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978-1-108-06795-9 - Robert Chester's 'Love's Martyr, Or, Rosalins Complaint': With its Supplement, 'Diverse Poeticall Essaies on the Turtle and Phoenix'

Edited by Alexander Balloch Grosart

Excerpt

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I

ROSALINS COM-  
PLAINT, METAPHORI-  
cally applied to Dame Nature at a Parlia-  
ment held (*in the high Star-chamber*) by the  
Gods, for the preseruation and increase of  
*Earths beauteous Phoenix.*

A Solemne day of meeting mongst the Gods,  
And royall parliament there was ordained :  
The heauenly Synod was at open ods,  
And many harts with earthly wrongs were pained ;  
Some came to craue excuse, some to complainē  
Of heauie burdend griefes they did sustaine.

*Vesta* she told, her Temple was defiled :  
*Iuno* how that her nuptiall knot was broken ;  
*Venus* from her sonne *Cupid* was exiled :  
And *Pallas* tree with ignorance was shoken :  
*Bellona* rau'd at Lordlike cowardice,  
And *Cupid* that fond Ladies were fo nice.

To this Asssembly came Dame *Nature* weeping,  
And with her handkercher through wet with teares,  
She dried her rosie cheekes, made pale with fighting,  
Hanging her wofull head, head full of feares :  
And to *Ioues* felse plac'd in a golden feate,  
She kneeld her downe, and thus gan to intreate :

Thou mightie Imperator of the earth,  
Thou euer-liuing Regent of the aire,  
That to all creatures giu'ft a liuely breath,

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## Rosalins complaint.

And thundrest wrath downe from thy firie chaire,  
Behold thy handmaid, king of earthly kings,  
That to thy gracious sight fad tidings brings.

One rare rich *Phoenix* of exceeding beautie,  
One none-like Lillie in the earth I placed ;  
One faire *Helena*, to whom men owe dutie :  
One countrey with a milke-white Doue I graced :  
One and none such, since the wide world was found  
Hath euer *Nature* placed on the ground.

*Head.* Her head I framed of a heauenly map,  
Wherein the feuenfold vertues were enclosed,  
When great *Apollo* slept within my lap,  
And in my bosome had his rest reposed,  
I cut away his locks of purest gold,  
And plac'd them on her head of earthly mould.

*Haire.* When the leaft whistling wind begins to sing,  
And gently blowes her haire about her necke,  
Like to a chime of bells it soft doth ring,  
And with the pretie noife the wind doth checke,  
Able to lull asleepe a pensiue hart,  
That of the round worlds sorrowes beares a part.

*Forehead.* Her forehead is a place for princely *Ioue*  
To sit, and cenfure matters of import :  
Wherein men reade the sweete concepts of Loue,  
To which hart-pained Louers do resort,  
And in this Tablet find to cure the wound,  
For which no falue or herbe was euer found.

Vnder

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## Rosalins complaint

3

Vnder this mirrour, are her princely eyes :  
 Two Carbuncles, two rich imperiall lights ;  
 That ore the day and night do foueraignize,  
 And their dimme tapers to their rest the frights :  
     Her eyes excell the Moone and glorious Sonne,  
     And when she riseth al their force is donne.

*Eyes.*

Her morning-coloured cheekes, in which is plac'd,  
 A Lillie lying in a bed of Rofes ;  
 This part about all other I haue grac'd,  
 For in the blew veines you may reade sweet poesies :  
     When she doth blush, the Heauens do wax red,  
     When she lookes pale, that heauenly Front is dead.

*Cheekes.*

Her chinne a litle litle pretie thing  
 In which the sweet carnatian Gelli-flower,  
 Is round encompast in a chriftall ring,  
 And of that pretie Orbe doth beare a power :  
     No forme of Enuie can this glorie touch,  
     Though many should assay it ouermuch.

*Chinne.*

Her lippes two rubie Gates from whence doth spring,  
 Sweet honied deaw by an intangled kisse,  
 From forth these glories doth the Night-bird sing,  
 A Nightingale that no right notes will misse :  
     True learned Eloquence and Poetrie,  
     Do come betwene these dores of excellencie.

*Lippes.*

Her teeth are hewed from rich crystal Rockes,  
 Or from the Indian pearle of much esteem,  
 These in a clofet her deep counsell lockes,

*Teeth.*

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## Rosalins complaint

And are as porters to so faire a Queene,  
They taste the diet of the heau'nly traine,  
Other base grossenefse they do still disdaine.

*Tongue.* Her tongue the vtterer of all glorious things,  
The siluer clapper of that golden bell,  
That neuer foundeth but to mightie Kings,  
And when she speakes, her speeches do excell:  
He in a happie chaire himselfe doth place,  
Whose name with her sweet tongue she means to grace.

*Necke.* Her necke is *Vestas* siluer conduict pipe,  
In which she powers perfect chastitie,  
And of the muskie grapes in sommer ripe,  
She makes a liquor of ratiemie,  
That dies this swanne-like piller to a white,  
More glorious then the day with all his light.

*Breastes.* Her breasts two crystal orbes of whiteft white,  
Two little mounts from whence lifes comfort springs.  
Between those hillockes *Cupid* doth delight  
To sit and play, and in that valley fings:  
Looking loue-babies in her wanton eyes,  
That all grosse vapours thence doth chaftefize.

*Armes.* Her armes are branches of that siluer tree,  
That men surname the rich *Hesperides*,  
A precious circling shew of modestie,  
When she doth spread these glories happines:  
Ten times ten thousand blessings he doth taste,  
Whose circled armes shall cling about her waste.

Her

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## Rosalins complaint.

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Her hands are fortunes palmes, where men may reade  
 His first houres destiny, or weale or woe,  
 When she this sky-like map abroad doth spreade,  
 Like pilgrimes many to this Saint do go,  
     And in her hand, white hand, they there do see  
     Loue lying in a bed of yuorie.

*Hands.*

Her fingers long and small do grace her hand ;  
 For when she toucheth the sweete sounding Lute,  
 The wild vntamed beasts amaz'd do stand,  
 And carroll-chanting birds are fudden mute :  
     O fingers how you grace the filuer wires,  
     And in humanitie burne *Venus* fires !

*Fingers.*

Her bellie (ð grace incomprehensible)  
 Far whiter then the milke-white lillie flower.  
 O might *Arabian Phœnix* come inuisible,  
 And on this mountaine build a glorious bower,  
     Then Sunne and Moone as tapers to her bed,  
     Would light loues Lord to take her maidenhead.

*Bellie.*

Be still my thoughts, be filent all yee Muses,  
 Wit-flowing eloquence now grace my tongue :  
 Arise old *Homer* and make no excuses,  
 Of a rare peece of art must be my song,  
     Of more then most, and most of all beloued,  
     About the which *Venus* sweete doues haue houered.

*Nota.*

There is a place in louely paradize,  
 From whence the golden *Gehon* ouerflowes,  
 A fountaine of such honorable prize,

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## 6 Rofalins complaint.

That none the sacred, sacred vertues knowes,  
 Walled about, betok'ning sure defence,  
 With trees of life, to keepe bad errors thence.

*Thighes.* Her Thighs two pillers fairer far then faire,  
 Two vnderprops of that celestiall house,  
 That Mansion that is *Iunos* siluer chaire,  
 In which *Ambrosia VENUS* doth carouse,  
 And in her thighs the prety veines are running  
 Like Chrifall riuers from the maine streames flowing.

*Legges.* Her legges are made as graces to the rest,  
 So pretie, white, and so proportionate,  
 That leades her to loues royall sportiue nest,  
 Like to a light bright Angel in her gate:  
 For why no creature in the earth but she,  
 Is like an Angell, Angell let her be.

*Feete.* Her Feete (now draw I to conclusion)  
 Are neat and litle to delight the eye,  
 No tearme in all humane inuention,  
 Or in the veine of sweet writ Poetrie  
 Can ere be found, to giue her feet that grace,  
 That beares her corporate Soule from place to place.

And if by night she walke, the Marigold,  
 That doth inclose the glorie of her eye,  
 At her approach her beauty doth vnfold,  
 And spreads her selfe in all her royaltie,  
 Such vertue hath this Phoenix glassy shield,  
 That Floures and Herbs at her faire fight do yeeld.  
 And

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## Rosalins complaint.

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And if the grace the Walkes within the day,  
*Flora* doth spreade an Arras cloth of flowers,  
 Before her do the prety *Satires* play,  
 And make her banquets in their leauie Bowers :  
     Head, Haire, Brow, Eyes, Cheeks, Chin and all,  
     Lippes, Teeth, Tong, Neck, Brefts, Belly are maiesticall.

This *Phoenix* I do feare me will decay,  
 And from her ashes neuer will arife  
 An other Bird her wings for to display,  
 And her rich beauty for to equalize :  
     The *Arabian* fiers are too dull and base,  
     To make another spring within her place.

Therefore dread Regent of these Elements,  
 Pitie poore *Nature* in her Art excelling,  
 Giue thou an humble eare to my laments,  
 That to thee haue a long true tale beene telling,  
     Of her, who when it please thee to behold,  
     Her outward fight shall bewties pride vnfold.

At these words *Ioue* stood as a man amazed,  
 And *Iunos* loue-bred bewtie turnd to wight,  
*Venus* she blusht, and on dame *Nature* gazed,  
 And *Vesta* she began to weepe outright :  
     And little *Cupid* poore boy strucke in loue,  
     With repetition of this earthly Doue.

But at the last *Ioue* gan to rouse his spirit,  
 And told dame *Nature* in her sweet discourse ;  
 Her womans Toung did run before her Wit,

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## 8 Rofalins complaint.

Such a faire foule her selfe could neuer nurfe,  
 Nor in the vastie earth was euer liuing,  
 Such beauty that all beauty was excelleng.

*Nature* was strucke with pale temeritie,  
 To see the God of thunders lightning eyes ;  
 He shooke his knotty haire so wrathfully,  
 As if he did the heauenly rout despise :  
 Then downe vpon her knee dame *Nature* fals,  
 And on the great gods name aloud she calts.

*Ioue* thou shalt see my commendations,  
 To be vnworthie and impartiall,  
 To make of her an extallation,  
 Whose beauty is deuine maiesticall ;  
 Looke on that painted picture there, behold  
 The rich wrought *Phœnix* of *Arabian* gold.

*Ioues* eyes were fetled on her painted eyes,  
*Ioue* blushing smil'd, the picture smil'd againe :  
*Ioue* spoke to her, and in his heart did rise  
 Loues amours, but the picture did disdain  
 To loue the god, *Ioue* would haue stole a kisse,  
 But *Iuno* being by, denied him this.

When all the rest beheld this counterfeit,  
 They knew the substance was of rarer price :  
 Some gaz'd vpon her face, on which did waite  
 As messengers, her two celestiaall eyes ;  
 Eyes wanting fire, did giue a lightning flame,  
 How much more would her eyes mans fences tame ?  
 Then

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## Rosalins complaint.

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Then all the Gods and Goddeffes did decree,  
 In humble maner to intreat of *Ioue*  
 And euery power vpon his bended knee,  
 Shewd faithfull feruice in dame *Natures loue*,  
     Intreating him to pacifie his Ire,  
     And raife another *Phœnix* of new fire.

Her picture from *Ioues* eyes hath banisht Hate,  
 And Mildnesse plaind the furrowes of his brow,  
 Her painted shape hath chastifed debate,  
 And now to pleasure them he makes a vow :  
     Then thus *Ioue* spake, tis pittie she should die,  
     And leaue no offspring of her Progenie.

*Nature* go hie thee, get thee *Phœbus* chaire,  
 Cut through the skie, and leaue *Arabia*,  
 Leaue that il working peece of fruitlesse ayre,  
 Leaue me the plaines of white *Brytania*,  
     These countries haue no fire to raife that flame,  
     That to this *Phœnix* bird can yeeld a name.

There is a country Clymat fam'd of old,  
 That hath to name delightfome *Paphos* Ile,  
 Ouër the mountaine tops to trudge be bold,  
 There let thy winged Horfes rest awhile :  
     Where in a vale like *Ciparissus* groue,  
     Thou shalt behold a second *Phœnix* loue.

A champion cōuntry full of fertill Plaines,  
 Green grassie Medowes, little prettie Hills,  
 Abundant pleasure in this place remaines,

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## Rosalins complaint.

And plenteous sweetes this heauenly clymat filles :  
 Faire flowing bathes that issue from the rockes,  
 Abundant heards of beafts that come by flockes,

High stately Cædars, sturdie bigge arm'd Okes,  
 Great Poplers, and long trees of *Libanon*,  
 Sweete smelling Firre that frankensence prouokes,  
 And Pine apples from whence sweet iuyce doth come :  
 The sommer-blooming Hauthorne ; vnder this  
 Faire *Venus* from *Adonis* stole a kisse.

Fine Thickets and rough Brakes for sport and pleasure,  
 Places to hunt the light-foote nimble Roe :  
 These groues *Diana* did account her treasure,  
 And in the cold shades, oftentimes did goe  
 To lie her downe, faint, weary on the ground,  
 Whilest that her Nymphs about her daunft a round.

A quire of heauenly Angels tune their voyces,  
 And counterfeit the *Nightingale* in finging,  
 At which delight some pleasure she reioyces,  
 And *Plenty* from her cell her gifts is bringing :  
 Peares, Apples, Plums, and the red ripe Cherries,  
 Sweet Strawberries with other daintie berries.

Here haunt the *Satyres* and the *Driades*,  
 The *Hamadriades* and pretie Elues,  
 That in the groues with skipping many pleafe,  
 And runne along vpon the water shelues :  
 Heare *Mermaid*es sing, but with *Ulysses* eares,  
 The country Gallants do difdaine their teares.

The