THOMAS CAREW

Song

Give me more love, or more disdain;
    The torrid or the frozen zone
Bring equal ease unto my pain;
    The temperate affords me none:
Either extreme, of love or hate,
Is sweeter than a calm estate.

Give me a storm; if it be love,
    Like Danaë in that golden shower,¹
I swim in pleasure; if it prove
    Disdain, that torrent will devour
My vulture hopes; and he’s possessed
Of heaven that’s but from hell released.
    Then crown my joys, or cure my pain;
Give me more love or more disdain.

The Second Rapture¹

No, worldling, no, ‘tis not thy gold
Which thou dost use but to behold,
Nor fortune, honor, nor long life,
Children, or friends, nor a good wife
That makes thee happy; these things be
But shadows of felicity.
Give me a wench about thirteen,
Already voted² to the queen
Of lust and lovers, whose soft hair,
Fanned with the breath of gentle air,
O’erspreads her shoulders like a tent,
And is her veil and ornament:
Whose tender touch will make the blood
Wild in the aged and the good;
Whose kisses fastened to the mouth
Of threescore years’ and longer sloth
Renew the age, and whose bright eye
Obscures those lesser lights of sky;
Whose snowy breasts (if we may call
That snow, that never melts at all)

¹. Danaë, mother of Perseus, was wooed by Zeus in a shower of gold.
². Devoted.

Platonic idealization, as well as a strong streak of sensuality. The poet’s second, and much shorter, rapture dispenses with most of the idealism to say bluntly and brutally what really pleases him.
Makes Jove invent a new disguise
In spite of Juno's jealousies;
Whose every part doth re-invite
The old decayed appetite;
And in whose sweet embraces I
May melt myself to lust, and die.
This is true bliss, and I confess
There is no other happiness.

Disdain Returned

He that loves a rosy cheek,
Or a coral lip admires,
Or from starlike eyes doth seek
Fuel to maintain his fires;
As old Time makes these decay,
So his flames must waste away.
But a smooth and steadfast mind,
Gentle thoughts and calm desires,
Hearts with equal love combined,
Kindle never-dying fires.
Where these are not, I despise
Lovely cheeks, or lips, or eyes.

No tears, Celia, now shall win
My resolved heart to return;
I have searched thy soul within,
And find naught but pride and scorn;
I have learned thy arts, and now
Can disdain as much as thou.
Some power, in my revenge convey
That love to her I cast away.¹

Song (Persuasions to Enjoy)

If the quick spirits in your eye
Now languish, and anon must die;
If every sweet and every grace
Must fly from that forsaken face,
Then, Celia, let us reap our joys
E'er time such goodly fruit destroys.

Or if that golden fleece must grow
For ever, free from aged snow,
If those bright suns must know no shade,
Nor your fresh beauties ever fade,

¹. I.e., to a previous mistress.
Then fear not, Celia, to bestow
What still being gathered, still must grow.
  Thus, either Time his sickle brings
  In vain, or else in vain his wings.

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