

To him that is the president^o
 Of noblesse and of chevalree,
 5 And if that Envie barke at thee,
 As sure it will, for succoure flee
 Under the shadow of his wing,²
 And askèd, who thee forth did bring,
 A shepherds swaine saye did thee sing,
 10 All as his straying flocke he fedde:
 And when his honor has thee redde,^o
 Crave pardon for my hardyhedde.^o
 But if that any aske thy name,
 Say thou wert base^o begot with blame:
 15 For thy^o thereof thou takest shame.
 And when thou art past jeoparddee,
 Come tell me, what was sayd of mee:
 And I will send more after thee.
 IMMERITO.^o

pattern

seen
boldnesslowly
therefore

unworthy

April¹Aegloga Quarta²

ARGUMENT

This Aeglogue is purposely intended to the honor and prayse of our most gracious soveraigne, Queene Elizabeth. The speakers herein be Hobbinoll and

2. I.e., the protective sponsorship of Sir Philip Sidney.
 1. When *The Shepheardes Calender* was published in 1579, each of the twelve eclogues was followed by a "Glosse," which contained explications of difficult or archaic words, together with learned discussions of— and disagreements with—Spenser's ideas, imagery, and poetics. The glosses are by one "E. K.," whom some scholars identify with one of Spenser's friends, others with Spenser himself. They are made to look authoritative, but in fact serve to complicate the process of interpretation. The editors have included several of these glosses, marked [E. K.], to give the reader some sense

of them. The original spelling is retained.

2. Fourth Eclogue. An eclogue ("aeglogue") is a short pastoral poem in the form of a dialogue or soliloquy. Spenser's spelling is based on a false etymology (aix, "goat" + logos, "speech"), signifying, according to E. K., "Gotheards tales." The illustration portrays Colin Clout (the shepherd persona assumed by Spenser) piping a song of Elizabeth, shown with the ladies of her court. The shepherds Thenot and Hobbinoll are in the background, and the astrological sign for April, Taurus the bull, is at the top of the picture.

Thenot, two shepheardes: the which Hobbinoll being before mentioned, greatly to have loved Colin, is here set forth more largely, complayning him of that boyes great misadventure in Love, whereby his mynd was alienate and with drawn not onely from him, who moste loved him, but also from all former delights and studies, aswell in pleasaunt pyping, as conning³ ryming and singing, and other his laudable exercises. Whereby he taketh occasion, for prooffe of his more excellencie and skill in poetrie, to recorde a songe, which the sayd Colin sometime made in honor of her Majestie, whom abruptly⁴ he termeth Elysa.

THENOT

HOBBINOLL

Tell me good Hobbinoll, what garres thee greeete?⁵
 What? hath some Wolfe thy tender Lambes ytorne?
 Or is thy Bagpype broke, that soundes so sweete?
 Or art thou of thy lovèd lasse forlorne?
 5 Or bene^o thine eyes attempted to the yeare,⁶
 Quenching the gasping furrowes thirst with rayne?
 Like April shoure, so stremes the trickling teares
 Adowne thy cheeke, to quenche thy thirstye^o payne.

forsaken

are

thirsty

HOBBINOLL

Nor thys, nor that, so muche doeth make me mourne,
 10 But for^o the ladde,⁷ whome long I lov'd so deare,
 Nowe loves a lasse,⁸ that all his love doth scorne:
 He plongd in payne, his tressèd^o locks dooth teare.

that

curled

Shepherds delights he dooth them all forswear,
 Hys pleasaunt Pipe, which made us meriment,
 15 He wylfully hath broke, and doth forbear
 His wonted songs, wherein he all outwent.⁹

THENOT

What is he for a Ladde,¹ you so lament?
 Ys love such pinching payne to them, that prove?
 And hath he skill to make² so excellent,
 20 Yet hath so little skill to brydle love?

HOBBINOLL

Colin thou kenst,^o the Southerne shepheardes boye:
 Him Love hath wounded with a deadly darte.
 Whilome^o on him was all my care and joye,
 Forcing^o with gyfts to winne his wanton heart.

knowest

once

striving

3. Learning.

4. With a sudden change.

5. "Cauneth thee weepe and complain" [E. K.].

6. "Agreeable to the season of the yeare, that is April, which moneth is most bent to shoures and reasonable rayne: to quenche . . . the drought" [E. K.].

7. "Colin Clout" [E. K.].

8. "Rosalinda" [E. K.].

9. His usual songs, which surpassed those of all others.

1. "What maner of Ladde is he?" [E. K.].

2. "To rime and versifye" [E. K.]. *Maker* is the Greek word for "poet."

25 But now from me hys madding^o mynd is starte,³ foolish/broken away
And woes^o the Widdowes daughter of the glenne;⁴ woe
So nowe fayre Rosalind hath bredde^o hys smart,⁵ caused
So now his frend is chaunged for a frenne.^o stranger

THENOT

But if hys ditties bene so trimly dight,⁴
30 I pray thee Hobbinoll, recorde^o some one: sing
The whiles our flockes doe graze about in sight,
And we close shrowded in thys shade alone.

HOBBINOLL

Contented I: then will I singe his laye^o song
Of fayre Elisa, Queene of shepherdes all:⁵
35 Which once he made, as by a spring he laye,
And tuned it unto the Waters fall.

"Ye daynty Nymphs, that in this blessed Brooke
doe bathe your brest,
For sake your watry bowres, and hether looke,
40 at my request:
And eke you Virgins, that on Parnasse dwell,
Whence floweth Helicon the learned well,⁶
Helpe me to blaze⁷
Her worthy praise,
45 Which in her sexe doth all excell.

"Of fayre Elisa be your silver song,
that blessed wight:^o being
The flowre of Virgins, may shee flourish long,
In princely plight.^o condition
50 For shee is Syrinx daughter without spotte,
Which Pan the shepherds God of her begot:⁸
So sprung^o her grace sprung
Of heavenly race,
No mortall blemishe may her blotte.

55 "See, where she sits upon the grassie greene,
(O seemely^o sight) pleasing
Yclad in Scarlot like a mayden Queene,
And Ermines white.

3. "He calleth Rosalind the Widdowes daughter of the glenne, that is, of a country Hamlet or borough, which I thinke is rather sayde to concele the person, then simply spoken. For it is well known . . . that shee is a Gentle woman of no meane house" [E. K.].

4. "Adorned" [E. K.].

5. "In all this songe is not to be respected, what the worthinesse of her Majestie deserveth, nor what to the highnes of a Prince is agreeable, but what is moste comely for the meannesse of a shepherds witte, or to conceive, or to utter" [E. K.].

6. "The nine Muses, daughters of Apollo and Memorie, whose abode the Poets faine to be on Parnassus, a

hill in Grece" [E. K.]. According to Spenser and E. K., Helicon is a well or spring at the foot of Parnassus, but in fact it is a mountain itself sacred to the Muses.

7. A blason was a poem cataloging and praising a lady's various physical features.

8. "Syrinx is the name of a Nympe of Arcadie, whom when Pan being in love pursued. . . . By Pan is here meant the most famous and victorious King, her highnesse Father, late of worthy memorye K. Henry the eyght" [E. K.]. "Without spotte" qualifies "Syrinx," not "daughter," a covert repudiation of the scandals surrounding Anne Boleyn.

Upon her head a Cremosin^o coronet, crimson
60 With Damaske roses and Daffadillies set:
Bayleaves betweene,
And Primroses greene
Embellish^o the sweete Violet.

"Tell me, have ye seene her angelick face,
65 Like Phoebe fayre?¹
Her heavenly haveour,^o her princely grace bearing
can you well compare?
The Redde rose medled^o with the White yfere,² mingled
In either cheeke depeincten^o lively chere. depict
70 Her modest eye,
Her Majestie,
Where have you seene the like, but there?

"I sawe Phoebus thrust out his golden hedde,
upon her to gaze:
75 But when he sawe, how broade her beames did spredde,
it did him amaze.
He blusht to see another Sunne belowe,
Ne durst againe his fyrye face out showe:³
Let him, if he dare,
80 His brightnesse compare
With hers, to have the overthrowe.⁴

"Shewe thy selfe Cynthia⁵ with thy silver rayes,
and be not abasht:
When shee the beames of her beauty displayes,
85 O how art thou dasht?
But I will not match her with *Latonaes* seede,
Such follie great sorow to Niobe⁶ did breede.
Now she is a stone,
And makes dayly mone,
90 Warning all other to take heede.

"Pan may be proud, that ever he begot
such a Bellibone,⁷
And Syrinx rejoyse, that ever was her lot
to beare such an one.
95 Soone as my younglings cryen for the dam,
To her will I offer a milkwhite Lamb:
Shee is my goddesse plaine,^o absolute

9. "Beautifye and set out" [E. K.], i.e., by contrast of colors.

1. "The Moone, whom the Poets faine to be sister unto Phoebus, that is the Sunne" [E. K.].

2. "Together" [E. K.]. Elizabeth, like her father Henry VIII, descends from both the houses of Lancaster and of York (symbolized, respectively, by the red and the white rose), whose conflicting claims to the throne caused the War of the Roses.

3. Show abroad.

4. Be overthrown.

5. "The Moone" [E. K.].

6. When Niobe vaunted herself above Latona by reason of her seven sons and seven daughters, the goddess caused her two children, Apollo and Diana, to slay Niobe's entire progeny, after which her sorrow transformed her to stone.

7. A *belle bonne*. "Homely spoken for a fayre mayde or Bonilasse" [E. K.].

- And I her shepherds swayne,^o *servant*
 Albee forswonck and forswatt I am.⁸
- 100 "I see Calliope^o speede her to the place,
 where my Goddesse shines:
 And after her the other Muses trace,^o *step*
 with their Violines.
- Bene^o they not Bay braunches,¹ which they doe beare, *are*
 105 All for Elisa in her hand to weare?
 So sweetely they play,
 And sing all the way,
 That it a heaven is to heare.
- "Lo how finely the graces² can it foote^o *dance*
 to the Instrument:
 110 They dauncen deffly,^o and singen soote,^o *nimbly/sweet*
 in their meriment.
 Wants not a fourth grace, to make the daunce even?
 Let that rowme^o to my Lady be yeven:^o *place/given*
- 115 She shalbe a grace,
 To fyll the fourth place,
 And reigne with the rest in heaven.
- "And whither rennes^o this bevie^o of Ladies bright, *runs/company*
 raungèd in a rowe?
 120 They bene all Ladyes of the lake behight,³
 that unto her goe.
 Chloris,⁴ that is the chiefest Nymph of al,
 Of Olive braunches beares a Coronall:^o *crown*
 Olives bene^o for peace, *are*
 125 When wars doe surcease:
 Such for a Princesse bene principall.^o *princely*
- "Ye shepheards daughters, that dwell on the greene,
 hye^o you there apace:^o *come/quickly*
 Let none come there, but that Virgins bene,
 130 to adome her grace.
 And when you come, whereas shee is in place,
 See, that your rudenesse doe not you disgrace:
 Binde your fillets^o faste, *hair ribbons*
 And gird in your waste,^o *waist*
 135 For more finesse, with a tawdrie lace.⁵
- "Bring hether the Pincke and purple Cullambine,
 With Gelliflowres:

8. "Overlaboured and sunneburnt" [E. K.].

9. The muse of epic poetry.

1. "Be the signe of honor and victory . . . and eke [also] of famous Poets" [E. K.].

2. "Be three sisters, the daughters of Jupiter, whose names are Aglaia, Thalia, Euphrosyne . . . whom the Poetes feyned to be Goddesses of al bountie and comelines" [E. K.]. "Foote": dance.

3. "Called or named" [E. K.]. "Ladies of the lake" "Nymphes. For it was an olde opinion amongst the Ancient Heathen, that of every spring and fountains was a goddesse the Sovereigne" [E. K.].

4. According to E. K., the nymph of flowers and green herbs; her name signifies greenness.

5. I.e., to present a finer appearance, with a band of lace bought at the fair of St. Audrey (Etheldreda).

- Bring Coronations, and Sops in wine,
 worne of Paramoures.^o *lovers*
- 140 Strowe me the ground with Daffadownillies,
 And Cowslips, and Kingcups, and lovèd Lillies:
 The pretie^o Pawnce, *pretty*
 And the Chevisaunce,
 Shall match with the fayre flowre Delice.⁶
- 145 "Now ryse up Elisa,⁷ deckèd as thou art,
 in royall aray:
 And now ye daintie Damsells may depart
 echeone^o her way. *each one*
 I feare, I have troubled your troupes to^o longe: *too*
 150 Let dame Eliza thanke you for her song.
 And if you come hether,
 When Damsines^o I gether, *plums*
 I will part them all you among."⁸

THENOT

- And was thilk^o same song of Colins owne making? *this*
 155 Ah foolish boy, that is with love yblent:^o *blinded*
 Great pittie is, he be in such taking,^o *plight*
 For naught caren,^o that bene^o so lewdly bent.⁹ *care/are*

HOBBINOLL

- Sicker^o I hold him, for a greater fon,^o *surely/fool*
 That loves the thing, he cannot purchase.
 160 But let us homeward: for night draweth on,
 And twincling starres the daylight hence chase.

Thenots Embleme¹
O quam te memorem virgo?
 Hobbinolls Embleme
O dea certe.

6. All these are names of flowers common in pastoral poetry. "Coronations" are carnations; "sops in wine," the pink; "daffadownillies," daffodils; "pawnce," the pansy; and "flowre Delice (fleur de lis)," a kind of iris.

7. In the conclusion. For having so decked her with

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9. I.e., for they that are so foolishly inclined are heedless of everything.

1. An "embleme" is a motto or relevant quotation. Both emblems are from *Aeneid* I. 327–328, in which Aeneas is overwhelmed by the appearance of Venus in the guise of one of Diana's maidens and cries out, "By what name should I call thee, O maiden? . . . O goddess surely." E. K. notes that Hobbinoll and Thenot are similarly struck with amazement by the "divine" Elizabeth.