
A MAIDEN'S DREAM

Upon the death of the right honourable Sir Christopher Hatton, Knight,
late Lord Chancellor of England

By Robert Greene, Master of Arts

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To the right worshipful, bountiful, and virtuous lady, the Lady Elizabeth Hatton, wife to the right worshipful Sir William Hatton, Knight, increase of all honourable virtues.

Mourning, as well as many (right worshipful Lady) for the late loss of the right honourable your deceased uncle, whose death, being the common prejudice of a [sic] present age, was lamented of most (if not all), and I among the rest sorrowing that my country was deprived of him that lived not for himself but for his country, I began to call to mind what a subject was ministered to the excellent wits of both universities to work upon, when so worthy a knight and so virtuous a justiciary had by his death left many memorable actions performed in his life deserving highly by some rare men [sic] to be registered. Passing over many days in this muse, at last I perceived men's humours slept, that love of many friends followed no farther than their graves, that art was grown idle, and either choice scholars feared to write of so high a subject as his virtues, or else they dated their devotions no further than his life. While thus I debated with myself, I might see (to the great disgrace of the poets of our time) some mechanical wits blow up mountains and bring forth mice, who with their follies did rather disparage his honours than decipher his virtues; beside, as *Virtutis comes est inuivida*, so base report, who hath her tongue blistered by slanderous envy, began as far as she durst, now after his death, to murmur, who in his lifetime durst not once mutter, whereupon touched with a zealous jealousy over his wonderful virtues, I could not, whatsoever discredit I reaped by my presumption, although I did *Tenui auena meditari*, but discover the honourable qualities of so worthy a counsellor, not for any private benefit I ever had of him which should induce me favourably to flatter his worthy parts, but only that I shame to let slip with silence the virtues and honours of so worthy a knight, whose deserts had been so many and so great towards all. Therefore (right worshipful lady), I drew a fiction called *A Maiden's Dream*, which as it is enigmatical, so it is not without some special and considerate reasons. Whose slender muse I present unto your Ladyship, induced thereunto first, that I know you are partaker of your husband's sorrows for the death of his honourable uncle, and desire to hear his honours put in memory after his death as you wished his advancement in virtues to be great in his life, as also that I am your Ladyship's poor countryman, and have long time desired to gratify your right worshipful father with something worthy himself. Which because I could not to my content perform, I have now taken opportunity to show my duty to him in his daughter, although the gift be far too mean for so worshipful and virtuous a lady. Yet hoping your Ladyship will with courtesy favour my presuming follies, and in gracious acceptance vouch of my well-meant labours, I humbly take my leave.

Your Ladyship's to command,

R. Greene. Nordovicensis.

A Maiden's Dream.

Methought in slumber as I lay and dreamt,
I saw a silent spring railed in with jet,
From sunny shade, or murmur, quite exempt,
The glide whereof gainst weeping flints did beat,
And round about were leaveless beeches set,
So dark it seemed night's mantle for to borrow,
And well to be the gloomy den of sorrow.

About this spring in mourning robes of black
Were sundry nymphs or goddesses, methought,
That seemly sat in ranks, just back to back,
On mossy benches nature there had wrought,
And cause the wind and spring no murmur brought,
They filled the air with such laments and groans
That Echo sighed out their heart-breaking moans.

Elbow on knee, and head upon their hand,
As mourners sit, so sat these ladies all,
Garlands of ebon boughs whereon did stand
A golden crown; their mantles were of pall,
And from their watery eyes warm tears did fall;
With wringing hands they sat and sighed like those
That had more grief than well they could disclose.

I looked about and by the fount I spied
A knight lie dead, yet all in armour clad,
Booted and spurred, a falchion by his side;
A crown of olives on his helm he had,
As if in peace and war he were adrad;
A golden hind was placed at his feet,
Whose veiled ears bewrayed her inward greet.

She seemed wounded by her panting breath,
Her beating breast with sighs did fall and rise,
Wounds was there none; it was her master's death
That drew electrum from her weeping eyes;
Like scalding smoke her braying throbs outflies;
As deer do mourn when arrow hath them galled,
So was this hind with heart-sick pains enthralled.

Just at his head there sat a sumptuous queen,
I guessed her so, for why, she wore a crown,
Yet were her garments parted white and green,
Tired like unto the picture of renown,

Upon her lap she laid his head adown,
Unlike to all, she smiled on his face,
Which made me long to know this dead man's case.

As thus I looked, gan Justice to arise,
I knew the goddess by her equal beam,
And dewing on his face balm from her eyes,
She wet his visage with a yearful stream,
Sad mournful looks did from her arches gleam,
And like to one whom sorrow deep attaints,
With heaved hands she poureth forth these plaints.

The Complaint of Justice.

Untoward twins, that tempers human fate,
Who from your distaff draws the life of man,
Parce, impartial to the highest state,
Too soon you cut what Clotho erst began,
Your fatal dooms this present age may ban,
For you have robbed the world of such a knight
As best could skill to balance justice right.

His eyes were seats for mercy and for law,
Favour in one and justice in the other,
The poor he smoothed, the proud he kept in awe,
As just to strangers as unto his brother,
Bribes could not make him any wrong to smother,
For to a lord, or to the lowest groom,
Still conscience and the cause set down the doom.

Delaying law, that picks the client's purse,
Ne could this knight abide to hear debated
From day to day (that claims the poor man's curse),
Nor might the pleas be over-long dilated,
Much shifts of law there was by him abated,
With conscience carefully he heard the cause,
Then gave his doom with short dispatch of laws.

The poor man's cry he thought a holy knell,
No sooner gan their suits to pierce his ears
But fair-eyed pity in his heart did dwell,
And like a father that affection bears,
So tendered he the poor with inward tears,
And did redress their wrongs when they did call,
But poor or rich, he still was just to all.

Oh woe is me (saith Justice), he is dead,
The knight is dead that was so just a man,
And in Astera's [sic] lap low lies his head
Who whilom wonders in the world did scan;
Justice hath lost her chiefest limb, what then?
At this her sighs and sorrows were so sore,
And so she wept, that she could speak no more.

The Complaint of Prudence.

A wreath of serpents bout her lily wrist
Did seemly Prudence wear; she then arose;
A silver dove sat mourning on her fist,
Tears on her cheeks like dew upon a rose,
And thus began the goddess' grieffful gloze:
Let England mourn, for why? his days are done
Whom Prudence nursed like her dearest son.

Hatton -- at that I started in my dream,
But not awoke -- Hatton is dead, quoth she;
Oh could I pour out tears like to a stream,
A sea of them would not sufficient be,
For why? our age had few more wise than he;
Like oracles as were Apollo's saws
So were his words accordant to the laws.

Wisdom sat watching in his wary eyes,
His insight subtile; if unto a foe,
He could with counsels commonwealths comprise,
No foreign wit could Hatton's overgo,
Yet to a friend wise, simple, and no mo;
His civil policies unto the state
Scarce left behind him now a second mate.

For country's weal his counsel did exceed,
And eagle-eyed he was to spy a fault,
For wars or peace right wisely could he rede,
'Twas hard for treachers fore his looks to halt,
The smooth-faced traitor could not him assault;
As by his country's love his grees did rise,
So to his country was he simple-wise.

This grave advisor of the commonweal,
This prudent counsellor unto his prince,
Whose wit was busied with his mistress' heal,
Secret conspiracies could well convince,

Whose insight pierced the sharp-eyed lynx,
He is dead; at this her sorrows were so sore,
And so she wept, that she could speak no more.

The Complaint of Fortitude.

Next Fortitude arose unto this knight,
And by his side sat down with steadfast eye [sic],
A broken column twixt her arms was pight,
She could not weep nor pour out yearnful cries,
From Fortitude such base affects nil rise,
Brass-renting goddess, she cannot lament,
Yet thus her plaints with breathing sighs were spent.

Within the maiden's court, place of all places,
I did advance a man of high degree [sic]
Whom nature had made proud with all her graces,
Inserting courage in his noble heart,
No perils drad could ever make him start,
But like to Scaevola, for country's good,
He did not value for to spend his blood.

His looks were stern, though in a life of peace;
Though not in wars, yet war hung in his brows;
His honour did by martial thoughts increase,
To martial men living this knight allows,
And by his sword he solemnly avowed [sic],
Though not in war, yet if that war were here,
As warriors do, to value honour dear.

Captains he kept, and fostered them with fee,
Soldiers were servants to this martial knight;
Men might his stable full of coursers see,
Trotters, whose managed looks would some affright;
His armoury was rich and warlike dight,
And he himself, if any need had craved,
Would as stout Hector have himself behaved.

I lost a friend whenas I lost his life,
Thus plained Fortitude, and frowned withal,
Cursed be Atrapos [sic], and cursed her knife,
That made the captain of my guard to fall,
Whose virtues did his honours high install;
At this she stormed and wrung out sighs so sore,
That what for grief her tongue could speak no more.

The Complaint of Temperance.

Then Temperance, with bridle in her hand,
Did mildly look upon this liveless chord [sic],
And like to weeping Niobe did stand,
Her sorrows and her tears did well accord,
Their diapason was in selfsame lord [sic];
Here lies the man (quoth she) that breathed out this:
To shun fond pleasures is the sweetest bliss.

No choice delight could draw his eyes awry,
He was not bent to pleasure's fond conceits;
Inveigling pride, nor world's sweet vanity,
Love's luring follies with their strange deceits,
Could wrap this lord within their baleful sleights,
But he, despising all, said man was grass,
His date a span, & *omnia vanitas*.

Temperate he was, and tempered all his deeds,
He bridled those affects that might offend,
He gave his will no more the reins than needs,
He measured pleasures ever by the end,
His thoughts on virtue's censures did depend;
What booteth pleasures that so quickly pass,
When such delights are fickle [sic] like to glass?

First pride of life, that subtile branch of sin,
And then the lusting humour of the eyes,
And base concupiscence, which plies her gin,
These sirens, that do worldlings still entice,
Could not allure his mind to think of vice,
For he said still, pleasure's delight it is
That holdeth man from heaven's delightful bliss.

Temperate he was in every deep extreme,
And could well bridle his affects with reason;
What I have lost in losing him then deem;
Base death, that took away a man so geason,
That measured every thought by time and season;
At this her sighs and sorrows were so sore,
And so she wept, that she could speak no more.

The Complaint of Bounty.

With open hands, and mourning looks [sic] dependent,
Bounty stepped forth to wail the dead man's loss,

On her was Love and Plenty both attendant;
Tears in her eyes, arms folded quite across,
Sitting by him upon a turf of moss,
She sighed and said: Here lies the knight deceased
Whose bounty Bounty's glory much increased.

His looks were liberal and in his face
Sat frank Magnificence with arms displayed,
His open hands discoursed his inward grace,
The poor were never at their need denied,
His careless scorn of gold his deeds bewrayed,
And this he craved, no longer for to live
Than he had power and mind and will to give.

No man went empty from his frank dispose,
He was a purse-bearer unto the poor,
He well observed the meaning of this gloze:
None lose reward that giveth of their store;
To all his bounty passed; ay me, therefore,
That he should die; with that she sighed so sore,
And so she wept, that she could speak no more.

The Complaint of Hospitality.

Lame of a leg, as she had lost a limb,
Start up kind Hospitality, and wept,
She silent sat awhile, and sighed by him,
As one half maimed to this knight she crept,
At last about his neck this nymph she leapt,
And with her cornucopia in her fist,
For very love his chilly lips she kissed.

Ay me, quoth she, my love is lorn by death,
My chiefest stay is cracked, and I am lame,
He that his alms frankly did bequeath,
And fed the poor with store of food, the same,
Even he, is dead, and vanished is his name,
Whose gates were open, and whose alms-deed
Supplied the fatherless and widow's need.

He kept no Christmas house for once a year,
Each day his boards were filled with lordly fare,
He fed a rout of yeomen with his cheer,
Nor was his bread and beef kept in with care,
His wine and beer to strangers were not spare,
And yet beside, to all that hunger grieved,

His gates were ope, and they were there relieved.

Well could the poor tell where to fetch their bread;
As Baucis and Philemon were yblessed,
For feasting Jupiter in stranger's stead,
So happy be his high immortal rest,
That was to hospitality addressed,
For few such live, and then she sighed so sore,
And so she wept, that she could speak no more.

Then Courtesy, whose face was full of smiles,
And Friendship, with her hand upon her heart,
And tender Charity, that loves no wiles,
And Clemency, her [sic] passions did impart;
A thousand virtues there did straight up start,
And with their tears and sighs they did disclose
For Hatton's death their hearts were full of woes.

The Complaint of Religion.

Next, from the farthest nook of all the place,
Weeping full sore, there rose a nymph in black,
Seemly and sober, with an angel's face,
And sighed as if her heart-strings straight should crack,
Her outward woes bewrayed her inward wrack,
A golden book she carried in her hand,
It was Religion that thus meek did stand.

God wot, her garments were full loosely tucked,
As one that, careless, was in some despair,
To tatters were her robes and vestures plucked,
Her naked limbs were open to the air,
Yet for all this her looks were blithe and fair,
And wondering how Religion grew forlorn,
I spied her robes by Heresy was torn.

This holy creature sat her by this knight,
And sighed out this: Oh here he lies (quoth she)
Liveless, that did religion's lamp still light,
Devout without dissembling, meek and free
To such whose words and livings did agree;
Lip-holiness in clergymen he could not brook,
Ne such as counted gold above their book.

Upright he lived, as Holy Writ him led,
His faith was not in ceremonies old,

Nor had he new-found toys within his head,
Ne was he lukewarm, neither hot nor cold,
But in religion he was constant-bold,
And still a sworn professed foe to all
Whose looks were smooth, hearts Pharisical.

The brainsick and illiterate surmisers,
That like to saints would holy be in looks,
Of fond religions fabulous devisers,
Who scorned the Academies and their books,
And yet could sin as others in close nooks,
To such wild-headed mates he was a foe,
That rent her robes and wronged Religion so.

Ne was his faith in men's traditions,
He hated Antichrist and all his trash,
He was not led away with superstitions,
Nor was he in religion over-rash,
His hands from heresy he loved to wash;
Then base report, ware what thy tongue doth spread,
'Tis sin and shame for to belie the dead.

Heart-holy men he still kept at his table,
Doctors that well could doom of Holy Writ,
By them he knew to sever faith from fable,
And how the text with judgement for to hit,
For Pharisees in Moses' chair did sit;
At this Religion sighed, and grieved so sore,
And so she wept, that she could speak no more.

Primate[s].

Next might I see a rout of noblemen,
Earls, barons, lords, in mourning weeds attired,
I cannot paint their passions with my pen,
Nor write so quaintly as their woes required,
Their tears and sighs some Homer's quill desired,
But this I know, their grief was for his death
That there had yielded nature, life, and breath.

Milites.

Then came by soldiers, trailing of their pikes
Like men dismayed; their beavers were adown,
Their warlike hearts his death with sorrow strikes,
Yea, War himself was in a sable gown,

For grief you might perceive his visage frown,
And scholars came by with lamenting eyes,
Wetting their books with tears fell from their eyes.

Plebs.

The common people, they did throng in flocks,
Dewing their bosoms with their yearful tears,
Their sighs were such as would have rent the rocks,
Their faces full of grief, dismay, and fears,
Their cries struck pity in my listening ears,
For why? the groans are less at hell's black gate
Than Echo there did then reverberate.

Some came with scrolls and papers in their hand,
I guessed them suitors that did rue his loss,
Some with their children in their hands did stand,
Some poor and hungry, with their hands across,
A thousand there sat wailing on the moss;
O pater patriae, still cried they thus,
Hatton is dead, what shall become of us?

At all these cries my heart was sore moved,
Which made me long to see the dead man's face,
What he should be that was so dear beloved,
Whose worth so deep had won the people's grace;
As I came pressing near unto the place,
I looked, and though his face were pale and wan,
Yet by his visage I did know the man.

No sooner did I cast mine eye on him
But in his face there flashed a ruddy hue,
And though before his looks by death were grim,
Yet seemed he smiling to my gazing view,
(As if, though dead, my presence still he knew);
Seeing this change within a dead man's face
I could not stop my tears, but wept apace.

I called to mind how that it was a knight
That whilom lived in England's happy soil;
I thought upon his care and deep insight
For country's weal, his labour and his toil
He took, lest that the English state might foil,
And how his watchful thought from first had been
Vowed to the honour of the maiden Queen.

I called to mind again he was my friend,
And held my quiet as his heart's content;
What was so dear for me he would not spend?
Then thought I straight: Such friends are seldom hent;
Thus still from love to love my humour went,
That pondering of his loyalty so free,
I wept him dead, that living honoured me.

At this Astraea, seeing me so sad,
Gan blithely comfort me with this reply:
Virgin (quoth she), no boot by tears is had,
Nor doth laments aught pleasure them that die,
Souls must have change from this mortality,
For living long, sin hath the larger space,
And dying well, they find the greater grace.

And sith that tears bewrays thy love (quoth she),
His soul with me shall wend unto the skies,
His liveless body I will leave to thee,
Let that be earthed and tombed in gorgeous wise;
I'll place his ghost amongst the hierarchies,
For as one star another far exceeds,
So souls in heaven are placed by their deeds.

With that methought within her golden lap
(This sun-bright goddess, smiling with her eye)
The soul of Hatton curiously did wrap,
And in a cloud was taken up on high;
Vain dreams are fond, but thus as then dreamt I,
And more, methought I heard the angels sing
An alleluia for to welcome him.

As thus attendant fair Astraea flew,
The nobles, commons, yea, and every wight,
That living in his lifetime Hatton knew,
Did deep lament the loss of that good knight;
But when Astraea was quite out of sight,
For grief the people shouted such a scream
That I awoke, and start out of my dream.

FINIS.