THE EPITHALAMIONS OF SPENSER AND OF JONSON:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY

by
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APPENDIX
"There are so many beauties interspersed throughout these poems that I cannot but wonder they have been so little known and noticed."

F. G. Waldron
The period in English literature from 1580 to 1633, the Age of Elizabeth, saw the introduction, the development, and the climax of the epitaphalamion as a form of English poetry. Sir Philip Sidney wrote the first English epitaphalamion in 1580, and Ben Jonson produced his last in 1633. Between these two dates the more important authors who have left examples of the type are Spenser, 1595, 1596; Chapman, 1602; Jonson, 1606, 1608, 1633; Donne, 1613; and Drayton, 1630.

The purpose of this study is to compare the epitaphalamions of Ben Jonson and Edmund Spenser, the two great masters of the form in the Elizabethan Age. This comparison of Spenser's Epithalamion and Prothalamion and Jonson's Masque of Hymen, The Hue and Cry after Cupid, and Epithalamion is based upon the purposes of the authors in writing the poems and the Catullian conventions therein. A review of the notable epitaphalamions in Greek, Latin, and English literature precedes this comparative study of Spenser and Jonson. The final chapter presents the text of Spenser's Epithalamion with extensive annotations. The appendix contains copies of the ten epitaphalamions referred to in the study.
NOTABLE EPITHALAMIONS IN GREEK, LATIN, AND ENGLISH LITERATURE

To the casual reader of English literature the term epithalamion signifies a long poem written by Edmund Spenser. Yet it does not of itself signify a poem by any one person, but rather a particular type of song or poem sung or written for a special occasion. The Shorter Oxford Dictionary defines an epithalamion as a "nuptial song or poem in praise of the bride and groom." Its contents and use have varied with the centuries.

Several studies have been made to discover the use which the ancients made of this form. C. H. Case has written a very useful book upon the subject, English Epithalamies. According to him the term epithalamy was "originally used to denote the song sung at the bridal chamber as distinguished from those sung during the wedding procession." This song was sung very sweetly by the musicians at three different times during the wedding night. The first part was sung at the close of the public festivities, the second at midnight, and the third in the morning some hours before the rising of the bridal couple.

2. Ibid., p. 195.
The musicians returned at these stated times for this special purpose. Among the Greeks the first part of the wedding song was sung "by a number of boys and girls" during the evening, and the second part on the following morning. The Romans followed a like custom, except that they used girls to do the singing. It is evident that the first epithalamions, which have been called "ballades at the bedding of a bride," were genuine songs really sung by a chorus.

Chronologically, Sappho (seventh century B.C.) holds first place among the very early writers of epithalamions, although only fragments of her poems are known. According to J. A. Symonds,

"In order to form a remote conception of what a Sapphic marriage chorus might have been, we have to study the imitation of her style in Catullus, the marriage chorus at the end of the 'Birds' of Aristophanes, and the 'Epithalamium of Helen' by Theocritus." 4

When we read John Dryden's translation of The Epithalamium of Helen and Menelaus from the Eighteenth Idyllium of Theocritus we sense the fresh beauty and personal sentiment of the celebrated Grecian epithalamion. Vivid imagery and a regular rhythmic pattern give an effect of rare simplicity. From the context we learn that twelve Spartan maidens have come "to sing a nuptial blessing to

3. Encyclopedia Britannica, 8:662.
5. For a copy of this poem see Appendix, pp. xx-xxii
the bed of Menelaus." With the lines

From generous loins a generous race will spring,
Each girl, like you, a queen; each boy, like you,
a king,

they climax their subtle descriptions and generous praises
of the royal couple, Helen and Menelaus. At the conclusion
of the song the promise of the maidens to return to the
bridal chamber on the following morning is announced thus:

We will be with you ere the crowing cock
Salutes the light, and struts before his feathered flock.

This example of a Grecian nuptial song shows the quality
and style of a writer in the third century B. C.

From the first century B. C. we have an excellent
Roman example, the famous sixty-first Carmen of Catullus,
written on the nuptials of Vinia and Manlius. In either
the paraphrased form by Cornish or the more conventional
translation by Martin there is the simplicity and emotion
which gave Catullus his power. Because songs were not
customarily sung at Roman weddings, Frank suggests that
this one probably was presented to the couple as a wedding
gift. It pictures scenes after the wedding rite has been
completed and the groom has gone hurriedly to his new home
to await his bride. Her journey to her husband's house

6. Cornish, F. W., Catullus Tibullus and Pervigilium Veneris
   pp. 69-85.
   of the World's Best Literature, 6:3367-8.
8. For a copy of his poem see Appendix, pp. xxiii-xxvi.
is suggested. The poet presents his best wishes to each and concludes his song after the bride has been lifted in true Roman fashion over the threshold of her new home.

Here is the Cornish translation of the first seven stanzas of Catullus' poem:

O haunter of the Helicon mount, Urania's son, thou who bearest away the tender maid to her bridegroom, O Hymenaeus Hymen, O hymen Hymenaeus!

Bind thy brows with the the flowers of fragrant marjoram, put on the marriage veil, hither, hither merrily come, wearing on thy snow-white foot the yellow shoe, and wakening on this joyful day, singing with resonant voice the nuptial songs, beat the ground with thy feet, shake with thy hand the pine torch.

For now shall Vinia wed with Manilius, Vinia as fair as Venus who dwells in Idalion, when she came to the Phrygian judge; a good maiden with a good omen, like the Asian myrtle shining with flowering sprays, which the Hamadryad goddesses with dewy moisture nourish as a plaything for themselves.

Hither then, come hither, haste to leave the Aonian caves of the Thespian rock, which the nymph Aganippe besprinkles with cooling shower from above; call to her home the lady of the house, full of desire for her bridegroom; bind her heart with love, as here and there the clinging ivy straying clasps the tree.

We readily recognize here the Catullian formula which was to exert such a great influence upon the authors of continental and English epithalamions centuries later. Among the notable conventions are the invocation of the gods, the lavish description of the bride, the observance of the usual Roman nuptial customs, the wish for a "little Torquatus," and the hope that the couple's wedded life may
be happy.

In later Roman literature Catullus was "constantly admired, quoted, and imitated," a great honor for a young man who lived but thirty years, and whose life reads like a fascinating novel. His biography gives us a better understanding of his nuptial poem and a deeper appreciation of its effect upon the poets of his own country and upon succeeding generations. Much of his influence was exerted through intermediaries who translated his poems or utilized his epithalamic formula and lyric conventions to improve their own poetic efforts. By the sixteenth century this influence was spreading to England. Harrington asserts that "Spenser's Epithalamion glitters with jewels gathered from Catullus." He also states that "Jonson's epithalamia are deeply indebted to Catullus, not merely for their general ideas and progress of thought but also continually for the exact expression of it." The Catullian influence upon these two Elizabethans will be fully developed in Chapter III of this thesis.

Although we may logically expect the echo to become fainter as the centuries separate us from Catullus, yet at the close of Tennyson's In Memoriam we find much that was inspired by Catullus. In Frater, Ave Atque Vale, 4-6,

11. Ibid., p. 150.
12. Ibid., p. 165.
the Victorian has expressed his love and admiration for the Roman:

There beneath the Roman ruin where the purple flowers grow,
Came that "Ave atque Vale" of the Poet's hopeless woe,
Tenderest of Roman poets nineteen hundred years ago.

Turning from the classical to the Hebraic tradition, we find in two parts of the Old Testament material which is epithalamic in character: The Bridal Procession in the Song of Solomon, chapter 3, verses 6-11; and the Forty-fifth Psalm. As its title suggests, the first song is a description of the procession which followed the actual wedding ritual.

In his notes Dr. Jastrow observed that the main feature of the wedding ceremony was the procession in which the bride was carried on a litter to her bridegroom's home. Although this Old Testament song is but six verses in length, all the Oriental splendor of a Solomonic procession is suggested. Dr. Jastrow classified the description as intentional exaggeration or a mere "Oriental hyperbole;" however, the concrete realism of this nuptial song is very effective:

6. Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?
7. Behold his bed, which is Solomon's; three score valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel.
8. They all hold swords, being expert in war:

every man hath his sword upon his thigh because of fear in the night.

9. King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon.
10. He made the pillars thereof of silver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it of purple, the midst thereof going paved with love, for the daughters of Jerusalem.
11. Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart. 15

Moulton calls the Forty-fifth Psalm "A Royal Marriage Hymn." In length and beauty of phrase it is superior to the Bridal Procession. However, the two have numerous points of similarity; their allegorical interpretations and their epithalamial characteristics both afford important bases for comparison, yet only the latter, as being of greater interest here, will be discussed in some detail at the end of the psalm, here given in full:

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim; for the sons of Korah, Maschil, A song of loves.

My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

2. Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.

3. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty.

4. And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.

5. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.

15. For a copy of Dr. Jastrow's translation of Chapter 3, verses 6-11 of the Song of Solomon see the Appendix, p. xxvii.

6. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.
7. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.
8. All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.
9. Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.
10. Harken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house;
11. So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him.
12. And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour.
13. The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold.
14. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.
15. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king's palace.
16. Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayst make princes in all the earth.
17. I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.

The invocation of the gods usually noted in Catullian and Elizabethan nuptial songs is absent; but mention is made of the Christian Deity. The description of the bride is rather similar in the two epithalamions. In the Bridal Procession she is "perfumed with myrrh and frankincense; with powders (incense) of the merchant." In the Forty-fifth Psalm she has garments that "smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of ivory palaces;" "her clothing is of wrought gold;" and "She shall be brought unto the king in raiment.

17. The New Indexed Bible, pp. 404-5.
of needlework." Warfare customs afford other similarities. The Oriental custom of carrying weapons, "his sword upon his thigh," appears in both songs. "Danger at night" in the Bridal Procession and "king's enemies" in the Forty-fifth Psalm show the need for the swords mentioned. In the former the soldier is one "in warfare trained," while in the latter he is one with "arrows...sharp." Marked similarities also appear in the expressions of joy on nuptial occasions. The Bridal Procession is spoken of as taking place "on the day of the gladness of his heart," while the entry of the bride and the virgins into the king's palace is made "with gladness and rejoicing."

From these comparisons we see that the two nuptial songs in the Old Testament have much in common. Whether they are expressions of natural or supernatural love does not greatly alter their importance as epithalamial examples.

When we compare the wedding songs in the Elizabethan period with the two songs from the Old Testament we immediately notice a decided literary tendency in the Elizabethan songs. This development was due, again, to Latin influence, and had begun several centuries earlier in the works of Statius. The material was extended to refer not only to the wedding night, but also to the entire day and even to the time immediately following. The praises

of the bridal couple, the reflections upon the beauties and joys of marriage, and the expression of good wishes appropriate to the occasion were retained. Like the Latin and Greek epithalamions, the English nuptial songs were usually written in honor of a particular bridal pair.

Although there were English poems about marriage before the Renaissance, Sir Philip Sidney, as we have already noted, is usually credited with having written the first true epithalamion in English. The chief concern of this song, sung by Discus at the marriage of Thyrsis and Kala in the Arcadia (1580-81), is the future wedded life of "the honest bridegroom and the bashful bride." To insure that the couple shall "long their coupled joys maintain" the services of Mother Earth, Heaven, the Muses, the Nymphs, Pan, Virtue, and Hymen are invoked. This first example does not have the finesse which is noticeable in later Elizabethan nuptial songs, but is of interest because it shows a preliminary attempt. The second stanza expresses the spirit of the song:

0 Heaven, awake! show forth thy stately face;
Let not these slumb'ring clouds thy beauties hide,
But with thy cheerful presence help to grace
The honest bridegroom and the bashful bride;
Whose loves may ever bide,
Like to an elm and vine,
With mutual embraces them to twine;
In which delightful pain,
0 Hymen, long their coupled joys maintain!

19. For a copy of this song see Appendix, pp. xxviii-xxx.
Other poems of this kind soon appeared during the next fifty years, a period during which the best epithalamions in English were written. Of particular interest are those by Spenser, *Epithalamion* and *Prothalamion*, written in 1595 and 1596, respectively; and those by Jonson—*Masque of Hymen, The Hue and Cry after Cupid*, and *Epithalamion*—written in 1606, 1608, and 1633. These five poems have many similarities and differences which will be discussed in later chapters.

Following these fruitful years of the Elizabethan period there was a decline in the popularity of the epithalamion in England. It lost its ancient genuine song quality and its Elizabethan literary characteristic and became in the seventeenth century a mere congratulatory piece written with little feeling and often with less poetic grace. These so-called bridal poems were "invaded by politics and generalities" and sometimes even by satire. At times they were mere translations.

According to Case, we must come well into the nineteenth century before we find examples of English nuptial poems which are at all comparable to those written during the Elizabethan period. He calls our attention to the following: Shelley's *Bridal Song*, Tennyson's closing stanzas of In

20. A copy of Spenser's *Epithalamion* is in Chapter IV.
Copies of the other four poems are in the Appendix, pp. vi-xix.
Memoriam, Gosse's Epithalamion on Viol and Flute, and Le Gallienne's Epithalamion. After reading the more scholarly epithalamions of earlier centuries, we note a tendency toward simplicity in these later poems. This is particularly true of Shelley's Bridal Song. With characteristic skill and brevity he expresses his wish for the bridal pair:

The golden gates of sleep unbar
Where strength and beauty, met together,
Kindle their image like a star
In a sea of glassy weather!

In the ingenuous poem by Richard Le Gallienne on the marriage of William Faversham and Julie Opp we find another example of this later type. It is quite different from other epithalamions in that it lacks the ingenuity usually associated with this genre. To have the bridal pair called "husband and wife" is an innovation not frequently noticed in marriage songs:

Husband and wife! O happy, happy pair!
A union so perfect that it seems
A fabled bliss, a marriage made in dreams,
A rainbow strangely painted on the air.

Although the poem lacks any expression of intense emotion, yet there is in its final stanza considerable emotional appeal:

Young king and queen, - pass to your palace now;
Pass in and from your happy windows gaze

22. For a copy of this poem see Appendix, p. xxxi.
23. Ibid., p. xxxii.
Along your stately avenue of days,
Survey the shining gardens of your peace,
And all the future filling with increase
Of garnered joy, and prosperous with praise -
The long sweet ripening of your marriage vow.

Although the number of epithalamions discussed in this study of the truly notable epithalamions in Greek, Latin, and English literature is by no means extensive, acquaintance with them provides a background for a more intensive study of the nuptial songs of Edmund Spenser and Ben Jonson. We note that the two high points in epithalamic history are the several centuries before Christ, in the days of Sappho, Theocritus, Catullus, and the psalmists; and the English Renaissance, which produced the epithalamions of Sidney, Jonson, and Spenser. Mention was made of the poems of the nineteenth century partly because of their own intrinsic interest, but chiefly because, by contrast, they increase our appreciation of the marriage hymns by the ancients, the psalmists, and the Elizabethans.
CHAPTER II

THE POETIC PURPOSES OF SPENSER AND JONSON

In this comparative study of the epithalamion of Spenser and Jonson we are concerned first of all with the poetic purposes of these two authors. Spenser, Jonson's predecessor by about twenty-one years, will be considered first.

He had a higher poetic objective than most of his contemporaries. Many scholars in Elizabethan England, to be sure, endeavored to perfect their own work by following Greek and Roman models. They recognized the value in the theory of the new-poetry: "to cultivate the mother tongue by the importation of the best learning and the imitation of the best models, wherever these are to be found." Spenser, however, proposed to create a new style in English poetry that would cause it to rank high in the world's literature. He was determined "to prove his mother tongue capable and himself a master." Although he did not hesitate to imitate many models, especially the Italian, he did succeed in making his work "so gloriously his own that no reader of his ever thinks of those models as primary."  

Grosart holds that it was "Spenser's modesty, not his need that made him borrow." To carry on the task begun by Chaucer of making language, style, and verse harmonize with the classical and foreign art was a purpose truly worthy of Spenser's genius. "He would, like Du Bellay, lift the vernacular from the dust."

Many factors fitted him for this important work. His natural endowments, his schooling, his employment, the age in which he lived, and above all else his scholarship contributed to the success of his high poetic purpose. Love for beauty and endurance of the many disappointments of his life drove him to seek relief in the world of the imagination. Spenser's sensitive, loving nature made him a responsive poetic instrument. His appearance, as Legouis describes it, was an index to his artistic temperament:

"A slight figure, surmounted by a fine head...
His face bore every mark of refinement, with its lofty, backward-sloping forehead, its thin mobile lips, grey-blue eyes, auburn hair and pointed beard." 5

Briefly, he was a "noble-minded Renaissance scholar, infinitely susceptible to love and beauty."

Spenser's schooling was not secured easily. Although he received an allowance, and frequent additions of "sick

4. Legouis, Emile, Spenser, p. 52.
5. Ibid., p. 1.
6. Ibid., p. 23.
pay," from Robert Newell's fund, he was not particularly well to do. In 1569 he was admitted as sizar at Pembroke Hall, Cambridge. Records show that he received his B. A. degree and, in 1576, his M. A. degree. He was fortunate in matriculating at Pembroke Hall and particularly blessed in having Gabriel Harvey for a friend. Spenser's senior by six or seven years, Harvey assumed an important responsibility in giving advice freely to the young poet. In his Letters of 1580 he advised: "We must not blindly follow Classic precedent." This idea was expressed also in Mulcaster's Elementarie where he says, "I love Rome, but London better, I favor Italie, but England more, I honor the Latin, but I worship the English." Partly because of his training, Spenser exemplified these statements in his poetic objectives.

Perhaps no single event in Spenser's life had such a far reaching influence as his political banishment to Ireland, England's "cooling card." Greenlaw states that it was Spenser's "connection with Leicester which caused his exile to Ireland," and concludes that this was "highly fortunate for the history of English literature." Although much has been written with regard to Spenser's official duties and actual difficulties in Ireland, Grosart hazards

that the poet must have had "large leisure" to spend upon his literary endeavors. Removed in this way from the actual court life and political intrigues of England, Spenser gained a perspective which enabled him to write poetry pregnant with allegorical pictures of the foibles of his age. This banishment to Kilcolman Castle as secretary to Lord Grey, moreover, brought about the poet's meeting with Elizabeth Boyle. Because he later honored her with his great wedding ode, this meeting was important from an epithalamic standpoint.

The freedom of Spenser's Age—a period marked by an "endless diversity of forces...struggling toward manifestation; multitudinous voices...striving strenuously to articulate; and mighty impulses stirring the nation"—aided his poetic purpose. Such a chaotic period would encourage flexibility in all types of thought. Experiments could be made without attracting an unnecessary amount of attention. Spenser was in little need of this encouragement, but his Age did help him to assert for himself "the right of an original genius to give his own message, in his own self-chosen form, and in his mother-tongue."

Although he is primarily remembered as the author of the Fairy Queen, this study is particularly concerned with

13. Ibid., p. 280.
14. Ibid.
his purpose in writing his epithalamions, brilliant examples of his effort to show the flexibility and power of his own vernacular in following the ancient models. Apart from this ideal, he had a twofold purpose in writing the Epithalamion and the Prothalamion. The one was autobiographical, and the other was literary.

The Epithalamion, a great wedding ode which has been called "the finest composition of its kind," was presented by Spenser to his bride, Elizabeth Boyle, "in lieu of many ornaments." This poem and the Amoretti have been figuratively called "the silver lamp of twin-lights" which guides us to an understanding of Spenser's courtship. Fortune had made him a painter in verse, and so it was but natural that he should choose to paint verbally an occasion as important as his own wedding day. If one feels that there is lack of modesty in such a selection he has but to remember the period in which the poem was written. Wilson suggests this explanation:

"No poet in our refined—our delicate age—could write his own marriage-hymn of thanksgiving...But Spenser lived in a strong age. And had he been silent, he would have felt that he wronged Hymen as well as the Muses." 17

Although the poem paints a highly imaginative picture, it has served its author's purpose to proving to

Be unto her a goodly ornament
And for short time an endless moniment.

His purpose in writing the Prothalamion was to commemorate the double marriage at Essex House of Lady Elizabeth and Lady Katherine Somerset, daughters of Edward Somerset, to Master Henry Gilford and Master William Peter. Although it has its strong points, notably "the delicate management of the refrain" which Saintsbury thinks is even more beautiful than the Epithalamion, it is clear that Spenser did not intend to write a piece of such length and scholarly character as his own nuptial poem. His purpose was to pay a lovely compliment to the grace and beauty of two young ladies upon the occasion of their weddings rather than to erect for them an "endless moniment."

In contrast to Spenser, "the vindicator of native principles in poetry," Jonson showed little interest in most of the native forms of lyrics. His chief purpose was to show English literature "certain kinds of lyric in which antiquity had done immortal things." In writing he worked for "brevity, terseness, and emphasis." The poetic form was not so vital to him as it was to Spenser. He was more interested in the message and the content. His well known remark that "he objects to stanzas because they interrupt

the flow of thought at the wrong places" shows how he felt upon the point. His devotion to drama and especially to the masque was his greatest interest, but he did help English poetry towards a "vital simplicity and directness of speech." Herford has summarized Jonson's poetic purpose in this telling passage:

He...stood for a revolution in poetry. He challenged the supreme poet of the previous generation, Spenser. He stood for a masculine spirit in poetry, weighty, pregnant, concentrated, against a poetry of facile melody, and melting phrase. He sought to enlarge the intellectual compass of poetry, to charge it with more insistent thought, to bring it into more intimate relation with knowledge. 22

To understand why he was essentially different from Spenser one has but to consider the factors which shaped his poetic objectives. Although both poets are thought of as Elizabethans, remember that Jonson was but eight years old when Spenser left England to take up his new assignment as secretary to Lord Grey. During the years that Spenser spent in comparative retirement in Ireland, Jonson was just growing into manhood. His mature years were spent in the excitement of the court and the stage. He owed many of his "pleasantest social connections and much of his professional success" to his life at court. While Spenser had been forced to earn his livelihood as a secretary, Jonson upon

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the accession of James I became the recipient of various employments, honors, and eventually a pension from the court. Contrast Jonson basking in the convivial atmosphere of a tavern with Spenser in comparative solitude among the beauties of the Irish moors. So characteristic are these pictures that it would be as difficult to imagine the slight, refined figure of Spenser among the revelries of Mermaid Tavern as to vision the boisterous, fun-loving Jonson secluded for long within the quiet walls of Kilcolman Castle.

Jonson's education fitted him for his classical poetic purpose. His early training was cared for by his stepfather, who sent him to a private school at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. Later, through the generosity of a friend, he was able to go to Westminster. Fortunately, as a young student he came under the influence of the great scholar William Camden, who helped to make him "the most learned poet of his Age."

Excellent examples of Jonson's writing "out of the fulness and memory of his former readings" are his epithalamions. His classical study, especially of Catullus, and his dramatic propensity are clearly reflected in these three songs. As the ancient epithalamions climaxed the wedding ceremony, so Jonson's nuptial songs came as con-

23. Symonds, John Addington, Ben Jonson, p. 3.
clusions to his masques. An artist at fashioning "these glittering bubbles of invention," Jonson was not too much concerned with matter in these productions; he strove more for their transitory effect. The first two of his nuptial songs lacked the personal sentiment of Spenser's first one because they were part of these public masques. Feeling is also absent from his third epithalamion, written when he was too old "to depict the passion he had ceased to feel, if indeed he ever had."

Jonson's epithalamions cover a period of twenty-seven years. The first, described by Smith as a "piece of indifferent quality," was presented on January 5, 1606, in honor of the marriage of Lady Frances Howard, in her fourteenth year, to the young Earl of Essex. Part of the performance called the Masque of Hymen was given at court on the eleventh and twelfth nights after Christmas. Many adaptations from Catullus' sixty-first Carmen are noted in this piece. In his introductory notes Jonson added a characteristic bit when he explained that in the actual performance only one staff was sung, but that since he wrote the entire piece he was at least going to print all of it. With true Jonsonian ego he does "heartily forgive their ignorance whom it chanceh not to please."

26. Ibid., p. 405.
The masque called *The Hue and Cry after Cupid*, printed in 1608, concludes with Jonson's second nuptial song. His purpose was to assist the celebration of the marriage of Lord Haddington with the Lady Elizabeth Radcliffe. Critics grant some few bits of praise to this epithalamion. Smith concedes that it "makes some amends for the stiffness of Ben's first nuptial masque by its lyrical quality."  

"Skillfully constructed and sonorous stanzas" is Symonds' characterization. If these criticisms are at least partially true then the poet's purpose of writing a fit tribute for this happy wedding was accomplished.

In *Underwoods - Miscellaneous Poems*, selection XCIII, we find Jonson's final marriage ode, written when he was a veteran of sixty. It is scarcely to be expected that this piece should escape the criticism of owing "more to the artist than to the lover." Written in celebration of the nuptials of Hierome Weston with the Lady Frances Stewart, the poem shows two characteristics of Jonson, his retained mental powers and his continued interest in his wide circle of friends.

Although his longer lyrics fall "short of Spenser's heavenly music," they do show many of his poetic characteristics and his epithalial purposes. The differences

noted above in the poetic purposes, the personal qualities, and the lives of these two great Elizabethans are shown in their nuptial songs. The Platonic imagery of Spenser contrasts with the concrete narrative of Jonson. Both poets used their vast scholarship to show the possibilities of the vernacular in lyric poetry of this genre, but the tribute for having written the ultimate epithalamial example in English literature must go to Spenser. It was as though he had recognized his as the most perfect English nuptial poem when he named it Epithalamion.
CHAPTER III

THE CATULLIAN FORMULA IN THE
EPITHALAMIONS OF SPENSER AND JONSON

What Petrarch was to the sonnet, Catullus was to the epithalamion of Elizabethan England. His formula for writing nuptial songs became such an essential part of poetic tradition that his influence is apparent in most of the English wedding odes. Many poets discovered a fountainhead of inspiration in his "long and charming epithalamion," the sixty-first Carmen. The purpose of this chapter is to summarize what is meant by the Catullian formula and to compare the extent of its influence upon the marriage songs of Spenser and of Jonson.

The Catullian formula may be followed in two ways. A poet may use the general plan of arrangement found in the sixty-first Carmen, or he may so closely imitate the ideas found therein that his work has many similarities. Catullus, himself, probably "either set or followed the fashion of his time." Ellis believes that he was familiar with the extant fragments from Sappho's lost book of epithalamions.

The belief that his poems might have been mere Latin translations of her work is precluded, however, by their many distinctly Roman characteristics. Whatever his source may have been, Catullus established a definite set of conventions when he wrote his nuptial song. When a poet follows these he is using the "Catullian formula."

The first fact noticed in reading the sixty-first Carmen is that it is occasional. In a letter to Manlius, the bridegroom in the song, Catullus indicates that the wedding was to occur soon. The marriage of Manlius, whose father had been consul in 66 B.C., was an important event. To make his song very personal the poet used the names of the couple in this way:

For now shall Vinia wed with Manlius, Vinia as fair as Venus... (61.16-17) 7
Not to you, Aurunculeia, is there danger that any fairer woman shall see the bright day...(61.86-88)
May he be like his father Manlius...(61.217-8)

Since the song was not to be sung at the actual wedding, this biographical touch was appropriate. The happy couple would prize their friend's gift more highly because of this added distinction.

The exordium (61.1-30) establishes the atmosphere

5. Frank, Tenney, Catullus and Horace, p. 54.
6. Ibid.
7. Throughout the thesis 61 will stand for the sixty-first Carmen and the numbers following will be the approximate line in the Latin poem. For a copy of Cornish's version see Appendix, pp. xxiii-xxvi.
8. Ellis, Robinson, DR. Cit., p. 209.
for the song. Many stage directions are given and the singing of the refrain *Hymen Hymenaeus* is begun in order that everything shall be in readiness when the bride comes.

Such an important wedding could not be celebrated without invoking the assistance of Hymen and Venus and praising the beauty of the bride. To eulogize Vinia's perfections was to compliment the taste and good fortune of Manlius. She was modest (61.79), chaste, (61.222), noble (61.226), with a face "like a white daisy" (61.190), and as "fair as Venus" (61.18). Her bosom was soft (61.101), her white foot (61.110) clad in gold (61.163). For the perfumed (61.137) Manlius, who in his "rich and mighty" house (61.152-3) eagerly (61.169) awaited her coming, she was truly a lovely bride. Many Roman customs are reflected in the poem. The line "Thou who bearest away the tender maid to her bridegroom" (61.3) recalls the practice of carrying off the bride as observed by many of Romulus' warriors. The choice of a joyful day and the "allusions to the *manus* by which the wife passed into her husband's power" are likewise suggestions of local customs. "The merry Fescennine jesting" (61.124), the lifting of the bride across the threshold of her new home (61.162), and the "honest matrons" (61.182) attending her when she is placed upon her marriage couch are other expected rituals. The observance of these customs gives the song a Roman atmosphere in spite of its Greek
Catullus expresses his hope for a "little Torquatus, stretching his baby hand from his mother's lap" (61.212). The wish that the couple may have a long life is supplemented at the conclusion of the song with the hope that they will have many wedded joys.

This sketch of his song shows the conventions which Catullus followed. His treatment of each part of the song is so brief that the paraphrased form reads like an epitome. But we readily note his epithalamial formula. A marriage song which followed his precedent would be written in honor of the approaching marriage of a specific couple, but it would not be sung at the actual ceremony. It would contain a refrain, a lavish description of the bride, and some reference to the bridal party. Several examples of ancient and local nuptial customs would be included. A wish for a "little Torquatus" and a hope for a long happy life for the couple would probably conclude the song. These conventions are used as a basis for comparison when we consider how a poet has followed the Catullian formula. We might naturally expect that centuries upon centuries of poetic tradition would make later epithalamions written in another language and in another country vastly different from this early Roman's marriage song. We shall now see whether the

epithalamions of the two Elizabethan singers were vastly different from that of Catullus or whether they:

Tuned to the highest key of ancient Rome,
Return (ed) all her music with (their) own. 11

As was specifically noted in Chapter II, all five Elizabethan epithalamions were written to celebrate the weddings of actual couples. The additional characteristic that they were not really sung at the wedding festival makes them Catullian in the first conventions.

The exordium in the sixty-first Carmen is paralleled in Spenser's excellent introduction to his Epithalamion.
With majestic strokes he sets the atmosphere for his ode.
Countless directions are given before the bride is awakened. All must be in readiness for this masque of Hymen before the leading character arises from her slumbers. The keynote of the joyous song is sounded in the glorious refrain which Spenser begins:

That all the woods may answer, and his echo ring.
With increasing effect this varied refrain gains momentum until after the wedding and the public festivities, when it suddenly slips into a minor key and

The woods no more shall answer, nor your echo ring. (314) 13

11. Harrington, K. P., Catullus and his Influence, p. 162.
12. Chapter II, pp. 17, 18, 21, 22.
13. Numbers cited in this way refer to the line in the poem mentioned.
"That vital requisite,...unity" which we find in this poem is partly the result of the poet's skillful use of this device, which helps to bind the several stanzas into a whole poem. "Melodiousness...so essential to and so inseparable from all verse that is poetry" is also gained by this clever employment of the refrain. The same important effects are achieved by Spenser in his second nuptial song, the Prothalamion. After each of the ten stanzas he repeats the following refrain with very slight variations:

Against the bridal day, which is not long: (17)
Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song.

Although our Elizabethan "painter in verse" mentions neither his own name nor that of his bride we are left in no doubt as to the identity of the couple meant. Taking separately the three dozen or so lines which contain the personal pronouns I, my, me, us, and we, one may easily follow the events of the entire wedding day. Not that Spenser has spoiled his ode by too much personal reference. In fact he has been extremely careful upon this point. Most of the interest of the poem is centered in his "truest turtle dove" (24), his "beautifulest bride" (105). Clearly he states his purpose:

15. Ibid., p. 6.
Help me mine own love's praises to resound; (14)
Ne let the same of any be envied;
So Orpheus did for his won bride.
So I unto myself alone will sing;
The woods shall to me answer, and my echo ring.

The occasional and personal element in his second bridal song is not so strongly stressed. We are to imagine the poet sitting upon a bank of the Thames, enjoying a beautiful scene in which he sees:

......... Two swans of goodly hew (37-8)
Come softly swimming down along the Lee

These graceful birds are metaphorically the brides of his song. The grooms are referred to as:

Two gentle knights of lovely face and feature. (169)

The bridal day is mentioned as an event of the near future, but no detailed plans are given. This omission seems strangely in contrast to the minute details given in the Epithalamion. The few mythological terms in the Prothalamion are as nothing compared with the profusion in the longer marriage hymn.

In his own nuptial song Spenser calls to his assistance the muses, the nymphs, and over a score of gods and goddesses. The tapestry of his ode is richly ornamented with these choice jewels of antiquity. So much a part of his thinking had these figures become that he uses them very naturally.

Were every trace of classical lore to be removed from his song much of its charm and subtle connotation would be lost.

The lavish description of the bride was an epitthala-
mial convention which appealed to Spenser's love of beauty and to his interest in beautiful women as expressions of the Platonic theory of true beauty. From her "fair eyes, like stars that dimmed were" (93) to her "tender foot" (49) the poet gives a very complete picture of his "beautifulest bride" (105). Her "sunshiny face" (119) and her "long loose yellow locks" (154) are pleasingly realistic as compared with the gorgeous similes in the tenth stanza (167). Being "infinitely susceptible to love and beauty," he found it easy "to open the floodgates of his inexhaustible fancy." His creation of an "opulent temple" is followed by a distinctly Platonic note:

But if you saw that which no eyes can see, (185)
The inward beauty of her lively sprite.

Much personal feeling and poetic skill are evinced in this description of the bride.

Pictorial interest is given to the poem by the poet's "adoption of an Irish setting and his introduction of native folk lore." The minute details about the river Mulla lend realism to the poem. This feeling of actuality is further intensified by a description of the hurried preparations for the wedding. The nymphs and muses performing their tasks, the birds singing their love-learned songs, and the

virgins and boys hurrying about give a picture of ceaseless activity. This bustle is finally rewarded by the approach of the procession. The people "standing all about" (143) serve as a fit audience for the appreciation of the modest bride who comes with "portly pace." This pageantry culminates in the wedding itself. Roaring organs, joyous anthems, and "sweet angels" fluttering about the modest bride dramatically suggest the grandeur of the wedding scene.

The local customs observed after the wedding are quite pagan in their intensity. "Never had a man more joyful day than this" (246). Drinking of wine, dancing, caroling, ringing of bells, and burning of bonfires create a festive scene which contrasts sharply with the later description of the bridal bower. Lilies, violets, perfumed sheets, silken curtains, and a calm quiet night, disturbed only by the moon at the window make the latter picture delightful. "Pagan and Christian emotion" makes the poem an effective treatment of "the noble and frank joy of possession."

In the following lines Spenser makes the customary prayer for a long happy life for his wedded couple:

And thou, great Juno,... (390)
Eternally bind thou this lovely band,
And all thy blessings unto us impart.

To be certain of a "progeny" he climaxes his song as follows:

And ye high heavens, the temple of the gods, (409)
In which a thousand torches flaming bright
Do burn, that to us wretched earthly clods
In dreadful darkness lend desired light
And all ye powers which in the same remain,
More than we can feign,
Pour out your blessing on us plenteously,
And happy influence upon us rain,
That we may raise a large posterity.

In his plan of arrangement Spenser has followed Catullus
quite closely. All the conventions are duly observed yet
since Spenser has used about twice as many lines of poetry,
his descriptions are more elaborate. With this extra length
he was able to embellish each epithalamial convention. Al-
though his ingenuity and originality are remarkable, we do
find a few instances in which Catullian inspiration is not
concealed. There is no better way to compare these
similarities than to examine the actual lines in both poems.
In the first stanza of the Epithalamion Spenser calls to the
Muses, "the learned sisters," saying:

Help me mine own love's praises to resound; (14)

Catullus says:

Ye too with me, unwedded virgins,...in
measure say, "0 Hymenaeus Hymen, 0 Hymen
Hymenaeus." (36)

Harrington points out another parallel in these lines from
21
the seventh and eighth stanzas of the Epithalamion:

Now is my love ready forth to come. (110)

Let all the virgins therefore well await,
And ye fresh boys, that tend upon her groom,
Prepare yourselves, for he is coming straight.

The whiles the boys run up and down the street, (137)
Crying aloud with strong confused noise,
As if it were one voice.
"Hymen, Io Hymen, Hymen!" they do shout.

The similar passages in the sixty-first Carmen are:

Come forth, O bride (61.91)

and

Raise aloft the torches, boys: I see the wedding veil coming. Go on, sing in measure, Io Hymen Hymenaeus, Io, Io, Hymen, Hymenaeus.

Note that both poets use the exact words "come forth."

Harrington points out also the resemblance in their use of boys for the purpose of crying "Hymen." This is distinctly a Roman custom. An additional use of the boys is found in Spenser's fifteenth stanza:

Ring ye the bells, ye young men of the town, (261)
And leave your wonted labors for this day.

And bonfires make all day,
And dance about them, and about them sing.

Another passage in Spenser's poem shows a strong Catullian characteristic:

Now cease, ye damsels, your delights forepast; (296)
Enough is it that all the day was yours.

Now bring the bride into the bridal bowers.

Now it is night, ye damsels may be gone,
And leave my love alone.

With almost curt brevity Catullus expresses the above ideas

in this way:

Ye, honest matrons,...set the damsel in her place. (61.182)

and:

Maids, shut the doors. (61.227)

A comparison of these few quotations shows why Emperor says that Spenser's Epithalamion "glitters with jewels, gathered from Catullus." Keeping in mind Spenser's arrangement of his poem and his apparent usage of some phrases, one may logically conclude that he owed much to the Catullian formula.

The three epithalamions of Jonson lend themselves to an interesting parallel treatment because they have so much in common with Catullus and at the same time such marked differences. Like Spenser's nuptial songs, these were all written for special occasions and were not actually sung on the wedding day. In contrast to his first epithalamion, Jonson's last two songs mention the names of the happy couples:

Ratcliffe's blood and Ramsey's name: (1608.70)
Weston, their treasure, as their treasurer. (1633.97)
Asks first, who gives her?...I, Charles... (1633.124)
The lady Frances drest. (1633.37)

In his last marriage ode Jonson further emphasizes the special occasion by mentioning a specific time and a definite

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23. Ibid.
24. To distinguish Jonson's three epithalamions the year each was published will be given after every quotation. The number following the year is the line in the poem.
place:

See the procession! What a holy day, (1633.8)

Hath filled, with caroches, all the way,
From Greenwich hither to Rowhampton gate!
When look'd the year, at best,
So like a feast:
Or were affairs in tune,
By all the spheres consent, so in the heart of June?

The poet's use of the refrain is very unusual. In his earliest song he employs three refrains. The first one

'Tis Cupid calls to arm; (1606.7)
And this his last alarm.

appears only twice. Later in the poem the following refrain recurs three times:

On Hymen, Hymen call (1606.23)
This night is Hymen's all.

Near the end Jonson employs a third refrain, which likewise is given three times:

That you may both ere day (1606.87)
Rise perfect every way.

The irregular use of this unifying device is pleasing to the reader who finds himself wondering which refrain will come next. This almost haphazard pattern gives the first nuptial song a spontaneity which a more regular repetition would not have given. When Jonson's second epithalamion is read the difference is noted immediately, for in this ode every eleventh line is the refrain:

Shine, Hesperus, shine forth, thou wished Star! (1608.11)

To make this repetition even more noticeable the poet
manages to end every eighth line with the words "Hymen's War.". This continual repetition of a line-ending, which rhymes with the refrain, gives the whole poem a studied scholarly effect not noticeable in the first nuptial song and pointedly absent from the third. No refrain appears in this last ode. Evidently, Jonson was experimenting with this Catullian convention.

Such a classical student as Jonson would be expected to follow the "invocation of the gods" convention. His first two songs make extensive use of this idea. The word Hymen appears twelve times in his first rather short epithalamion. This emphasis by means of repetition is in keeping with the fact that this song came at the close of the Masque of Hymen. Other mythological names mentioned are Hesperus (1606.25), Venus (1606.46-97), also called Cypris (1606.84), Juno (1606.89), Genius (1606.94), and Cynthia (1606.102). Although the second poem contains fewer classical references, it opens with a truly Catullian invocation:

Up, youths and virgins, up, and praise (1608.1)
The god whose nights outshine his days;
Hymen, whose hallowed rites
Could never boast of brighter lights:

In his final ode Jonson uses the sun as a special being whom he entreats to remain for the events of the wedding day. Direct address to the sun unifies the poem. So personal is this speech that it is very realistic. When the poet says, "Haste, haste, officious sun, and send them night" (1633.145),
the command fits with his other personal remarks to this unusual wedding guest. Jonson's diminished use of the invocation of the gods corresponds to his final disregard for the refrain.

In the second poem the conventional description of the bride is reduced to the one word "faie" (1608.58). A more elaborate list of adjectives appears in the first epithalamion, including such expressions as "bride's fair eyes" (1608.77), "tender ladý" (1608.33), "golden feet" (1608.38), "maiden fears" (1608.79), and "your lips so sweet" (1608.81). The following quotations show that the use of this convention is much more complete in the final marriage hymn.

The lady Frances drest
Above the rest
Of all the maidens fair;
In graceful ornament of garlands, gems, and hair.

See how she pæceth forth in virgin-white,
Like what she is, the daughter of a duke,
And sister; darting forth in dazzling light
On all that came her simpless to rebuke!

Her tresses trim her back,
As she did lack
Nought of a maiden queen,
With modesty so crowned, and adoration seen.

In this last song there is also an extra emphasis upon the praise of the bridal pair. In his first two epithalamions Jonson is chiefly concerned with the customs of the bridal night, but in the last he takes pains to stress the importance of the royal couple. He asks the sun to look:
And looking with thy best inquiry tell, (1633.73)
In all, thy age of journals thou hast took,
Saw'isthoushatpairbecametheseritessowell,
Save the preceding two?
Who, in all they do,
Search, sun, and thou wilt find
They are the exampled pair, and mirror of their kind.

Among the bridal customs reflected in his songs are the bringing forth of the bride, the procession, the profuse use of flowers, the dances, the opening of the chapel door, the wedding itself, the public festival, bringing home the bride, lifting her over the threshold, the preparation for bed, the "prediction of supreme marital delights," and the closing fast the door. Jonson's first epithalamion mentions more of these customs than do his last two.

Jonson's personal feeling for his own family may be reflected in his following of the "little Torquatus" convention. This one Catullian precedent is amply imitated in each of his three epithalamions, as the following quotations indicate:

And when the babe to light is shown (1606.105)
Let it be like each parent known;
Much of the father's face,
More of the mother's grace;
And either grandsire's spirit
And fame let it inherit...

That ere the rosy-fingered morn (1608.67)
Behold nine moons, there may be born
A baby t' uphold the fame
Of Ratcliffe's blood and Ramsey's name:

Till you behold a race to fill your hall, (1633.185)
A Richard, and a Hierome, by their names
Upon a Thomas, or a Francis call;
A Kate, a Frank, to honor their grand dames.

The hope for fame in each of these three examples is interesting. Perhaps here is an example of the poet expressing his own personal desires.

The final convention in the Catullian formula, the author's hope that the couple will have a long, happy wedded life, also appealed very strongly to Jonson. Again all three of his songs have examples of the convention. Considerable ingenuity is noted in these expressions:

And, though full years be told (1606.119)
Their forms grow slowly old.

Live what they are (1608.19)
And long perfection see.

Be kept alive, those sweet and sacred fires (1633-163)
Of love between you and your lovely-head:
That when you both are old,
You find no cold
There; but renewed, say
After the last child born, This is our wedding day.

Although there is probably more good advice than poetic beauty in this final quotation it is an interesting turn to this epithalamial convention.

Harrington has well said, "Jonson's epithalamia are deeply indebted to Catullus not merely for their general ideas and progress of thought, but also continually for the exact expression of it." The Catullian conventions found

in his work are convincing proof that his debt for his "ideas and progress of thought" is indeed heavy. His reverting to Catullus "for the exact expression of" this thought is an example of Jonson's power to write "out of the fulness and memory of his former readings."

Although each song contains examples of this debt, the first marriage hymn is the most pregnant with borrowed expressions. At least a third of it was inspired by the genius of Catullus. Emperor has carefully pointed out the similarities in the poems of Jonson and Catullus. There are so many parallel quotations which illustrate this point that only the more interesting ones will be noted. Jonson's lines are given first.

Haste your own good to meet; (1606.37)
And lift your golden feet
Above the threshold high.

and:

Lift across the threshold with good omen your golden feet. (61.162)

Good matrons, that are so well known (1606.49)
To aged husbands of your own,
Place you our bride tonight;

and:

Ye, honest matrons, well wedded to ancient husbands, (61.182) set the damsel in her place.

Let ivy not so bind (1606.85)
As when your arms are twined.

27. Dunn, Cloudman Esther, Ben Jonson's Art, p. 55.
and:

But as the pliant vine entwines the trees planted (61.102) near it, so will he be entwined in your embrace.

Love's wealthy crop of kisses, (1608,27)
And fruitful harvest of his mother's blisses.

and:

If the harvest of our kissing were thicker than the ripe ears of corn. (48.5)

These specific parallels are complete proof of Jonson's debt to Catullus.

The various comparisons in this chapter between the epithalamions of Spenser and Jonson and those of Catullus show that the Elizabethans did follow the arrangement and ideas in his poems, that they were indeed followers of the Catullian formula. Spenser's debt was not very great when compared to the heavy borrowing of his successor. Although the following quotation originally was applied only to Jonson, the debt which both great English epithalamiasts owed to Catullus makes it an appropriate conclusion to this chapter. Spenser and Jonson,

Tuned to the highest key of ancient Rome,
Return(ed) all her music with (their) own.
CHAPTER IV

SPENSER'S EPITHALAMION WITH FOOTNOTES

At the close of Chapter II Spenser's own nuptial song was called "the ultimate epithalamial example in English literature." Because his Epithalamion is outstanding among the five marriage songs of this study, a more complete annotation of it has been attempted here. It is based on the following books: Herbert Ellsworth Cory's Edmund Spenser, Emile Legouis' Spenser, Henry Gibbons Lotepeich's Classical Mythology in the Poetry of Edmund Spenser, Charles G. Osgood's Concordance to the Poems of Edmund Spenser, Francis T. Palgrave's Complete Works, Alice Elizabeth Sawtelle's The Sources of Spenser's Classical Mythology, and C. H. Whitman's A Subject Index to the Poems of Spenser.

When a classical reference appears in the Epithalamion and also in one of the other bridal poems, this fact is shown by using a number to indicate the line of the poem and the following key to designate the poem: Proth. stands for the Prothalamion; 1606 stands for Jonson's nuptial song at the end of the Masque of Hymen; 1608 stands for his song at the end of the Hue and Cry after Cupid; 1633 stands for his last Epithalamion. The complete stanza is given to help the reader sense the thought and rhythm of each unit without the interference of explanatory notations.
EPITHALAMION

by

Edmund Spenser

(From Potter, Elizabethan Verse and Prose, pp. 414-47. For the convenience of the reader an anthology with modernized spelling is used.)

Ye learned sisters, which have oftentimes
Been to me aiding, others to adorn,
Whom ye thought worthy of your graceful rhymes,
That even the greatest did not greatly scorn
To hear their names sung in your simple lays, (5)
But joyed in their praise;
And when ye list your own mishaps to mourn,
Which death, or love, or fortune's wreck did raise,
Your string could soon to sadder tenor turn,
And teach the woods and waters to lament (10)
Your doleful dreamt;
Now lay those sorrowful complaints aside,
And, having all your heads with garland crowned,
Help me mine own love's praises to resound;
Ne let the same of any be envied; (15)
So Orpheus did for his own bride.
So I unto myself alone will sing;
The woods shall to me answer, and my echo ring.

1. Ye learned sisters) CORY (p. 248): "Having finished his sonnets, Spenser approaches us with a sacred intimacy that hushes all scholastic cynicism and fills the reader with an ecstasy that leaps to answer the wonderful abandon with a fervent appreciation of it. The poet invokes the learned sisters with a charming unconscious familiarity of one who has brought them great glory and naturally calls them now to help him, like Orpheus, to sing to his own bride."- LOTSPEICH (p. 85): "The idea that the Muses, as sources of poetic inspiration, have in their keeping all matters of poetry,. . .is implicit in most of Spenser's references to them. . . . In accord with the principle that high poetry must be learned the Muses are 'learned sisters.'"

16. Orpheus) SAWTELLE (p. 94): "Orpheus is the reputed inventor of music. Among the scant traditions respecting Orpheus, is that which represents the wonderful power of his music over men, beasts, and inanimate nature. . . . Numerous passages, from the time of the lyric poets of Greece down to a much later day, might be quoted to support the general references; but perhaps no one better shows that his music had charms than Met. 10.86 ff., where trees and beasts and
birds are described as flocking about the tuneful bard, when, in his retirement among the mountains, he mourns the loss of his wife."

Early, before the world's light-giving lamp
His golden beam upon the hills doth spread,
Having dispersed the night's uncheerful damp,
Do ye awake, and, with fresh lustihead,
Go to the bower of my beloved love,
My trusty turtle dove:
Bid her awake; for Hymen is awake,
And long since ready for his mask to move,
With his bright tead (torch) that flames with many a flake,
And many a bachelor to wait on him,
In their fresh garments trim.
Bid her awake therefore, and soon her dight (adorn),
For lo! the wished day is come at last.
That shall, for all the pains and sorrows past,
Pay to her usury of long delight.
And, whilst she doth her dight,
Do ye to her of joy and solace sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echoing.

25. Hymen) LOTSPEICH (p. 71): "Except for Ep. 24-6, where Spenser speaks of Hymen's mask, his use of the god of marriage is entirely classical." See Jonson 1603.3 - 1608.3 and Catullus 61.4 - 62.4.

Bring with you all the nymphs that you can hear,
Both of the rivers and the forests green,
And of the sea that neighbors to her near,
All with gay garlands goodly well beseen.
And let them also with them bring in hand
Another gay garland,
For my fair love, of lilies and of roses,
Bound truelove-wise with a blue silk riband;
And let them make great store of bridal posies,
And let them eke bring store of other flowers,
To deck the bridal bowers.
And let the ground whereas her foot shall tread,
For fear the stones her tender foot should wrong,
Be strewed with fragrant flowers all along,
And diapered (diversified) like the discolored mead;
Which done, do at her chamber door await,
For she will-waken straight;
The whiles do ye this song unto her sing,
The woods shall to you answer, and your echoing.
37. Nymphs) LOTSPEICH (p. 92): "Spenser knows three classes of Nymphs: Dryads or Homadryads, Naiads, and Nereids. Thus at Ep. 37-9 he calls upon the nymphs of rivers, of forests, and of the sea... It is the association of Nymphs with water that Spenser develops most fully." See Proth. 20, 55, 83; and Catullus 61.29.

Ye nymphs of Mulla, which with careful heed
The silver scaly trouts do tend full well,
And greedy pikes which use therein to feed
(Those trouts and pikes all others do excell),
And ye likewise which keep the rushy lake, (60)
Where none do fishes take,
Bind up the locks the which hang scattered light,
And in his waters, which your mirror make,
Behold your faces as the crystal bright,
That when you come whereas my love doth lie (65)
No blemish she may spy.
And eke ye lightfoot maids which keep the deer
That on the hoary mountain use to tower,
And the wild wolves, which seek them to devour,
With your steel darts do chase from coming near, (70)
Be also present here,
To help to deck her, and to help to sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

56. Ye nymphs of Mulla) LOTSPEICH (p. 92): "The country girls about Koloolmon are 'ye nymphs of Mulla'... Spenser's nymphs have in many places become completely naturalized and are quite at home with English fairies." LEGOUIS (pp. 87-88): "Mulla, i.e., the Awbeg, the river that flows across the poet's estate...Is this not full of familiar and homely allusions - the invitation to the country maids to comb their hair and wash their faces carefully, the passing reference to the excellent quality of trout and pikes in the poet's own river?...Nymphs is merely meant to throw a veil of poetry over details and persons that would look vulgar and commonplace if not transfigured."

60. Rushy lake) LEGOUIS (p. 88): "Kilcolmon Lake"

Wake, now, my love, awake! for it is time.
The rosy morn long since left Tithon's bed, (75)
All ready to her silver coach to climb;
And Phoebus begins to show his glorious head.
Hark, how the cheerful birds do chant their lays
And carol of love's praise!
The merry lark her matins sings aloft; (80)
The thrush replies; the mavis descant (variation on a melody) plays;
The ouzel (blackbird) shrills; the ruddock (red-breast) warbles soft;
So goodly all agree, with sweet consent,
To this day's merriment.
Ah! my dear love, why do ye sleep thus long, (85)
When meeter were that ye should now awake,
To await the coming of your joyous mate,
And harken to the birds' love-learned song,
The dewy leaves among?
For they of joy and pleasance to you sing, (90)
That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring.

75. Tithon) LOTSFPEICH (p. 41): "Spenser refers several times allusively to the myth of Aurora and Tithonus, cf. Aen. 4.584-5, which is remembered also at l.2.7., where also occurs that familiar Homeric epithet, 'rosie-fingered'; cf. II. 1.477." SAWTELLE (p. 35): "The first lines of Odyssey: 'Now the Dawn arose from her couch, from the side of the lordly Tithonus, to bear light to the immortals and to mortal men.'"

77. Phoebus) SAWTELLE (p. 22): "Again and again throughout his poems Spenser refers to Phoebus as the god of the sun. Sometimes he uses the name for the sun itself; sometimes he speaks of the 'lamp' of Phoebus, or the 'car' of Phoebus; and again, of his 'golden face;' or 'golden head.' Phoebus was primarily the god of the sun. Homer and other of the early Greek writers represent Phoebus and Helias as perfectly distinct, but in later times the two became identical. That Phoebus was the god of the sun, the giver of light and warmth and life to the earth, accounts for his numerous other attributes. He figures as the god of intellectual light, delighting in poetry and art, and in the foundation of cities and civil institutions; as the protector of flocks; as the god of prophesy, bringing hidden things to light; as the god of the healing art; and, again, as the hurler of death-dealing darts."

My love is now awake out of her dream,
And her fair eyes, like stars that dimmed were
With darksome cloud, now show their goodly beams,
More bright than Hesperus his head doth rear. (95)
Come now, ye damsel, daughters of delight,
Help quickly her to dight (adorn).
But first come ye, fair Hours, which were begot
In Jove's sweet paradise of Day and Night;
Which do the seasons of the year allot,
And all that ever in this world is fair
Do make and still repair;
And ye three handmaids of the Cyprian queen,
The which do still adorn her beauty's pride,
Help to adorn my beautifulest bride.
And as ye her array, still throw between
Some graces to be seen,
And, as ye use to Venus, to her sing,
The whiles the woods shall answer, and your echo ring.

95. More bright than Hesperus) SAWTELLE (p. 64): "The brilliancy of Hesperus, alluded to by Spenser, is described by Homer-Iliad 22.317 as a brightness surpassing that of the other stars of heaven... The ancients, even in the earliest times, regarded Hesperus, the evening star, as identical with the morning-star."

96. Fair Hours) LOTHspeich (p. 70): "Spenser's versions of the parentage of the Hours are his own, but he is manifestly working from their connection with the divisions of time. He may have got a suggestion from Bocc. 4.4 who makes them daughters of Sol and Cronis (Time) and says this is because 'they are made from a definite measurement of time by the progress of the sun.' Spenser's train of thought is similar." EGOUIS (p. 87): "She awakes at last, and the Hours and Graces - by whom the bridesmaids are meant - enter into her bedroom."

103. Cyprian Queen) Jonson 1606.84. SAWTELLE (p. 58): "Very numerous are the passages in the classics that might be quoted as pictures of Venus attended by the Graces: in Homeric Hymn to Venus
The ready Graces wait, her baths prepare,
And oint with fragrant oils her flowing hair."
LOTHspeich (p. 114): Spenser follows "common classical usage in calling Venus Cytherea and Cyprian."

Now is my love ready forth to come.
Let all the virgins therefore well await,
And ye fresh boys, that tend upon her groom,
Prepare yourselves, for he is coming straight.
Set all your things in seemly good array,
Fit for so joyful day,
The joyfull'ast day that ever sun did see.
Fair Sun, show forth thy favorable ray,
And let thy lifeful heat not fervent be,
For fear of burning her sunshiny face,
Her beauty to disgrace.

0 fairest Phoebus, father of the Muse,
If ever I did honor thee aright,
Or sing the thing that mote thy mind delight,
Do not thy servant's simple boon refuse;
But let this day, let this one day be mine,
Let all the rest be thine.
Then I thy sovereign praises loud will sing,
That all the woods shall answer and their echo ring.

121. Phoebus, the father of the Muse,\footnote{SAWTELLE (p. 86): "There seems to be very slight ground for calling Apollo their (the Muses) father: though his intimate connection with the Muses, as their leader, would quite naturally suggest it."}

124. Do not thy servant's simple boon refuse\footnote{SAWTELLE (p. 85): "With Hesiod, poetry in general in the province of all the Muses, and with master Apollo they give inspiration to the poet:

Bless'd whom with eyes of love the Muses view
Sweet flow his words, gentle as falling dew.

Hark, how the minstrels gin to shrill aloud
Their merry music that resounds from far,
The pipe, the tabor, and the trembling crowd
(a Celtic musical instrument, 6 strings),
That well agree withouten breach or jar!
But most of all the damsel's do delight,
When they their timbrels smite,
And thereunto do dance and carol sweet,
That all the senses they do ravish quite,
The whiles the boys run up and down the street,
Crying aloud with strong confused noise,
As if it were one voice.
"Hymen, Io Hymen, Hymen!" they do shout,
That even to the heavens their shouting shrill
Doth reach, and all the firmament doth fill;
To which the people, standing all about,
As in approvance do thereto applaud,
And loud advance her laud,
And evermore they "Hymen, Hymen", sing,
That all the woodsthem answer, and their echo ring.

Lo! were she comes along with portly pace,
Like Phoebe, from her chamber of the east,
Arising forth to run her mighty race,
Clad all in white, that seems a virgin best.
So well it her bessems, that ye would ween
Some angel she had been.
Her long loose yellow locks like golden wire,
Sprinkled with pearl, and pearling flowers atween,
Do like a golden mantle her attire;
And, being crowned with a garland green,
Seem like some maiden queen.
Her modest eyes, abashed to behold
So many gazers as on her do stare,
Upon the lowly ground affixed are;
Ne dare lift up her countenance too bold,
But blush to hear her praises sung so loud,
So far from being proud.
Nathless do ye still loud her praises sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

148. Portly pace) Cory (p. 248): "That the lady of
the Epithalamion is the lady of the Amoretti will seem
sufficiently likely to those who will recall the noble
sonnets describing the perfect harmony of 'portly pride'
and humility...as the heritage of great souls."

Tell me, ye merchant's daughters, did ye see
So fair a creature in your town before,
So sweet, so lovely, and so mild as she,
Adorned with beauty's grace and virtue's store? (170)
Her goodly eyes like sapphires shining bright,
Her forehead ivory white,
Her cheeks like apples the sun hath rudded,
Her lips like cherries charming men to bite,
Her breast like a bowl of cream uncrudded, (175)
Her paps like lilies budded,
Her snowy neck like to a marble tower,
And all her body like a palace fair,
Ascending up, with many a stately stair,
To honor's seat and chastity's sweet bower. (180)
Why stand ye still, ye virgins, in amaze,
Upon her so to gaze,
While's ye forget your former lay to sing,
To which the woods did answer, and your echo ring?
171-8. LEGOUIS (p. 89): "The poet does not miss an opportunity to give an inventory of her charms. And we have here a splendid stanza which is by itself a complete summing up of his poetry - a true Spenserian stanza, in which the abundant and voluptuous description of the bride's beauty is finally interpreted as the mere outward sign of her perfect virtue."

178-80. LEGOUIS (p. 90): "...Perhaps the most admirable expression of Spenser's Platonic conception of outward beauty which, he says, leads the mind, 'with many a stately stair,' to the seat of perfect, divine virtue."

But if ye saw that which no eyes can see, (185)
The inward beauty of her lively sprite,
Garnished with heavenly gifts of high degree,
Much more then would ye wonder at that sight,
And stand astonished like to those which read
Medusa's mazeful head. (190)
There dwells sweet love, and constant chastity,
Unspotted faith, and comely womanhood,
Regard of honor, and mild modesty;
There virtue reigns as queen in royal throne,
And giveth laws alone, (195)
The which the base affections do obey,
And yield their services unto her will;
Ne thought of thing uncomely ever may
There to approach to tempt her mind to ill.
Had ye once seen these her celestial treasures,(200)
And unrevealed pleasures,
Then would ye wonder, and her praises sing,
That all the woods should answer, and your echo ring.

Open the temple gates unto my love,
Open them wide that she may enter in, (205)
And all the posts adorn as doth behove,
And all the pillars deck with garlands trim,
For to receive this saint with honor due,
That cometh in to you.
With trembling steps and humble reverence, (210)
She cometh in before the Almighty's view.
Of her, ye virgins, learn obedience,
When so ye come into those holy places,
To humble your proud faces.
Bring her up to the high altar, that she may (215)
The sacred ceremonies there partake,
The which do endless matrimony make;
And let the roaring organs loudly play
The praises of the Lord in lively notes,
The whiles with hollow throats (220)
The choristers the joyous anthem sing, That all the woods may answer, and their echo ring.

Behold, whiles she before the altar stands, Hearing the holy priest that to her speaks And blesseth her with his two happy hands, (225) How the red roses flush up in her cheeks, And the pure snow with goodly vermeil stain Like crimson dye in grain; That even the angels, which continually About the sacred altar do remain, (230) Forget their service, and about her fly, Oft peeping in her face, that seems more fair. The more they do on it stare. But her sad eyes, still fastened on the ground, Are governed with goodly modesty, (235) That suffers not one look to glance awry, Which may let in a little thought unsound. Why blush ye, love, to give me your hand, The pledge of all our band? Sing, ye sweet angels, Alleluia sing, (240) That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

204-41. LEGOUIS (p. 90): "Now the procession enters the church, and we have here, in the midst of the gorgeous Hymen, two admirable stanzas from which all mythology is banished to make room for a purely Christian ceremony. And though it surely breathes much more of the Catholic than of the Puritan spirit, the description is so vivid that we seem to see the poet and his bride standing in that sacred building, with pillars adorned with flowers, where the organs loudly play."

Now all is done: bring home the bride again, Bring home the triumph of our victory, Bring home with you the glory of her gain, With joyance bring her and with jollity. (245) Never had man more joyful day than this, Whom heaven would heap with bliss. Make feast therefore now all this livelong day; This day forever to me holy is. Pour out the wine without restraint or stay, (250) Pour not by cups, but by the belly-full, Pour out to all that wall, And sprinkle all the posts and walls with wine, That they may sweat, and drunken be withal.
Crown ye god Bacchus with a coronal, (255)
And Hymen also crown with wreaths of vine;
And let the Graces dance unto the rest,
For they can do it best;
The whiles the maidens do their carol sing,
To which the woods shall answer, and their echo ring.   (260)

250. LEGOUIS (p. 91): "The pagan mood of the festival
breaks out. In a lively bacchic stanza we have the banquet
full of true rustic profusion of meat and wine, and bound-
less hospitality."

255. Crown ye god Bacchus) SAWTELLE (p. 35): "Although
it does not appear that the crowning of this god was a
regular part of the marriage festival of the ancients as
was that of Hymen with the Romans, yet it is not inapprop-
riate that the god of wine and revelry should be intro-
duced here. Furthermore, in ancient art and literature the
crown of vine leaves was used, and ivy is a noticeable
feature of this god." LOTSPEICH (p. 42): "Bacchus and wine
as inspiration of poetry (Oct. 106) are treated by Boccaccio.
'Poets also are wont to be crowned with the vine, because
by their skill they are sacred to Bacchus.'"

256. Hymen) SAWTELLE (p. 67): "The custom of crowning
Hymen with a garland at marriage festivals is referred to
by Catullus."

257. Graces) LOTSPEICH (p. 64): "The traditional con-
ception of the Graces as the handmaids of Venus, who
delight in dancing, and 'play and sport' on Mount Acidale."

Ring ye the bells, ye young men of the town,
And leave your wonted labors for this day.
This day is holy; do ye write it down,
That ye forever it remember may.
This day the sun is in his chiefest height,   (265)
With Barnaby the bright,
From whence declining daily by degrees
He somewhat loseth of his heat and light,
When once the Crab behind his back he sees.
But for this time it ill ordained was (270)
To choose the longest day in all the year,
The shortest night, when longest fitter were;
Yet never day so long but late would pass.
Ring ye the bells, to make it wear away,
And bonfires make all day,    (275)
And dance about them, and about them sing;
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.
Ah! when will this long weary day have end,  
And lend me leave to come unto my love,  
How slowly do the hours their numbers spend!  
How slowly does sad Time his feathers move!  
Haste thee, O fairest planet, to thy home  
Within the western foam;  
Thy tired steeds long since that need of rest.  
Long though it be, at last I see it gloom,  
And the bright evening star with golden crest  
Appear out of the east.  
Fair child of beauty, glorious lamp of love,  
That all the host of heaven in ranks dost lead,  
And guidest lovers through the nightes dread,  
How cheerfully thou lookest from above,  
And seemest to laugh atween thy twinkling light,  
As joying in the sight  
Of these glad many, which for joy do sing,  
That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring!  

Now cease, ye damsels, your delights forepast;  
Enough is it that all the day was yours.  
Now day is done, and night is nighing fast;  
Now bring the bride into the bridal bowers.  
The night is come, how soon her disarray,  
And in her bed her lay;  
Lay her in lilies and in violets,  
And silken curtains over her display,  
And odor'd sheets, and arras (tapestry) coverlets.  
Behold how goodly my fair love does lie,  
In proud humility!  
Like unto Maia, whenas Jove her took  
In Tempe, lying on the flowery grass,  
'Twixt sleep and wake, after she weary was  
With bathing in the Acidalian brook.  
Now it is night, ye damsels may be gone,  
And leave my love alone;  
And leave likewise your former lay to sing;  
The woods no more shall answer, nor your echo ring.
307. Like unto Maia) SAWTELLE (p. 80): "E. K., commenting upon this passage, says, 'Maia's bower, that is the pleasant field, or rather the Maye bushes. Maia is a goddess, and the Mother of Mercurie, in honor of whom the month of Maye is of her name so called, as sayth Macrobius.'"

308. In Tempe) SAWTELLE (p. 80): "Spenser names Tempe as the place where Jove and Maia met, but his authority is not evident." LOTSPEICH (p. 110): "Where Spenser makes Tempe the haunt of Maia, seems to be original with him."

310. Acidalian brook) LOTSPEICH (p. 79): "For the use of the Acidalian here, Spenser may possibly have received a suggestion from Comes 5.5, where he says that Maia bore Mercury in Arcadia at a place where there were three fountains."

Now welcome, night! Thou night so long expected, That long day's labor dost at last defray, (316)
And all my cares, which cruel Love collected, Hast summed in one, and cancelled for aye.
Spread thy broad wing over my love and me, That no man may us see, (320)
And in thy sable mantle us enwrap,
From fear of peril and foul horror free. Let no false treason seek us to entrap,
Nor any dread disquiet once annoy
The safety of our joy. (325)
But let the night be calm and quetsome, Without tempestuous storms or sad affray; Like as when Jove with fair Alcmena lay, When he begot the great Tirynthian groom; Or like as when he with thyself did lie, (330)
And begot Majesty.
And let the maids and young men cease to sing; Ne. let the woods them answer, nor their echo ring.

328. Jove with fair Alcmena lay) SAWTELLE (p. 18): "Spenser follows Metamorphoses 6.112 when he mentions the affair with Alcmena among the amours of Jove."

329. Tirynthian groom) SAWTELLE (p. 61): "The epithet, Tirynthian groom, is accounted for by the fact that Hercules was brought up at Tyrins, in Argolis, and was, therefore, often called the Tirynthian hero by the ancient writers."

331. And begot Majesty) LOTSPEICH (p. 91): "No explanation appears for the statement that Jove and Night begot Majesty. A goddess Majesty, daughter of Honor and Reverence, is mentioned by Ovid - Fasti 5.23-5 and Boccaccio 3.12."
Let no lamenting cries nor doleful tears
Be heard all night within, nor yet without; (335)
Ne let false whispers, breeding hidden fears,
Break gentle sleep with misconceived doubt;
Let no deluding dreams, nor dreadful sights,
Make sudden sad affrights;
(339)
Ne let house-fires, nor lightning's helpless harms,
Ne let the Pouke, nor other evil sprites,
Ne let mischievous witches with their charms,
Ne let hobgoblins, names whose sense we see not,
Pray us with things that be not. (344)
Let not the screech-owl nor the stork be heard,
Nor the night raven that still deadly yells,
Nor damned ghosts called up with mighty spells,
Nor grisly vultures make us once affaced.
Ne let the unpleasant choir of frogs still croaking
Make us wish their choking. (350)
Let none of these their dreary accents sing;
Ne let the woods them answer, nor their echo ring.

334-351. LEGOIS (p. 92): "Then begins the reign of
night and silence. But as we are in a troubled country,
in that Ireland where night attacks are always possible,
the poet utters a long prayer to conjure away all perils,...
not forgetting the 'unpleasant quire of frogs still croaking,' which in his Kilcolman manor he too often heard from
the neighboring pond."

But let still Silence true night watches keep,
That sacred Peace may in assurance reign,
And timely Sleep, when it is time to sleep, (355)
May pour his limbs forth on your pleasant plain,
The whiles an hundred little winged loves,
Like divers feathered doves,
Shall fly and flutter round about our bed,
And in the secret dark, that none reproves, (360)
Their pretty stealths shall work, and snares shall
spread
To filch away sweet snatches of delight,
Concealed through covert night.
Ye sons of Venus, play your sports at will;
For greedy Pleasure, careless of your toys, (365)
Thinks more upon her paradise of joys
Than what ye do, albe it good or ill.
All night therefore attend your merry play,
For it will soon be day.
Now none doth hinder you, that say or sing, (370)
Ne will the woods now answer, nor your echo ring.
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357. An hundred little winged loves) LOTSPBEICH (p. 49): "In Alexandrian literature, Cupid was often changed from one into many, or was given brothers."

364. Ye sons of Venus) SAWTELLE (p. 121): "Horace (Carmina 4.1) addresses Venus as the mother of sweet loves, and Spenser expresses the same idea" here.

Who is the same which at my window peeps?
Or whose is that fair face that shines bright?
Is it not Cynthia, she that never sleeps,
But walks about high heaven all the night? (375)
O fairest goddess, do thou not envy
My love with me to spy;
For thou likewise didst love, though now unthought,
And for a fleece of wool, which privately
The Latmian shepherd once unto thee brought, (380)
His pleasures with thee wrought.
Therefore to us be favorable now;
And sith of women's labors thou hast charge,
And generation goodly dost enlarge,
Incline thy will to effect our wishful vow, (385)
And the chaste womb inform with timely seed,
That may our comfort breed.
Till which we cease our hopeful hap to sing,
Ne let the woods us answer, not our echo ring.

374. Cynthia) SAWTELLE (p. 47): "Diana, the sister of Apollo, whom the Greeks knew as Artemis, is designated by Spenser under the names of Cynthia, Diana, and Phoebe...
As Apollo was the god of the sun, she was the corresponding divinity of the moon. As Apollo was called Cynthia, on account of his birth at the foot of Mt. Cynthia so Diana was known as Cynthia for the same reason: he was Phoebus, she was known as Phoebe - under these two names Spenser often refers to her as the goddess of the moon." Proth. 121, Jonson 1606.102.

380. The Latmian shepherd) SAWTELLE (p. 49): "But even Cynthia became a victim of the arch-god. The story of Endymion, the Latmian shepherd, which has ever been a favorite with the poets, is referred to in S. C. July 63 also... Spenser says that the Latmian shepherd won the affections of Cynthia by presenting her with a 'fleece of wool.' But Virgil (Georgics 3.391) says that it was Pan who did this."

372-7. LEGOUIS (p. 93): "A beautiful passage, yet not wholly intelligible unless we realize that Cynthia has a
twofold meaning, and designates not only the moon but also the queen, to whom Sir Walter Raleigh had dedicated a long poem by that name. The poet who remembered his sovereign in the midst of his joys, implores her not to be angry with him for giving his heart to another virgin; he makes bold to remind her that she too has felt love (for Leicester), which ought to make her tolerant of lovers. But the allusion can only be a 'dark conceit;' in the next lines Cynthia has once again become the mythological deity whom Spenser invokes together with Juno, Hebe, Hymen and the domestic genius, asking them to make his union blessed and fruitful.

"Was Spenser really afraid that Queen Elizabeth would be offended by his marriage as though by the desertion of one of her favourites or devotees? It is not probable. But in thus feigning fear of her wrath, he was promoting himself to the rank of nobler and higher courtiers than he. He assumed, so to say, a patent of nobility, set himself on a level with the Leicesters, Raleighs, and Eseoses. Even on his marriage night he had to play his part as a laureate devoted to the services of the Virgin Empress."

And thou, great Juno, which with awful might
The laws of wedlock still dost patronize,
And the religion of the faith first plight
With sacred rites has taught to solemnize,
And eke for comfort often called art
Of women in their smart,
Eternally bind thou this lovely band,
And all thy blessings unto us impart.
And thou, glad Genius, in whose gentle hand
The bridal bower and genial bed remain,
Without blemish or stain,
And the sweet pleasures of their love's delight
With secret aid dost succor and supply
Till they bring forth the fruitful progeny,
Send us the timely fruit of this same night.
And thou, fair Hebe, and thou, Hymen free,
Grant that it may so be.
Till which we cease your further praise to sing;
Ne any woods shall answer, nor your echo ring.

390. Juno) LOTSPEICH (p. 76): "Juno occupies a rather unimportant place in Spenser's mythology. All that he says of her is in accord with classical tradition." SAWTELLE (p. 76): "Juno is invoked as the patron of marriage, and the divinity who presides over childbirth. The origin of the first of these ideas is in the wifely relation which
Juno bore to Jove: her interest in offspring arises from the fact that she first made Saturn a parent, that is, she was his eldest child." Jonson 1606.89.

398. Genius) LOTHSPEICH (p. 61): "Genius, as god of birth and generation, is invoked in the poet's prayer for children. In using the words "gentle" and "genial," Spenser is playing on the etymology of the god's name." Jonson 1606.94.

400. Hebe) LOSTPEICH (p. 66): "Hebe does not appear in Spenser as cup-bearer of the gods, but as the wife of Hercules...and as a deity presiding over fertility."

And ye high heaven, the temple of the gods, In which a thousand torches flaming bright (410) Do burn, that to us wretched earthly clods In dreadful darkness lend desired light, And all ye powers which in the same remain. More than we men can feign, Pour out your blessing on us plenteously, (415) And happy influence upon us rain, That we may raise a large posterity, Which from the earth, which they may long possess With lasting happiness, Up to your haughty palaces may mount, (420) And for the guerdon of their glorious merit May heavenly tabernacles there inherit, Of blessed saints for to increase the count. So let us rest, sweet love, in hope of this, And cease till then our timely joys to sing; (425) The woods no more us answer, nor our echo ring.

409. The Temple of the gods) LEGOUIS (p. 93): "The end of the Hymn links together, rather profanely, as we should think nowadays, the deities of Olympus, in whom Spenser had only poetical faith, with the Christian God and the saints. Once granted that confusion, which after all is merely verbal, the last stanza has a truly religious ring."

Song, made in lieu of many ornaments With which my love should duly have been decked, Which cutting off through hasty accidents Ye would not stay your due time to expect, (430) But promised both to recompense, Be unto her a goodly ornament, And for short time an endless monument.
427-433. PALGRAVE Complete Works (p. xciv): "Spenser writes here from the whole fulness of his heart; and being hence led to include and dwell on every bridal association old or new, which he could recall, the wealth of the Epithalamion has, perhaps, tended a little to efface the impression that depth of feeling is involved. But, (even if it were not in itself a kind of treason to poetry to suppose this) the lovely simplicity of the Envoi may reassure us."
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# APPENDIX

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PROTHALAMION

by Edmund Spenser


Calme was the day, and through the trembling ayre
Sweete breathing Zephyrus did softly play,
A gentle spirit, that lightly did delay
Hot Titans beams, which did glyster fayre:
When I, whom sullein care,
Through discontent of my long fruitlesse stay
In princes court, and expectationayne
Of idle hopes, which still doe fly away,
Like empty shadowes, did afflict by strayne,
Walkt forth to ease my payne (10)
Along the shoare of silver streaming Themmes;
Whose rutty banoke, the which his river hemmes,
Was paynted all with variable flowers,
And all the meades adorned with daintie gemmes,
Fit to decke maydens bowres,
And crowne their paramours,
Against the brydale day, which is not long;
Sweet Themmes, runne softly, till I end my song.

There, in a meadow, by the rivers side, (20)
A flocke of nymphes I chanced to espie,
All lovely daughters of the flood thereby,
With goodly greenish looks all loose untyde,
As each had bene a bryde:
And each had a little wicker basket,
Made of fine twigs entrayled curiously,
In which they gathered flowers to fill their flasket;
And with fine fingers crot full feateously
The tender stalkes on bye.
Of every sort, which in that meadow grew,
They gathered some; the violet pallid blew, (30)
The little dazie, that at evening closes,
The virgin lillie, and the primrose trew,
With store of vermeil roses,
To deck their bridegromes posies
Against the brydale day, which was not long:
Sweete Themmes, runne softly, till I end my song.

With that I saw two swannes of goodly hewe
Come softly swimming downe along the Lee;
Two fairer birds I yet did never see:
The snow which doth the top of Pindus strew
Did never whiter shew,
Nor Jove himselfe, when he a swan would be
For love of Leda, whiter did appear:
Yet Leda was, they say, as white as he,
Yet not so white as these, nor nothing neare:
So purely white they were,
That even the gentle streame, the which them bare,
Seem'd foule to them, and had his billowes spare
To wet their silken feathers, least they might
Soyle their fayre plumes with water not so fayre,
And marre their beauties bright,
That shone as heaven light,
Against their brydale day, which is not long:
Sweet Themmes, runne softly, till I end my song.

Eftsoones the nymphaes, which now had flowers their fill,
Ran all in haste to see the silver brood,
As they came floating on the chrystal flood;
Whom when they sawe, they stood amazed still,
Their wondering eyes to fill.
Them seem'd they never saw a sight so fayre,
Of fowles so lovely, that they did deeme
Them heavenly borne, or to be that same payre
Which through the skie draw Venus silver teeme;
For sure they did not seeme
To be begot of any earthly seede,
But rather of angels or of angels breede:
Yet were they bred of Somers-heat, they say,
In sweetest season, when each flower and weede
The earth did fresh array;
So fresh they seem'd as day,
Even as their brydale day, which was not long:
Sweete Themmes, runne softly, till I end my song.

Then forth they all out of their baskets drew
Great store of flowers, the honour of the field,
That to the sense did fragrant odours yeild,
All which upon those goodly birds they threw,
And all the waves did strew,
That like old Peneus waters they did seems,
When downe along by pleasant Tempes shore,
Scattered with flowres, through Thessaly they streeme,
That they appeare, through lillies plenteous store,
Like a brydes chamber flore.
Two of those nymphaes, meane while, two garlandes bound
Of freshest flowres which in that mead they found,
The which presenting all in trim array,
Their snowy foreheads therewithall they crownd,
Whil'st one did sing this lay,
Prepar'd against that day,
Against their brydale day, which was not long:
   Sweete Themmes, runne softly, till I end my song.  (90)

'Ye gentle birds, the worlds faire ornament,
And heaven glorie, whom this happie hower
Doth leade unto your lovers blissfull bower,
Joy may you have and gentle hearts content
Of your loves couplement:
And let faire Venus, that is Queene of Love,
With her heart-quelling sonne upon you smile,
Whose smile, they say, hath vertue to remove
All loves dislike, and friendships faultie guile
For ever to assiole.  (100)
Let endlesse peace your steadfast hearts accord,
And blessed plentie wait upon your bord;
And let your bed with pleasures chast abound,
That fruitfull issue may to you afford,
Which may your foes confound,
And make your joyes redound,
Upon your brydal day, which is not long:
   Sweete Themmes, run softly, till I end my song.

So ended she; and all the rest around
To her redoubled that her undersong,  (110)
Which said, their brydale daye whould not be long.
And gentle Echo from the neighbour ground
Their accents did resound.
So forth those joyous birdes did passe along,
Adowne the Lee, that to them murmure lowe,
As he would speakes, but that he lackt a tong,
Yeat did by signes his glad affection show,
Making his streame run slow.
And all the foules which in his flood did dwell
Gan flock about these twaine, that did excell  (120)
The rest so far as Cynthia doth shend
The lesser starres. So they, enrange well,
Did on those two attend,
And their best service lend,
Against their wedding day, which was not long:
   Sweete Themmes, run softly, till I end my song.

At length they all to merry London came,
To merry London, my most kyndly nurse,
That to me gave this lifes first native source;
Though from another place I take my name,  (130)
An house of auncient fame.
There when they came, whereas those brickie towres,
The which on Themmes brode-aged backe doe ryde,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whylome wont the Templer Knights to byde,
Till they decayed through pride:
Next whereunto there stands a stately place,
Where oft I gayned giftes and goodly grace
Of that great lord which therein wont to dwell,
Whose want too well now feeleth my freendles case;(140)
But ah!.here fits not well
Olde woes, but joyes to tell,
Against the bridale days, which is not long:
Sweete Themmes, runne softly, till I end my song.

Yet therein now doth lodge a noble peer,
Great England's glory and the worlds wide wonder,
Whose dreadfull name late through all Spaine did thunder,
And Hercules two pillors standing neere
Did make to quake and feare.
Faire branch of honor, flower of chevalrie, (150)
That fillest England with thy triumphes fame,
Joy have thou of thy noble victorie,
And endlessse happinesse of thine owne name
That promiseth the same:
That through thy prowesse and victorious armes
Thy country may be freed from forraine harms;
And great Elisaes glorious name may ring
Through all the world, fil'd with thy wide alarmes,
Which some brave Muse may sing
To ages following.
(160)
Upon the brydale day, which is not long:
Sweet Themmes, runne softly, till I end my song.

From those high towres this noble lord issuing,
Like radiant Hesper when his golden hayre
In th' ocean billowes he hath bathed fayre,
Descended to the rivers open-iewing,
With a great traine ensuing,
Above the rest were goodly to bee seene
Two gentle knights of lovely face and feature, (170)
Beseeming well the bower of anie queene,
With gifts of wit and ornaments of nature,
Fit for so goodly stature:
That like the twins of Jove they seem'd in sight,
Which decks the bauldricke of the heavens bright.
They two, forth pacing to the rivers side,
Received those two faire brides, their loves delight,
Which, at th' appointed tyde,
Each one did make his bryde,
Against their brydale day, which is not long:
Sweete Themmes, runne softly, till I end my song.
MASQUE OF HYMEN

by Ben Jonson

(From Gifford, The Works of Ben Jonson, Vol VII, pp. 65-7)

Glad time is at his point arrived,
For which love's hopes were so long lived.
Lead, Hymen, lead away;
And let no object stay,
Nor banquet, but sweet kisses,
The turtles from their blisses.
'Tis Cupid calls to arm;
And this his last alarm.

Shrink not, soft virgin; you will love,
Anon, what you so fear to prove. (10)
This is no killing war
To which you pressed are;
But fair and gentle strife,
Which lovers call their life.
'Tis Cupid cries, to arm;
And this his last alarm.

Help, youths and virgins, help to sing
The prize, which Hymen here doth bring.
And did so lately rap
Bring forth the mother's lap, (20)
To place her by that side
Where she must long abide.
On Hymen, Hymen call,
This night is Hymen's all.

See' Hesperus is yet in view.
What star can so deserve of you?
Whose light doth still adorn
Your bride, that, ere the morn,
Shall far more perfect be,
And rise as bright as he; (30)
When, like to him, her name
Is changed, but not her flame.

Haste, tender lady, and adventure;
The covetous house would have you enter,
That it might wealthy be,
And you, her mistress, see:
Haste your own good to meet;
And lift your golden feet
Above the threshold high,
With prosperous augury. (40)
Now, youths, let go your pretty arms;
The place within chants other charms.
Whole showers of roses flow;
And violets seem to grow,
Strew'd in the chamber there,
As Venus' mead it were.
On Hymen, Hymen call,
This night is Hymen's all.

Good matrons, that so well are known
To aged husbands of your own,
Place you our bride to night;
And snatch away the light:
That she not hide it dead
Beneath her spouse's bed;
Nor he reserve the same
To help the funeral flame.

So! now you may admit him in;
The act he covets is no sin,
But chaste and holy love,
Which Hymen doth approve:
Without whose hallowing fires
All aims are base desires.
On Hymen, Hymen call,
This night is Hymen's all.

Now free from vulgar spite or noise,
May you enjoy your mutual joys;
Now, you no fear controls,
But lips may mingle souls;
And soft embraces bind
To each the other's mind,
Which may no power untie,
Till one or both must die!

And look, before you yield to slumber,
That your delights be drawn past number;
Joys, got with strife, increase.
Affect no sleepy peace;
But keep the bride's fair eyes
Awake with her own cries,
Which are but maiden fears:
And kisses dry such tears.

Then coin them 'twixt your lips so sweet,
And let not cockles closer meet;
Nor may your murmuring loves
Be drown'd by Cypris' doves:
Let ivy not so bind
As when your arms are twined:
That you may both ere day,
Rise perfect every way.

And, Juno, whose great powers protect
The marriage-bed, with good effect,
The labour of this night
Bless thou, for future light:
And thou, thy happy charge,
Glad Genius, enlarge;
That they may both, ere day
Rise perfect, ev'ry way.

And Venus, thou, with timely seed,
Which may their added-comforts breed,
Inform the gentle womb:
Nor let it prove a tomb:
But, ere ten moons be wasted,
The birth, by Cynthia hasted.
So may they both, ere day,
Rise perfect every way.

And, when the babe to light is shown,
Let it be like each parent known;
Much of the father's face,
More of the mother's grace;
And either grandsire's spirit,
And flame let it inherit.
That men may bless th' embraces,
That joined two such races.

Cease, youth and virgins, you have done;
Shut fast the door: and as they soon
To their perfection haste,
So may their ardours last.
So either's strength out-live
All loss that age can give:
And, though full years be told,
Their forms grow slowly old.
THE HUE AND CRY AFTER CUPID

by Ben Jonson

(From Gifford, The Works of Ben Jonson, Vol. VII., pp. 100-2)

Up, youths and virgins, up, and praise
The God whose nights outshine his days;
Hymen, whose hallowed rites
Could never boast of brighter lights;
Whose bands pass liberty.
Two of your troop, that with the morn were free,
Are now waged to his war.
And what they are,
If you'll perfection see,
Yourselves must be. (10)
Shine, Hesperus, shine forth, thou wished star!

What joy or honours can compare
With holy nuptials, when they are
Made out of equal parts
Of years, of states, of hands, of hearts!
When in the happy choice
The spouse and spoused have the formost voice!
Such, glad of Hymen's war,
Live what they are,
And long perfection see:
And such ours be. (20)
Shine, Hesperus, shine forth thou wished star!

The solemn state of this one night
Were fit to last an age's light;
But there are rites behind
Have less of state, but more of kind:
Love's wealthy crop of kisses,
And fruitful harvest of his mother's blisses.
Sound then to Hymen's war:
That what these are,
Who will perfection see,
Make haste to be. (30)
Shine, Hesperus, shine forth, thou wished star!

Love's commonwealth consists of toys;
His council are those antic boys,
Games, Laughter, Sports, Delights,
That triumph with him on these nights;
To whom we must give way,
For now their reign begins, and lasts till day. (40)
They sweeten Hymen's war,
And in that jar,
Make all that married be
Perfection see.
Shine, Hesperus, shine forth, thou wished star!

Why stays the bridegroom to invade
Her that would be a matron made?
Good-night whilst yet we may
Good-night to you a virgin say:
To-morrow rise the same
Your mother is, and use a noble name.
Speed well in Hymen's war,
That what you are,
By your perfection we
And all may see.
Shine, Hesperus, shine forth, thou wished star!

To-night is Venus' virgil kept.
This night no bridegroom ever slept;
And if the fair bride do,
The married say, 'tis his fault too.
Wake then, and let your lights
Wake too; for they'll tell nothing of your nights,
But that of Hymen's war
You perfect are.
But such perfection we
Do pray should be.
Shine, Hesperus, shine forth, thou wished star!

That ere the rosy-fingered morn
Behold nine moons, there may be born
A babe t' uphold the fame
Of Ratcliffe's blood and Ramsey's name:
That may, in his great seed,
Wear the long honours of his father's deed.
Such fruits of Hymen's war
Most perfect are;
And all perfection we
Wish you should see.
Shine, Hesperus, shine forth, thou wished star!
EPITHALAMION
by Ben Jonson

(From Gifford, The Works of Ben Jonson, Vol. IX, pp. 21-9)

Though thou hast past thy summer-standing, stay
Awhile with us, bright sun, and help our light;
Thou canst not meet more glory on the way,
Between the tropics, to arrest thy sight,
Then thou shalt see to-day:
We woo thee stay:
And see what can be seen,
The bounty of a king, and the beauty of his queen.

See the procession! what a holy day,
Bearing the promise of some better fate,
Hath filled, with caroches, all the way,
From Greenwich hither to Rowhampton gate!
When look'd the year, at best,
So like a feast;
Or were affairs in tune,
By all the spheres consent, so in the heart of June?

What beauty of beauties, and bright youths at charge
Of summers liveries, and gladding green,
Do boast their loves and braveries so at large,
As they came all to see, and to be seen!
When look'd the earth so fine,
Or so did shine,
In all her bloom and flower,
To welcome home a pair, and deck the nuptial bower?

It is the kindly season of the time,
The month of youth, which calls all creatures forth
To do their offices in nature's chime,
To celebrate, perfection, at the worth,
Marriage, the end of life,
That holy strife,
And the allowed war,
Through which not only we, but all our species are.

Hark how the bells upon the waters play
Their sister tunes from Thames his either side,
As they had learn'd new changes for the day,
And all did ring the approaches of the bride;
The lady Frances drest
Above the rest
Of all the maidens fair;
In graceful ornament of garland, gems, and hair.

See how she paceth forth in virgin-white,
Like what she is, the daughter of a duke,
And sister; darting forth a dazzling light
On all that come her simplessse to rebuke!
Her tresses trim her back,
As she did lack
Nought of a maiden queen,
With modesty so crown'd and adoration seen.

Stay, thou wilt see what rites the virgins do,
The choicest virgin-troop of all the land!
Porting the ensigns of united two,
Both crowns and kingdoms in their either hand:
Whose majesties appear,
To make more clear
This feast, than can the day,
Although that thou, 0 sun, at our entreaty stay!

See how with roses, and with lilie shine,
Lillies and roses, flowers of either sex,
The bright bride's baths, embellish'd more than thine,
With light of love this pair doth intertwix!
Stay, see the virgins sow,
Where she shall go,
The emblem of their way.
O, now thou, smil'st, fair sun, and shin'st, as thou
would'st stay!

With what full hands, and in how plenteous showers
Have they bedew'd the earth, where she doth tread,
As if her airy steps did spring the flowers,
And all the ground were garden where she led!
See, at another door,
On the same floor,
The bridegroom meets the bride
With all the pomp of youth, and all our court beside!

Our court, and all the grandees! now, sun, look,
And looking with thy best inquiry, tell,
In all thy age of journals thou hast took,
Saw'st thou that pair became these rites so well,
Save the preceding two?
Who, in all they do,
Search, sun, and thou wilt find
They are the exampled pair, the mirror of their kind.
Force from the Phoenix, then, no rarity
Of sex, to rob the creature; but from man,
The king of creatures, take his parity
With angels, muse, to speak these: nothing can
Illustrate these, but they
Themselves to-day,
Who the whole act expresses;
All else, we see beside, are shadows, and no less.

It is their grace and favour that makes seen,
And wonder'd at the bounties of this day;
All is a story of the king and queen:
And what of dignity and honour may
Be duly done to those
Whom they have chose,
And set the mark upon,
To give a greater name and title to! their own!

Weston, their treasure, as their treasurer,
That mine of wisdom, and of counsels deep,
Great say-master of state, who cannot err,
But doth his caract, and just standard keep,
In all the prov'd assays,
And legal ways
Of trials, to work down
Men's loves unto the laws, and laws to love the crown.

And this well mov'd the judgment of the king
To pay with honours to his noble son
To-day, the father's service; who could bring
Him up, to do the same himself had done:
That far all-seeing eye
Could soon esp'y
What kind of waking man
He had so highly set; and in what Barbican.

Stand there; for when a noble nature's rais'd,
It brings friends joy, foes grief, posterity fame:
In him the times, no less than prince, are prais'd,
And by his rise, in active men, his name
Both emulation stire;
To the dull a spur
It is, to the envious menat
A mere upbraiding grief, and torturing punishment.

See now the chapel opens, where the king
And bishop stay to consummate the rites;
The holy prelate prays, then takes the ring,
Asks first, who gives her? --- I, Charles --- then
he plights
One in the other's hand,
While they both stand
Hearing their charge, and then
The solemn choir cries, Joy! and they return, Amen!

Happy bands! and thou more happy place,
Which to this use wert built and consecrate!
To have thy God to bless, thy king to grace,
And this their chosen bishop celebrate,
And knit the nuptial knot,
Which time shall not,
Or canker'd jealousy,
With all corroding arts, be able to untie!

The chapel empties, and thou mayst be gone
Now, sun, and post away the rest of day:
These two, now holy church hath made them one,
Do long make themselves so another way:
There is a feast behind,
To them of kind
Which their glad parents taught
One of the other, long ere these to light were brought.

Haste, haste, officious sun, and send them night
Some hours before it should, that these may know
All that their fathers and their mothers might
Of nuptials sweets, at such a season, owe,
To propagate their names,
And keep their names
Alive, which else would die;
For fame keeps virtue up, and it posterity.

The ignoble never lived, they were awhile
Like swine, or other cattle here on earth:
Their names are not recorded on the file
Of life, that fall so; Christians know their birth
Alone, and such a race,
We pray may grace,
Your fruitful spreading vine,
But dare not ask our wish in language Fescennine.

Yet, as we may, we will, --- with chaste desires,
The holy perfumes of the marriage-bed,
Be kept alive, those sweet and sacred fires
Of love between you and your lovely-head!

xviii.
That when you both are old,
You find no cold
There; but renewed, say,
After the last child born, This is our wedding-day.

Till you behold a race to fill your hall,
A Richard, and a Hierome, by their names
Upon a Thomas, or a Francis call;
A Kate, a Frank, to honour their grand-dames,
And 'tween their grandsires' thighs,
Like pretty spies,
Peep forth a gem; to see
How each one plays his part of the large pedigree!

And never may there want one of the stem,
To be a watchful servant for this state;
But like an arm of eminence 'mongst them,
Extend a reaching virtue early and late!
Whilst the main tree still found
Upright and sound,
By this sun's noonsted's made
So great; his body now alone projects the shade.

They both are slipp'd to bed; shut fast the door,
And let him freely gather love's first-fruits.
He's master of the office; yet no more
Exacts than she is pleased to pay: no suits.
Strifes, murmurs, or delay,
Will last till day;
Night and sheets will show
The longing couple all that elder lovers know.
Twelve Spartan virgins, noble, young, and fair,
With violet wreaths adorned their flowing hair;
And to the pompous palace did resort,
Where Menelaus kept his royal court.
There, hand in hand, a comely choir they led,
To sing a blessing to his nuptial bed,
With curious needles wrought, and painted flowers bespread.
Jove's beauteous daughter now his bride must be,
And Jove himself was less a god that he;
For this their artful hands instruct the lute to sound.
Their feet assist their hands, and justly beat the ground.
This was their song:

Why, happy bridegroom, why,
Ere yet the stars are kindled in the sky,
Ere twilight shades, or evening dews are shed,
Why dost thou steal so soon away to bed?
Has Somnus brushed thy eyelids with his rod,
Or do thy legs refuse to bear their load,
With flowing bowls of a more generous god?
If gentle slumber on thy temples creep,
(But, naughty man, thou dost not mean to sleep,)
Betake thee to thy bed, thou drowsy drone,
Sleep by thyself, and leave thy bride alone:
Go, leave her with her maiden mates to play
At sports more harmless till the break of day;
Give us this evening; thou hast morn and night,
And all the year before thee, for delight.
O happy youth! to thee, among the crowd
Of rival princes, Cupid sneezed aloud;
And every lucky omen sent before,
To meet thee landing on the Spartan shore.
Of all our heroes, thou canst boast alone,
That Jove, whens' er he thunders, calls thee son.
Betwixt two sheets thou shalt enjoy her bare,
With whom no Grecian virgin can compare;
So soft, so sweet, so balmy, and so fair.
A boy, like thee, would make a kingly line;
But oh! a girl like her must be divine.
Her equals we in years, but not in face.
Twelve score virgins of the Spartan race,
While naked to Eurotas' banks we bend,
And there in manly exercise contend,
When she appears are all eclipsed and lost,
And hide the beauties that we made our boast.
So, when the height and winter disappear,
The purple morning, rising with the year,
Salutes the spring, as her celestial eyes
Adorn the world and brighten all the skies;
So beauteous Helen shines among the rest,
Tall, slender, straight, with all the Graces blest.
As pines the mountains, or as fields the corn,
Or as Thessalian steeds the race adorn;
So rosy coloured Helen is the pride
Of Lacedaemon, and of Greece beside.
Like her no nymph can willing osiers bend
In basket-works, which painted streaks commend;
With Pallas in the loom she may contend,
But none, ah! none can animate the lyre,
And the mute strings with vocal souls inspire;
Whether the learned Minerva be her theme,
Or chaste Diana bathing in the stream,
None can record their heavenly praise so well
As Helen, in whose eyes ten thousand Cupids dwell.
0 fair, 0 graceful! yet with maids enrolled,
But whom to-morrow's sun a matron shall behold!
Yet ere to-morrow's sun shall show his head,
The dewy paths of meadows we will tread,
For crowns and chaplets to adorn thy head.
Where all shall weep, and wish for thy return,
As bleating lambs their absent mother mourn.
Our noblest maids shall to thy name bequeath
The boughs of Lotos, formed into a wreath.
This monument, thy maiden beauty's due,
High on a plane-tree shall be hung to view;
On the smooth rind the passenger shall see
Thy name engraved, and worship Helen's tree;
Balm, from a silver box, distilled around,
Shall all bedew the roots, and scent the sacred ground.
The balm, 'tis true, can aged plants prolong,
But Helen's name shall keep it ever young.
Hail bride, hail bridegroom, son-in-law to Jove!
With fruitful joys Latona bless your love!
Let Venus furnish you with full desires,
Add vigour to your wills, and fuel to your fires!
Almighty Jove augment your wealthy store,
Give much to you, and to his grandsons more!
From generous loins a generous race will spring,
Each girl, like you, a queen; each boy, like you, a king.
Now sleep, if sleep you can; but while you rest,
Sleep close, with folded arms, and brest to brest.
Rise in the morn; but oh! before you rise,
Forget not to perform your morning sacrifice.
We will be with you ere the crowing cock
Salutes the light, and struts before his feathered flock.
Hymen, Oh Hymen, to thy triumphs run,
And view the mighty spoils thou hast in battle won!
CARMEN 61

by Catullus

(From Cornish, Catullus Tibullus and Pervigilium Veneris, pp. 69-85)

O haunter of the Heliconian mount, Urania's son, thou who bearest away the tender maid to her bridegroom, O Hymenaeus Hymen, O Hymen Hymenaeus!

Bind thy brows with the flowers of fragrant marjoram, put on the marriage veil, hither, hither merrily come, wearing on thy snow-white foot the yellow shoe,

and wakening on this joyful day, singing with resonant voice the nuptial songs, beat the ground with thy feet, shake with thy hand the pine torch.

For now shall Vinia wed with Manilius, Vinia as fair as Venus who dwells in Idalium, when she came to the Phrygian judge; a good maiden with a good omen, like the Asian myrtle shining with flowering sprays, which the Hamadryad goddesses with dewy moisture nourish as a plaything for themselves.

Hither then, come hither, haste to leave the Aonian caves of the Thespian rock, which the nymph Aganippe besprinkles with cooling shower from above; call to her home the lady of the house, full of desire for her bridegroom; bind her heart with love, as here and there the clinging ivy straying clasps the tree.

Ye too with me, unwedded virgins, for whom a like day is coming, come, in measure say, "O Hymenaeus Hymen, O Hymen Hymenaeus!"

that hearing himself summoned to his own office, the god may come more readily hither, the herald of genial Venus, the coupler of honest love.

What god is more worthy to be invoked by lovers who are loved? whom of the heavenly ones shall men worship more than thee? O Hymenaeus Hymen, O Hymen Hymenaeus!

Thee for his children the aged father invokes, for
thee the maidens loose their garments from the girdle: 
for thee the bridegroom listens fearfully with eager ear.

Thou thyself givest into the hands of the fiery youth 
the blooming maiden from her mother's bosom, O Hymenaeus 
Hymen, O Hymen Hymenaeus!

No pleasure can Venus take without thee, such as 
honest fame may approve; but can, if thou art willing. 
What god dare match himself with this god?

No house without thee can give children, no parent 
rest on his offspring; but all is well if thou art willing. 
What god dare match himself with this god?

A land that should want thy sanctities would not be 
able to produce guardians for its borders - but could, if 
thou wert willing. What god dare match himself with this 
god?

Throw open the fastenings of the door; the bride is 
coming. See you how the torches shake their shining 
tresses?... noble shame delays... Yet listening rather to 
this, she weeps that she must go.

Weep no more. Not to you, Aurunculeia, is there dan­ 
ger that any fairer women shall see the bright day coming 
from ocean.

So in the gay garden of a rich owner stands a hya­ 
cinth flower - but you delay, the day is passing; come 
forth, O bride.

Come forth, O bride, if now you will, and hear our 
words. See how the torches shake their golden tresses!-
come forth, O bride.

Your husband will not, lightly given to some wicked 
paramour, and following shameful ways of dishonour, wish 
to lie away from your soft bosom; (100)

but as the pliant vine entwines the tree planted 
near it, so will he be entwined in your embrace. But the 
day is passing; - come forth, O bride.

0 bridal bed, to all... white foot... bed, (110)

What joys are coming for your lord, O what joys for
him to know in the fleeting night, joys in the full day! —
but the day is passing; come forth, 0 bride.

Raise aloft the torches, boys: I see the wedding veil
coming. Go on, sing in measure, Io Hymen Hymenaeus io, io
Hymen Hymenaeus!

Let not the merry Fescennine jesting be silent long,
let the favourite boy give away nuts to the slaves, when
he hears how his lord has left his love.

Give nuts to the slaves, favourite: your time is past:
you have played with nuts long enough; you must now be the
servant of Talassius. Give nuts, beloved slave. (130)

To-day and yesterday you disdained the country wives:
now the barber shaves your cheeks. Wretched, ah! wretched
lover, throw the nuts!

They will say that you, perfumed bridegroom, are un-
willing to give up your old pleasures; but abstain. Io
Hymen Hymenaeus io, io Hymen Hymenaeus!

We know that you are acquainted with no unlawful joys;
but a husband has not the same liberty. Io Hymen, Hymenaeus
io, io Hymen Hymenaeus! (150)

You too, 0 bride, be sure you refuse not what your
husband claims lest he go elsewhere to find it. Io Hymen,
Hymenaeus io, io Hymen Hymenaeus!

See how mighty and rich for you is the house of your
husband; be content to be mistress here, (Io Hymen
Hymenaeus io, io Hymen Hymenaeus!)

even till hoary old age, shaking a trembling head,
nods assent to all for all. Io Hymen Hymenaeus io, io
Hymen Hymenaeus! (160)

Lift across the threshold with a good omen your
golden feet, and enter within the polished door. Io Hymen
Hymenaeus io, io Hymen Hymenaeus!

See how your husband within, reclining on a purple
couch, is all eagerness for you. Io Hymen Hymenaeus io, io
Hymen Hymenaeus! (170)

In his inmost heart no less than in yours glows the
flame, but deeper within, Io Hymen Hymenaeus io, Io Hymen Hymenaeus io, Io Hymen Hymenaeus!

Ye, honest matrons, well wedded to ancient husbands, set the damsel in her place. Io Hymen Hymenaeus io, Io Hymen Hymenaeus!

Now you may come, bridegroom; your wife is in the bridechamber, shining with flowery face, like a white daisy or yellow poppy. (190)

But, husband, so the gods help me, you are no less fair, nor does Venus neglect you. But the day is passing. Go on then, delay not.

Not long have you delayed. Already you come. May kindly Venus help you, since you openly take your desire and do not hide your honest love. (200)

Let him first count up the number of the dust of Africa and the glittering stars, who would number the many thousands of your joys.

Sport as ye will, and soon bring children forth. It is not fit that so old a name should be without children, but that they should be ever born from the same stock. (210)

I would see a little Torquatus, stretching his baby hands from his mother's lap, smile a sweet smile at his father with lips half parted.

May he be like his father Manlius and easily be recognised by all, even those who do not know, and declare by his face the fair fame of his mother. (220)

May such praise, due to his chaste mother, approve his descent, as for Telemachus son of Penelope remains unparagoned the honour derived from his noble mother.

Maidens, shut the doors. We have sported enough. But ye, happy pair, live happily, and in your wedded joys employ your vigorous youth.

xxvi
The Bridal Procession

(From Jastrow, The Song of Songs, p. 181)

Who is this coming up from the meadows
Like a dense cloud of smoke?
Perfumed with myrrh and fankincense;
With the powders of the merchant.
Three score warriors about her,
Of the warriors of Isreal.
All armed with swords;
In warfare trained.
Each with his sword upon his thigh,
Against danger at night.
The king has made him a conveyance,
Of the woods of the Lebanon.
Its supports he has made of silver;
Its seat of gold.
Its body of purple within,
Inlaid with ebony.
Go forth and gaze on the king,
On the day of his nuptials.
With the crown with which his mother crowned him,
On the day of the gladness of his heart.
Let Mother Earth now deck herself in flowers,
  To see her offspring seek a good increase,
Where justest love doth vanquish Cupid's powers,
  And war of thoughts is swallowed up in peace,
Which never may decrease,
  But, like the turtle fair,
Live one in two, a well-united pair;
  Which that no charm may stain,
O Hymen, long their coupled joys maintain.

O Heaven, awake! show forth thy stately face; (10)
  Let not these slumb'ring clouds thy beauties hide,
But with thy cheerful presence help to grace
The honest bridegroom and the bashful bride;
  Whose loves may ever bide,
Like to the elm and vine,
  With mutual embracements them to twine;
In which delightful pain,
O Hymen, long their coupled joys maintain!

Ye Muse, all, which chaste effects allow,
  And have to Thyrsis shewed your secret skill, (20)
To this chaste love your sacred favours bow;
  And so to him and her your gifts distill,
That they all vice may kill,
  And like to lilies pure,
May please all eyes, and spotless may endure;
  Where that all bliss may reign,
O Hymen, long their coupled joys maintain!

Ye nymphs which in the waters empire have,
  Since Thyrsis' music oft doth yield you praise,
Grant to the thing which we for Thyrsis crave: (30)
Let one time, but long first, close up their cays,
One grave their bodies seize;
  And like two rivers sweet,
When they, though divers, do together meet,
One stream doth streams contain:
O Hymen, long their coupled joys maintain!
Pan, Father Pan, the god of silly sheep,
Whose care is cause that they in number grow,
Have much more care of them that them do keep,
Since from these good the others' good doth flow,(40)
And make their issue show
In number like the herd
Of younglings, which thyself with love hast reared;
Or like the drops of rain:
O Hymen, long their coupled joys maintain!

Virtue, if not a god, yet God's chief part,
Be thou the knot of this their open vow,
That still he be her head, she be his heart,
He lean to her, she unto him do bow,
Each other still allow;
Like oak and mistletoe,
Her strength from him, his praise from her do grow:
In which most lovely train,
O Hymen, long their coupled joys maintain!

Be thou, foul Cupid, sire to lawless lust,
Be thou far hence with thy empoisoned dart,
Which, though of glittering gold, shall here take rust,
Where simple love, which chastness doth impart,
Avoids thy hurtful art;
Not needing charming skill,
Such minds with sweet affections for to fill;
Which being pure and plain,
O Hymen, long their coupled joys maintain!

All churlish words, shrewd answers, crabbed looks,
All privateness, self-seeking, inward spite,
All waywardness, which nothing kindly brooks,
All strife for toys and claiming master's rights,
Be hence, aye put to flight;
All stirring husband's hate
'Gainst neighbour's good for womanish debate,
Be fled, as things most vain:
O Hymen, long their coupled joys maintain!

All peacock pride, and fruits of peacock's pride,
Longing to be with loss of substance gay;
With retchlessness what may the house betide,
So that you may on higher slippers stay,
For ever hence away;
Yet let no sluttish,
The sink of filth, be counted housewifery;
But keeping wholesome mean,
O Hymen, long their coupled joys maintain!

xxix
But above all, away vile jealousy,
The evil of evils, just cause to be unjust;
How can he love, suspecting treachery?
How can she love where love cannot win trust?
Go, snake, hide thee in dust,
Ne dare once show thy face
Where open hearts do hold so constant place
That they thy sting restrain;
O Hymen, long their coupled joys maintain!

The earth is decked with flowers, the heavens displayed,
Muses grant gifts, Nymphs long and joined life,
Pan store of abes, Virtue their thoughts well stayed,
Cupid's lust gone, and gone is bitter strife.
Happy man, happy wife!
No pride shall them oppress,
Nor yet shall yield to loathsome sluttishness,
And jealousy is slain;
For Hymen will their coupled joys maintain.
A BRIDAL SONG

by Percy Shelley

(From Alexander, Select Poems of Shelley, pp. 279-80)

The golden gates of Sleep unbar
Where Strength and Beauty met together
Kindle their image like a star
In a sea of glassy weather.
Night, with all thy stars look down, -
Darkness, weep thy holiest dew, -
Never smiled the inconstant moon
On a pair so true.
Let eyes not see their own delight; -
Haste, swift Hour, and thy flight
Oft renew.

Fairies, sprites, and angels keep her!
Holy stars, permit no wrong!
And return to wake the sleeper,
Dawn, - ere it be long
Oh joy! oh fear! what will be done
In the absence of the sun!
Come along!

xxxi
No one to-day is happy as you are,
No one so happy in any place or land,—
Not in sea-hidden islands ringed with spray,
Nor yet in any impregnable bright star,
Nor any girl or boy.

Nearest approached to your beatitude
Are we who watch your wonderful glad eyes
Here at the awful gates of Paradise;
Our hungry hearts eager with gratitude—
Only to look on the rare face of joy.

O Will! Oh Julie! do you understand?
This is the day!

Do you remember how the long days wore?
So long, so many, so empty, and so slow;
It seemed indeed that they could never go:
And 0! the lonely sound of all that sea!
The days will not be empty any more,
And you would search the calendar in vain,
Nor find one long day in the longest year;
Yes! pray some god to make them long again—
O you will never have one minute to spare
From the grave business of felicity!

Husband and wife! 0 happy, happy pair!
A union so perfect that it seems
A fabled bliss, a marriage made in dreams;
A rainbow strangely painted on the air.
Husband and wife — those old unhappy words
Glow with mysterious blessedness once more,
Like an old world made young again with flowers.
And the green leaf and the returning birds,
And the warm murmur soft of gleaming showers—
Young April packed with sweetness to the core.

Young king and queen, - pass to your palace now;
Pass in and from your happy windows gaze
Along your stately avenue of days,
Survey the shining gardens of your peace,
And all the future filling with increase
Of garnered joy, and prosperous praise—
The long sweet ripening of your marriage vow.