

Penelopes Complaint:

Or,

A Mirrour for wanton
Minions.

Taken out of Homers Odifsea,
and written in English
Verfe,
By Peter Colfe.

Armat spina rofas, mella tegunt apes.

{ornament}

L O N D O N

¶ Printed by *H. Iackson* dwelling in
Fleetstreet, and are to be sold at his
shop vnder Temple-barre
gate. 1596.

<A1r>

<A1v>

To the vertuous and chafte Ladie,
the Ladie Edith, wife to the right worship-
full fir Rafe Horfey knight, increafe of all
honourable vertues.

P *Erufing (vertuous Ladie) a Greeke
Author, entituled Odyffea (writ-
ten by Homer prince of Greeke po-
ets) noting therein, the chafte life of
the Ladie Penelope (in the twen-
tie yeers abfence of hir louing lord
Vlyffes) I counterfeited a dif-
course, in Englifh verfes, terming it*
*her Complaint: which treatife, comming to the view, of cer-
taine my fpecial friends, I was by them oftentimes encited to
publifh it. At length weying with my felfe, the fhipwracke
that noble vertue chaftitie is fubiect vnto: and feeing an vn-
knowne Author, hath of late publifhed a pamphlet called A-
uifa (ouerflipping fo many praiseworthy matrons, hath regi-
ftred the meaneft: I haue prefumed vnder your Ladifhips pa-
tronage, to commit this my Penelopes complaint (though vn-
perfectly portraied) to the preffe: not doubting but the Etimo-
logie of fo rare a fubiect, enchafed with the Phyfiognomie of
your excellent chaftitie: fo worthie a conclufion cannot but
be a fufficient argument, both to abolifh Venus Idolaters, &
alfo to counteruaile the checkes of Artizans ill willers,
which carpe at al, but correct nothing at al: meafuring other
mens labours, by their owne idle humors. Thus offering vn-
to your Ladifhip the firftlings of my fcholars crop for a fatif-
faction of my prefumption, and hoping you wil pardon my
boldnes, and accept of this my proffered feruice, I commit you
to the grace and tuition of the Almightye.*

5
10
15
20
25

Your Ladifhips to commaund

PETER COLSE.

A2<r>

*In commendation of the right Worshipfull fir
Raufe Horfey knight.*

5 S S Weete Mufe ftrike vp thy filuer ftring,
 I In fhrill confort thy fhake but ftraine,
 R Reflecting peales let Cosmos ring,
 R Refound *Apolloes* piercing vaine:
 A Arife and rowfe thy felfe with fpeede,
 V Vfe no delay but do the deede.

10 F Feare not, for *Momus* nor his mates
 E Encounter dare with rare renowne,
 H Honour with Armes defends the fates,
 O Of thofe whom due defert doth crowne,
 R Recount at large what trump of fame,
 S founds in the praife of *Horfeu* name.

15 E Engraude in golden letters write,
 Y Your cenfure fage with due aduicef
 K Knowne trueth ne fnaky enuies fpite,
 N Nor wrath can touch in any wife,
 I Into thy Poem though there prie,
 G Groe Zo/us with fquinted eie.

20 H Harfh, and too rude I muft confefse
 T The Poem is to moue delight:
 Yet force of duety would no leffe.
 But it prefent in open fight:
 For what my wit cannot difcharge,
 My will furely fupplies at large.

25 His valour daunts the valiantft heart,
 His wifedome worthy worfhip winnes,
 His perfect zeale by due defart
 To higheft point of honour climes:
30 His hand the fword moft iuftly guides,
 And therewith caufes due decides.

 His wit doth Orphanes wrong redrefse,
 His hand relieues the needy heart,
 His word the widowes wo doth eafe,
35 He double doth reward defart:
 He naught attempts in any cafe
 Whereby he may incurre difgrace.

 His chiefeft care his countries loue,
 His chiefeft loue his countries care,
 Whofe care confidered, well doth proue
40 His loue, the countrey cannot fpare:
 Whom countriemen do fo adore,
 That worfhip neuer man had more.

 To Prince he true lieutenant is,
 To common weale a faithfull knight,
45 Her Grace his feruice cannot miffe,
 Nor common weale fo wo/thy a wight:
 Whom loue to Prince and fubiects ioy
 Preferue and keepe from all annoy.

Finis P. C.

<A2v>

An Encomion vpon the right worshipful sir Rafe
Horfey knight, and the Lady Edith
in Saphic verse.

I F merites may true, honour //taine ///,
 Or fame aduance worthy renowned offspring,
 Les Muses found forth triple tuned harp efrings,
 vnto their honour.

Whofe louely bloud with fauourable aspect 5
Nurture and good fortune enhanceth highly
Vnto bright heauens generously fpringing,
 theirs be the glory.

From farre apart thofe louely doues did afcend,
Th'one fro th'east with Phoebus arofe for our good, 10
Th' other of weft where Coronaeus hardy
 camped in old time.

Gentle their gentilitie knightly adorned,
Worthy their worships ftately well adopted,
Humble their humanitie highly graced 15
 with louely nature.

Whofe diuine deedes and tried hearts true meaning
Duely commented manifef fequences,
Happy doubtlefse, worthy no doubt the titlef 20
 of their aliance.

Whofe honours vnburied I will entombe,
For euerlafting ages to looke vpon,
Cleare of obfcurenelfe, free of enuiies outrage
 will I defend them.

Happy my Mufes, but vnhappy mafter, 25
That can aduance encomions renowned
Of others, obfcurely lying in hopes graue
 buried himfelfe.

Yet dying, and dead wil I fing due trophees,
Then trium/hs fhall ftately records eternize, 30
My Muse fhall euer erect monuments to their praife
 vnto the worldes end.

F I N I S . P . C .

<A3r>

*In commendation of the vertuous, prudent, and chafte
virgin, miftris Grace Horfey, daughter to the
right Worſhipfull, fir Raph Horfey
knight, and the Ladie
Edith.*

5 G G Lorions Nimph, Diana's darling deere,
 R Rofe-garland drefle of damafke red and white,
 A Adorne thou Veſtaes ſhrine, her poeſies wea/e,
 C Conferude with fweete of hono^r, high delight.
 E Enter the Lyons caue he is thy friend,
 Though Dragon ſwell faint George that thee defend.

10 H Hunt as Diana did, with Daphne flie,
 O Outrunne Apollo, truſt not to his rage,
 R Repoſe n^o truſt in Cupids deitie,
 S ſay Fruſira to his force, make him thy page.
 E Enchaſe thou vertue with pearles of grace,
 Y Yongſters may wonder at the enterlace.

15 What faire? wife? rich? with grace combind?
 A ioy to al that fuch a grace behold:
 fo rare a ſympathie is hard to find,
 A gift with fame worthie to be enroll.
 Beautie and chaſtitie two deadly foes,
 Liue reconciled in her louely browes.

20 Faire: looke on her there dwelleth beauties grace:
 Wife: her wit the wifeſt doth abaſh
 Sweete: where is fweete but in her ſweeteſt face:
 Rich: to her ſtore al treafure is but traff.
 A Grace ſhe is with fuch rare Graces dight,
 Tongue, pen, nor art her grace can ſhew aright.

Finis. P. C.

<A3v>

Candido Lectori hexastichon.

E N tibi Penelope prudens, & δία γυναικῶν,
cuius tot vates nomen vbique canunt.
Si cupis illius niueos cognoscere mores,
hunc paruum placido perlege fronte librum.
Nam de Penelope quae doctus dixit Homerus: 5
hic plano & pleno carmine (Lector) habes.

Ioannes Mayo.

Amico fuo charissimo P.C. S.D.

*Q*Vid quærit titulos, quid dotes lactat Auifa.
Anne ea Penelope est aequiparanda tua?
Penelope clara est, veneranda fidelis: Auifa
obscura, obscuro foemina nata loco.
Penelope satrapæ est. coniux illustris: Auifa 5
coniux cauponis, filia pandochæi.
Penelope casta est cum sponsus abeffet: Auifa
casta suo sponso nocte dièque domi.
Penelopeia annos bis denos mansit: Auifa
tot (vix credo) dies intenter ata foret. 10
Penelopeia procos centum neglexit: Auifa
Vix septem pretium sustinuitque precem.
Penelope neuit, pensum confecit: Auifæ
laffauit nunquam pendula tela manus.
Penelope Graijs, Latijs celebratur: Auifæ 15
vnus homo laudes, nomen & acta canit.
Ergo Penelope vigeat, cantetur: Auifa
nullo Penelope est aequiualenda modo.

<A4r>

To the Readers.

H Auing taken vpon me (Gentlemen) to
 pipe with *Hiparchion*, though my mu-
 sicke be not melodious inough to con-
 tent the proud *Theffalians*, yet I doubt
5 not but poore shepheards will stirre their stumps
 after my minstrellie : If the stranes be too harfh, to
 delight your stately eares (pardon me and accept my
 mind, and not my muficke) I stretch my strings as I
 can, desiring rather to teach the simple their vni-
10 forme cinquepace, then effect Courtiers in their
 lofty galliards, which alter euery day with new de-
 uises. The cause I haue contriued fo pithie a mat-
 ter, in so plaine a stile, and short verse, is: for that a
 vaigneglorious *Auifa* (seeking by flaunder of her
15 superiors, to eternize her folly) is in the like verse,
 (by an vnknown Authour) described : I follow(I
 say) the same stile, & verse, as neither misliking the
 methode, nor the matter, had it beene applyed to
 some worthier subiect. Thus hoping you wil cour-
20 teously accept my *Penelopes Complaint*, I wil short-
 ly make you amends with her Will, and Testa-
 ment, in Pentameters, wherein I wil stretch my
 wits to Ela, to shew my duetie, and satisfie your de-
 fires : and so farewell.

Peter Colfe.

<A4v>

Penelopes Complaint.

25 My loue (alas) and I loue ficke,
 Ten thoufand leagues to warres is gone,
 And me hath left here widdow-like,
 In fhiuering bed to lie alone :
 Oh now, vnto my paine I proue,
30 A dririe lothfome thing is loue.

 Alacke, how am I gallde with griefe,
 fith that no where I can behold,
 Thofe louely lookes that of reliefe,
 The locks and keyes and al do hold:
35 Whofe fmiling cheekes and merrie cheere,
 To pleafure fweete the Porters were.

*She fheweth how Vlyffes fained himfelfe mad at
 his departure, and how he was bewraied by
 Palemedes.*

V *Lyffes*, my *Vlyffes* deare,
 Alacke, alacke, and wel away,
 My bedfellow, my friend and pheere,
40 *Vlyffes* mine is wend away:
 To fiege of Troy, with heauie cheare,
 Againft his wil, I dare to fweare.

 Halfe franticke he (vnwilling wretch)
 And mad almoft, himfelfe did faine,
45 He warily his wit did ftretch,
 New nuptiall fport fo vext his braine.
 Loue tickled fo his louely breft,
 That he (poore foule) could take no reft.

<B1v> But

Penelopes Complaint.



But oft would stare as one amazde,
Or as the foule amidst the fire: 50
Yea, grimly oft on me he gazde,
His flesh so fumde with loues desire:
Alacke how oft did he complaine,
Loues parting was a pinching paine.

Woe worth the wretch, that did bewray, 55
My good *Vlyffes* warie wit:
Foule fare *Palemedes* I fay,
That fo his poyfoned venome spit.
But my *Vlyffes* wil ere long,
Reuenge the villaines fpightful wrong. 60

Meane while (alas) poore worthles wight,
I want my hearts moft chiefeft treafure:
I leade my life in fanfies fpight,
And tarry euer Fortunes leafure.
I harping fit on Hopes fweete ftring, 65
Till Time *Vlyffes* home doth bring.

Adue my ioy, adue my bliffe,
My comfort, and my deare delight,
By day I thal his prefence miffe:
Much more, his abfence in the night. 70
Of ioy, of bliffe, and fweete delight,
One man at once, depriude me quight.

B2<r> *She*

Penelopes Complaint.

*She difcommendeth her married estate, and fhe-
weth the toile fhe indures.*

A H, what a doting foole was I?
 To marry fuch a manly mate,
75 Well taught(alas) now do I trie,
 Too mery was my maiden-ftate,
 And Angel-like my virgins life,
 But hellifh-like, to be a wife.

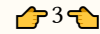
80 With mangled mind, loues worthles ware,
 (Poore wretch) I haue too deerely bought:
 Like feely b/rd, I faw the fnare,
 Yet foolifhly my woe I wrought:
 Woe to my felfe t'was my defire,
 To *Iuno*s hefts thus to aspire.

85 But fith I would the wanton play,
 And enter into wedded ftate,
 I wifh (but all too late) I fay,
 That I had chofe fome meacocke mate,
90 As could haue kept but dogges from dore,
 And not a knight that Armes had bore.

95 Well mought I thinke,as now I find,
 That long *Vlyffes* could not ftay
 In *Venus* court, his martiall mind
 And courage ftowt would it gaine fay:
 Had I at firft had this forecaft,
 I neede not thus repent at laft.

<B2v> Had

Penelopes Complaint.



Had nature me deformed fac'de,
Or had I not *Vlyßes* leene,
Or had he neuer me embrac'de,
Or in his bed had I not beene: 100
Then maiden-like had bin my care,
Not widdowlike, thus neede I fare.

With distaffe thus I neede not drudge,
Nor yet with wheele haue worne my hand:
Nor want of sleepe neede I thus grudge, 105
Nor tired thus a-twisting stand,
Nor yet haue bufied thus my braine,
From haftic futors to refraine.

Shee accuseth Hellen of light confent.

O H for thofe routs of roifters ranke,
Which do my filly foule affault, 110
And for this toile I wel may thanke,
Dame *Hellen* and her foolish fault:
Her light confent makes al men fay,
The Grecian dames cannot fay nay.

Had *Hellen* felt my loues long lacke, 115
So many wearie winters woe,
Or funnie summers luftful wracke,
As I poore wretched woman do:
Then had there beene fome reafon why,
Her louing pheere fhe fhould defie. 120

B3</> Or

Penelopes Complaint.

125 Or the fuch troopes of wooers had,
Or halfe the courting I endure,
Of faucie futers staring mad,
Her honours breach for to procure:
fome would haue thought, loue had her won,
Not luft, to go with *Priams* fonne.

130 To one mans fute ſhe did confent,
And ſcarce entreated did ſhe yeeld,
Vnaskd almoſt, to bed ſhe went,
Without repulſe, ſhe fled the field.
O vile, vnconſtant, fickle dame,
Vnworthie worthie womens name.

135 How wil fir *Paris* vaunt at Troy?
Of his ſucceſſe, how wil he boalt?
(Wel let him heed amidſt his ioy,
Left *Menelaus* marre his roaft)
Both Troy, and Greece may wel repent,
Thy peremptorie light confent.

140 Fie, what were al your frumps forgot?
Where were your chaſte and chary looks?
Were you ſo farre with fanſie ſhot,
To truſt to beauties hidden hookes?
Where were your ſharpe conceited ſhifts,
Your wittie, ſubtle, ſhrewiſh drifts?

<B3v> *She*

👉 3 x 👈

H Ow dar'ft thou looke the Greekes in face,
When they at Troy fhall with thee meete?
Alas, with what difguifed grace,
Wilt thou thy wedded hufband greete?

Alacke, it would haue burft my heart,
If I had played fuch a part.

A thousand prettie damfels peart,
 Haue caufe to curle this fact of thine!
 A thousand thousand in their heart,
 Wil wifh that *Hellen* had not beene: 150
 Thy giggifh tricke, thy queanifh trade,
 A thousand Bridewel birds hath made.

Thy foule example works fuch force,
The brau't thereby to luft are bent:
The rich as bad as poore, or worfe, 145
To brothell houfes do frequent.
Falfe play (fay they) is no offence,
For *Hellen* exercifed it once.

PRIN 2017 – Classical Reception in Early Modern English Drama – Skenè Research Centre (University of Verona) ©2020-2022.
Transcription by Marco Duranti

Penelopes Complaint.

150 This made faire Ioane of Naples queene,
fo wantonly to tread awry,
And *Meffaline* for to be feene,
Thofe tricks in common flowes to trie.
This damned deede that thou haft done,
May infants curfe that are vnborne.

155 Thy toy is growne to fuch a trade,
That few or none wil wiue and wed,
fo common now the vfe is made,
That luft, not loue, brings brides to bed.
For few wil houfhold charge endure:
160 That Palliardice do put in vre.

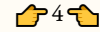
Againft Paris and his trecherie.

A Lacke how could fir *Paris* flie,
His countrey and his owne true loue?
What heart had he, how durft he trie,
From natiue foile thus to remoue?
165 What had his loue *Oenone* done?
That he fo retchles from her runne.

What furie forc'd his franticke head?
To *Troy* had *Hellens* beautie rung?
What, was he fure at firft to speede?
170 That thither in fuch hafte he flung?
Was he fo refolute and rafh,
No princely port could him abafh?

<B4v> What

Penelopes Complaint.



What(Deuil) fet his ships on faile,
And hither sent the leachers band?
Could he vnto no harbour haile, 175
But thus at *Lacedemon* land?
Was there no place for to arriue?
Muft needs the wind him hither driue?

I would his mother had not knowne,
His father *Priam*, or that she, 180
fo foule a firebrand had not borne,
As he to *Troy* is like to be:
Would she had dreamed of his death,
Or wifely she had flopt his breath.

I would that he had not beene borne, 185
Or seas had funke him downe to hel,
Would tempests had his tackling torne,
Or he on craggie rocks had fell:
Would sea haggies had tranformd his hue
Ere euer *Hellen* did him vew. 190

I would (I wish with al my heart)
That *Leacher* he my gheft had beene,
I would haue better plaid my part,
Then did the brainficke doting queene:
Had he but fought *Vlyffes* place, 195
These fingers should haue flead his face.

C<1r> Then

Penelopes Complaint.

200 Then should fir *Paris* foone haue felt,
The furie of my chaft defires,
Vlyffes feene how I had delt,
The dole that lawles loue requires.
My good *Vlyffes* had beene fure,
How faithful alwaies I endure,

205 My heart had not thus facrifizde,
Nor yet fuch woful incenfe fent:
forrow had me not thus furprizde,
Then had I liu'd at hearts content:
In corners darke I neede not creepe,
Lie downe to waile, and rife to weepe.

210 The world had not felt my outcries,
The aire my fighes, the earth my teares,
My prayers had not pearft the skies,
Nor troubled fo celestial eares:
But fighes and prayers are in vaine,
My Lord fith they bring not againe.

Antinous interrupting her fighting, offereth his fuit.

215 Fie Ladie fie: why figh you fo?
Be of good cheare, what neede you fray
Thofe heart bloud fuckers wrecke your woe,
Thofe farfetcht fighes loues want bewray,
Heigh ho againe : alas for woe,
220 To whom fhall this fweete meffage go.

<C1v> Extirpe

Penelope's Complaint



Extirpe the monfter out of mind,
Thofe paffions al tread vnder foote,
fith that *Vlyffes* proues vnkind,
From of your heart the traitor roote:
Who would take care for fuch a knight, 225
That leaues his loue in field to fight?

Let not loues want difturbe your head,
For by the Stygian lake I fweare:
I am a Lord, I will thee wed, 230
My faith and troth fhall foone appeare:
Elfe wil I reft your fecret friend,
Thofe loueficke motions to amend.

Her anfwere to her wooers.

M Y Lord: for me take you no care,
 My loues losfe I my felfe wil mourne: 235
 I wonder you fo witleffe are,
 To trie by force, the ftream to tourne:
What though my loue doth time prolong,
With fhame fhall I requite the wrong?

fhame followes finnnne, as beames the funne, 240
Amiffe wil out though clofely done:
Folly diffame can neuer fhunne,
Reproach breaks out vnthought vpon
My countenance would me bewray,
If I amiffe fhould do or fay. 245

C2<r> Shall

Penelopes Complaint

250 Shall I my foules shipwracke procure?
shal hateful slander spot my name?
shall faire speech me to lust allure?
With pleafure shal I purchase flame?
Ile rather pine in my complaint,
Then flame shal crowne me *Cupids* faint.

255 I can but thanks afford for loue,
Your good will for to gratifie:
Your practife meane I not to proue,
Your secrete friendship I defie,
Sith (Lordings) you haue mist your aime,
Leaue off in time, those toys reclaime.

260 For why? it neuer shal be said,
Penelope did tread awry:
Not truely told, she false hath playde,
Or spotted her pure chastitie.
My lords, I loath your wanton lure,
Your faith shal not my fall procure.

265 Therefore my Lords and louers al,
Let me this at your hands obtaine:
(For feare of that which may befall)
That you my house a while refraine:
Vntil my towe be at an end,
Then I with speede wil for you fend.

<C2v> *She*

👉 6 👈

W Hat shall I fay? what shall I doo? 270
 How diuerfly am I perplex?
 With lustie gallants that mee woo,
 How am I filly woman vex?

From *Samos* futors to me poft,
And *Zacynth* cutters do me court:
Besides thofe of our *Ithac* coaft,
Lads of *Dulichium* do refort.
What fhall I do? what fhall I fay?
Thofe ftately gamfters brooke no nay.

My good *Vlyffes* goods they wafte,
And me poore wretch, do they torment:
Lord-like forsooth is their repaft,
When he poore man is wel content, 285
At fiege of *Troy*, with fouldiers fare,
Vnwitty of my wofull care.

If I should to *Vlyffes* write,
And shew him of their careles coyle,
How earnestly they me incite,
My constant faith, and troth to foyle:
I might breede Bees nests in his braine,
And put him in a ielous vaine.

PRIN 2017 – Classical Reception in Early Modern English Drama – Skenè Research Centre (University of Verona) ©2020-2022.
Transcription by Marco Duranti

Penelopes Complaint

295 For he is wife, he wil suspect,
My lightnesse breedes their fond desire,
some cause he'll thinke, doth adde effect.
No smoake appeares without some fire:
so feldome is there feruent loue,
But where some kindnes doth it moue.

300 Then may he presently for spight
Acquaint him with some forrein fro:
My flut (faith he) I wil requite,
Sith she at home doth serue me so,
since so vnruilie she doth range,
305 Brow antlers with her Ile exchange,

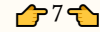
She wifheth Vliffes to beware of the cruel Troians.

N O, no, my gem and sweetest ioy,
Thou shalt not neede for me to care,
Thou busines hast enough at *Troy*,
Looke wisely to thy owne welfare,
310 For *Troy* yeeldes many a dogged lad,
Which makes me fighting fit thus fad.

Ah how doth feare affright my heart?
I dreade and yet I neede not doubt,
Though froward fortune doth him thwart,
315 He's warie, valiant, yea and stout,
And beares the minde he will not stoupe:
For proudest he in *Troian* troupe.

<C3v> Yet

Penelopes Complaint.



Yet (Heartagold) refraine thy heat,
Be not too forward on thy foes,
Ah (trueloue) let me thee intreate, 320
Be not the first at bloudie blowes:
Though of thy felfe no care thou make:
Yet (fweete) of me, fome pittie take.

Beware of hugy *Hectors* hand,
To fwifty *Dolon* take good heede: 325
What needft thou fight, which maift command,
Thy fouldiers for to do the deede?
Let them God *Mars* his mercie trie,
Stand backe and come not thou too nie.

Giue *Menelaus* leaue to fight, 330
The caufe is his, he had the wrong,
And *Agamemnon* worthie knight,
The quarrel doth to them belong:
Let fiery *A/ax* fight his fill,
But (if thou loue me) ftand thou ftill. 335

Ah let thy confort *Diomede*,
And ftout *Achilles* battel wage:
Let hardy *Hercules* at neede,
His fwelling furie there affwage:
From battel (fweete) do thou defift, 340
Loue thou, and let them fight that lift.

<C4r> *Her*

Penelopes Complaint.

Her supplication to the Gods.

345 T Hou Ioue, Lord of Olympus hie,
 If thou wilt heare poore widows grieve,
 Looke down with thy tranſplendant eie,
 And yeeld vs wretches due reliefe:
Our loues, our liues, and deſtinie,
Do on thy Princely powre relie.

350 And thou *Apollo*, which in fight,
 With Thunderclaps, didſt *Cyclops* quell:
In *Greekes* iuſt quarrel ſhew thy might,
Raze and confound thoſe *Troians* fell:
Which wrong vs with their villanie,
And triumph in their tyranny.

355 And *Iuno* : we do thee implore,
To tender our vnworthy wrong:
To vs, our wedded mates reſtore,
For we, (alas) haue lackt them long:
With ſpeede let them returne againe,
Left we our bridall beds do ſtaine.

<C4v> *She*

*She accuseth Menelaus of folly, for making warres
for Hellen.*

W As not Prince *Menelaus* mad, 360
For strumpet thus to leuie armes?
This makes the wanton woman glad,
Yea: she will laugh at those alarmes:

For war's a play-game, they suppose,
That neuer tasted bloudie blowes. 365

Who would in warres his person trust,
Which safe in peace at pleasure swimmes?
For paltrie giglet so vniust,
What Prince would hazard life and lims?
At push of pike, affoone doth light, 370
A wound on Prince, as worthles wight.

What if the *Grecians* haue the foile?
(As warres euent vncertaine is)
How wil she glorie at thy spoile?
Thy bane wil be to her a bliffe: 375
Then shall we widdowes wearie worne,
A fresh begin to waile and mourne.

Put case the *Troians* haue the worst,
(As we al with for *Hellens* sake)
The filly people then accurst, 380
With outcries wil the aire shake:
Then shall they wretches dearely buy,
Their prinkox *Paris* trecherie.

D<1> What

Penelopes Complaint.

385 What ghastly groanes, wil dead men giue?
How wil the maimed howling lie?
How wil the aged fathers griue?
How wil the filly infants crie?
And widdowes (in worst case of al)
How wil they for their husbands call?

390 From fire and sword shal few be free,
With famine some shal hunger-starue:
The virgins they deflowr'd shalbe,
(The Lord vs from such state preferue)
It grieues my heart to shew the paine,
395 They for a strumpet shall sustaine.

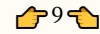
She sheweth Vlyffes worthines.

 V Lyffes deare, the Gods thee shield,
 And fend thee home wel to retourne,
 For loue to thee they all may yeeld,
 Thy like in loue was neuer borne:
400 fo Angel-like did shine thy face,
 It was a blisse thee to embrace.

 Alacke he was the worthiest,
 The gentlest, and the meek'st of mind:
 The truest, and the faithfulest,
405 That of a thousand I could finde:
 The wisest and the wariest,
 And one I lou'd and liked best.

<D1v> Ah

Penelopes Complaint.



Ah, good Vlyffes was my trust,
With him contented still I stood,
He hath my loue in clay and duft: 410
Ile die for him to do him good.
To him I gaue my heart and hand:
Therefore both vow and gift shal stand.

She bewailes the want of Vlyffes in the night.

A Lacke how loathfome is my bed?
How fore for sleepe my eielids chim? 415
What phantasies possesse my head?
How palfy-ficke is euery lim?
Such shiuerring ague-fits me shake,
As make my very heart to quake.

fuch vgly shapes doth *Morpheus* shew, 420
fuch hips and hawes, and sudden care,
Doth of those vaine illusions grow,
Which dreaming reprefented are:
fometimes I figh, fometimes I start,
fuch terror doth torment my heart. 425

I want (poore wretch) in darkefome night,
The comfort of my dearest friend:
My forrowes leach, my hearts delight,
Whofe verie fight my grieve would end:
Whom if I mought but once embrace, 430
I fure fhould be in happie cafe.

D2<r> Shee

Penelopes Complaint.

Shee fheweth her defect of beautie.

Alas how tawnie am I turnd?
How am I wretch tranfformd in hue?
How am I fcorched, and funburnd?
435 A gaffly creature for to vew:
A mirror I, for beautie was,
But now a moufter, for difgrace.

My fkinne that cleare as chriftal was,
My cheekes that crimfon filke did ftaine,
440 My eies like bright tranfplendant glaffe,
My browes, fraught with each prettie vaine:
My fkinne, my cheeks, my eies and browes,
Are like to foot, in fmoaky houfe.

Ah when to *Troy* my true-loue wend,
445 He left me fhining maiden like,
But when that he doth backward bend,
He fure fhall find me beldam-like:
But *loue* I thanke thy glorious grace,
For this my wrinkling forrowed face.

*Penelope warneth her maides to beware
of hot affection.*

450 A H damfels deare, which fee the care,
Of miftres yours Penelope:
And fee how fowly I do fare,
Be rul'd, and take this reede of me:
Haft not too foone for wedded charge,
455 Left that you wifh you liu'd at large:

<D2v> Of

Penelopes Complaint.

👉 10 👈

Of hot affection eke take heede,
For often I haue heard it told,
That haftie liking hath flow speede,
And loue foone hot, is quickly cold:
And thofe that woo, ere wife they are, 460
Are won fometime, ere they beware.

The virgins ftate, I muft confeffe,
Is too too tedious for to beare:
But widdowes ftate exceeds exceffe,
fo fickle and fo fraught with feare: 465
Wherefore fee that you maides remaine,
Of euils take the leaft of twaine.

For if you (wantons) wedded were,
(As yet you farre vnworthie are,) 470
To one that with my wedded pheere,
Might euerie way for worth compare:
What pleafure of him can you take,
If he your companie forfake.

Put cafe that you (my prettie ones) 475
fhould match with fuch a brainficke boy:
As would not fticke to batte your bones,
What then? where were your bridall ioy?
Then might you wifh, but al in vaine,
That you vnwedded were againe. 480

D3<r> Thus

Penelopes Complaint.

Thus if you wed a worthie knight,
Then of his death you still wil doubt,
And if you haue a wretched wight:
Then wil you wifh, his braines were out:
485 But either ill for to preuent,
I wifh you vnto none content.

The speech of her wooers.

A H Princely nymph *Penelope*,
A goddesse, were thou not to coy,
490 *Pallas* may not compare with thee,
Nor *Venus* with her blinded boy,
Mycene could not thy craft fulfill,
Nor had *Alcmena* halfe thy skill.

Say (fweete Icarius daughter deare)
Do thou no longer vs delay,
495 Whom wilt thou take to wedded Pheere,
That al the rest may poft away.
Either fay yea, or elfe denie:
Thou muft take one, or al defie.

No worthles wight fhall with thee wed,
500 Though thou the worft amongft vs chufe,
Feare not: *Vlyffes* he is dead:
fhew reafon if thou vs refufe:
fay, if thou loathe our Parentage,
Or doft diflike our perfonage.

<D3v> *Her*

👉 11 👈

M Y louely youthes, and Lordings all, 505
As I haue said, so fay I still:
I can but thanke you great and small,
For this your kindnes and good will.
It grieues me (Gallants) to the heart,
I cannot grant you your defart. 510

Yea though my loue his bane hath bought,
(As Gods forebode) yet must you stay,
Vntil my web be fully wrought,
For why the world shal neuer say: 520
That such a worthie knight as he,
without a shrowde should buried be.

T *Elemachus*, thou foolish lad,
 A Lord thou were, if thou hadst wit:
 Thou hear'st thy father he is dead,
 And we thy friends al can proue it:
 Wherefore it now doth thee behoue,
 That thou thy mother dost remoue.

PRIN 2017 – Classical Reception in Early Modern English Drama – Skenè Research Centre (University of Verona) ©2020-2022.
Transcription by Marco Duranti

Penelopes Complaint.

530 Why doft thou not thy birthright claime,
 And turne the beldame out of doore?
 Thou feeft al we at her do aime,
 To do vs right, we thee implore:
 If from thy houfe, thou her expell,
 We would her wed, and al were wel.

535 With fcoffing cardes fhe doth vs load,
 And with faire fpeeches vs delay:
 And woodcocke-like leades vs to roade,
 Yea like tame fooles, fhe makes vs ftay:
 Thou art the onely caufe of this,
540 Therefore amend that is amiffe.

Telemachus anfwere to the wooers.

 A Nd is this al that you can fay?
 Is this the counfel that you vse?
 Do you your parents fo obey?
 Can you your mothers fo abufe?
545 No force : my father fhall not find,
 His *Telemac*, fo much vnkind.

 For let my father liue or die,
 If I my mother ill intreate:
 Why then my Graundfire *I cary*,
550 With vengeance (furely) wil me threat.
 I feare if I fhould her offend,
 The Lord fhort life would to me lend.

<D4v> Your

Penelopes Complaint.

👉 12 👈

Your companies I well could spare:
Pardon me if I fret and fume,
I fee right little do you care, 555
How you my fathers goods confume:
Except you better you behaue,
Your abfence fhortly let me craue.

She debateth with her felfe of marriage.

N Ow may I leaue, now may I take,
Now may I loue, now may I hate, 560
I now may chufe, I may forfake,
Twixt yea, and nay, ftands my eftate:
Now may I marrie, for my cafe,
Or elfe may tarrie if I pleafe.

My hufband (hardly)is aliue: 565
And though aliue, yet ten to one,
If euer here he do arriue:
What foole fo long would lie alone?
Who would a widdow ftay fo long,
And nature of her right thus wrong? 570

Antinous my loue doth feeke,
(A gallant Lordly minded lad)
And *Eurymac* (fac'd Angel-like)
To win my loue would be right glad:
Sith with fuch futors I am fped, 575
Why fhould I not poore widdow wed.

E<1r> My

Penelopes Complaint

580 My father wils me for to wed,
 And that shal stand for my excuse:
 What though I foyle my bridall bed?
 Vlyffes will me not refuse.
 And when againe he doth retourne,
 What care I though he do me scorne.

585 But deuillish wretch, how do I dote?
 What hellish hag doth me possesse?
 What? shal I sing *Medeas* note?
 Know good, and follow nothing leffe:
 shall I that yong a faint haue seemd,
 In age a deuill right be deemd.

590 No, no, my constant chastitie,
 The world throughout about shal ring
 In prayse of chaste *Penelope*,
 From time, to time, shal al men sing:
 My fame shall mount vnto the skie,
 When *Hellens* vile defamd shall die:

Her commendation of chastitie.

595 O Chastitie, the cheefest kay,
 Of womens worthie treafury:
 A vertue that's of virgines gay,
 The pure and redoubted dowry.
600 A poesy springing fresh for aye,
 A flowre that neuer can decay.

<E1v> *Diana*

Penelopes Complaint.

👉 13 👈

Diana it did beautifie,
And her among the gods enroll:
And *Ganimede* her chafitite,
Did to the heauens hie extoll.
Zenobia with her maiden might, 605
Did ramping Lyons put to flight.

When lawles loue, to luckles end,
A thoufand, thoufand, daily brings,
Diana to the woodes doth wend,
And fweetely with hir damfels fings, 610
Diana-like, I wil difdaine,
Both louers ioy, and louers paine.

*The complaint of her waiting women againft
the wooers.*

A h Madame, if you loue your life,
Or do regard your chafitite:
If you wil be *Vlyffes* wife, 615
Or tender your poore familie:
Thofe helhounds al with fpeede expell,
Which of your houle do make a hel.

Antinous he fweares and ftares,
By al the othes he can deuife, 620
If you come not, he vnawares,
Wil you falute in shamefull wife.
Foule shame fhall take them al and fome.
Ere I againe amongft them come.

E2<r> For

Penelopes Complaint.

625 For madame they haue me defilde,
with cruel shameles villanie:
Alas I feare I am with childe,
With trusting to their tyranny.
Oh would to God I buried were,
630 I am so toft with doubtful feare.

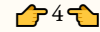
They are so dronken al with wine,
They care not what they say or do:
(sauing your prefence) where they dine,
They do discharge their stomackes too.
635 And al that euer they inuent,
Is but to haue vs wretches flent.

One sings, *Vlyffes* fure is dead,
Another saies, he feedes the fish,
Another at him stakes his head,
640 Another doth him euil with.
Yea some your strangers ill intreate,
And others do your seruants beate.

Yet al this wil not them suffice,
Not al your cates, and costly cheare.
645 But they amidst thei Gourmandice,
Your filuer plate in peeces teare:
But when *Vlyffes* comes, no doubt,
He wil affwage this reuel rout.

<E2v> *Her*

Penelopes Complaint.



Her speech vnto her sonne Telemachus.

T *Elemachus* (my louely sonne)
What shall we filly wretches do? 650
I fee we shall be al vndone,
Vnlesse thou to thy father go.
Those Lordings that a wooing come,
Will eate vs out of house and home.

Alas I cannot be so rude, 655
By cruel meanes their blood to spill:
Not yet by force them to extrude,
That proffer me so much good will:
Alas their loue I must respect,
Though their conditions I reiect. 670

Thou feest, how waitful eke they are,
And in our house keepe careles coyle:
There's neither of them al do care,
Nor what they spend, nor what they spoile.
Yea now with me they may not match, 675
Well's he my fillie maids can catch.

*The reply of her sonne Telemachus, then but
a childe.*

P Eace (mother) fie: what neede you mourne?
My father will not you forsake:
Be of good cheare he wil returne,
No thought for him (good mother) take: 680
He will with vs arriue ere long,
And wil reuenge our wofull wrong.

E3<r> Ah

Penelopes Complaint.

685 (Ah mother) would I were a man,
I would fo plague thefe leachers vile,
Not one of them fhould fcape me /han,
They fhould not thus our houfe defile:
O how I would their carcas carue?
They fhould not you thus fhrewdly ferue.

690 Thefe trencher flyes me tempt each day,
To turne you (mother) out of doore:
The land is mine (thefe lyars fay)
My father he is de/d of yore.
Yet mother, here you ftill fhall reft,
Of women al I loue you beft.

695 Oh you may fee (fweete mother deare)
How friendly minded they are bent:
And eke what louing hearts they beare,
By this their trecherous intent.
But I commanded them be gone,
700 How fay you? waf't not ftoutly done?

Wel, though my father he be flaiue,
(As Gods forbid it fhould be fo)
And that he neuer come againe,
Yet one day will I worke their woe.
705 My deareft bloud I fure wil fpend,
My fathers houfe for to defend.

<E3v> Meane

Penelopes Complaint.

👉 15 👈

Meane while(al heart) to Troy Ile trudge,
If you thereto wil but consent,
To runne or go I wil not grudge,
Pray (mother) peace, lest they preuent
My going forth, when I come backe,
I wil not feare the proudest iacke.

710

Her Epistle to Vlyffes.

V Lyffes (if thou be aliue)
Peruse those lines I fend to thee,
(fweete) let me see thee here arriue,
Tis bootles for to write to me.
Not thy epistle be thou sure,
Thy present sight, my griefe must cure.

715

Ah fay (fweete heart) and trueloue mine,
How canst thou lingring stay so long?
Why cam'st thou not home at this time?
How canst thou offer me this wrong?
fay (fluggard) what doth thee refraine,
That thou dost not returne againe?

720

The *Troian* warre is at an end,
T^o finders Troy is quite consumde,
The Argⁱues al do homeward bend,
With incense are the Altars fumde.
some foe I feare me, holdes thee backe,
And that's the cause thou art so slacke.

725

730

<E4r> To

Penelopes Complaint.

735 To *Pylon* haue I often fent,
To forrein countries farre and neare:
My meffenger to *Sparta* went,
But there no certaine newes could heare:
At *Troy* (they fay) thou were not flaine,
That makes me hope thou com'ft againe.

740 Ah good *Vlyffes* hie thee home,
For I had futors long agoe:
If that thou fay, thou wilt not come,
Then know I what I haue to doe:
I neede not long a widow liue,
A hundred gladly would me wiue.

745 For of *Dulichium* fifty two,
Moſt ſtately futors ſecke my ſhame:
Of *Zacinthe*, twentie do mee woo,
From *Samos* foure and twentie came:
Befides twelue of our *Ithac* ſtates,
On whom, *Maedon* the minſtrell waites.

750 My father eke doth me accuſe,
And faies, I do my wooers wrong:
And too too much my ſelfe abuſe,
ſith widdow-like I ſtay ſo long.
But let him daily me reproue,
From c^onſtant faith I wil not moue.

<E4v> Yea

Penelopes Complaint.

👉 16 👈

Yea, let him fay, or do his worft, 755
I wil be but *Vlyffes* wife:

To him I gaue my faith at firft,
With him Ile end my loue and life.
To him, ere I wil faile my faith,
I fure wil die a Martirs death. 760

As twentie winters there are gone,
fo twentie more I meane to fpend,
I wil vndoe that I haue done,
Ten thoufand times before I end.
Yet fhall I thinke each hōurē twaine, 765
Vntil you do returne againe.

*She accusfeth Antinous, that he goeth about to kil
her fonne.*

A *Ntinous* I haue beene told,
 Thou wert a youth that did excell,
 (Ah true I proue the prouerbe old)
 Report vntruth doth often tell. 770
 They fay, thy like not *Ithac* had,
I thinke it hath not one fo bad.

How dar'ft thou me the mother court,
And go about my child to kill:
Thou fwear'ft and ftar'ft thou mean'ft no hurt, 775
Yet doft deuife his bloud to fpill.
But you can wake, although you winke,
And fay right wel, though ill you thinke.

F<1r> But

Penelopes Complaint.

780 But take thou heede, and warning good,
And warning giue to al the rest:
Beware of fpilling princely bloud,
For vnreueng'd it will not rest.
Wherefore see that his life you faue,
If fauour you of me wil haue.

*The reply of Eurymachus, in the behalfe of the
wooers.*

785 A fure your felfe (my dearling fweete)
Ther's no man here, that wil or fhall,
Him hurt, Ile die firft at his feete,
Before mishap fhall him befall.
Be bold, whilst me aliue you see,
790 From fword I fure wil fet him free.

For thine, and for *Vlyffes* fake,
Telemachus I wil p^referue,
(Who on his knee would oft me take)
And roft meate often to me carue:
795 Ile fheath my fword within his fkinne,
That firft to touch him dares beginne.

Am I not here? what needs thou dread?
Thou maift command me heart and hand,
Ile him defend ^aliue or dead,
800 My word and deede, fhall frmely ftand.
Wherefore (fweete heart) be of good cheare,
And caft away this foolifh feare.

<F1v> *She*

👉 17 👈

A Las, what haue I (fondling) done?
How haue I on aduenture sent,
Telemachus my onely sonne? 805
Ah: for his sake shal I be shent.
If by this meanes he do miscarrie:
Then of my life shal I be wearie.

What dangers dire ſhal he endure? 815
Rocks renting dread, and tempeſts doubt,
Of meaſure hard he ſhal be ſure,
If prouling Pirates pry him out:
Or if *Antinous* deſcry,
His ſkil in ſwimming ſhal he trie. 820

Alas: if my fweete *Temelac*,
 (Whom for to shield the Gods I pray)
 On waftfull seas should go to wracke,
 What wil my good *Vlyffes* say:
 My life alas I foone should lacke,
 As hearbs to pot he would me hacke.

PRIN 2017 – Classical Reception in Early Modern English Drama – Skenè Research Centre (University of Verona) ©2020-2022.
Transcription by Marco Duranti

Penelopes Complaint.

830 But if it be my destinie:
I ftill wil waile with woful heart,
Til time doth end this Tragedie,
Or chance doth cure my carefull smart.
And I my felfe, my felfe wil hate,
Til death doth e/f/ my dolefull state.

835 But fee, he comes right wellcome home,
(fweete *Telemac* my prettie boy)
What? is thy father with thee come?
Tel true, what liues my louely ioy?
Ah fay the truth, and do not faine,
Will my *Vlyffes* come againe?

*Telemachus fheweth his fathers comming: and how
he means to be reuenged of his Riuals, and fhe-
weth fome of his fathers acts.*

840 M Y father (as you fay) doth liue,
Loe here, a letter he hath fent,
And fhortly here he will arriue,
For to returne is his intent.
But priuily he will you greete,
That with thofe Riuals he may meete.

845 He fweares he wil torment them all,
Not one of them fhall fcape alie,
He'll kill and flay, both geat and fmal:
As dogges from doore he wil them driue.
He fweares he'll fee their eies al out,
Ere he wil feed fo foule a rout.

<F2v> *Eurymachus*

Penelopes Complaint.

👉 18 👈

Eurymachus he wil take downe, 850
And eke *Antinous* fwelling pride,
He'll coxe them all, I hold a crowne,
For that they do him thus deride,
He'll teach them better vfe their tearmes,
He'll learne them fcoffe a man at armes. 855

Though that thofe lads haue long him loath'd,
If he in fight fould but appeare,
They al would wifh they were vncloathd,
fo that they lighter legged were.
They'll rather wifh for feete that day, 860
Then either gold or rich array.

For he at hazard more hath beene,
Then taking downe fuch trencher-knights,
His prowes at fiege of *Troy* was feene,
He hath fubdued worthier wights. 865
Yea (mother) he hath beene at hel,
Where the Prince *Pluto* dire doth dwell.

He thruft out *Polyphemus* eie,
For that he did his fellowes eate,
And he fcapt *C/rces* forcerie: 870
He feared not God *Neptunes* threat.
When three da'ies fhiples he did faile,
His hardy heart did neuer faile.

F3<r> *Penelope*

Penelopes Complaint.

Penelope readeth Vlyffes letter.

875 T Hy letter when I ouer-looke,
 (*Penelope* my fweeteft faint)
 I note the care that thou haft tooke,
 And pittie take of thy complaint.
Lo: to releafe thee of thy doome,
(fweete heart) at once I write and come.

880 Thy faithful hand I quickly found,
 The pledge and token of my troth,
 Whereby to me thou firft wert bound,
 And I to thee, by folemne oth.
 fo welcome thereof was the fight,
885 My heaue heart it made ful light.

 I would to God my fluggardife,
 Which thou fo highly doft accufe:
 The *Greekes* at *Troian* enterprife,
 Had holden for a iuft excufe:
890 Then had I not endured the toile,
 I now fustaine in forrein foyle.

 Then had I ftayed ftill with thee,
 When I my felfe did franticke faine:
 It grieu'd me (truft me) to agree,
895 The warres fo foone should part vs twaine.
 I would, nor could, as thou maift fee,
 fo lightly leaue thy companie.

<F3v> No

Penelopes Complaint.

👉 19 👈

No *Troian* trull doth me retaine,
For *Troy* to cinders quite is rafde,
Priam, and *Paris*, both are flaine, 900
And al the countrey quite defafde.
Sarpedon flaine, and *Hector* stout,
And Mars fo hurt, his guts came out.

I fcofree fcap't, and *Rhefus* flaine,
His palfreys led I to my tent: 905
I feared not the *Thracian* traine,
But boldly I amidft them went:
And thofe that *Diomedes* flue,
ftill by the heeles I from him threw.

Thou needft not doubt, my life or loue, 910
The one the *Troians* could not fpill,
Nor th'other *Mermaids* could remoue:
To thee it refteeth constant ftill.
No comfort haue I on the fea,
But loue, to make me thinke on thee. 915

Parthenope did oft affay,
Me to her loue for to allure,
Yet could fhe not me fo betray,
My toyle I ftoutly did endure:
And when fhe faw I would not ftay, 920
fhe drownd her felfe in furing fea.

<F4r> Nor

Penelopes Complaint.

925 Nor yet *Calypso* with her skill,
When in *O/ygean* Isle I staid,
Could with her druggs win my good will:
Though oft so shamefully she affaid.
Though me immortall she would make,
Yet could I not thee so forfake.

930 And where thou faist, thou futors haft,
It is a credit I confesse,
If they our substance do not waite,
Nor thee of honour dispossesse:
Beware lest thou amidst thy wine,
Dost grant them that is none of thine.

935 If to the hundred thou haft had,
A thousand futors more thou fet,
Yet haue I had a sturre as bad,
With lasses, my true loue to get.
Do Lords the court? a common case,
Vnaskt, braue Ladies me embrace.

940 But (wife) you scarcely did me please,
When *Telemac* my onely sonne,
You set on mercie of the seas:
Confesse a truth it was ill done.
That loue vngrateful is ywis,
945 That to such danger,subiect is.

<F4v> But

Penelopes Complaint.

👉 20 👈

But now his courfe is finifhed,
Our danger al is at an end,
My dolour eke diminifhed:
You after me no more fhall fend:
For fuddenly you fhall me fee, 950
Before thofe Riuals looke for me.

Meane while, fuppreffe thy merrie cheere,
Let not thy futors know my mind,
Vnto their cofts I wil appeare:
The helhounds fhall me feele and find. 955
Thy countenance fee that thou keepe,
When thou fhouldft laugh, fee that thou weepe.

I wil not open warres proclaime,
Nor yet by force of armes there come,
Amidft their banket wil I aime, 960
To cut them off both al and fome.
And when you fee thofe Riuals flaine,
Then fay that I am come againe.

The aduice of Euryclea, nurfe to Penelope.

O H daughter deare, my Iem and ioy:
My comfort, and my onely care, 965
Ah, *I oue* preferue thee from annoy,
And from thofe fpoiles that, threatned are
Be charie of thy chafitie,
Which futors feeke fo fhamefully.

G<1r> Thy

Penelopes Complaint.

970 Thy waiting women they abuse,
Without remorse or conscience sting,
And of thy house they make a stewes,
Thee to dishonour, for to bring.
Take heede in time I thee advise,
975 wit bought, is at too deare a price.

These /^uflie Gallants sweare and stare,
If thou to wed wilt not consent,
Thy house they'll topfie turvy teare,
And eke thy heart in peeces rent.
980 To hide thy selfe I thinke it best,
And vnto *Loue* commit the rest.

Her reply to Euryclea.

W Hat are they men, or are they not?
 Or are they beasts, or are they worse?
 Are lawes of God, and men, forgot?
985 No care of God, nor yet his curse?
Or dread they not the day of doome?
That they so beastlike are become.

Shal men, that God himselfe hath made?
And do his Image represent,
990 By their abhominable trade:
To be the devils lims consent?
O most vnworthie wretches vile,
That do their vessels so defile.

<G1v> Fie

Penelopes Complaint.

👉 21 👈

Fie: what can they not eate and drinke?
But they muſt furfeit fhamefully? 995
Can they not miſchiefe meane or thinke?
But they muſt blab it by and by.
Can they not prettie damfels vfe?
But they their bodies muſt abuſe.

Aurelianus here we lacke, 1000
Or *Iulia* with her ſacred lawe:
Then ſhould thoſe gallants go to wracke,
Then better would they ſtand in awe:
For then the ſword or elſe the tree,
From fhameful force, ſhould ſet vs free. 1005

O curſed times, O cruel facts,
O manners vile, for men vnfit,
O difmal daies, O hainous acts,
O heliſh haggies, of *Plutoes* pit.
O ſpightfull, cruel tyranny, 1010
Enforcing endles miſery.

My tongue doth tremble for to tell,
The villanie that they inuent,
My heart (alas) with grieſe doth ſwell,
To ſee braue men ſo beaſtly bent, 1015
From this their wicked trechery,
The Lord aboue deliuer me.

G2<r> She

Penelopes Complaint.



She bewaileth Vlyffes long tarrying.

1020 H Ow doth *Vlyffes* time detract?
How doth he play the cofoning knight,
He writes *Troy* is alreadie fack't,
Yet wil he not appeare in fight.
I feare me he hath caught some doue,
And keepes her tame, with tills of loue.

1025 I would I wift he falfe did play,
Of fpight I would reuenged be:
But then what would the people fay?
As is the hee, fo is the fhee:
No, no, the care I abfent take,
His prefence wil the fweeter make.

1030 Nor wealth, nor woe nor enuies croffe,
Nor grieve, nor gaine, nor fortunes fall:
Nor paine, nor pleafure, lucke or loffe,
Nor treafure, nor yet wretched thrall,
1035 fhall make me my *Vlyffes* loath.
Nor to him falfe my faith and troath.

*The fpeech of her wooers challenging her
by promife.*

 [...]  C Ome on (fweet nimph) what anfwer now?
Your towe is twift, your web is wrought,
With fpeede performe your fared vow:
Thy murmring mate his death hath fought:
1040 *Harpyades* haue on him fed,
The citie-fpoiler he is dead.

<G2v> Thee

Penelopes Complaint.

👉 22 👈

Thee for to wed is al our fute,
And now thy anfwere we expect:
Therefore fay quicke, be not fo mute,
Which of our futes wilt thou accept? 1045
If thou no ready anfwere make,
Thy houfe we neuer wil forlake.

(fweete Nymph)refolue vs now with fpeede,
Thinke ere thou fpeake, denie not flat:
For we are they can do the deede: 1050
Thou maift refufe thou knoweft not what:
Make readie *Hymaeneus* bed,
For why, we muft and will thee wed.

Her anfwere to the wooers.

S Weete Lordings though my web be wrought,
And al my towe be readie spun, 1055
Another doubt comes to my thought,
You know, what worth *Vlyffes* won:
Yow know he was a worthie knight,
And got him honour for his might.

It me behoues to draw the latch, 1060
And of my choyce in time beware,
Left I with fuch a milkefop match,
As may augment my wonted care.
Or you in fight for me contend,
And fo the mightie Gods offend. 1065

G3<r> Lo

Penelopes Complaint.

1070 Lo Lordings, this is my decree,
He that *Vlyffes* bowe can bend,
That worthie wight shall wed with me:
Away with him I foone wil wend.
Hold take in hand to bend the bowe,
Your strength that quickly I may know.

*Vlyffes being come home, disguiseth himselfe, and
foiourning with Penelope amongst the woo-
ers, maketh this answere.*

1075 W Hy then (faire queene) to win thy loue,
I filly wretch wil also trie,
My shriueled finewes will I proue:
To win this worthie masterie.
Had I my youthfull strength and skill,
I would the act right foone fulfill.

1080 *Eurymachus* I thee befeech,
And eke *Antinous* I thee pray,
To giue me leaue my strength to stretch,
Which gods haue almost tane away:
Necessitie hath pinchd me too,
A cruel dart it is you know.

1085 The bowe refigne into my hand,
I trial of my strength wil make,
And if the fame I cannot bend,
The prize you shall among you take.
But if the bowe be by me bent,
To wed the Nymph is my intent.

<G3v> The

👉 23 👈

The wooers scoffingly checke Vlyffes.

H Ow dar'ft thou Palmer thus to prate? 1090
 And with vs yongsters thus compare?

Content thee with thine owne estate:
Of Palmery go take thou care:
Although *Vlyffes* bowe thou bend,
With Baldpate shall she neuer wend,

1095

But too much wine makes thee thus mad,
Which wifer men doth brainficke make,
And bragge of that they neuer had,
If out of meafure they it take:
Therefore leaue off to make fuch strife, 1100
For her thou fhalt not take to wife.

Leaue off I fay: thus to contend,
If thou wilt banket here at rest,
We wey not who the bowe doth bend,
For that we hold but as a ieft. 1105
But if with vs thou so contend,
Thou soone shalt feele thy fatall end.

She checketh Antinous for abusing her ghests.

A Ntinous leauē off I fay,
 Our ghefts thus euil to intreate,
 Difcurteous parts why doft thou play? 1110
 My ftranger thus why doft thou threat?
 Their neighbours al they wil abuſe,
 That ftrangers practife to miſufe.

<G4r> This

Penelopes Complaint.

1115 This franger is of ftature tall,
 And borne of worthie parentage:
 The likeliest amongst you all,
 If force confits in perfonage:
 Pray giue him leaue his strength to trie,
 Why offer you this iniurie?

1120 If that *Apollo* giue him powre,
 For manly might the price to win,
 Then wil I waite on him each houre,
 And costely webs array him in:
 My onely ioy I wil him make,
1125 And him to husband wil I take.

Telemachus wifheth his mother to be filent.

 F Ie : fie: what neede you thus to chaunt,
 filence doth best become your fex,
 T'is giglet-like, thus for to taunt,
 What thogh those villains do you vex:
1130 Yet (mother) you must patience vse,
 And smother vp this vile abuse.

 Vnto your maids your mind disclose,
 And talke of that you haue to doe,
 What neede you counterchecke with those,
1135 That nothing appertaines you to?
 They'll fay you are alreadie won,
 Their companie you cannot fhun.

<G4v> Sweete

Penelopes Complaint.

👉 24 👈

Sweete (mother) let me anfwere make,
That am a man, and know to speake:
My speech shal make them for to quake, 1140
Against me dare they not to creak.
My father absent, I am king,
New dirges shall they shortly sing.

*The death of her wooers represented vnto hir, in a
dreame of an Egle and a flocke of geefe.*

W Hy dost thou Morpheus me annoy?
What fantasies dost thou intrude? 1145
Why dost thou me of sleepes sweete ioy,
With vaine illusions thus delude?
Those dreames iwis that I endure,
I doubt but little good procure.

Last night as I lay in my bed, 1150
fretted forth (alas) in slumbering wife,
Me thought a flocke of geefe I fed,
That al my corne could not suffice.
To giue them foode I did denie,
And yet not one away would flie. 1155

They were a number numberles,
Whose gagling did me much offend:
I made them anfwere anfwereles,
And wisht them to the fields to wend:
Yet would they not be answered so, 1160
In rest for them I could not go.

H<1r> At

Penelopes Complaint.

1165 At laft as they were fafe in mue,
 A mightie Eagle with them met:
 And them, both great and fmal he flue,
 Not one of them could from him get.
 No creature could the fpoile preuent,
 The Eagle was fo fiercely bent.

1170 At length when his bloud-thirftie bill,
 Had thus vpon thefe gofelings praide,
 (Me thought) the people for to kill,
 This matchles Eagle al affaide.
 They were fo wroath they fware by gis,
 They would difpoile both him and his.

1175 Ah *Cefta* fweete, I thee implore,
 My doubtful dreame for to diffolue,
 For that which *Morpheus* told of yore.
 I often in my mind reuolue.
 The refolution to me fhow,
 And endles thanks I wil thee owe.

*She hearing Vlyffes fighting with her wooers,
 vnknownen to her, fhe feareth.*

1180 H Ow doth *Vlyffes* me me deride?
 How doth he foolefaine me poffeffe?
 He promifde to returne with fpeede,
 But fure he thinks of nothing leffe.
 My eies with looking for him ake,
1185 with trembling feare my heart doth quake.

<H1v> What

Penelopes Complaint.

👉 25 👈

What horror doth my heart oppresse?
What hurly burly do I heare?
What sturdy tumults? (God me bleffe)
What's he that plaies the tyrant there?
Who's he cries out, what's he is flaine? 1190
Go Girle and fee, but hie againe.

Harke, harke, at daggers point on life,
Thofe dronkards with each other fight:
Why doth my sonne not flint the strife?
Ah how doth feare my heart affright? 1195
What is the cause of this their ruth?
Come quicke (fweete wench) and tel the truth.

Her maide sheweth the slaughter of her wooers.

A Las, beblubred al with bloud,
Antinous lieth vnder bord,
Yea *Eurymac* that was so proud, 1200
Is flaine with dint of sharped sword:
Pisanders braines are beaten out,
And *Polybe* flaine that Champion stout.

Eurynomus, he waltring lies,
And eke *Polidor* worthie knight, 1205
Amphimedon for mercie cries:
And *Liodes* is put to flight.
Ctesippus put to deadly paine,
And eke *Eurydamantus* flaine.

H2<r> *Liocritus*

Penelopes Complaint.

1210 *Liocritus* that Lordlie lad,
 And *Demoptolemus* is dead,
 Euriades hath fped as bad,
 His braines are knockt out of his head:
 I thought amidst their stately pride.
1215 fome stagedie there would be plaide.

*She hearing of the death of her wooers, feareth
left Vlyffes wil flay her also.*

 A Lacke, and are those Lordings flaine?
 Why then my Lord *Vlyffes* deare,
 Vlyßes mine, is come againe,
 How am I toft twixt ioy and feare?
1220 Ah he, tis he hath done this deede:
 Yea, he this Stratageme hath plaied,

 It is *Vlyffes* deales such blowes,
 What shal I filly woman doo?
 Ah fee, how furiously he glowes,
1225 I feare he wil torment me too:
 I wil him trie, with weeping eies,
 Him to withdraw from tyranies.

 Fie: cannot twentie yeares suffice,
 Thy wrathful venome for to spit,
1230 But thou must thus in warlike wife,
 Thy tyranny continue yet?
 Though no wight can thy wrath appeafe,
 Let me request thee to fureeafe.

<H2v> Vlyffes

Penelopes Complaint.

👉 26 👈

Vlyffes making himfelfe knowne, comforteth

Penelope with thefe speeches.

F Eare not my iem and hearts delight,
Penelope my spotles fpoufe, 1235
Thofe lads no more fhall worke our fpight,
They fhall no more defile our houle.
Ah I haue feene thy conftancie,
Thy vertues haue reioyc'd mine eie.

But oh: what haue I tyrant done, 1240
(Oh mifer borne to endles toyle)
Now haue I new my care begon,
By this my pittie-wanting fpoyle.
I merciles haue many flaine.
For bloud fhall I pay bloud againe, 1245

O furie with repentance fraught,
(Ah enemie to perfect peace)
Thou to confufion haft me brought,
(Ah furie foe to humane eafe.)
I that my foes haue put to flight, 1250
Againft my friends am forc'd to fight.

*Penelope fearing to entertaine Vlyffes, debateth
as followeth.*

B Vt ah me wretch (borne but to wo)
What entertainment fhall I giue?
Him, for my Lord how fhall I know?
T'is hard to know whom to beleeeue. 1255
Ah my *Vlyffes* was too kind,
To beare fuch a bloud-thirftie mind,

H3<r> But

Penelopes Complaint.

1260 But (doting dame) what can I tell,
May not God *Mars* his furie moue?
May not *Bellona* make him fell?
Ah *Mars* makes Turtles Tygers proue:
And those are ordinary euent,
To them that do frequent the tents.

1265 But yet, *Vlyffes* welcome home,
(If thou my Lord *Vlyffes* be)
A thousand times to me welcome,
Thee safe I do reioyce to see.
Yet shew (ah good *Vlyffes* shew)
some token that I may thee know.

*Vlyffes sheweth by euident tokens, he is no cofer-
ning knight.*

1270 W Hy then I am *Laertes* sonne,
And he that Gods, and men do hate,
fcomme of the world, by fates foredone,
Whose death my deedes do calculate,
Ah I am he, that for thy loue,
1275 A thousand perills daily proue.

Yea I am he, that fainde me mad,
Thee in my armes for to embrace,
And I am that vnhappy fad,
That *Palemedes* did disgrace.
1280 Yea I am he that for thy sake,
All dangers dare to vndertake.

<H3v> Yea

Penelopes Complaint.

👉 27 👈

Yea I am he, whose damned hand,
Hath flaine a knot of noble blood:
And I am he, thou maist command,
Alive or dead, to do thee good. 1285
Yea I am he that maugre spight,
Will alwaies rest thy constant knight.

L'enuoy.

O Ladies, *Ioue* referues a friend,
For those that tender chastitie,
But Leachers brought to dolefull end, 1290
Amidst their chiefe securitie:
Penelope for bale had blisse,
When villanes vengeance could not misse.

Let Riuals not learne Lordly youthes,
To shun the snare of lewd desires, 1295
Left lawles loue procure their ruthes,
With liues lue that lust requires:
Left whilst they recke not what they do,
Some good *Vlyffes* wrecke their woe.

FINIS.

<H4 r>