

The Doubt of Future Foes¹

The doubt of future foes exiles my present joy,
And wit me warns to shun such snares as threaten mine annoy.²
For falsehood now doth flow, and subject faith doth ebb,³
Which would not be, if reason ruled or wisdom weaved the web.
But clouds of toys untried do cloak aspiring minds,
Which turn to rain of late repent, by course of changed winds.⁴
The top of hope supposed, the root of ruth will be,
And fruitless all their grafted guiles, as shortly ye shall see.⁵
The dazzled eyes with pride, which great ambition blinds,
Shall be unsealed by worthy wights whose foresight falsehood finds.
The daughter of debate, that eke⁶ discord doth sow
Shall reap no gain where former rule hath taught still⁷ peace to grow.
No foreign banished wight⁸ shall anchor in this port,
Our realm it brooks no stranger's force, let them elsewhere resort.
Our rusty sword with rest,⁹ shall first his edge employ
To poll¹ their tops that seek such change and gape for joy.

ca. 1568

On Monsieur's Departure¹

I grieve and dare not show my discontent,
I love and yet am forced to seem to hate,
I do, yet dare not say I ever meant,
I seem stark mute but inwardly do prate.²
I am and not, I freeze and yet am burned,
Since from myself another self I turned.

My care is like my shadow in the sun,
Follows me flying, flies when I pursue it,
Stands and lies by me, doth what I have done.³

1. The poem concerns Elizabeth's Roman Catholic cousin Mary Stuart, queen of Scotland, who in 1568 sought refuge in England from her rebellious subjects. Mary was the focus of several Roman Catholic conspiracies to place her on the English throne in place of Elizabeth. "Doubt": fear.
2. I.e., threaten to harm ("annoy") me. "Wit": intelligence.
3. I.e., the tide of faith (loyalty) is ebbing, because it is now subject to the rising tide of falsehood.
4. Clouds of tricks ("toys") not yet tested and detected ("untried") hide the "aspiring minds" of ambitious foes, but those clouds will turn at last into rains of repentance.
5. The deceptions ("guiles") grafted ("grafted") into them will not bear fruit. "Ruth": sorrow.
6. Also, Mary Stuart also was sometimes called "Mother

of Debate," because she was constantly the focus of conspiracies and plots.
7. Stable. "Former rule": either the reign of Henry VIII or Edward VI, which established the Reformation in England.
8. Person.
9. Sword rusty from disuse.
1. Strike off their heads.
1. The heading, present in two manuscripts, identifies the occasion of this poem as the breaking off of marriage negotiations between Queen Elizabeth and the French duke of Anjou in 1582. A third manuscript implies instead an association with Elizabeth's favorite, the earl of Essex, who led an abortive rebellion and was executed for treason in 1601.
2. Chatter.
3. Does everything I do.

His too familiar care¹ doth make me rue² it.
No means I find to rid him from my breast,
Till by the end of things it be suppressed.

Some gentler passion slide into my mind,
For I am soft and made of melting snow;
Or be more cruel, love, and so be kind.
Let me or float or sink, be high or low.
Or let me live with some more sweet content,
Or die and so forget what love ere meant.

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Speech to the Troops at Tilbury¹

My loving people,

We have been persuaded by some that are careful of² our safety, to take heed how we commit our selves to armed multitudes, for fear of treachery; but I assure you I do not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear, I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and good-will of my subjects; and therefore I am come amongst you, as you see, at this time, not for my recreation and disport, but being resolved, in the midst and heat of the battle, to live or die amongst you all; to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and my people, my honour and my blood, even in the dust. I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too,³ and think foul scorn that Parma⁴ or Spain, or any prince of Europe, should dare to invade the borders of my realm; to which rather than any dishonour shall grow by me, I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field. I know already, for your forwardness you have deserved rewards and crowns;⁵ and We do assure you in the word of a prince, they shall be duly paid you. In the mean time, my lieutenant general⁶ shall be in my stead, than whom never prince commanded a more noble or worthy subject; not doubting but by your obedience to my general, by your concord in the camp, and your valour in the field, we shall shortly have a famous victory over those enemies of my God, of my kingdom, and of my people.

1588

1752

1. I.e., my own care (i.e., sorrow) that he caused.
2. Regret.
3. Delivered by Elizabeth to the land forces assembled at Tilbury (Essex) to repel the anticipated invasion of the Spanish Armada, a fleet of warships sent by Philip II. The Armada was defeated at sea and never reached England, a miraculous deliverance and sign of God's special favor to Elizabeth and to England, in the general view.
4. Anxious about.

3. An allusion to the concept of the king's (or queen's) two bodies, the one natural and mortal, the other an ideal and enduring political construct.
4. Alexander Farnese, duke of Parma, allied with (the king of) Spain and expected to join with him in the invasion of England.
5. An English monetary unit.
6. Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, led her armies; he was the queen's favorite courtier and at one time rumored to be her lover and a prospective husband.