet I hope we will deal so secretly in our affairs as neither the one shall have cause to suspect our familiarity nor the other to detect our affection. And therefore, Castania, lest (if we be spied) the time and place give occasion of mistrust, I will leave you as I found you, and so farewell.

Well, these two lovers, placed thus by fortune in the palace of earthly prosperity, floated so securely in the streams of bliss as they thought no chips of mischance might change their present happiness to future heaviness as long as their privy contract was kept so secret to themselves. But as they which cannot see fire in the straw are stone-blind, so he that cannot see the flame of fancy is a fool. It is hard to cover smoke, but more hard to

conceal love, which these two lovers in tract of time tried true. Who, as closely as they kept their cloak, yet it was most easy to espy the lining, for fancy secretly restrained is like the spark covered with ashes which at length bursteth into a great flame. For there passed between Gwydonius [+and Castania] such amorous glances, such loving looks, such courteous congees, such countenances and such friendly familiarity, such often meetings, such open greetings, such sighs, such sobs, and such strange passions as not only Valericus but all the court (though they, poor fools, thought to dance in a net and not be seen) perceived how entirely they loved and liked each other. Which as it did not displease many which loved Gwydonius as their friend, so it greatly despited Valricus which was his foe, to see one of small countenance preferred before one of his calling, that Gwydonius should win the bulwark which he so long had battered, that he pitching the field another should obtain the conquest, that he laying the siege another should vaunt of the victory, that while he beat the bush another should catch the birds, and that the meed of his merit should be given to one of small desert. Being cumbered with these choleric cogitations, and perplexed with these despiteful passions, inflamed with wrathful fury he fell into these terms:

O gods, quoth he, what courtesy is there to be found in such kites of Croesus' [sic for Cressid's] kind, or what constancy is there to be hoped for in such dainty disdainning dames, whose wavering wills and stayless wits both wax and wane with the moon, whose lunatic minds change with every sudden motion, yea, whose lightness and lewdness is such as they delight with the raven to fade [sic for feed] on the most loathsome flesh, with the she-wolf to choose the foulest make, with Aesop's cock to prefer the barley-corn before a most precious pearl, & with Glaucus to make a change of his golden armour for brazen harness. Did not Euphinia forsake most famous princes and embrace a most infamous bonds slave? Did not Sirichia, the princess of Denmark, reject most princely potentates and at last accept a poor peasant? Yea, did not Venus herself with the beetle disdain all day to light on the most fragrant flowers and at night vouchsafeth to lodge in a filthy cow-shard, I mean, did she not refuse the renowned gods and choose a most deformed smith?

Why, but Valericus, is it fancy that forceth them to this folly? Doth love lead them? Do the destinies drive them? Doth beauty allure them? Is it their countenance that constraineth them? No, they are clowns. Is it their person or parentage that persuadeth them? No, they are peasants. But like crafty Calypsos they think by these unequal matches to rule the roost after their own diet, to be sovereign mistress of their own minds, with Venus to let Vulcan possess the tree and Mars enjoy the fruit, to have their husbands feed the sheep & some other reap the fleece, under the shadow of his head do [sic for to] defend themselves from such heat as would otherwise greatly scorch their credit, to make him follow the bent of their bow although he set the cuckold's end upward. It is a simple cloak that cannot cover one from a shower of rain, and a silly husband that is not able to father that another doth beget. But to see how these gallant girls, if they like not the party, what show of shamefastness they will make, how they will veil their face with the visor of virginity, how they will cloak themselves with the colour of continency, how chary they will be of their chastity, whereas if they fancy, who so loose of their lips and free of their flesh as they?

But Valericus, why dost thou thus recklessly rail and rage against womankind? It is not Castania that thus crosseth thee with care, but Gwydonius that breedeth thy grief. It is not she that inferreth thy sore, but he that procureth thy sickness. She is not the means of thy malady, but he the hinderer of thy medicine. She is not the worker of thy woe, but he is the sower of thy sorrow. And shall he be puffed up with prosperity and I pressed down with misery? Shall he swim in wealth and I sink in want? Shall he bathe in bliss and I wail in woe? Shall he be pampered up with pleasure and I pined away with penury? No, I will either spoil him or spill myself, in despite of the fates and fortune.

While thus Valericus sought opportunity to revenge his wrath upon guiltless Gwydonius, Fortune, minding to bewray her immutability, brought it so to pass that whereas Orlandio was accustomed to pay a yearly tribute to the Duke of Metelyne which surmounted to the sum of thirty thousand ducats, either wilfully or unwittingly he withheld this debt which Clerophontes claimed as his due, insomuch that being demanded by embassage for the payment of this tribute he flatly answered that he would not from henceforth disburse one denier, & he was sorry that in paying it heretofore he proved himself such a fool. Whereupon Clerophontes, being fraught with raging fury, was so incensed against Orlandio that, taking counsel of his nobility, he determined with as much speed as might be to wage battle against him, and to obtain that by constraint which he denied him of courtesy. As thus he was musing with himself whom he should appoint captain general of his army, because he meant not in proper person to abide the hazard of the battle, the remembrance of his son Gwydonius came into his mind, which not only amazed him but so molested him as he was driven into most distressed dolour. Now he called to mind his merciless cruelty in correcting his faults, and his modeless rigour in rebuking his folly, now he bewailed his long absence and wished his speedy presence, yea, he was so diversly perplexed as he began thus dolorously to discourse with himself:

Alas, quoth he, now I see the saying of Cicero to be true, that whoso wilfully perverteth the laws of nature seemeth to proclaim himself an enemy to the gods, for that nature never framed anything amiss, wherein I have most grievously offended, for in beastly rage I have surpassed the brute beasts, and in cruelty the senseless creatures. I have been more devoid of pity than the fowls of the air, and more unnatural than the fishes of the sea. The bird called apis indica, seeing the venomous viper ready to devour her young ones in her nest, presenteth herself to death to preserve them from destruction. The eagle is so careful over her young that if it hap by her default one of them do perish, she willingly woundeth herself in many places with her own beak. The lion so lovingly fostereth up her whelps that she never tasteth of the prey until they be fully satisfied. The fox is so careful over her cubs that she willingly falleth into the hunter's hands to defend her young from harm. But I, vild wretch, (as though I had drunk of the river Lincestis in Bohemia, which presently turneth whatsoever it toucheth into stones, instead of friendly courtesy have abused mine own son with frowning cruelty, in lieu of mercy I have brought him to misery, the fatherly affection I have showed him hath been raging fury. Yea, my rigorous nature, nay, rather my unnatural rage, hath been such towards him as he liveth a banished exile in a strange country, perhaps pinched with penury, oppressed with poverty, wandering in the wild deserts in danger of devouring, in peril of spoiling,

afflicted not only with the malady of the body but the misery of the mind, so that no doubt he wisheth that I had never been father to such a son, or he never son to such a father.

Alas, what joy can I now enjoy when I want my only joy? What comfort can I have to see my child in calamity? What pleasure can I take while he toileth in penury, who now in mine age should be the staff whereon to stay, that by his valiant courage and warlike prowess (wherewith from his infancy he hath been endued) might defend me from mine enemies and revenge me of my foes? But alas, I lament too late; the calm cometh out of time when the ship already hath suffered shipwreck, and these pitiful complaints little prevail where the patient is already pushed into peril. No, no, my rage hath been too great to hear of his hasty return; my perverse fury hath been such as he dare not abide my presence, and surely my sorrow is too great ever to be salved.

And with that Clerophontes start up, minding to revenge these his choleric cogitations by bloody battle upon the confines of Alexandria, and therefore in great haste mustered all his men, made great provisions for the war, and caused his navy to be rigged, for that he meant to convey his army by sea into Alexandria.

While thus there was no word through the whole dukedom of Metelyne but War, war! and no news but of the cruel conflict that should ensue between the two dukes, certain merchants of Alexandria which then rode in the haven durst not go ashore to sell their commodities, but as fast as wind and weather would serve them hied them out of the harbour and coasted speedily into their own country, where they no sooner arrived but they made report thereof to Orlanio, who driven into a dump with this noisome news, whether he doubted of the puissant power of Clerophontes, who was such a worthy warrior and in battle so bold that no man durst abide him, or whether he feared his own force was not able to resist the fury of his raging enemy, he presently summoned all his lords to a parliament, where after some conference it was concluded that Thersandro should be sent ambassador to Metelyne to parle of peace with Clerophontes, which determination was no whit deferred, but with as much speed as might be the bark wherein he should pass was provided, the charge of the embassy was given him, & he, accompanied with a train of brave gentlemen, departed.

But if this news was doleful to Orlanio, no doubt it was death itself to Gwydonius, who hearing that his father would bend his force against the place wherein he was, saw all possibility taken away from obtaining his purpose, for he feared death if he were known to Orlanio, and he doubted despiteful hate at the least if he bewrayed himself to Castania, which double dolour so distressed him as he felt himself diversly perplexed with dumpish passions, his mirth was turned to mourning, his pleasant conceits to painful cogitations, his wanton toys to wailing thoughts. Now he abandoned all good company and delighted only in solitary life. The wilsome woods were his wished walks, and the secret shades the covert he chiefly coveted. In fine, he seemed rather a Timon of Athens than a gentleman of Alexandria, so that all the court marvelled at this so sudden a change, but especially Castania, who conjecturing his doleful heart by his drowsy looks was astonished at this his strange state, casting in her mind whether she had given him any cause of this care, or whether by her occasion he was crossed with this calamity. But

alas, poor soul, howsoever she aimed she missed the mark, for Gwydonius felt his disease so secret as he knew none could but himself divine the cause of his malady, which no doubt was such that it would have inferred present death if he had not hope for some happy news by Thersandro.

Who no sooner luckily arrived at Metelyne but Clerophontes was certified that the Duke's son of Alexandria was come to impart with his Grace some weighty matters of importance. Now at this instant when the message was brought him, his daughter Leucippa was by, who (as the nature of women is desirous to see and be seen) thought she would both hear the parle and view the person of this young ambassador, and therefore found fish on her fingers that she might stay still in the chamber of presence, whither presently Thersandro was sent for, who courteously and curiously doing his obeisance to the duke, delivered his embassy in this manner:

Whereas, right worthy sir, Orlanio, the Duke of Alexandria, more unwittingly than wilfully denied certain tribute which he confesseth both he and his predecessors have paid to you and your ancestors, hearing that hereupon your Grace meaneth rather to wage battle than to lose any part of your due, although he feareth not your force, as one able every way to withstand it, nor passeth of your puissance, as a potentate sufficient to resist your power, yet the care he hath of his subjects' safety and the love he hath to preserve the life of his commons, the regard he hath to pay and perform that which conscience and custom requireth, and lastly, meaning with Tully, Iniquissimam pacem iustissimo bello antepone, he hath sent me both to sue for conditions of peace and to pay the tribute, which if your Grace shall refuse, of force he must put his hope in the hazard of fortune.

Thersandro having thus pithily performed his charge, Clerophontes told him that upon a sudden he would not dispatch so weighty a matter, but meant first both to consult and take counsel of his nobles, which done, within three days he should have an answer. In the meantime he commanded Lucianus, the steward of his house, very courteously to entreat both Thersandro and his train, and to feast them with such sumptuous fare as they might have cause most highly to extol his magnificence.

But leaving Clerophontes to consult with his learned counsellors, and Thersandro to company with the lusty courtiers, again to Leucippa, who while this young youth was telling of his tale never marked the matter but the man, nor regarded not the parle but respected the person, never noted the contents but viewed his countenance, in such sort that she was so scorched with the fire of fancy and so scalded with the flame of affection, so bewitched with his beauty and so inveigled with his bounty as he was the only man that made her check at the prey, bate at the lure, and willingly yield to the first assault of fancy. And on the other side, fortune so favoured that Thersandro, printing in his heart the perfection of Leucippa's person, felt his freedom so fettered by the view of her heavenly face, and so snared in the beams of her amorous glances, that he wished that either this dissension had never grown, or that he had not been the deliverer of the message, for he felt his heart already so overgrown with goodwill towards this young princess as no salve but herself was able to mitigate his sorrow, no medicine but her

courtesy was able to cure his calamity, and he thought to prefer his suit to his professed foe was folly, to linger still in love was death and misery, to seek for help at her hands neither would the present state permit him, nor time suffer him to prosecute his purpose.

Daunted with these divers doubts, to avoid the melancholic motions that molested his mind, he presently went from his lodging to the court, that by company he might drive away these dumps, where he found in the great chamber divers ladies and gentlemen passing away the time in pleasant parle, amongst whom was that peerless paragon, princely Leucippa, who (after due reverence done to the gentlewomen in general) was singled out by Thersandro, and courted in this wise:

Madam, quoth he, if any creature hath just occasion to accuse either nature or the gods of injustice, man only hath the greatest cause to make this complaint, for there is none either so deprived of reason or devoid of sense which by some natural instinct doth not skilfully presage of perils before they come, and warily prevent ere they be past. The goats of Libya know certainly when the canicular days begin wherein commonly they fall blind, and therefore by eating the herb polypodium they providently prevent their disease. When the lion leaveth his lawns and rangeth in foreign deserts, he always foreshoweth a drought. When the fish called uranoscopus sinketh down to the bottom of the sea, he bewrayeth great tempests to be imminent. But man is so far from this secret foresight that not only he cannot divine of these ensuing dangers, but rather wilfully or willing [sic?] pusheth himself into most manifest perils. Which, madam, I speak as feeling myself distressed with this want, for if I had been endued with this sacred prescience perfectly to presage of ensuing perils I had not been crossed with such cares as I am like to incur, nor had cause to repent this my present arrival. But sith lack of such skill hath procured my loss, and that when the hurt is had it is too late to take heed, though revealing of my mishap cannot heal my misery nor repeating of my pains redress my sorrow, yet I mean to participate my passions to your good Grace, that though you cannot or will not mitigate my malady yet you may pity my estate, which will somewhat ease my heaviness.

I came to your father's court, madam, a free man of Alexandria, and am like to return a captive of Metelyne; I arrived devoid of care, and am like to depart drenched with calamity. I landed free from affection, but fear to pass hence fraught with fancy; my charge was only to parle of peace, but my chance is to discover of passions. Yea, your beauty hath so fettered my freedom and so snared my heart in the links of your love that it shall never be raced out by any sinister means of fortune, although I see it is almost impossible to obtain it. For I doubt our parents are like to proclaim themselves professed foes, and the urgent necessity of my affairs forceth me to depart so speedily as want of time will not suffice to make trial of my love whereby I might claim a sufficient guerdon for my goodwill. Yet howsoever the matter shall hap, whether my hope be void or my hap be vain, I mean, madam, to remain yours forever.

Leucippa took such delight in hearing Thersandro discourse so lovingly as she could scar[c]ely keep her countenance from bewraying the pleasure she conceived in this parle, seeing that her love was requited with liking, and her fancy encountered with the like

affection. Yet lest Thersandro should think her too courteous if she should come at the first call, and very light of love to like at the first look, she framed him this answer:

Sir, quoth she, if of your suit for conditions of peace there ensue no better success than the revealing of your passions shall reap pity at my hands, or if the entreaty for truce be as lightly respected by my father as either your person or petition is regarded by me, you are like to carry home cold news to your country, and to vaunt that you had fair but bought little, that your harvest was long but your corn not worth the cropping, that your venture was much but your gains such as if your winnings prove no better you are like to live by the loss. For, sir, do you suppose me so sottish as to think everyone that flatters doth fancy, or so addicted to self-love as by a few filed phrases to be brought into a fool's paradise, knowing that it is the fashion of men by their feigned subtilty to deceive our faithful simplicity? No, for if you mean to counterfeit, take this for a rule, it is ill halting before a cripple. But sir, this your sudden liking bewrays the lightness of your love, this your fond affection imports the fickleness of your fancy, for soon hot, soon cold, easily inflamed, as quickly quenched, like to the apples of Arabia which begin to rot ere they be half ripe. And if I meant to love, had I none to like but my father's foe? Should I desire him whom my father doth detest? And if I should so far forget mine own stay or my father's state as to consent, it were impossible either to appease his wrath or to get the grant of his goodwill, so that to desire that which I can never enjoy were to drive myself wholly into despair, which would smally profit you and greatly displeasure me, and therefore cease to sue for that which may well be wished, but never obtained.

Thersandro, although he heard Leucippa decide the case sufficiently, yet he was so wilful that he would not take her doom for a verdict, but returned her this reply:

Madam, quoth he, where in lieu of hate there ensueth love, it is always the sign of the greater affection, and that it is a thing either confirmed by the fates or appointed by the gods. Tereus, the prince of Thrace, being sent by his father to defy Pandion, the king of Athens, was enamoured of his daughter Progne [=Procne], whereby between the parents instead of fatal enmity there ensued friendly amity. Whenas the bloody wars between Atys, the king of Libya, and Lycabas, the prince of Assur was most hot, young Admetus, being sent ambassador into Libya, was so stricken in love with Alcest, only daughter to his father's foe, and she repaying his liking with such loyalty as death itself could never dissolve their amity. If, madam, these premises may persuade you to take pity of my passions, or these examples induce you not to let the hatred of our parents be a hindrance of our love, whether your father reject me as a foe or accept me as a friend I doubt not but the destinies will drive the bargain through, in despite of them and fortune.

Sir, quoth she, I confess Progne, poor wench, loved Tereus, but how wretchedly did he reward her loyalty, and Scylla was enamoured of Minos, her father's foe, but how tyrannously did he repay her love with treachery? Tarpeia betrayed the tower of Rome to one of the Sabines whom she most entirely loved, but the meed of her merit was extreme misery. Shall I then, Thersandro, see the train, and yet fall into the trap; shall I spy the nets, and yet strike at the stale? Shall I see the mishap, and yet wilfully incur the mischance? No, I mean not for an inch of joy to reap an ell of annoy, for a moment of

mirth a month of misery, for a dram of pleasure a whole pound of pain, and by procuring mine own delight to purchase my father's death and destruction. But let this suffice, Thersandro, to signify how I pity thy passions and think well of thy person, that if my father's will might be framed to my wish, if he would condescend as I would consent, thou only art the man who in the way of marriage should dispose of me at thy pleasure. But sith the frowning state of fortune denies our love to have such happy success, hope well, and rest upon this point, that I will always like thee as a friend, though not love thee as my fere.

As Thersandro was ready to reply and to seal up the bargain of their love upon her sweet lips, Clerophontes came in, who marred all their market & turned their sweet to sour, for he gave Thersandro his answer before Leucippa, which was this, that he neither meant to accept of the conditions of peace nor to receive the tribute, but to claim his due by the doubtful event of battle, that he shortly pretended in person to visit Orlandio, and within the walls of Alexandria to demand his debt, and that he would bestow his father's dukedom upon a lord of his called Lucianus in dowry with his daughter Leucippa.

Thersandro was nothing amazed with the first part of the message, but when he heard how Clerophontes meant presumptuously both to deprave him of his living and deprive him of his love, he was so puffed up with wrath and choler as, hap what, hap would, he fell into these terms:

I remember, quoth he, that Caligula the Emperor, providing a mighty army to subdue Great Britain, when he was come to the sea, ready to post over his soldiers in his navy, he left off his endless enterprise, and set them to gather cockles. Syphax boldly boasting that he would bestow the kingdom of Numidia upon his second son was by Massinissa overthrown and sold as captive to the Romans. I dare not, sir, infer comparisons because they are odious, nor apply the examples sith time and place forbids me, but this I say, that to fish before the net is always counted folly, and to vaunt before the victory is but vanity. Yea, and if I had as good right to your daughter Leucippa as I have to the supposed dowry which you assign her, I would in despite of Lucianus and the devil himself dispose her at my pleasure.

Clerophontes, hearing the choleric conclusion of Thersandro, could scarcely bridle his frantic fury from raging without reason against this young youth, yet somewhat mitigating his mood he breathed out these cruel threatenings:

If the law of arms, quoth he, did not both safely protect thee & surely forbid me to hurt thee in that thou art a messenger, I would with such severity chastise these thy presumptuous speeches as thou shouldst learn hereafter to answer with more reverence, yet I wish thee not to stand too stiff upon this point, lest if thou be so reckless as to break the bonds of reason I be so forgetful as to pass the limits of the law. Thou hast received a determinate answer for the [sic for thy?] embassy, & there [sic for therefore?] I charge thee this present day to depart out of my dominions.

Thersandro, fearing the tyranny of this cruel Clerophontes, presently passed out of the chamber of presence, taking his leave of Lady Leucippa only with loving looks, which she requited with such glances of goodwill as they were sufficient signs what insupportable sorrow she received by his so sudden departure, yet knowing that her fancy was encountered with mutual affection, she drove away the misty clouds of despair, hoping that the gods, seeing their faithful amity, would take pity of their passions, & in time redress their misery.

But Thersandro, having with speed dispatched his affairs (all his train being set aboard, and they coasting the straits with a lucky gale), was so cumbered with care and so overgrown with grief that he passed no hour, minute nor moment without woeful wailing, sorrowful sobs and far-fetched sighs, so that the gentlemen his companions, supposing that he was thus painfully perplexed for fear of Clerophontes' puissance, began both to comfort and encourage him not to doubt or dread the force of the enemy sith his father was able to repulse him without any danger to himself or any great damage to his subjects. But these their persuasions could no whit prevail to assuage his passions, this their encouragement could not cure his care.

But as there is no greater bane to the body than trouble of the mind, so Thersandro so long continued in these pensive passions and careful cogitations, concealing his grief so covertly, which so much the more furiously flamed within him, that he was constrained to keep his cabin till his arrival at Alexandria. Where being set on shore, and presently conveyed to the court, he remained for the space of three days so strangely perplexed as he was not able to make report of his message, which so gripped Orlanio with such inspeakable grief as he wished rather to have died valiantly with the force of his enemy than to put the health of his son in hazard by passing so perilous a journey. But Thersandro, seeing that sorrow would not salve his sore but rather increase his sickness, that mourning would not appease his malady but rather augment his misery, began to take heart at grass, and within few days began to recover his former health. And then he declared to his father what he had in charge from Clerophontes, how he meant speedily to wage war against him & by force of arms to drive him out of his dukedom, which he had already promised to one Lucianus in dowry with his daughter.

Orlanio, hearing this proud presumption of this bragging duke, thought the greatest barkers were not always the sorest biters, and that it was far more easy with words to obtain the victory than with deeds to attain the conquest. Yet lest he might be taken at unwares, he made a general muster throughout all his dominions, providing in every place necessary munition for the defence of his country. And assembling his nobility to give their verdict who were fittest to be captains in this skirmish, after some consultation had in this cause they concluded that since Clerophontes meant to join battle in his own person, that likewise he should be general of the field, and Gwydonius, who surpassed all the rest in martial exploits, should be lieutenant and conduct the army, which he no sooner heard but he was tormented with inspeakable grief, he began to pull down his peacock's feathers, to hang his wings, and cry creak. Every man hoping to win fame was merry, but he alone mourning; every man laughed, & he alone loured, insomuch that he was generally suspected to be a fearful coward, and that dread of danger drave him into

these doleful dumps. But as they rashly conjectured the cause of his sorrow, so they missed the nature of his sickness, for Gwydonius, seeing that of this cruel conflict his calamity should ensue, and that this bloody broil would breed his bane, he fell into such solitary surmises and such musing meditations that Valericus, his open friend and yet his secret foe, sought by sundry means to search out the cause of his care, but not being able to wring out anything, either by flattering promises or feigned protestations, he ceased from his importunate suit. But froward fortune brought it so to pass that Valericus, coming by the chamber of Gwydonius, heard him thus desperately discoursing with himself:

Alas, quoth he, I see the sun being at the highest declineth, the sea being at full tide ebbeth. Calm continueth not long without a storm, neither is happiness had long without heaviness, bliss without bale, weal without woe, mirth without mourning. For who alate so floated in the floods of felicity as I, which now by the sinister means of frowning fortune am soused in the seas of sorrow; exalted alate to the highest degree of happiness, am now driven to the greatest extremity of evil; alate puffed up with prosperity, & now pushed down with adversity; yea, alate placed in paradise, and now plunged in perplexity.

Oh, Gwydonius, if thy father's friendly precepts might have persuaded thee, if his advice had been thy advertisement and thou hadst carefully kept his counsel, then by his forewarning thou hadst been forearmed against all mishap and misery. The force of fickle fancy had not then given thee the foil, love had not so lightly procured thy loss, nor the painted show of beauty had not so soon procured thy bane.

My bane? Why, fond fool, beauty hath bred my bliss. Fancy hath not given me the foil, but hath yielded me the fort; love hath not wrought my loss, but requited me with treble gain. Hath not Castania requited my love with loyalty, and repaid my goodwill with mutual affection? Is she not my saint, and I her servant? Are we not contracted together by love, and shall continue together by law? May I not dispose of her in the way of marriage at my pleasure?

Yes, but what then? The more is my grief and the greater is my care. For if her presence procureth my delight, will not her absence breed my despite? If her consent preserved my life, will not her contempt infer my death? Yes, for alas, since the destinies mean to dissolve that fancy hath decreed, since the frowning fates seek to unloose that which love hath linked, since froward fortune means to break the bonds wherein beauty hath bound us, since these bloody broils will cause Castania (where before she accepted me for a friend) now to reject me for a foe, what better luck can I look for than a loathsome life, or what better hap can I hope for than horror and heaviness? Yea, which way soever I turn me I see nothing but woe and wretchedness. For if Orlandio perceived our liking, how would he storm at our love? If he knew my chance, how would he fret at his daughter's choice? Would he ever consent that Castania should match with so mean a mate, that her princely personage should be disgraced with my base parentage, that her calling should be crazed with my slender countenance. No, he would no doubt first banish me out of all his dominions.

Tush, Gwydonius, would God this were the worst, and then thou mightest hope in time by some means to redress this doubt. But if Orlanio should know thou wert heir apparent to the dukedom of Metelyne, and only son to Clerophontes, his fatal foe, what torment were there so terrible which thou shouldst not try? What pain so pinching which thou shouldst not pass? What hap so hard which thou shouldst not hazard? Yea, what death so direful which at his cruel hands thou shouldst not suffer? And what if Castania were privy to thy state; dost thou think her so constant as to consent to her father's foe? Dost thou think she would wish the son's weal when the father wisheth her mishap? No, assure thyself if thy state be once known that Castania will most deadly detest thee, which will be more grievous to thee than death itself, be it never so terrible. Sith then, Gwydonius, thou must shortly either go in arms against thine own father or else lose both thy love and thy life, let not delay breed danger but strike on the stith while the iron is hot; Castania hath promised to forsake both father, friends and her own country to pass where and when it pleaseth thee. She doubteth no dangers, she forceth of no misfortune, she careth for no calamity, she passeth for no perils, so she enjoy thy desired company, and therefore as speedily as may be, convey her closely into the confines of Metelyne, before either she know thy stay or thy state.

And shall I so practise her with policies? Shall I so sift her with subtilty? Shall I put so little trust in her troth and so small confidence in her constancy as to conceal from her any secret? No, come woe, come wretchedness, come death, come danger, hap what, hap will, I will presently impart unto her my present state and my pretended purpose.

Valericus, hearing this doubtful discourse of Gwydonius, was driven into an ecstasy for joy, to see that he had found such fit means whereby he might not only purchase the duke's favour, aspire unto honour and dignity, but also obtain the love of Castania, for he meant speedily to prevent the pretence of Gwydonius by unfolding to the duke the sum of his secret purpose, assuring himself that after Orlanio knew his parents and parentage, that he was son and heir to Clerophontes, no price though never so precious, no ransom though never so rich, might redeem him from the most despiteful death that could be devised. And of these premises he inferred this conclusion, that [+if] the cause be taken away, the effect faileth; that Gwydonius being rejected, he should be received; that he being despited with hate, he should be requited with love. And upon this hope he went presently to bewray this matter to Orlanio, whom he found with his son Thersandro and divers other noblemen consulting what course they had best take against Clerophontes, whom Valericus saluted in this wise.

Plato, right worthy prince, that grave and wise philosopher whose sentences in all ages have been holden as most divine oracles, portrayeth out in the books of his Commonwealth the picture of a perfect citizen, whose lineaments being first levelled, he tricketh up with these colours, that he love his prince loyally, keep the laws carefully, and defend his country valiantly, in which three points (saith he) consisteth the chieftest duty of a trusty subject. This saying of Plato throughly considered, and calling to mind the sundry good turns which without desert your Grace hath bestowed upon me, I thought if I should not repay your favour with faithfulness, and your trust you repose in me with

inviolable troth, I might be counted a vicious vassal devoid of all virtue, a treacherous citizen rather than a trusty subject, a careless slave than a careful gentleman, yea, a graceless monster, misled with ingratitude.

I am come (right worthy sir) not to betray my foe but to bewray my friend, not to discover the fault of my enemy but to disclose his offence which liveth with me in perfect amity, in whose company hitherto hath been all my joy, pleasure and delight, but since his pretence is greatly prejudicial to your Grace's person, I thought to prefer your profit before mine own pleasure, and the commodity of my country before mine own private contentation. So it is that Gwydonius, whom your Grace hath honoured, and all the court esteemed, is son and heir to Clerophontes, the Duke of Metelyne, who by the peevish policy of his father, under the pretence of service, is purposed to procure your fatal death and the final destruction of your dukedom. And the better to perform this devilish practice he hath contracted himself to my lady Castania, who blinded with his beauty and inveigled with his wit hath consented not only to keep his counsel to your confusion, but also closely to convey herself with him into his country. Which pretence if your Grace doth not speedily prevent, you shall find that delay breeds danger, & that procrastination in perils is but the mother of mishap.

And have I, quoth Orlandio, brought up the bird that will pick out mine own eyes? Have I fostered up the serpent in my bosom that will breed my bane? Have I given her life that seeks to yield me death? Have I cherished her being young, and will she consume me being older; was there none to choose but Gwydonius, nor none to love but the son of her father's foe? Will she prefer her lust before my life, her private pleasure before the safety of my person? Well, as she forgets the duty of a child, so I will forget the natural affection of a father, and therefore, Valericus, go speedily with these noblemen to Gwydonius' chamber and apprehend him, that I may requite his hateful treachery with most hellish torments. And Thersandro, see you that Castania be closely kept until we have caught the traitor, lest she understanding that their devise is disclosed, she save herself by flight.

Valericus, hearing this commission given him from the Duke, made no delay but passed to Gwydonius' lodging with as much speed as might be, but Fortune, who after every chip of mischance sendeth some lot of good luck, and after every storm of adversity sendeth a quiet calm of prosperity, so carefully provided to free Gwydonius from mishap that he was newly gone towards Castania to impart unto her this his pretence, but before he came to her chamber he was encountered by Thersandro, who sternly taking Gwydonius by the bosom, pulling out his rapier commanded him as a traitor to stand or else without any farther doom he should feel the dint of death.

Gwydonius, amazed with this sudden motion, stood as one in a trance, neither being able to defend himself with word or weapon, but yielded himself into the hands of Thersandro, who shaked him up with these bitter speeches:

Thou traitorous wretch, quoth he, as it is impossible for the flame so closely to be covered but it will be spied, so it is impossible but that treason, though never so secret,

should in tract of time be disclosed, which now by experience is verified in thee, for although thou hast hitherto falsely feigned thyself to be a stranger of a foreign nation, thou art now known to be son and heir to Clerophontes, that cruel tyrant, my father's foe, by whose peevish policy thou hadst not only brought the commonwealth to confusion, but didst pretend to be prejudicial to my father's person if thy deadly practice & devilish purpose had not by Valericus his means been prevented. Hast thou been so trained up in treachery, or is thy mind so spotted with villainy, as to repay my father's goodwill with such barbarous ingratitude, and to devise his destruction which simply foresought thy preferment? Yea, to counsel my sister Castania not only to consent to thy desire but to my father's death? Is this the manner of Metelyne, or the custom of thy country, to be such cozening counterfeits? Well, since I have happily attached thee as a traitor & as a villainous rebel both transgressing human and divine laws, thou shalt abide the pain & punishment due to such devilish offenders. Now let thy cruel sire Clerophontes free thee from those torments that thou art like to suffer for thy treachery, & let the lords of Metelyne deliver thee from his hands who means in most miserable wise to martyr thee. Yea, let thy concubine Castania, who is like for her graceless disobedience to sip of the same sorrow, see if her tears will now prevail to move Orlanio to pity. No, if Jupiter himself sent Mercury to mitigate his mood, neither the authority of the one nor the eloquence of the other might prevail to pacify his fury.

Gwydonius, seeing that not only his purpose was prevented and his secrets disclosed, but that also Valericus most villainously had accused him and Castania of that which they never so much as once imagined, was so perplexed and driven into such dumps as he seemed by silence to aver that which Thersandro had alleged, yet at last he began thus to reply:

Thersandro, quoth he, as I mean not to affirm that which is false, so I will not deny that which is true, but come dolour, come death, come misery, come martyrdom, come torture, come torments, I will neither accuse myself unjustly nor excuse myself by perjury. I confess, Thersandro, that I am son and heir to the Duke of Metelyne, & contracted to thy sister Castania, that Clerophontes is my father by the law of nature, & Castania my wife by the league of love, but that I either pretended or purposed to be prejudicial to Orlanio's person, or that Castania was counselled or ever consented to her father's confusion, I not only deny, but I will prove by combat that Valericus most villainously doth accuse us of that whereof we are altogether sackless.

Why, Gwydonius, quoth he, wilt thou seek to prove thyself loyal when the hearers deem thee a liar, or to make trial of thy troth when thy words can have no trust? Dost thou think my father's fury will suffer thee to fable? Dost thou think his wrathful rage will abide thy reasons, or that he will be so patient as to hear thee plead thine own cause? No, if thou wert as clear from these crimes alleged against thee by Valericus as I am, yet in that thou art son to Clerophontes, the coin of Croesus and kingdoms of Caesar were not sufficient ransom to redeem thee from death. But Gwydonius, since thy health hangeth in my hands, and thy life or death is in my power, I will neither be so bloody-minded as to breed thy bane nor so cruel as to be the cause of thy confusion. The guerdon, Gwydonius, I crave for this my goodwill, and the recompense I claim for this

courtesy, is that when thou comest to Metelyne thou certify thy sister and my love and lady Leucippa that for her sake I have procured thy safety, that her perfection hath preserved thee from peril, the love I bear her hath saved thy life, the dutiful devotion I owe unto her hath redeemed thee from death and danger. And in token of this my unfeigned affection, I will lift my hand against none that cometh from Metelyne but against Lucianus only.

Before Thersandro was able fully to unfold his mind or that Gwydonius had time to yield him thanks for the safe-guard of his life they heard a great noise which made Gwydonius fly, and Thersandro hie him hastily to Castania's lodging. Now the company which came was Orlanio himself, who certified by Valericus that Gwydonius could not be found, laid not only watch and ward throughout all his dukedom to attach him, but went in proper person with his guard to apprehend Castania and lay her in close prison, whom he found all blubbered with tears for that she had understood the cause before of her brother Thersandro. Orlanio no sooner spied her thus weeping but raged against her in this wise:

Hath the force of love, nay, rather the fury of lust (vild wretch) so blinded thy understanding that to accomplish it thou passest not to pervert both human and divine laws? Doth lascivious affection and fleshly fancy so furiously fry within thee as thou wouldst procure thy father's death to purchase thy devilish desire? Could no rules of reason, no prick of conscience, no respect of honesty, no fear of God, nor dread of man prohibit thee from pretending such a monstrous mischief as to conclude with my mortal foe to work my fatal confusion? The young storks so tender the old ones in their age as they will not suffer them so much as to fly to get their own living. The bird called apis indica, being young, seeing the old ones through age grown so weak as they are not able to wave their wings, carry them continually from place to place on their backs. These savage creatures have but only sense, and are obedient; thou hast both reason & sense, & art more unnatural. These brute beasts are most dutiful to their parents, and thou, a reasonable creature, art most disobedient to thy father. Yea, contrary both to the laws of nature and nurture thou seekest to bathe thy hands in his guiltless blood, and without care or conscience to commit most cruel murder, which is so hateful to all things as the senseless plants and stones most deadly detest such villainy. The olive tree so hatefully abhorreth a parricide that whoso being guilty of that crime attempteth to plant it doth not only himself presently perish, but the tree forthwith waneth and withereth. The stone epistrites so loatheth this offence, counting it a fact so repugnant to nature, that it will not vouchsafe to be worn by a murderer. And shall I then let thee live whom the senseless creatures do so deadly loathe? No, this hand which cherished thee being a child shall now chastise thee being such a cursed caitiff.

And with that he drew out his falchion ready to have slain her but that Thersandro, kneeling down, desired him that he would not so in his fury forget himself as without the sentence of the law put her to death, but commit her to ward until the wars between him & Clerophontes were happily ended, & then upon more strait examination, if she were found faulty to assign her a punishment due for such an offence. Orlanio, somewhat pacified with his son's persuasion, commanded that presently she should be carried to

prison, and the Lady Melytta with her as an actor also in this tragedy, and that with all speed they should post the country for the attaching of the traitor Gwydonius.

Who, after that he parted from Thersandro, seeing before his eyes the terror of torments and the hellish horror of death, was driven forward so with the dread of danger and fear of imminent perils that knowing perfectly the coast of the country he passed so secretly & speedily as he was not so much as once descried by the posts that pursued him, but scaped safely out of the dukedom of Alexandria. Being now without the dint of the Duke's danger, seeing that although he had escaped himself yet he had left his love and lady Castania in hazard of her life, he began thus to exclaim against his own folly:

Ah Gwydonius, quoth he, what folly hath thou committed by this thy fearful flight, what careful calamity is like to ensue of this thy cowardice? In avoiding Scylla thou art fallen into Charybdis; in preventing one danger thou art like to be plagued with a thousand discommodities. Had it not been better for thee to have died in Alexandria with honour than to live here with shame and reproach, to have suffered mishap with Castania than to linger here in misery? Dost thou think that she will ever count of such a prating parasite as will love her in prosperity [sic for prosperity] and leave her in adversity, as preferreth his own safety before her security, his life before her love, and draweth himself out of danger to leave her in distress? No, she will contemn thee as a coward more fit to be a mate to some country slut than a match for such a courtly princess; she will think thy greatest faith was but feigned fickleness, thy forged love was but filthy lust, thy promises was but perjuries, and that thy greatest amity was but most dissembled enmity, so that of a professed friend she will become thy professed foe, her desire will turn to despite and her love to most hellish hate.

Why alas, would my pain have pleased her? Would my martyrdom have contented her mind had my peril procured her profit or my care her commodity? Nay, rather would not my danger have been her death, my mishap her misery, my torture her torments, and my fatal destiny her final destruction? By saving my life, in time we may enjoy our love, but by death no hope had been left for obtaining our desire, so that I assure myself Castania will rather allow of my policy by preventing perils by flight than mislike of my practice in procuring mine own safety. And upon this point I rest, hoping that the gods, seeing how unjustly Valericus hath accused us, will in tract of time rid us from blame and reward him with shame.

Gwydonius was not more distressed with dolour than poor Castania was cumbered with care to see so strange a chance and so sudden a change, that she who of late was a royal princess was now a ruthless prisoner, that her freedom was turned to fetters, her dignity to misery, and her happy stay to a most hellish state, that after floods of tears which fell from her crystal eyes, she burst forth into these terms:

Alas, quoth she, what poor damsel was ever driven into such doubtful distress? What princess was ever perplexed with such doleful passions? What maid was ever crossed with such mishap? Nay, what creature ever was clogged with the like calamity? Have the spiteful destinies decreed my destruction, or the perverse planets conspired my bitter

bane? Doth froward fortune mean to make me a mirror of her mutability, or is this the reward that Cupid bestows upon his clients? Is everyone that doth fancy maimed with the like misfortune, or is love always accompanied with such hapless luck?

Alas, no, for their love is lawful, & mine lewd and lascivious. Their fancy is fixed upon virtue, and mine upon vanity; they make their match with consent of their parents, and I my market without my father's counsel, so that I am like in choosing such chaffer to chop and change and live by the loss, yea, to buy repentance at an unreasonable rate. Had it not been better for thee, Castania, to have condescended to the requests of Valericus than consented to the suit of Gwydonius, to have liked thine own countryman than love a straggling stranger, to have satisfied thyself with assurance than vainly to fish for hope?

Truth, but what then? Can the straw resist the virtue of the pure jet? Can the flax resist the force of the fire? Can a lover withstand the brunt of beauty, freeze if he stand by the flame, pervert the law of nature, or eschew that which is framed by the fates, or fly from the force of fancy? No, for whoso escapeth the deadly darts of Cupid shall be scorched with his fire, and she that with the dew of chastity quencheth this [sic for his?] flame shall be overtaken with his wings, so that to seek by flight to eschew affection is foolishly to enterprise that which can never be achieved.

But alas, if I must needs lend a listening ear to the allurements of love, was there none to like but thy father's foe? How, fond fool, couldst thou show him courtesy that intends to repay thee with cruelty? How couldst thou choose the son to thy mate when the father seeks thy misery? It is not possible to mix the blood of a bull and a bear together in one vessel. The lion's whelps will never company with the young wolves; the falcons called pelegrae(?) will never fly with the young lavarettes(?), and if the eggs of a crow and a curlew be put in one nest they both forthwith burst in sunder because there is such ancient enmity between the old ones. And wilt thou then be so wilful to love him whom my father doth loathe, or so perverse as to place thyself in that parentage where there is such mortal hatred between the parents? Wilt thou so far forget the duty of a child as more to respect thy fatal enemy than regard thy natural father?

But why, vild wretch, do I thus fondly fable? Though Clerophontes be my father's foe, yet Gwydonius is my faithful friend; though the one seek to procure my pain, the other seeks to purchase my pleasure; though the old sire strives to subvert my father's state, yet the son never sought to be prejudicial to his person, although that perjured parasite Valericus hath most unjustly accused him of treachery. Shall I then hate him who hath always honoured me? Shall I work his woe that wisheth my weal? Shall I be his bane who hath bred my bliss? Shall I detest him which serveth me with most deep devotion? No, I here heartily pour out most pitiful complaints to the gods to preserve my Gwydonius from peril, and that fortune may so favour him as he may pass out of Alexandria without death or danger. What though I here in prison pine in pain, what thou I sink in sorrow, what though I be distressed with grief and oppressed with misery, what though I be crossed with care and cumbered with calamity? Tush, let my father fret and fume in his fury, let my brother rage and rail, let that traitor Valericus triumph, and all the country most bitterly curse me. Yea, let them martyr me most miserably, let them torment me

most terribly, yet direful death shall not fear me as long as I know Gwydonius is devoid of danger. For I hope, though fortune frown, though the destinies deny it, though the fates forswear it, yea, though the gods themselves say no, yet in time we shall have such happy success as the loyalty of our love and the clearness of our conscience by the law of justice do deserve. And therefore Gwydonius shall be the planet whereby to direct my doings, he shall be the star shall guide my compass, he shall be the haven to harbour in, & the saint at whose shrine I mean to offer my devotion.

Castania, having thus discoursed with herself, she determined when the wars were ended, if she could have no hope to enjoy the love of Gwydonius, to confess her faults and to sue for mercy at the bar of her father's courtesy, not that she meant to live without Gwydonius or to love or like any other, but to prolong her days in dolour that she might most rigorously revenge the villainy of Valericus, and by bathing in his blood she might both satisfy herself and signify to Gwydonius how entirely she loved and liked him.

But leaving her perplexed with these passions, again to Clerophontes, who frying still in his frantic fury was not any whit persuaded to conclude peace with Orlanio, but having mustered his men as speedily as might be, embarked them, and with a lucky gale arrived at the coast of Alexandria, where the borderers, not able to abide his force, were constrained to save themselves by flight. But he, as a man having exiled from his heart both piety and pity, bathed his hands in guiltless blood, firing every fort, battering down every bulwark, sacking each city, racing down the walls to the ground, and commanding his soldiers upon pain of most grievous punishment not to have any respect of persons, neither to regard the hoary hairs of the aged citizens nor the tender years of the sucking infants, but to imbrue their blades with the blood of all men, of what degree soever.

Orlanio hearing how Clerophontes had invaded his dominions and with what barbarous cruelty he had murdered his subjects, having also intelligence by his scouts that his army was passing huge, the better to resist the furious force of his enemy hired out of other countries a great multitude of mercenary soldiers, so that he gathered a marvellous great host wherein was an infinite number endued with great skill and long experience. Furnished thus sufficiently both with men and munition, like a wise and wary captain, seeing that he no way else might resist the puissant power of so mighty a prince, determined without further delay to meet him and to give him present battle, having marvellous affiance in the approved manhood & virtue of his soldiers.

Clerophontes likewise being of such a valiant and invincible courage as he seemed from his infancy to be vowed to Mars and marital affairs, manfully marched forward to meet with his enemies, which he performed so speedily that within few days both the armies were within view, which Clerophontes seeing, he began to encourage his soldiers on this sort:

Although, most trusty subjects, quoth he, I neither doubt of your prowess nor have cause to fear your manhood, as having mine army fraught with the most courageous captains and boldest bloods of Metelyne, yet I wish you to consider how desperately we have adventured upon the conquest of this dukedom, which if we achieve we shall not only

gain perpetual fame and renown but reap such riches and treasure as shall sufficiently countervail our travail. But to obtain this victory we must behave ourselves valiantly, neither dreading any danger though never so desperate, nor doubting any peril though never so fearful. Before our face we have our enemies, behind our backs the surging seas, so that fight we must, but fly we cannot. In being courageous we win the field, and return conquerors; in proving cowards, we both lose our lives and the conquest. If we foil our foes we return with triumph; if we faint and fly, we have no hope of safety, but death and desperation is imminent. Be then hardy to hazard and valiant to venture amidst the press of your enemies, that daunted with your valour they may be forced to fly, and we both triumph and enjoy the treasure.

Clerophontes having thus lovingly encouraged his soldiers, Orlanio, on the other side, seeing his men began to fear the force of the enemy and were amazed with such a monstrous multitude, pricked them forward with this parle:

That mighty monarch, Alexander the Great, who for his martial exploits was a mirror to all his posterity, whose prowess was such as he daunted Darius, & by his invincible courage made a conquest of the whole world, hearing on a time one of his captains to demand what multitude was in their enemy's camp, answered that it was not the point of a good soldier to inquire how many the enemies were, but where they were, meaning that to fear the multitude is rather the sign of cowardice than a token of courage. Which saying I wish you carefully to consider, that the huge army of Clerophontes neither amaze your minds nor abate your valour, sith that the equity of our cause doth more than countervail his company. He invadeth our realm without reason, & we defend but our own right; he cruelly seeketh to deprive us of freedom, & we lawfully do maintain our own liberty. He tyrannously striveth to make us bondslaves, and we fight to free ourselves from captivity. If he prevail, let us look for no pity, but that we shall be murdered without mercy, we shall see before our face our wives ravished, our daughters deflowered, our parents put to death, our children slain, our goods spoiled, our city sacked, and ourselves brought to utter ruth and ruin. Sith then we are placed between two extremities, ei[ther] to possess our own with plenty or to pass our lives in penury, let us valiantly venture whatsoever we gain, let us fight without fear, for better it is to die with honour than to live with shame.

By that time Orlanio had ended his oration, the armies met in a plain within thirty leagues of Alexandria, where both of them ordering (as became good captains) their people, there began in the break of the day the most cruel and terrible battle that erst was heard of, considering the number on both parts, their experience and policy, with the valiant prowess and courage of the captains. Thus continued they in fight, even almost until even, with marvellous slaughter on both sides, the victory yet doubtful, till in the end the Alexandrians began to faint and fly, more oppressed with the excess of the multitude than distressed for want of manhood, for there were two and forty thousand slain, but not one taken prisoner, and of Clerophontes' company eight and twenty thousand slain, and six hundred mortally wounded. This monstrous massacre and fearful slaughter so amazed the minds of these two captains that for the better burying of the dead and healing of them which were hurt they concluded a truce between them for fifteen days, in which

time Orlanio sent ambassadors to parle of peace to Clerophontes, but in vain, for he was resolved either valiantly to die in the field with glory, or to enjoy the dukedom of Alexandria with renown.

Yet as a worthy prince, preferring the security of his soldiers before the safety of his own person, he offered them the combat, which Orlanio, to avoid the effusion of blood, most willingly accepted. Now it was agreed and concluded between them that two champions might be chosen, who by the dint of the sword should stint the strife between these two armies. If he of Metelyne remained victor, then Orlanio should not only pay his former tribute, but deliver up his dukedom into the hands of Clerophontes. But if the Alexandrians obtained the conquest, the Duke of Metelyne should peaceably depart the country, release the tribute, and also resign his state and became a subject to Orlanio. And for the better keeping & confirming of these conditions they presently dispatched ambassadors to Fernandus, the King of Bohemia, to entreat his Majesty that he would vouchsafe to become judge in the combat, who for that he wished well to both these dukes, granted to their requests, and with as much speed as might be, came to Alexandria.

But in the meantime there was some difference about the champions. For Clerophontes said that sith in losing the field consisted the loss of living, life and liberty, and in getting the victory the gain of a dukedom, he would in proper person fight the combat and try the chance of fortune, and therefore made a challenge to Orlanio. But he finding himself far unfit to resist his furious force, refused it, yet promising that none, unless he were descended of nobility, should enter the lists, wherewith Clerophontes was very well contented.

Now while this truce continued, which was prolonged for thirty days, it was lawful for them of Alexandria to come and view the camp of Metelyne, and for the Metelynes to go and see the city. Whereupon Clerophontes, desirous to see Orlanio and his court, went only accompanied with his guard to Alexandria, where he was most royally entertained and sumptuously feasted by Orlanio, both of them remitting the rigour of their malice till it should be showed in effect by reason of their manhood. But as soon as Thersandro and the other lords saw Clerophontes, that he was rather a monster than a man, having each limb so strongly couched, each part so proportioned, so huge of stature & so fierce of countenance, they were so daunted with the sight of his person as they almost feared to come in his presence, saying that thereof the boldest bloods in Alexandria were not able to abide the force of Clerophontes. Who now peaceably departing to his host left Orlanio as greatly perplexed, for assembling his nobility together, amongst whom he appointed the champion should be chosen, they not only with one consent withstood his command, but began to murmur and mutine against him, condemning him of folly that he would so unadvisedly commit his own state & their stay to the doubtful hazard of one man's hap. Orlanio seeing that it was now no time to chastise this their presumption unless he meant to raise civil dissension in the city, which were the next way to confirm the enemy & breed his own confusion, he dissembled his choler & began to work a new way. For first he freed Castania out of prison, then made general proclamation throughout his dukedom that what lord soever within his land would try the combat with Clerophontes, if he remained victor in the conquest he would not only give him his daughter Castania to

wife, let him possess peaceably the dukedom of Metelyne as her dowry, but be content to acknowledge him as his liege, & pay him tribute as he was wont to Clerophontes.

While he lingered and listened how this proclamation [sic for proclamation] would prevail, Castania, hearing this severe sentence & doleful doom pronounced, seeing that [+she] should not only be forced to forsake Gwydonius but be constrained to match in marriage with one whom she should neither love nor like, burst forth into these bitter complaints:

Alas, quoth she, how pinching a pain it is to be perplexed with divers passions, what a noisome care it is to be cumbered with sundry cogitations, what a woe it is to hang between desire & despair, & what a hell it is to hover between fear and hope. For as to him which is assured to die, death is no dolour in that he perfectly knows there is no salve can cure his sorrow, so to him which fears to die & yet hopes to live, death were thrice more welcome than to linger in such doubt. In which cursed case, alas, my case consisteth, for as out of the river Cea in Sicilia bursteth most fearful flames and yet the stream is passing cold, neither is the water able to quench the fire nor the fire cause the water to be hot, so the heat of hope flameth out of the chilling fountain of fear & yet the force of the one is not able to assuage the vehemency of the other, but still my heavy heart is diversly assailed with them both.

If my father Orlanio win the conquest, I doubt my desire shall never have happy success; if Clerophontes triumph as victor, I greatly fear his cruelty is such as I shall not escape most hapless death. And yet again I hope that then my own Gwydonius will accept me for his, and with triumphant arms embrace me. But alas, will Clerophontes suffer him to match with his mortal foe; will he not rather prevent it by my peril? Yes, no doubt, if he return with triumph my father shall serve him as a subject, my brother shall become his vassal, my friends shall be forlorn, my city sacked, and my native country brought to utter confusion. And shall I for the love of a stranger wish these strange stratagems? Shall I, to feed mine own fancy and content my lusting mind, wish my father's death, my brother's bane, my friends' mishap, my country's confusion, and perhaps my own misery? For though Gwydonius loved me when our parents were friends, he will not now like me being foes, but to revenge the injuries my father offered him will subtilly seek to sack my honour and honesty, and so triumph of my shame and discredit.

Had I not better pray my father may win the combat, & then shall I bathe in the streams of bliss and flow in the floods of felicity; then shall I dread no danger, no fear, no perils; then shall I see my father, friends and country flourish in most happy prosperity; then shall I enjoy some jolly gentleman who will love me being young, and cherish me being old, and possess the dukedom of Metelyne for my dowry.

And canst thou, Castania, be so ingrateful as to will his woe which wisheth thy weal, to desire his destruction which prayeth for thy prosperity? Canst thou be so covetous as to crave that for thy possession which is thy Gwydonius' patrimony, or so suspicious as to accuse him of treachery which hath been but too trusty, to count him a counterfeit which

hath always been constant? No, come what, come will, let froward fortune favour whom she please, so I may joy and safely enjoy my only joy, Gwydonius.

As Castania had thus ended her complaint, Gwydonius, who all this while lurked about the borders of Alexandria, heard what success Orlanio's affairs had with his father, Clerophontes, how very few or none at all durst try the combat with him, that his love and lady Castania was the prize that he should get that gained the conquest, which things considered, supposing that Castania had cast him off, & that she played out of sight out of mind, by a secret and trusty messenger he presented her with this letter:

Gwydonius to Castania, health.

The pure spice, Castania, the more it is pounded, the sweeter smell it yields; the camomile increaseth most being trodden on. The palm-tree, the greater weight it beareth, the straighter it groweth; the stone terpestretes, the more it is beaten, the harder it is, and loyal love is not weakened by the storms of adversity, but rather far the more fortified by the forward state of frowning fortune. Which, madam, I speak by proof and experience, for since I have sipped of the sour dregs of sorrow and been pestered with the bitter pills of penury, since sinister fortune hath crowned me with mishaps and disaster fates have driven me down to misery, my fancy hath so furiously assaulted my mind and affection hath so incessantly battered the bulwark of my breast as the sparks of love which were kindled in me in prosperity are turned to fierce and fiery flames by adversity. So that, madam, your presence did not before procure me such pleasure as your absence doth pain, neither was I so drowned in delight in frequenting your company as I am drenched with despite by leading my life in sorrowful calamity. Alas, Castania, what unspeakable grief hath tormented me? What direful dolour hath distressed me? What hellish horror hath hunted [sic for haunted?] me? Yea, what woe and wretchedness hath wracked my wits since thou hast been proclaimed a prey to him whosoever winneth the prize in the combat. How oft have I wished that I might be the champion to make the challenge, that I might venture my life to purchase thy liberty, that my death might redeem thee from danger.

But alas, I see to wish is in vain. To to [sic] crave of the gods that thy father should vaunt of the victory is but to wish that your [sic for our?] love should have hapless success. To pray that Clerophontes should return with conquest, thou wilt deem I desire thy friends' misfortune. Thus assailed with divers doubts, I drive off my days in dolour, hoping, howsoever fortune frown, that the fates will assign us a perfect calm of permanent felicity for this sturdy storm of pinching misery.

Thine ever, exiled Gwydonius.

Castania, having received this letter, seeing that no sinister chance of fortune was able to change the fixed fancy of Gwydonius, conceived such assured hope in his constancy as now she thought his troth was filed with no spot of treachery, that his faith was quite devoid of flattery, and that whatsoever chanced, she might safely repose her stay and state in his loyalty. Insomuch that to drive out the evil opinion which she thought her

brother Thersandro had conceived of Gwydonius' conspiracy, she secretly showed him the letter, which after he had read over and carefully construed every clause, he began both to detect and detest the villainy of Valericus, desiring his sister Castania that she would earnestly persuade Gwydonius in disguised apparel speedily to repair to her lodging, promising with solemn vows and sacred oaths not be prejudicial to his person. Castania, affying greatly in her brother's faith, and desirous to have a sight of her loving Gwydonius, returned him these few lines:

Castania to Gwydonius, prosperity.

Whoso tasteth, Gwydonius, of the herb melissophilos is never tormented with the sting of adversity, and she that weareth the stone mephitis about her never sorroweth at sinister fortune. Whoso fancieth without feigning never proveth fickle, and he that loveth loyally may well be crossed with calamity but never justly accused of inconstancy. Account thy Castania, good Gwydonius, to be in the same predicament, for let disaster mishap drive me down to most deadly misery, let the cruel fates compass me with cursed care, let fortune and the destinies conclude my confusion, yet it shall not diminish my fancy, but rather increase my affection. I will still in weal, in woe, in bale, in bliss, in mirth & misery say I love, and it is only Gwydonius. For shall our fancy be such as it shall be foiled with misfortune? No, but as Thetis changing into many shapes at last returned into her own form, so into what mishap I be driven by misery, yet I will stand in mine old state in despite of the fates and fortune. Come therefore, Gwydonius, to the court in disguised apparel, but without care, for thou shalt find me so trusty as my troth shall be without spot, & thy health without hazard. Thus wishing thy courtesy to construe well of my constancy, I bid thee farewell.

Thine or not her own, constant Castania.

Gwydonius, having carefully construed over the contents of this loving letter, although the rigour of Orlanio might have given him sufficient cause of suspicion, yet the clearness of his own conscience & the love he bare to Castania would not suffer him either to suspect any treason or to doubt of any deceit, but determined without any delay to put the safety of his person and the safe-guard of his life into her hands.

But leaving him to bring his purpose luckily to pass, again to Orlanio, who seeing that his proclamation could not prevail, and that his nobles preferred their own safety before his security, was perplexed with such hellish passions and griped with such pinching grief as the ghosts tormented with grisly fiends felt no such hapless fury. To fight with Clerophontes, he felt his strength far unfit to resist his force; to deny the combat he neither could nor would, although he brought himself to confusion and his children to captivity, so that howsoever he turned himself he saw before his face death and despair, woe and wretchedness, mishap and misery. Cumbered thus with this cureless care, and sitting solitarily in sorrow, seeing the dismal day drew on, and hearing that Fernandus, the King of Bohemia, was lately landed, he fell into more furious passions until he was driven out of his dumps by his son Thersandro, who perceiving his father thus dolefully daunted, he began most lovingly to comfort him, promising that since none durst venture

to deal with Clerophontes, he himself would fight the combat, and either worthily win the conquest with renown or manfully die in the field with honour.

Orlanio, hearing the bold courage of this new champion, felt his sorrow somewhat salved by this proffer, persuading himself that his son was better able to abide the brunt than he, & hoping that the gods would favour the equity of the cause and assuredly by justice grant him the victory. Resting, I say, upon this hope, and thanking Thersandro for his natural affection, and praising him for his noble courage, he presently went to meet Fernandus, whom he most princely entertained, conducting him very royally into Alexandria where he most sumptuously feasted him and all his train. But as they passed away the time in pastime and pleasure, so poor Thersandro spent the day in dolour and the night in sorrow. For although to comfort his father he made light of the combat, and valiantly offered himself to try the chance of fortune, yet seeing his enemy's force far to exceed his feeble strength, he began to faint, although like a worthy gentleman he covered his dreadful courage with desperate countenance, ranging up and down the fields to drive away his melancholy, where by chance in disguised apparel he met Gwydonius, to whom after some parle passed between them he bewrayed the whole state of the matter, how he was to enter combat with Clerophontes, and that he doubted greatly of the event of the victory, fearing the force of his father, and fainting at his own imbecility, which Gwydonius hearing, he made this short answer:

Thersandro, quoth he, it is vain with long talk to pass away the time when delay breeds danger, & folly to hope for fair weather when the air is overcast with clouds. Leaving off, therefore, all oaths to confirm my faith, thus much to the purpose. If it please thee to trust me without trial, and to give any confidence to my words, I here promise both to make manifest my loyal love to Castania and to repay thy courtesy, that I will, resembling thy person, and disguised in thy armour, enter combat with my father, Clerophontes, either intending by winning the victory to obtain my will, or by losing the conquest to want my wish. If this my proffer please thee, I will pass privily to the court; if not, good Thersandro, let me go as I came.

Thersandro, commending the subtile devise of Gwydonius, carried him as covertly as could be to Castania, to whom he was far more welcome than soon come, remaining closely in her closet until the next morning, Castania notwithstanding knowing nothing of their pretence.

Fernandus, King of Bohemia, the next day being gone with all his nobility to the place appointed for the combat, Orlanio, Castania, and all the lords of Alexandria clad in mourning attire followed him, thinking this dismal day should be the date of their destruction. And Clerophontes, as a baleful wretch thirsting after blood, and glorying in the hope of his supposed conquest, stood in the lists expecting his fatal foe. To whom Gwydonius, his son, furnished with the armour of Thersandro, presented himself, who seeing that forced by the fond allurements of love he was to fight, not with his mortal foe, but with his natural father, he fell into these doubtful dumps:

Alas, poor Gwydonius, quoth he, how art thou cumbered with divers cogitations, what a cruel conflict dost thou find in thy mind between love and loyalty, nature & necessity? Whoever was so wilful as willingly to wage battle against his own father? Who so cruel as to enter combat with his own sire? Alas, duty persuades me not to practise so monstrous a mischief, but the devotion I owe to Castania drives me to perform the deed, were it thrice more dangerous or desperate. The honour I owe to my father makes me faint for fear but once to imagine so brutish a fact; the love I owe to Castania constraineth me to defend the combat if Jupiter himself made the challenge. And is not (fond fool) necessity above nature; is not the law of love above king or kaiser, father or friends, God or the devil? Yes, and so I mean to take it, for either I will valiantly win the conquest and my Castania, or lose the victory, and so by death end my miseries.

With that the trumpets sounded, and Gwydonius lustily leaping into the lists fell presently into furious fight with his father, driving not only Fernandus & Orlanio but also both the armies into a great doubt, for although Clerophontes most cruelly prosecuted him, yet he always received the strokes but never so much as once returned one blow, till at last looking aloft and spying Castania, his courage so increased that, all fear set aside, he carelessly flang away his sword and shield and ran upon his father, not only tearing from him his target but violently casting him upon the ground, and speedily unlacing his helmet offered to cut off his head with his own sword, but Clerophontes crying out confessed himself captive and granted his enemy the conquest. Whereupon they of Alexandria gave a mighty shout, and Fernandus and Orlanio came down ready to carry Clerophontes captive to the city. But Gwydonius first demanded of Orlanio if he was content to perform that which he promised by proclamation, to whom Fernandus answered that both he would and should, or else as he was his friend so he would be his foe. Gwydonius, hearing this faithful assertion of the king, pulling down his beaver began to speak in this manner:

I let thee, Orlanio, quoth he, and the worthy King of Bohemia to know that I am Gwydonius, son and heir to this conquered Clerophontes, who for the love of thy daughter Castania have not spared, contrary to the law of nature, to fight with mine own father, hoping the destinies by my means have decreed not only of fatal foes to make you faithful friends, but to finish up our love, which otherwise could not have been performed. I have won, Orlanio, my father's dukedom by victory, and thy daughter by conquest. The one I had before by inheritance and the other by love, yet I would willingly have thy goodwill, which if thou grant, I hope my father will both pardon my offence and think well of my proffer.

Clerophontes, kissing and embracing Gwydonius, told him his care was half cured, in that such a good captain had won the conquest. Fernandus & Orlanio stood astonished at this strange tragedy, doubting in [sic] whether they dreamt of such a rare device, or saw it [+in] effect. At last Orlanio, as one wakened out of a trance, with trickling tears embraced Clerophontes, honouring him as his sovereign and promising not only to give Castania to Gwydonius, but also half his dukedom in dowry. Clerophontes, thanking him for his courtesy, consented most willingly to this motion, so that before Fernandus

departed, the marriage between Gwydonius and Castania, Thersandro and Leucippa, was most sumptuously solemnized.

FINIS.