To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Georgia Chapman Caver entitled “Emaricdulfe by E. C. Esquier (1595): Materials Toward a Critical Edition.” I have examined the final electronic copy of the dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in English.

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(Original signatures are on file with official student records)
Emaricdulfe, by E. C., Esquier (1595):

Materials Toward a Critical Edition

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Georgia Chapman Caver
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Abstract:

E. C.’s *Emaricdulfe* (1595; STC2 4268) is a collection of forty English sonnets introduced by a brief dedicatory epistle addressed “to my very good friends, John Zouch and Edward Fitton, Esquiers.” The book was printed by Joan Orwin for bookseller Matthew Law. Two copies of the original text survive, one in the Huntington Library, the other in the Folger Shakespeare Library. In both subject matter and poetic aspiration, the collection answers to the conventions of the sonnet sequence, a genre that captivated English poets great and small during the last decades of the sixteenth century. The subject of E. C.’s poetic desire is, as it should be, his love for a young woman. The collection offers conventional modes of praise for Emaricdulfe, along with typical laments about the speaker’s failures to win her love. One deviation from the expected is E. C.’s description of a dream vision. This brief sequence replays the conventional imagery of love as hunt scene, but it also presents a rather troubling vision that, it seems, describes the death of Emaricdulfe’s young child, surely unfamiliar subject matter for the genre.

The collection, perhaps deservedly so, has generated little critical response during its history. No complete scholarly edition exists. This dissertation presents some of the basic materials upon which such an edition can be built. Here is a clear, correct, readable text, accompanied by a full commentary that situates the text and explains difficult facets of that text and is preceded by an introduction that considers, to varying degrees, features particular to this text that, in general, should be of assistance for someone reading it for the first time.
Preface:

Film critic Roger Ebert is fond of pointing out that movies should be judged for what they are. Teen horror flick *I Know What You Did Last Summer* is not Tennessee Williams’ *Suddenly Last Summer*, does not claim to be, and should not be judged by the same standards. Ebert generally offers his disclaimer before he defends a film others have panned. I hope to be excused for saying here, at the outset, exactly what this dissertation is and claims to be and what it is not.

It attempts to lay the groundwork for a critical edition of *Emaricdulfe*, a set of sonnets written by one “E. C.” and first printed in 1595. It is not *the* final critical edition. I have been guided by two goals, ones I felt worthy and myself able to achieve: first, to provide a clear, accurate text and the commentary necessary to render this text fully comprehensible to those who, while familiar with Early Modern habits of expression and with many of its texts, have not yet experienced this one and, it is hoped, to those who are considered educated readers in general; and, second, to demonstrate through comparisons with contemporary texts that *Emaricdulfe* belongs, with little, finally, easy to distinguish it, among other expressions of the passion for the sonnet sequence in the 1590s. In fulfilling my first goal, I may well explain that which is self-evident to more savvy readers, and my second, I may well overwhelm with too many comparisons, some obscure. For whatever is unnecessary and apt to be tiresome, I apologize.

Let me acknowledge as well that which, to be expected in a complete edition, is missing here. Perhaps the most intriguing issues left without clarification are the identities of the author and of the mistress whose name constitutes its title and subject, if
she was indeed a real person and, if so, whether there is some basis in history for the experience described in the sequence. Though I mention possibilities, I am unable to settle firmly upon either an attribution or her identity. These identities have remained hidden for over four hundred years and may perhaps remain so.

Moreover, though I attempt to describe literary, historical, and social contexts, more must be done to place fully the sonnets of *Emaricdulfe*, especially in their relationship with continental currents and models. This dissertation offers the most complete critical discussion of E. C.’s work up to this point. And it can provide a foundation for other scholarly work that follows. It is in these roles that it seeks your approval.

Many people have assisted me in one way or another as I completed this project, and I wish to offer my most heartfelt thanks to them. The Department of English has nurtured me through the years, presenting new challenges while at the same time showing the greatest of patience with me. Dr. Mary Papke, former Director of Graduate Studies in English has been particularly inspirational and encouraging. My students and colleagues at the Thornton Athletics Student Life Center have supported my work—and offered at least feigned enthusiasm for its subject matter—and I appreciate their interest. Dr. Chris Craig of UT’s Classics Department helped me with Latin translations and contexts. Committee members Dr. Heather Hirschfeld, Dr. Rob Stillman, and Dr. Paul Barrette read expeditiously so that I could meet deadlines and offered carefully considered and insightful comments and suggestions that have served me well as I completed this project and will echo through future work. Dr. Barrette also sacrificed quite a bit of time and energy to help make clearer the French and Italian poets whom I read in preparation for
this dissertation; I appreciate especially the subtle distinctions in translations that he was able to point out to me.

Finally, I cannot possibly express the debt I owe to Dr. Allen Carroll, my committee chair. He has labored mightily—and patiently—with me on this project, demonstrating along the way consummate scholarship and a facility at copy editing that frequently left me cringing as I looked over the drafts he faithfully marked and re-marked for me. He might surely have lost patience many times, but if he did, he managed to hide any displeasure, offering only encouragement, never harsh censure. Dr. Carroll has been, in all my dealings with him, unfailingly kind. There have been moments during this process during which I felt guilty for having ever involved Dr. Carroll, feeling that he should be able to approach his retirement without such a project looming in the background. But on those occasions I realized that it was no more than he deserved, for he is the person responsible for my ever having become an English major. I wandered into his introductory class on Shakespeare one fall, having decided to study nursing or some other practical field. But Dr. Carroll caught my imagination as he read the lines aloud. He showed me ways in which the written word necessarily directed the actor’s performance (I remember particularly his reading Juliet as she waits for the Nurse’s return and demonstrating that any actor would necessarily speak the lines in a way that would reinforce Juliet’s impatience with older people). He introduced me to the world of Renaissance England, and I fell in love with the people I met there. After that one semester, I could not imagine leaving that world behind forever, and so, here I am. I can never repay Dr. Carroll for sharing his passions and insight for the period. He has taught me much about scholarship and humanity, and I cherish the lessons.
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Sonnet

All we need is fourteen lines, well, thirteen now, and after this next one just a dozen
to launch a little ship on love’s storm tossed seas, then only ten more left like rows of beans.
How easily it goes unless you get Elizabethan and insist the iambic bongos must be played
and rhymes positioned at the end of lines, one for every station of the cross.
But hang on here while we make the turn into the final six where all will be resolved,
where longing and heartache will find an end, where Laura will tell Petrarch to put down his pen,
take off those crazy medieval tights, blow out the lights, and come at last to bed. (146)

Billy Collins’s “Sonnet” pokes gentle fun at the genre that is perhaps most representative of Early Modern English literature. In many respects, his critique is not far off. His “rows of beans” suggests the devotion to formula that characterizes so many of that period’s sonneteers, a portrayal made stronger by his “stations of the cross,” suggesting an almost religious devotion to the sonnet form. True, for many writers of the period—one scarcely knows whether to call them poets—form trumped all else as they answered the apparently irresistible call to add their offerings to an ever-growing collection of sonnets. For these writers, of whom painful evidence can be found in any comprehensive anthology of the period, the successful composition of a sonnet required, as Collins suggests, following the rules of line and foot and demonstrating facility with the conventional word-play of the day. Such a check-list approach to poetics predictably resulted in superficiality, in empty lines that bear testament only to their contrivance.
Only when Petrarch puts down his pen and ceases in his artifice can he truly relate to Laura, Collins suggests, artfully calling attention to a perception that the period’s infatuation with the sonnet form and its attendant conventions led inevitably to a disassociation between feeling and form. Lu Emily Pearson observes as much in classic understatement: “It cannot be denied that the Elizabethans were affected by both the French and the decadent Italian attitude toward the sonnet sequence, and for this reason the personal element in the English love sonnets cannot always be considered a feeling straight from the poet’s heart” (56-57). While Collins points to some writers’ appreciation of the individual sonnet as formula, Pearson speaks to the sonnet sequence, the perhaps inevitable expression to the period’s original obsession with the sonnet itself. Dependence upon a handbook of sequence conventions guaranteed a certain sameness in many of the cycles that created and fed the sonnet frenzy of the 1580s and 90s. One can imagine a writer measuring his work against the handbook: hand poem? check; voice poem? check; rose-and-white-cheek poem? check; shipwreck poem? check. The list of conventional topics is long, and most of the poets, skilled or not, did their best to honor the conventions, leaving for posterity sequences barely distinguishable from those of the next poet. As John Fuller suggests, the poetic temptation to develop a set of poems devoted to one theme “without organizing control and perspective, can have its dangers, as the surfeit of sonneteering in, for instance, the late sixteenth century shows” (37). Of course, in the hands of genius, even formula becomes fresh; Sidney, Spencer, and Shakespeare demonstrate what good poets can do. And other sonneteers, Daniel and Drayton among them, while they do not sustain originality throughout their sonnet cycles, nevertheless do create many moments of grace. E. C., the writer whose Emaricdulfe is
considered here, cannot be placed among even the second or third tier of the sonneteers. He has his moments. Nonetheless, a critical exploration of *Emaricdulfe* presents interesting opportunities for anyone hoping to grasp fully the Elizabethan sonnet sequence, in both theory and practice.

**Printer and publisher**

*Emaricdulfe* was printed by Joan Orwin, often identified in entries in the Stationers' Register as “the Widow Orwin.” She, in fact, serves as a perfect example of one of the ways a woman could gain wealth, status, and develop her profession during the Early Modern Period: by carrying on—and possibly expanding—her husband's enterprises when he died. Orwin was thrice widowed by printers. She was married to John Kingston, who is known to have been active from 1551-1584. One can presume that Joan worked with her husband to build his business and in doing so learned a great deal about printing, which would have made her an attractive widow upon Kingston's death, especially to any suitor who hoped to establish himself in the printing business, a specific embodiment of a general rule noted by Edward Arber in *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London; 1554-1640, A. D.*: printers' widows are appealing to men who want to open their own shops (xxix). In fact, leafing through Arber's index, one sees entry after entry describing materials printed by shops run by widows. In Orwin's case, after Kingston, with whom she had a son, Felix, who also became a successful printer, she married printers George Robinson (active 1585-1587) and Thomas Orwin (active 1587-1593); and it is quite possible that their printing careers flourished only because of their relationships with Joan, who would have provided her own
expertise as well as an established business. Hers was a busy and reputable print shop, printing works of a wide variety and working with a number of booksellers. She printed Christopher Marlowe and Thomas Nashe's *Dido Queene of Carthage* in 1594. Orwin also printed other sonnet sequences, such as the anonymous *Zepheria* (1594) and Bartholomew Griffin's *Fidessa* (1595).

*Emaricdulfe* was not itself entered into the Register for reasons that, though unknown, are probably not serious. The mandate to register all printed materials was not followed very stringently during the years of her work, and printed matter might remain unregistered and still be licensed for a variety of reasons. As Peter W. M. Blayney has pointed out, “roughly one-third of books published during the period were not registered” (400).1 Of course, authors and printers of seditious and/or libelous works would be highly unlikely to march into a government office to take official credit for such works, but people avoided the Stationers’ Register for other reasons. Perhaps the fees were deemed too dear or both licensing and registration were not necessary, only the former. Or a shrewd businesswoman realized that she could pick and choose her moments of compliance, registering some works and not others. *Emaricdulfe* was a light work, clearly not a threat of any kind to anyone, and the fact that it was unregistered bears not at all upon our consideration of it. Clearly, as witnessed by the amount of information on Orwin that the Stationers’ Register offers, she often observed official decorum, paid applicable fees, and obtained governmental sanction for her work, but she chose to do

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1 H. S. Bennett, writing about the period just following *Emaricdulfe*’s publication, concurs: “As we have seen, despite its insistence on the need to get books licensed before they were printed, even in the most severe days of the licensing system under Laud [in the early seventeenth century] two thirds of the books that were published were never submitted to the censor, and we have seen that about one third were never entered on the Company’s Register” (57).
otherwise with *Emaricdulfe*.

Orwin adorns the pages of *Emaricdulfe* with decorative borders at top and bottom and the title page with an illustration described in McKerrow's *Printers' & Publishers' Devices in England & Scotland 1485-1640*, # 273 (43 x39 mm.) (Fig. 1). Framed device of clasped hands emerging from the clouds, holding a caduceus and two cornucopias . . . . The motto, *By wisdom peace. By peace plenty*” (105).

McKerrow notes that the initials T. O. below the hands, used by Orwin and her husband John, as well as by Richard Jones, during the early 1590s, were voided in 1594-95, and both Joan and her son Felix Kingston used the device through the 1590's. It seems to have been built upon one used by a printer in Paris from 1547-1568 (McKerrow

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Fig. 1. Title page as it appears in EEBO.
105), so clearly it had no personal meaning for Orwin. Rather, it is her ownership and use of this and other decorative wood blocks that creates its association with her, nothing specific to her about the device.

Neither is this particular device associated with the bookseller identified on *Emaricdulfe*’s title page, Matthew Law. Law (sometimes Lawe) is identified by the *Short Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, & Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad, 1475-1640* as a bookseller in London from 1595 to 1629; *Emaricdulfe* is the first work associated with Law’s name. He apparently apprenticed as a draper and was freed from his apprenticeship by Abraham Veale on June 26, 1579 (Pantzer 89). *Emaricdulfe* serves as evidence that Law had entered the booksellers’ trade by 1595, but nothing is known of his activities between his release in 1579 and that date.

**Early texts and other editions**

Two copies of the 1595 *Emaricdulfe* exist. One resides at the Huntington Library (shelfmark 31300) and is described in the Huntington Library catalogue:

| Description | [48] p.; (8vo) |
| Note | Printer’s name from STC |
| Signatures: A-C | |
| The first leaf is blank except for signature-mark, “A.j.”; the last leaf is blank |

It is this copy that has been microfilmed by University Microfilms International for
inclusion into the Short Title Catalogue of Books organizational system, carrying the 
STC2 identification number 4268.

A second copy is in the Folger Shakespeare Library (shelfmark STC 4268 Bd.w. 
[Bound with] STC 22341.8). Hamnet, the online edition of the Folger Library catalogue, 
describes this copy:

Description: [48] p.; 8º.
Notes: Printer’s name from STC.
Signatures A-C8.
The first leaf is blank except for the signature-mark “A.j.”; the last leaf is blank.
Folger Copy: cs0063.5. Imperfect: title leaf cropped at tail, 
affecting imprint year. With: Shakespeare,
William. [The passionate pilgrim. London?
1599]—and three other works. . . .

Dr. Allen Carroll, who directed my research for this dissertation, examined the book 
containing the Folger copy of Emaricdulfe: it is, for unknown reasons, bound with three 
works attributed to Shakespeare, though the first can be only in part: Passionate Pilgrim 
(1599), Rape of Lucrece (1600), and Venus and Adonis (1599). Perhaps Emaricdulfe’s 
association here with Shakespeare’s works helped inspire Joseph Sobran’s identification 
of E. C. as Shakespeare (see Appendix). Carroll describes this collection as a small 
(about 4” x 2.5”’) tome bound in white leather. He finds an inscription on A2v that seems 
to read in an early hand “Got by loving friends for you,” suggesting that the book was 
presented as a gift. This anthology is deemed so fragile or valuable, or both, that access
to it in the Folger is restricted.

The Folger Shakespeare Library copy has in it more stop-press corrections than does the Huntington copy. Stop-press corrections occur as sheets come off the press—as printer, apprentice, or perhaps even E. C. himself glanced through some of the sheets just as they were taken off the press, noticed errors, and considered them important enough to stop the press and re-set type. The correction process was inexact and arbitrary to say the least, certainly not a rigorous copy-editing process. In fact, in *Emaricdulfe* one finds individual sonnets in which certain errors have been corrected while others pass. The standards for correction are not immediately clear to the modern reader who does not appreciate the rather cumbersome printing processes of 1595.

*Emaricdulfe* was reprinted in 1881 as part of a facsimile edition produced by the Roxburghe Club. The title of that work is *A Lamport Garland from the Library of Sir Charles Edmund Isham, bart. Comprising Four Unique Works Hitherto Unknown*. An editor’s note signature identifies the editor of the book as Charles Edmonds. Each of four works is introduced and reproduced in facsimile: “*Emaricdulfe*: sonnets / written by E. C., esquire. London, 1595.—*Celestiall elegies of the goddesses and the muses* / by Thomas Rogers. London, 1598.—*Vertues due* / by T. P. gentleman [Thomas Powell] London, 1603.—*A commemoration on the life and death of the Right Honorable, Sir Christopher Hatton* / published by Iohn Phillips. London, 1591.” Edmonds says that he depended upon an original text of Emaricdulfe “bound up with three other Poetical Tracts of great rarity and value, namely, Barnfielde’s Cynthia, 1595, Griffin’s Fidessa, 1596, and Tofte’s Laura, 1597” (i), indicating that he could not have used the copy currently housed in the Folger Shakespeare Library. This edition offers no commentary beyond a
brief introduction.

*Emaricdulfe* is also included in facsimile in Holger Klein’s *English and Scottish Sonnet Sequences of the Renaissance* (1984). It is there alongside other sonnet sequences of roughly the same time period, including Watson’s *Hekatompithia*, Soowthern’s *Pandors*, Barnfield’s *Cynthia*, Davies’s *Gullinge Sonnets*, Alexander’s *Aurora*, and Murray’s *Caelia*. Klein offers an introduction and brief commentary.

A facsimile of the Huntington Library copy is found in Early English Books Online (http://eebo.chadwyck.com), and modern-type editions can be found on the Literature Online (LION) website (http://lion.chadwyck.com/) and the University of Oregon’s Renaissance Editions website (http://www.uoregon.edu/~rbear/Emaricdulfe.html). It is not clear which text LION used in posting *Emaricdulfe*; the University of Oregon depended upon the Roxburghe Club facsimile edition.

**Critical evaluation**

*Emaricdulfe* has elicited little serious critical commentary during the four centuries of its existence. Charles Edmonds, editor of the Roxburghe Club edition, finds that “in some parts the Sonnets show great excellence, both in thought and expression; but in musical rhythm they are perhaps—with some exceptions where the lines, though they each scan, read more like prose than poetry—of better quality than they are in sonnet-sense,” faint praise indeed! (i). Edmonds notes E. C.’s experimentation with an extra syllable per line as corresponding with “Shakespeare’s poetry of the same date,” disappointed that the evidence of E. C.’s having thus experimented suggests that
Shakespeare’s usage was “not even a semi-originality” (1). Edmonds’ interest is piqued by the mystery surrounding the identities of E. C. and Emaricdulfe. He suggests that the “obscurity arises perhaps only from lapse of time,” intimating that the sequence chronicles a real love affair gone wrong and that pseudonyms employed to protect the lady’s identity which would not have deceived contemporaries effectively mask true identities from modern readers (i-ii). Edmonds provides evidence of Edward Fitton’s and John Zouch’s identities but leaves it to later scholars to determine the identities of E. C. and Emaricdulfe.

Holger Klein finds E. C. “no great poet” but appreciates the humility with which that fault is acknowledged (vol. 1, 19). Klein cites Sonnet I, Sonnet XIII, Sonnet XV, and the ending couplet of Sonnet XXXIII as particularly solid and pleasant. He suggests that thematically Sonnet XXI represents attainment of bliss but that Sonnet XXXV’s “exhortation to constancy . . . and the disgruntled Motto to the sequence adumbrate that this bliss was impermanent” (20).

Other than these introductory remarks by nominal editors, Emaricdulfe has generated few responses. The text is generally mentioned, without comment, in a number of works that list sonnet sequences in discussing the fad in the late sixteenth century. R. M. Cummings mentions E. C.’s Sonnet XXXX in his discussion of Spenser, noting the admiration with which Emaricdulfe’s author considered Spenser (84). Sidney Lee places E. C. among the minor poets of the genre and finds Emaricdulfe “a very rare collection of forty sonnets, echoing English and French models” (civ-cv). Presumably, since Lee mentions William Alexander’s Aurora and Fulke Greville’s Cælica as “of greater interest” than Emaricdulfe, the suggestion of rarity does not imply poetic worth. He does
not explain how he reached this conclusion. Examining Emaricdulfe’s Sonnet XV as she discusses the Spenser poem that E. C. so obviously imitated, Anne Lake Prescott refers to E. C. and says that his “present obscurity conceals a real if minor charm” (151). Prescott notes that the poet seems especially taken with Desportes, finds E. C. “unusually conventional,” but allows for a “pleasant grace” as well (151).

The dedication

The dedicatory epistle is meant personally for his addressees, of course, but it also serves a broader purpose. For instance, it is through the epistle that E. C. initially presents himself as a poet in only the most casual sense of the word. Far from being a man driven to tell whatever tales Emaricdulfe might offer, E. C. takes the conventional stance that he writes merely because he finds himself with nothing better to do. He is careful to denigrate his own poetic talents and to present his work as “idle,” a conventional descriptor turned to by E. C.’s betters as in Spenser’s dedicatory sonnet to Lord Burleigh in the Faerie Queene (1590), 25: “Unfitly I these ydle rimes present.” E. C. also teases the readers of his dedicatory epistle with the suggestion that Emaricdulfe chronicles the events and emotions of a real relationship.

E. C. dedicates his volume to two men whom he calls “loving friends.” Henry Wheatley categorizes as “first stage” those dedications that “are seen as the spontaneous expression of an author’s love for his friend . . .” (v), and while one might doubt the spontaneity of any Early Modern writer, there is no reason to believe that E. C. does not feel genuine affection and respect for his dedicatees. Though precious little is known about E. C., something is known about each of these men. John Zouch(e) (1564-1611) of
Codnor or Codnor Castle in Darbyshire, was son and heir of a John Zouche, and an “Esquire” in 1595 because his father, a knight, is still alive. There is an expression of gratitude for his favors in The Third and Last Book of Songs or Aires (1603) (STC2 7096). There are some observations about John, especially of his unhappy marriage and financial troubles, in John Smyth's The Berkeley MSS. –Lives of the Berkeleys, ed. Sir J. Maclean (3 vols. 1883)–“And in the end having prodigally consumed his patrimony, [he] felt the heavy waight of want” (vol. 2, p. 403). John attended Grays Inn. As the Dedicatory Epistle suggests that E. C. had assistance from Zouch, he may have had some experience as a poet. One is tempted to associate him with Zepheria, whose authorship is unknown, printed the year before from the same press as Emaricdulfe. In several places the commentary suggests possible links between its events and the family Zouch(e).

Edward Fitton (Fytton, etc.; 1572-1619) was first son and heir of the large family from Gasworth/Gosworth in Cheshire. His father died in 1606. He was sister to Mary Fitton (b.1578), Maid of Honor in Elizabeth's court in 1595 and once a leading candidate for the Dark Lady of Shakespeare's Sonnets. That “Mary” seems to be the first name of the mistress in the sequence inclines one to look for evidence of her last name there as well. The chapeau one would “doff” was on the Fitton family crest (for “fit-on,” presumably), and apparently a dolphin was below on the shield itself (these elements suggest, perhaps, the final syllable of Emaricdulfe). Mary, however, would not have been considered a “Dame” at any time. If Fitton wrote poetry, it has not come down to us as his. It may be that his was the pseudonym “Phaeton,” not hitherto identified. In 1590 he entered Gray's Inn. Perhaps we may assume that “E. C.” attended Gray's Inn.
The author: E. C.

In *The Anonymous Renaissance: Cultures of Discretion in Tudor-Stuart England*, Marcy North thoroughly explores the existence of a vital and prolific “Anon” who, for a variety of reasons, takes pains not to be identified. She suggests that, far from dying under any supposed urgency for specificity inherent in the printing process and fostered by institutions like the Stationers' Register, “anonymity flourished in the modern period, coexisting with naming and other methods of text presentation to offer authors and book producers an intriguing variety of conventions with which to introduce and frame the literature they produced” (3). One idea underlying North's work is that a modern reader's habit of assigning meaning to authorship—of finding true authority in an author's identity—might encourage an apprehension absolutely irrelevant to its author's intention and identity. A writer could choose complete or near-complete anonymity for any number of reasons: political or religious controversy, personal scandal, a reluctance to be associated with the unseemly occupation of writing. Whatever practical concerns may have discouraged a writer from proclaiming his authorship, anonymity, especially when presented as a teasing glimpse of identity, suited writers and readers of a culture that simply enjoyed puzzles. Wordplay is one of the hallmarks of the age, and writers, printers, and booksellers indulged in all kinds of diverting subterfuge on title pages. The trick might involve an image embedded in the printer's device or an anagram of writer's name. A writer might present his or her initials, as E. C. has done here; but, as North implies, initials in 1595 do not always satisfy obvious expectations: “much to the frustration of scholars hoping with diligent research to expand them, early initials often refuse to conform to our standard of a first and last name “ (67). Initials might be
reversed, might refer to position and rank rather than to appellation, or be completely fabricated. In some instances, an intended ambiguity of mysterious initials, such as Spenser's E. K. and Gascoigne's F. J., should be honored. Ferreting out a "true" identity would narrow the interpretation of the texts (68). It is unlikely that Emaricdulfe's author had developed such meta-textual notions, though his "E. C." might well have teased for other reasons. Whatever, unidentified for over 400 years, he will remain so in this study. I have not been able to find him, even with as much help as I could get.

The text presents several grounds for speculation, the title page attribution "E. C., Esquier" being the first. Unfortunately, these are very common initials. Any survey of a variety of public registries of the period turns up myriad E.C.s the right age and station in life. René Graziana, searching for The Shepheardes Calender’s E. K., in fact, was at first intrigued by his discovery of E. C. who contributed to an illustrated book by Edward Digby but found that he could not identify E. C. because “there were some dozens of Cambridge men with these initials during the period. . . .” (21). A quick search of Early English Books Online reveals six works besides Emaricdulfe written or translated by “E. C.” and printed in London from 1562 to 1645. Judged by their titles and subject matter (mostly religious and political), none seems likely to be our man.

Initials alone, even if straightforward, may not suffice. Allen Carroll has argued that the initials “E. K.”--responsible for the annotations in Spenser's Shepeardes Calender--can most productively be perceived as a suggestive sound, not as actual initials, a sound that provides a clue as to the writer's identity, in this case the sound that approximates the Latin ecce, which translates as “Lo!” or “Behold!,” an interjection alerting listeners or readers to the prospect of something wondrous and otherwise
remarkable (169). (As the first word out of the mouth of the Angel Gabriel in all his annunciations, it suggests Spenser's friend Gabriel Harvey.) He notes as well, however, “that during this period 'ecce' also functioned in a clearly ironic mode, meaning the opposite of what it seemed to mean" (169). “Ecce” could warn readers of an imminent hoax. His argument, like Marcy North's, seems reasonable as applied to a Spenser. Applied to the work of our “E. C.,” however, it cannot have had to do with any very original features (the work is imitative, derivative), if it is to be understood as there at all; but it could announce the speaker's excitement and the wonder of his relationship with Emaricdulfe, as recounted in the sonnets. Be that as it may, the author of Emaricdulfe clearly admired Spenser, and his work is rife with allusions to him.

The title page also offers E. C.’s social rank, that of esquire, which should narrow the search. The rank was described at the time by Thomas Wilson as that of a “gentlemen whose ancestors are or have bin knights, or else they are the heyres and eldest of their houses and of some competent quantity of revenue fit to be called to office and authority in their country (23-24).2 The category, always under pressures to expand, also appears to have included all sons of members of the upper nobility and of those who held high position in the government. That trend seems to have continued so that eventually the title lost much of its meaning: “Sons of peers above the rank of knight (Dukes, Earls, Barons, and so on), who are not the first born, and the first born of knights, are called esquire, it is my impression, though the matter is quite murky” (Harrison 100).

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2 The following is from the most recent Encyclopedia Britannica: “Of esquires, legally so called, there are, according to some authorities, five classes: (1) younger sons of peers and their eldest sons; (2) eldest sons of knights, and their eldest sons; (3) chiefs of ancient families (by prescription); (4) esquires by creation of office, as heralds and sergeants of arms, judges, officers of state, naval and military officers, justices of the peace, barristers-in-law; (5) esquires who attend the Knight of the Bath on his installation. . . ." The correctness of this enumeration is greatly disputed" (in Oxford English Dictionary, “Esquire” n.1 2).
It may be assumed that E. C. was of a significant family, even that his father was a living knight, possibly more. The fathers of both his dedicatees, John Zouch and Edward Fitton, described here as “Esquiers,” were living knights and they of well-known families. Fitton was sister of Mary Fitton, some time thought to have been the Dark Lady of Shakespeare’s sonnets, a Maid of Honor beginning in 1595 to Queen Elizabeth. Zouch’s sister had married Edward Zouch, a distant cousin, 11th Baron of Harringworth, and he himself had married Lord Berkeley’s daughter, Mary, in 1584. Both, apparently men about London now, had attended one of the universities and Gray’s Inn. They appear to have been his comrades (“MY VERY GOOD friends”), of the same social rank at least, even, perhaps, his literary mentors, though we have no poetry certainly attributed to them. In 1595, Zouch was 31, Fitton 23. E. C., perhaps in comparison with them, seems to consider himself inexperienced as a poet (his writing “unlearned” and he “no scholler”). While such may be the common self-effacement of preliminary matter, nothing has been identified as or suspected of being earlier work, or any work, by him. A list of candidates ought to entertain the possibility of a discreet collaboration by Zouch and Fitton.

One can simply, with no satisfaction, speculate. Adolphus Carey can be one candidate, a name often spelled Edolphus (Edolphe, and so on) at the time. He was of a good family, related to Queen Elizabeth, though his father, Edward Carey of Aldenham and Barkhamstead in Herfordshire, had not yet inherited his title (he was knighted in 1596). His older brother Henry would soon marry Elizabeth Taunton, who authored The Tragedy of Miriam, and would later become Viscount Falkland. His nephew Philip was a poet. Adolphus and his brothers all attended Oxford (Adolphus at Queen’s, 1593-94)
and, in the mid-nineties, like Zouch and Fitton, Gray's Inn. Adolphus appears to have been 16 in 1593, perhaps a little young for our purposes, especially if we consider the poems to reflect true life experiences. In the way that poets often suggested their own names in their titles, as did Philip Sidney (Astrophil and Stella), Daniel (Delia), Barnabe Barnes (Parthenophil and Parthenophe), and Nicholas Ling or Leng (Englands Helicon), something like an anagram of Carey's name (Edulfe Carei) can be found in that curious, awkward title Emaricdulfē.

Another potential candidate might be found in the Craig family. Alexander Craig is a Scots poet whose Amorose Songes, Sonets, and Elegies: Of M. Alexander Craig, Scoto-Britaine was printed in London in 1606. In that work is a sonnet called “To Lithocardia” that rehearses, almost verbatim, E. C.’s Sonnet XIII. Lax copyright practices of the period notwithstanding, this imitation is plagiaristic, too thoroughly imitative to be considered a coincidence. Alexander himself might have offered Emaricdulfē anonymously, but it is not clear why he should do so. If he happened to have had a brother whose first initial was “E,” that brother might have authored Emaricdulfē. A brother may copy his brother’s work. Or both may have, in brotherly competition, imitated the same source poem.

One final candidate must be mentioned, though I find the suggestion laughable. Joseph Sobran suggests that Emaricdulfē was written much earlier than its 1595 publication date and is the work of William Shakespeare (that is, the Earl of Oxford). Sobran bases his claim on his identification of over 200 words and phrases that exist as parallels in Emaricdulfē and Shakespeare's works. Some of his parallels stand up to scrutiny better than others. For instance, Sobran says that the final couplet of E. C.’s
Sonnet XXIII “clinch[es]” his belief: “And had she in the Sirens place but stood, / Her heavenly voice had drown’d him in the flood.” Sobran reveals a nicely drawn parallel with Lucrece “That had Narcissus seen her as she stood, / Self-love had never drown’d him in the flood” (“The Mystery of ‘Emaricdulfe’”). However, many of the ties he suggests are hardly convincing. Sobran finds significance in the parallel phrases “Laertes' heir / The wise Ulysses” (E. C.) and “wise Laertes' son” (Titus Andronicus), hardly parallel and less than interesting (“The Mystery of ‘Emaricdulfe’”). If this dissertation does nothing else, it makes the case that Emaricdulfe is filled with words and phrases found in a dizzying array of Early Modern texts. One might just as easily conclude that Shakespeare wrote Fidessa, Phyllis, Chloris, and all the rest. It turns out Sobran believes the Earl of Oxford wrote almost all the memorable poetry of the period (“The Bard’s Orphans”). Sobran’s suggestion cannot be taken seriously. One may well get the impression, though, that E. C. had experienced and been taken with much of the Shakespeare then available, especially the poems. (To read Sobran’s own argument, see the Appendix.)

**The mistress: Emaricdulfe**

The first thing one notices about the title of this work—the name of the lady it praises—is that it is hardly felicitous. Emaricdulfe is difficult to pronounce; one is uncertain which syllable to stress and how easily to following the hard c sound with the d. It cannot be considered lovely. Diana and Cynthia glide ethereally through charmed settings: Emaricdulfe is grounded elsewhere, by its length, its sound, its northern last syllable, and its strangeness generally. It is deliberately archaic. One is prompted
straight off to wonder about this name.

For his title E. C. appears to have been inspired by a Middle English Breton lay called *Emaré*. If so, he apparently wanted to call attention to elements present in that old work and its mode that he has blended into his sonnet sequence, quite unusual for one written in the currently fashionable Petrarchan mode. The early fifteenth-century romance *Emaré* retells the Constance Saga (so-called), the story of a good woman much put upon, who prevails by virtue of her goodness and enjoys a happy end. This story “was quite popular in late medieval literature” (Laskaya & Salisbury 145), and elements of it are found in folk tales of many different cultures. Certain features coincide in particular with the dream sequence in *Emaricdulfe*. The main character, after fleeing her oppressive home, finds sanctuary in the woods; Emaricdulfe appears in a woodland setting, where she provides the hunter-rider refreshments. More significantly, the Constance Saga generally presents some sort of problem for the main character regarding her child. In *Emaré* the problem is less dramatic than in many other versions. Emaré does not physically lose custody of her son, but he is born with a birthmark, which often in Middle English romances “identify[ies] children who are separated from their parents” (Laskaya & Salisbury 195, note to l.504). Clearly, this feature of *Emaré* hints at the most troubling and puzzling event recorded in *Emaricdulfe*, the death of “young Emaric.” The parallels between the two are not overwhelming, but they are there and may help account for its strange title, for the bond between the lady and the male speaker, and for something of the presence of a child, a rare feature in a sonnet sequence.

The heroine in the old saga usually made her way over the sea, the source of some of her distress, which may explain the *e-mar* part of her name. *Emaré* has been thought
to be from Old French *esmarie*, meaning “the bewildered, distressed woman,” in which case *-dulfe* may have been intended to suggest an epithet like “the doleful,” suggesting the Constance Saga. There is no evidence in the text connecting Emaricdulfe with water, though in some analogues (of hunters meeting fairies in the woodland and having relationships with them), one gets the impression that they are considered water spirits (*Naiads*). In her edition, however, Edith Rickert chooses to base the name on OF *esmerée*, meaning “refined,” “excellent,” certainly in keeping with the sonnet sequence’s conventional presentation of the mistress (197). *Emaricdulfe* in general suggests Germanic or northern associations. The *-ic* in the Western Europe in many cases gave way to a *-y*, as in *Henric-Henry*, a name that itself may have been the old *Emoric*. As *Amerigo* or Amerigus, it named the new-found continent. *Emmerich* and/or *Amalricus* became in England the names Merrick and, either male or female, Amory, Emery, and so on, surnames or first names. The *-dulfe* portion was certainly Germanic, the *–ulf* part having originally meant “wolf,” and is now as the suffix *-dolph* common in English names. On several occasions E. C. looks backward to a medieval mode suggested by his title, perhaps in conscious imitation of Spenser. It is, accordingly, unlikely that the name itself is that of any living person.

It would not be unreasonable, however, to suspect some sort of anagram, as we have already seen to be expected in some cases of anonymity. Allowing for the possibility, Sidney Lee guessed (in a footnote) that the lady in question was one Marie Cufeld or Cufaud (cv, note 1) of Cufaud Manor in or near Basingstoke. Lee may be right, but I have been unable with the resources available during my research to learn about her.
Anagrams were among the popular devices authors used to disguise either their own names or that of others. As Marcy North says, “the penetrability of anagrams varied considerably; some were much closer to acts of anonymity than others” (16). A sonnet sequence title might represent the writer’s name, the mistress’s name, or else a combination of the two, or some other identifying marker, the name of one of their homes, for instance: “The sonneteers . . . hid anagrams of their lovers’ names and secret symbols of identification within the poems so that only the very intimate reader would have access to the lover’s or the poet’s identity” (North 53). North’s contention is *apropos* of sequence titles as well. However, merely understanding the title *Emaricdulfe* as an anagram and even deciphering that anagram does not necessarily solve the mystery of Emaricdulfe’s identity. *Mary* or *Marie* as Christian names might reasonably be detected and perhaps some surname ending in *-dolph*: Mary or Marie Randolph, Adolph, Botolph, Bardolph, and so on. In his dedicatory epistle, E. C. refers to his mistress as “so sweete a Saint,” hinting, perhaps, at the most popular female Christian name in Western culture. If *-dulfe* can be heard as a play on *doff*, then one may be forgiven for speculating about the familiar name *Mary Fitton*, and sister to one of the E. C.’s dedicatees, Edward Fitton, the crest of whose family device had on it a *chapeau*, suggesting the name. She was, I believe, seventeen in 1595. I suggest above the possibility “Edolph (Adolph) Carei (Cary, Carey)” is in the title. To any further extent I have been unable to demystify the name.
Reading the text

Imagine some poetry lover strolling through the booksellers’ shops of London in the 1590s, hungry for sonnets and willing to pay for them. Suppose that poetry lover giving up the requisite three pence (at a pence a gathering) for a slight volume called *Emaricdulfe*—would the purchase disappoint? Just what kind of poetry does E. C. offer here, in this simple little book, with its title page, its brief dedication, and its forty sonnets, one to a page, and no more? One could damn him with faint praise by saying that his offering is not so bad as it could be. Given the rage for sonnets in 1595, the year of its publication, sequences were everywhere to hand. Almost anyone fancied himself the English Petrarch and rushed to bestow his interpretation of the rigors of romantic love on the poetry-loving public. This climate produced, needless to say, many notably bad collections. The anonymous *Zepheria* (1594), printed, like *Emaricdulfe*, by Joan Orwin, confuses and frustrates at almost every turn. It is simply incomprehensible. Richard Linch’s *Diella* (1596) sits heavily on the page, with almost no graceful note or other redeeming feature. And Bartholomew Griffin’s *Fidessa* (1596) provides perhaps the worst lines of all the sequences: “I die before I drown, O heavy case! / It was because I saw my mistress face.” Griffin’s unfortunate declaration reveals a poet mired in the conventional conceits of the period; he surely did not mean to suggest that his mistress’ visage did him in. But by the end of his sonnet, that’s where he’d got, and there was no escape. E. C. fits somewhere in between examples like these and the great successes of the day, the sonnets of Sidney (*Astrophil and Stella*, 1591), Drayton (*Idea*, 1593), Daniel (*Delia*, 1592), and Spenser (*Amoretti*, 1591). Two who bought E. C.’s poems liked them
well enough to bind them together with other poetry, with, in one case, Shakespeare’s *Venus and Adonis* and *Rape of Lucrece*, thereby giving them a chance to survive and us a chance to evaluate them.

One can find in Emaricdulfe the full range of the variety of the fashionable topics of the sonnets. Here are several seasonal sonnets, of gardens and the spring, poems in praise of the lady’s musical competence, of her fingers, her hair, her voice, her faith (markedly Protestant) and its effect on the speaker, on the relationship between Wisdom and Beauty in her, the competition between the Heavens and Nature in her make up, a “sweet” sonnet and a “red and white” (Rose and Lily) one, one on impossibilia, one of Love set against one of Lust, sonnets on mythological topics (Dido and Aeneas, Icarus, the Phoenix, Cupid), a sonnet on the motif of sacrifice, one that draws on the rarities turned up in the great voyages of discovery, on the House of Fame, the well-worn ship conceit, the killing of a deer, on painting and the process of writing, on the inspiration she prompts and the eternizing conceit she deserves, the blazon of her features, little allegories (one in the form of a card game), a heavily symbolic bird poem presented as a riddle, suggesting sexual intrigue, betrayal, and something of an autobiographical element, several sonnets presented together devoted to a Dream Vision, and much more.

Here, as this catalogue should suggest, is a sampler of the images and themes of the sonnets of that day, composed by someone who must have taken them all in and set about to imitate what he had experienced. Almost all can be considered typical, though each in its way appears to be unique, certainly in English, variations on a commonplace theme or image. One should not be surprised to find continental models for most of them.

All are in the Shakespearean or English form, three quatrains and a couplet, with
some sense of closure in the couplet in most of them, something summarizing with fresh emphasis or undermining with a revealed irony. In Sonnet IIII we return to the three elements that in collaboration attempt to appreciate her beauty, the “heart, pen, and muse”; only here we get them in reverse order, as is true as well in the “heart, and eyes, and face” of the couplet to XXXI. In Sonnet V, a companion piece to IIII, on portraiture, all her features are represented as chaste and dignified through associations with classical beings—the Graces, Saturnia (Juno), Diana, Vesta, the Muses—all are there in her person, the poet complains in the couplet, except for Cupid and Venus, who have no power or dignity, “save in her golden haire,” power enough, we are to understand, to make for his frustration. E. C. experiments with the structure in a number of places. Sonnet XVIII begins with an octet made up of eight “If ever” clauses, leading finally to a nicely understated couplet conclusion. And Sonnet XXXIII is made up of 27 half-line epithets describing Emaricdulfe—and no verb. In several places the line from the previous sonnet, or part of it, serves to begin the next, binding two sonnets together. Almost always the ninth line matters structurally, more or less; but rarely does its argument or punctuation suggest that the poem should be read, despite its rhyme scheme, as essentially bipartite: that is, 8 and 6.

These should impress one as being quite competent sonnets. The iambic pentameter is sufficiently various to divert (the commentary identifies certain unstressed syllables that need to be verbalized), the rhymes a pleasant mix of masculine and feminine. Much of the expression itself, especially the phrasing and the proper nouns, derives from the common stock of literary expression at the time, as the notes will indicate, familiar and doubtless, with some variation, exactly what readers would expect.
The alliteration, which tends to be excessive in the period, often works well: “Mermaids song, or Syrens sorcerie” (XXIII). Like other sequences in the period that give the impression of being autobiographical, this one also teases with that possibility, beginning with the dedicatory epistle. We can only assume some connection. But we cannot here, as with most others, assume that a conventional narrative is being offered. Moments in a relationship are here, largely having to do with moods, some involving what appear to be clusters or pairs of sonnets, but overall one would not be inclined to make much of a pattern of them. As Katherine Duncan-Jones notes, “The structural principals on which the Elizabethans built their sequences in their period were only partly thematic or narrative” (153).

To appreciate what is graceful and distinctive about these sonnets, inexperienced readers of early texts will need to work through places not clear at first or appear finally to be rough or clumsy. Consider, early on, the opening quatrain of Sonnet II:

Homage to love, dutie to thee my deare,

Deare mistris of my thoughts, Queene of my joy:

Then my lifes gratious planet bright appeare,

My hearts deepe griefe and sorrow to destroy.

The quatrain makes sense only as a continuation, part repetition, of the last lines of the previous sonnet: “Cupid conquer’d me, and made me sweare / Homage to him, an dutie to my deare.” One can further clarify the lines by supplying missing apostrophes where they seem appropriate, a constant requirement with texts back then--“life’s gratious planet” and “heart’s deepe grief and sorrow”—and by remembering that Then would be recorded as Than in modern usage, which gives some relief. However, even after
incorporating these modifications, line three remains puzzling. I have proposed that appreciating the line requires an understood intensifier: brighter instead of bright. In other words, that the speaker implores Emaricdulfe to “appear brighter than his life’s gracious planet,” meaning that he has faith in her capacity to direct his life in ways even more positive than the most fortunate alignment of the planets can do for him. This interpretation is plausible and, I believe, what E. C. meant to say. The line illustrates a truth about this sequence: an experienced reader must often silently edit the lines (or rely on my commentary) in order to make E. C.’s intentions clear.

The same kind of work is required to unpack a confusing line in the third quatrain of the collection’s final sonnet:

Thy vertues Collin shall immortalize,

Collin chast vertues organ sweetst esteem’d,

When for Elizas name he did comprise

Such matter as inventions wonder seem’d.

Again, a method of indicating possessive case would have helped E. C. here: “vertue’s organ,” “Eliza’s name” and “invention’s wonder.” Nevertheless, the essential import of the quatrain is clear: Spenser (Collin), whose Fairie Queene astounded all and honored Elizabeth, shall one day immortalize Emaricdulfe’s virtues. A problem arises, however, when one tries to make syntactic sense of the quatrain’s second line. My suggested paraphrase reads “Collin, esteemed [as] chaste virtue’s sweetest organ when he comprised . . . ,” meaning that with his production of the Fairie Queene Collin assumed the mantle of English poet most able to offer sweet praise of chaste virtue. It will be seen in the text that, for purposes of clarity, I add a comma here after Collin. Again, I am
confident in my reading, but it requires consideration.

E. C., who shows himself elsewhere as a poet not unwilling to experiment with stress and line length, nonetheless does have his limits. He knows what he wants to say here but seems unable to arrive at a line that is clear and at the same time conforms to his meter’s parameters. Perhaps, accepting what E. C. says in his dedicatory letter, one should suspect that he was so overcome with his ague--feverish--to expend much energy here. Or, accepting the ague as a conventional excuse for submitting the sequence at all, one can assume that E. C. did labor over these lines, perhaps mightily. “I am,” he says in that letter, “no scholler.” The problematic lines I find are possibly attributable to his relative inexperience. Syntax was, with certain styles, expected to be convoluted, appreciated that way, and such can also in part be accounted for by the demands of the meter.

While E. C. may be faulted for the odd line here and there, and we must assume that neither he nor his printer worked with a generally accepted scheme for punctuation, a number of what appear to be incomplete ideas, awkward syntax, or otherwise inscrutable lines probably result from this modern readers’ unfamiliarity with sixteenth century usage. The most striking example of this failure of communication occurs in Sonnet XXXIX:

When learnings sun with more resplendent gleames,

Shall with immortall flowres of poesie,

Bred by the vertue of Bram bigning beames

Deck my invention for thy dignitie: (5-8).

On its face, the phrase “Bram bigning beames” has no meaning for us now. When I
began work on this project, I asked members of a list serve devoted to the study of the literature of the period what it meant. They themselves were stymied. The consensus of the group seemed to be that it represented printer error and that E. C. must have intended some sort of burning beames. Professor Allen Carroll and I worried over the phrase, unsatisfied with what surely should have been an easy correction. I was unsettled by the fact that Bram is capitalized, which one expects to suggest personification. Carroll speculated as to a relationship between Bram and a childbearing metaphor in bred and bigning (= “biggening”). Again and again we turned to this phrase. Then Carroll found in Early English Books Online (EEBO) from certain medical texts, Scottish, it is my impression, the spelling brame for brain. When we joined this possibility with the Oxford English Dictionary’s recognition of biggening as a reference to a pregnant woman’s expanding girth, we understood the phrase. “Bram bigning beames” could be read as “brain enlarging beams,” with beams referring neatly back to “learnings sun,” that is, of Apollo. While the reading does not settle my qualms about personification--unless the brain is personified--it is certainly plausible, as is the possibility that the printer was short of lower case bs. It gives writer and printer the benefit of the doubt and demonstrates that E. C. and his peers sometimes use language now lost to us, accounting for some of what modern readers find frustrating about these centuries-old texts. (It might as well encourage suggestions that E. C. was a Scot.) My commentary is replete with definitions of words that might cause trouble now.

The almost miraculous ease with which one may type a few words and click into the text of works found in EEBO allows for such a recovery of words and phrases. I discovered that what I imagined to be either poet’s or printer’s error--the to too of Sonnet
III’s “I that is it, I to too well consider”—merely reflects common usage of the day (the _I_, of course, should be read as _aye_). I rejected my plan to emend the text to _too too_ or _do too_ when EEBO convinced me that the phrase as it appears was common during the period. Initially, as I read and re-read *Bram bigning beames*, I worried over how I could ever make this text accessible, but what leaps from the page as a mistake is not necessarily so. The point of my disclosing this journey through EEBO is that there are real problems enough with *Emaricdulfe* without faulting E. C. for the evolution of the language. At any rate, sorting through the textual problems, whatever their reasons, allows one to appreciate what E. C. has done well. Besides, as Elizabethan texts go, I am told, it is a relatively clean one. The Widow Orwin had had considerable experience in her trade.

One thing that E. C. does well, though not always with felicitous result, is pay homage to convention. The first thing one notices about *Emaricdulfe* is that, barring two rather nice distinguishing moments, it resembles any of the other twenty or so pedestrian sonnet sequences offered by the minor poets. Meter, of course, would prevent one from substituting _Phyllis or Diana or Chloris_ for _Emaricdulfe_ and arriving at essentially the same destination, but except for meter, one might interchange poems, one sequence to the next, with little worry. E. C. embraces fully the conventional conceits of the day and stocks his work liberally with well-worn images and phrases. He knows what a sequence looks and sounds like. The results are often plodding and dull. All the sonneteers, even the great ones, followed the conventions of the genre; but while Sidney, Spenser, and Shakespeare refined those conventions into precious metal, E. C. and his peers forged work of a baser nature. E. C. neither avoids nor takes command of the conventions,
though there are points at which he carries a trope to a pleasant conclusion or turns to a stock rhetorical device with success. Those successes risk being lost in a reader’s initial assessment that the sequence drowns in such conventions.

Once can imagine that E. C. sat with rhetorical handbook nearby as he composed, so anxious was he that his style conform to current usage. Elizabethans loved wordplay, as even the most casual observer must have noted. He seems most fond of the rhetorical “trick” of repetition in which the second iteration of a word takes on a different inflection than the first, a practice called *polyptoton*. The sequence teems with examples: “True love immortall is, then love me truly” (III); “Thou perfect life of my imperfect living” (VIII); “All which I weare, and wearing them sigh forth” (XIII); “The graces grace, faire Erecines disgrace” (XXXIII); and so on. E. C. flips words and phrases almost effortlessly, almost, it seems, without thought; sometimes the repetition and flipping work and sometimes they don’t. And there is simple repetition: I like this one: “Her she exceeds, though she exceed all other” (XXV). In this habit as in so much of what he presents, E. C. finds common ground with so many writers in the age of Euphues: he fails to appreciate the notion than rhetorical tricks used sparingly call attention to the ideas that they adorn but, when sprinkled liberally throughout a work, cease to impress, becoming invisible at best and annoying at worst.

*Amplificatio*, another device E. C. favors, piles example upon example to decorate an argument and, early modern writers believe, make it stronger. E. C. presents an interesting example in the argument in Sonnet XXVI, in which he lists a series of impossibilities that would have to occur before he would forswear his love for Emaricdulfe. His idea is not original--almost every sonnet sequence of the period
provides a similar argument—but his language here is nice, and some of his images striking. The second quatrain is lovely, I think:

The starres that spangle heaven with glistening light,
    In number more then ten times numberlesse,
    Shall sooner leave to beautifie the night,
    And thereby make the world seeme comfortlesse.

Here is another example of polyptoton, with number becoming numberlesse, and in this case the repetition does what it is meant to do; the notion of numbering the numberless stars is just as impossible as the notion of their leaving the night skies. So E. C. subtly adds to his amplification. The quirky rhyme—numberlesse and comfortlesse—if it counts as one at all, calls attention to the idea of comfortlessness, injecting gravity into what is otherwise a conventional list of cosmic impossibilities. Comfortlesse, because it suggests a lack of spiritual comfort, encourages an emotional response in readers who might otherwise trip rapidly through the conventional. Of course, that emotion is undone in the next image: “First shall the Sea become the continent, / And red-gild Dolphins dance upon the shore.” If one were feeling distraught in contemplation of a comfortless world, no image is more likely to cure the melancholy than the one E. C. draws here. The image is lovely but ineffective. Red-gold dolphins are every bit as unlikely to dance upon the shore as stars are to leave the heavens, but they present such a merry picture that the mood necessarily lifts, an effect that one doubts E. C. intended, unless he thought thereby to enliven this old solid-liquid trope. He has, perhaps, been pressed more by the need for the number of examples (it extends through fourteen lines) than with their quality.

E. C. lays out a specific kind of amplificatio in Sonnets XXXIII and XXXVII. In
these poems, which serve as counterpoint to one another, E. C. lists a series of epithets (*epitheton*) to contrast Love and Lust, with Emaricdulfe representing the former. Sonnet XXXIII, the one with no verb, merely names and re-names the mistress in a series of adjectival phrases, while the Lust sonnet, after running through its list of reprehensible characteristics, commands Lust to forgo any relationship with Emaricdulfe. Quite effectively, E. C. draws the distinction. Emaricdulfe (Love) is “Honors onely daughter,” Lust “Follies first childe.” Emaricdulfe is “Advices patron, councts resting place,” Lust “good councls interrupter” and “spurner of advice.” As the “Ensigne of love, foule enemie to lust” Emaricdulfe stands firm against “Love-choking lust.” Throughout *Emaricdulfe*, E. C. gives ample evidence of his willingness to honor convention for convention’s sake, but in these two poems he also demonstrates an ability to create a coherence beyond merely that of completing a requisite “epithet poem.”

In fact, just as he creates the two balanced and mirrored structures here, E. C. frequently manages a similar comparison elsewhere. Several poems focus on his inherent inability to do justice in poetry to Emaricdulfe’s virtues (yes, this is a commonplace of the genre), and each of these complements the others. Words, phrases, and images link the three poems, Sonnets IIII, XXII, and XXIII, to complete the picture of a poet who acknowledges his inadequacies but nevertheless manages nicely to make his point. The “artles pen” of IIII assumes it place also among “feeble instruments” in XXII and becomes “Marcias harsh-writing quill” in XXIII. E. C. laments his failure to reach the “top of hie Pierion mount” (IIII) and reminds us later of that sorrow when he ruefully acknowledges that his verse “never stil’d from the Castalian spring” (XXII). Each poem tells the common tale of a lover-poet who cannot summon from within himself the
eloquence his mistress deserves and must ask her forbearance. Each stands alone without any apparent weakness, his protestations to the contrary notwithstanding, alone fulfilling the convention’s demand for a display of self-deprecation, poems about not being able to write poems. E. C. deftly brings them together, through the repetition of theme, certain images, and tone, in a way that even the most casual of readers would appreciate.

One reads with greater interest what may be his most unusual, if not unique in the England of that day, and most difficult poem, certainly for us now, in the book: Sonnet XXXVIII. We can understand enough about it to recognize that it presents an allegorical conflict of abstractions as if that conflict were a game of cards, a strategy Alexander Pope will turn to much more famously—and with greater success and length—in *Rape of the Lock*. E. C. does not quite carry the day in his attempt; the sonnet’s first quatrain seems headed in a far different direction than the second and third quatrains pursue, perhaps because we haven’t read it well, and the game itself is not easy to sort out. Here, without its opening quatrain, is the game.

A thousand colours Love sate suted in,
Guarded with honour and immortall time;
Lust led with envie, feare, and deadly sin,
Opposde against faire Loves out-living line.
True Constancie kneeld at the feet of Love,
And begg’d for service, but could not procure it:
Which seene, my heart stept forth & thought to move
Kind Love for favour, but did not allure it:
Yet when my heart swore Constancie was true,
Love welcom’d it, and gave them both their due.

Here Love, who apparently has a hand full of honors cards, including some trumps, needs
to believe that the speaker, for whom Constancy speaks, truly has a trump (a heart), perhaps the ace of trumps and perhaps other cards with which to protect hers, and having none of the suits Lust leads, can honestly or legitimately play a trump, providing, it would seem, access to her power cards. The game would be Trump or Ruff, a very early form of Bridge.

E. C.’s effort is not distinguished when compared to Pope’s far more polished offering, but it shines among the sonnet sequences generally and within E. C.’s collection because it departs from the expected. One wonders how and why E. C. makes this effort, where he finds inspiration and creative energy to move beyond merely filling in the blanks as he has done through so much of his collection. As I take pains to point here and throughout my commentary, E. C. is no innovator. I do not think he is original here but rather that I have failed to find the text he imitates. There were apparently early French models for the gaming poem. Nonetheless, this otherwise so conventional poet deserves notice for including at least this attempt to distinguish his work from those that surround it.

Even more worthy of attention is what I have called the dream vision sequence, three poems, Sonnets IX through XI, in which the speaker relates to Emaricdulfe the visions he saw when he succumbed to “sweet repose.” The poet introduces these visions by saying that they explain “Wherein and when my selfe I did avow / To honour thee, and give my heart to thine” (VIII). He goes on to relate two distinct visions, which, if we take him at his word, provide two very different accounts for his commitment to Emaricdulfe. The first, described in Sonnet IX, makes use of a conventional hunting motif as metaphor for romantic pursuits. E. C. describes how a huntsman, himself we are
to understand, spies a comely doe and chooses her to hunt, though he sees all about other presumably equally lovely deer. Working carefully, he manages to shoot this doe. While the hunt as allegory for romance is conventional, E. C.’s insistence that the huntsman found the doe “by the purley side” of the field injects a bit of intrigue, for the suggestion of love “in the purlieus” leads one to conjecture that perhaps Emaricdulfe has not always been as chaste as she is generally described in the sequence. One can without difficulty read this passage as an allegory of E. C.’s pursuit of Emaricdulfe, but it does not explain his commitment to her; rather, it describes a commitment that has been trumpeted already in the eight preceding poems.

Sonnet X explains E. C.’s commitment in terms of Emaricdulfe’s generous and hospitable nature. In this vision, a companion to and continuation, in some respects, of the former, the hunter finds himself weary and seeks a “good harbour,” where he finds the generous courtesy of Emaricdulfe. She appears to offer him conversation and companionship and offers also welcomes, first one, then three, and then six more, making for a total of ten refreshments. The hunter drinks his fill and feeds to his content, setting up, it seems, a sexual encounter. This passage is interesting in that in these few—eight—lines, Emaricdulfe can be imagined as some sort of woodland nymph, a creature of mystery. She focuses on the comfort of her guest, and though the speaker says that she talks with him, readers have no notion of her words. She makes no demands on her guest; rather, as soon as he has drunk his fill, the rider returns to his own home. In this incarnation, Emaricdulfe certainly is not a distanced and demanding mistress but rather every man’s desire, a welcoming woman whose sole focus is her man’s comfort. If the dream vision were to end here, it would be interesting for its inclusion in a sonnet
sequence, which may be unique. E. C., who clearly admired Spenser, might have incorporated his dream sequence in order to pay homage to him, but the content would be familiar enough in the fairy literature of romance. The hunting motif is thoroughly conventional, and while the woodland nymph suggested is more likely to raise a reader’s interest, it easily fits into a sequence describing romantic devotion. These elements of the dream vision are recognizable as dreams of desire.

However, the final moment of the vision sequence takes a decidedly different direction. In Sonnet IX, the speaker describes his joy at seeing Emaricdulfe’s child, a “young Emaricdulfe” whose beauty rivals and perhaps surpasses her mother’s. Gladness over beauty soon turns to sorrow over loss, however, as the speaker laments the child’s early death and curses “cruell death” for taking “So faire a branch before it halfe was ripte.” This emotional trauma is enough to waken the speaker from his trance, and the vision sequence ends. However, even in XII, which is ostensibly a return from the shadowy world of dreams, E. C. continues to speak passionately about the death of “yong Emaric.” He mourns the death very eloquently, accusing “cruell heavens and regardless fates,” reminding both that they hold the power to close “deaths ebongates.” Though he returns by the end of this sonnet to the conventional eternizing conceit, one feels that this pain is genuine, that a child was born from this meeting and did die too soon, and that E. C. and Emaricdulfe share the sorrow in that instance. It is possible, of course, that E. C. looked back to Dante and Petrarch and realized that their great sequences offered what the English sonnets generally omitted, the gravity of death, and attempted to follow suit. Certainly the abrupt movement to XIII—“That I did love and once was loved by thee”—creates an impression of great passion of XI and XII dropped in rather randomly in E.
C.’s work, suggesting, perhaps, that it is not more “real” than are the conventional tributes to eye and cheek and hand that infuse the sequence. Perhaps I am naïve and sentimental in thinking so, but I can conceive of no poet describing the death of a child merely to fulfill some imagined debt to Italian models of poetry. E. C.’s passion of grief is genuine, one of the very few sincerely felt and articulated expressions of emotion in his and most of his contemporaries’ sonnet sequences. Recall that E. C. offers his vision as explanation for his commitment to Emaricdulfe; describing this shared sorrow explains that commitment in a way that any number of facile sonnets cannot. I believe that this death did take place and the poet felt he must describe it in order to illustrate fully the depth of his feelings for Emaricdulfe.

**Treatment of the text**

I adopt the Folger Library copy as copy-text and call attention to variations with the Huntington Library copy in textual notes. The Folger copy presents two stop-press corrections, both appearing in Sonnet XXXIII and both documented in textual notes. Glosses provide relevant definitions, information, and suggested readings for terms and ideas that might otherwise be lost to modern readers. As noted in the commentary, some material is found in *The Oxford English Dictionary Online* (http://www.oed.com), which the notes refer to as *OED*. Though I maintain old spellings, in accordance with modern usage I modernize certain features as appropriate: i for j; v for u; w for vv; and s for slash s. With the exception of Æ and æ, I expand ligatures. I replace Sonnet XIIII’s ô with *oh*, noting the change in the commentary. Throughout, I supply an italicized *n* for the original text’s tilde. I alter original punctuation and supply punctuation only in order to
clarify meaning, and I note each alteration in a textual note. I reduce from oversize to capital the initial letter of each sonnet’s first line, reduce from capital to lower case the second letter of each sonnet’s first line, and eliminate catch-words. Sonnet XVIII presents the only instance of a crowded line necessitating a turndown, and I regularize the spacing of that line. I do not attempt to reproduce ornamental borders or printer’s device, though I describe the borders in an introductory comment and include a facsimile of the 1595 title page.

**Abbreviations for frequently cited works**

**A&S**  

**Amoretti**  

**Arbor**  

**Cælica**  

**Canzoniere**  

**Chloris**  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poem</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Licia</td>
<td>Giles Fletcher</td>
<td>Licia (1593), in Elizabethan Sonnet Cycles, vol. 3,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Except for his sonnets, all references to Shakespeare’s works are found in *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974).
Emaricdulfe with textual notes and commentary

Facsimile, 1595 Title page (from Folger Shakespeare Library copy)
SONNETS
WRITTEN BY
E. C. Esquier.

Non sunt ut quondam, plena favoris erant.

At London,
Printed for Matthew Law.
1595.


Non [. . .] erant  Cf. Ovid, Tristia 1.1.63-64 (trans. A. D. Melville, Oxford: Clarendon, 1992) 2: “Yet come in secret, lest my poems harm you: / They’re not so favoured as they used to be.” In this passage, the poet tells his book of poetry to enter Rome secretly, lest it suffer guilt by association. Ovid, in exile, fears that his earlier love poems will taint this book. The reference possibly suggests a basic change in the relationship recorded in this sequence and attempts, perhaps, to account for the reluctance to use a full name in the attribution.

TO MY VERY GOOD

friends, John Zouch, and Edward Fitton, Esquires.

Both loving friends, forasmuch as by reason of an ague, I was enforced to keep my chamber, and to abandon idlenes, I tooke in hande my pen to finish an idle worke I had begun, at the command and service of a faire Dame, being most exquisitely well featured, and of as excellent good carriage, adorned with vertue: and understanding the storie, and knowing you both to be of sufficient valour, wit, and honestie, presumed to dedicate the same to you, not doubting but that you will vouchsafe for my sake, to maintaine the honour of so sweete a Saint. Thus craving you my deare friends to be patrones of these fewe Sonnets: being well perswaded you will excuse my /A3/ unlearned writing, in regard you may be assured I am no scholler, as dooth appeare by this my worthles verse: hoping you will receive my goodwill with content, as I my selfe shall be then best satisfied. And so wishing you both as much comfortable happines, as to my soule: I bid you heartily farewell.

Yours in all true friendship. E. C.

[A3v]


idlenes . . . idle E. C. presents a conventional front; the writing of poetry is considered a frivolous occupation during the period, so poets, even if they have labored over their poems, often suggest nonchalance. Sir Philip Sidney works
from this stance even as he pens his “Defence of Poesy” (1595; ed. Duncan-Jones), 212: “I will give you a nearer example of myself, who (I know not by what mischance) in these my not old years and idlest times having slipped into the title of a poet. . . .” *Idle worke* would seem to be an oxymoron. Note, too, the repetition, a common rhetorical trick of which E. C. seems particularly fond.

3 *command* Typically, the object of a sonneteer’s affections would protest against public representations of the relationship, so the suggestion that Emaricdulfe commanded this work is interesting. Perhaps she imagined that the work would be circulated among friends but not published.

*Dame* suggests a married woman

4 *exquisitely well featured* “well-formed; comely, beautiful” (*OED* 1. b Obs.)

*good carriage* Either or both of the following apply to describe what E. C. means here: *carriage* is defined as the “manner of carrying one's body; bodily deportment, bearing, mien” (*OED* 13) and the “manner of conducting oneself socially; demeanour; deportment, behaviour” (*OED* 14.a arch.).

5 *understanding the storie* The suggestion, of course, is that the poems that follow are associated with persons and events that are known to Zouch and Fitton. Perhaps E. C. does write of real people and events that are lost to modern readers, or perhaps he suggests so here merely to stimulate interest in his work.

7-8 *vouchsafe. . . sweete a Sainte* E. C. relies upon the affections of Zouch and Fitton in maintaining Emaricdulfe’s anonymity, once again hinting at the potential for gossip inherent in this work.

*vouchsafe* show a gracious willingness (*OED* v. 5)

*so sweete a Sainte* possibly suggests Mary and hints at Emaricdulfe’s own given name.

9 /*A3/ A page break occurs in the original.

10 *unlearned writing* Here, as with the admissions below that he is “*no scholler*” and that he offers only “*worthles verse,*” E. C. takes the conventional position that his poetry is a trivial offering; he reiterates his unworthiness as poet throughout the sequence.
SONNET. I.

When first the rage of love assail’d my hart,
   And towards my thoughts his fiery forces bent:
Eftsoones to shield me from his wounding dart,
   Arm’d with disdaine, I held him in contempt. 4
Curl’d headed love when from mount Erecine
He saw this geere, so ill thereof he brookes,
That thence he speedes unwilling to be seene,
   Till he had tane his stand in thy faire lookes. 8
There all inrag’d his golden bow he bent,
   And nockt his arrow like a pretie elfe:
Which when I saw, I humbly to him went,
   And cri’d hold, hold, and I will yeeld my selfe. 12
Thus Cupid conquer’d me, and made me sweare
Homage to him, and dutie to my deare.

A4

1 When [ . . . ] hart  Cf. Hek. 35 (1582), 256: “When first mine eyes were blinded with Desire”; Diella 1 (1596): “When first the feather’d God did strike my hart.”

rage of love  Cf. A&S 62 (1591), 177: “With rage of love, I called my love unkind.”

Love  Cupid. The portrayal of Cupid as a mischievous, tyrannical boy was the popular presentation among Elizabethan poets. The image originates in an Alexandrian Greek conception of Eros and comes to Elizabethans through the translations of French poets such as Ronsard, du Bellay, and Belleau.
3  **Eftsoones**  soon afterward; archaic by 1595 and used, perhaps, in conscious imitation of Spenser

4  **Arm’d [. . .] contempt**  Cf. *A&S* 2 (1591), 153: “I loved but straight did not what love decreed: / At length to love’s decrees I, forced, agreed.”

5  **Erecine**  common surname for Aphrodite/Venus, taken from the name of a Sicilian mountain, Mt. Eryx, Venus’s abode

6  **geere**  jeer; taunt (*OED* *n.*2)

   **brookes**  bears, puts up with

8  **tane**  taken. Cupid’s hiding in the face, or in this case possibly more specifically, the eyes of the beloved, a popular conceit of the time. Cf. *A&S* 8 (1591), 156: “At length he [Cupid] perched himself in Stella’s joyful face”; *Idea* 2 (1593), 3: “And in your eye the boy that did the murder”; *Licia* 13 (1593), 96: “Whereat the boy did fly away for fear / To Licia’s eyes, where safe intrenched he lay”; *Coelia* 2 (1594): “Love coopt behind the chariot [chariot] of her eye”; *Phillis* 13 (1595), 26: “Love in thine eyes does build his bower, / And sleeps within their pretty shine”; *Amoretti* 8 (1591), 71: “Thru through your bright beams doth not the blinded guest / shoot out his darts to base affections wound?”

10  **stand**  positioned in cover, as if for ambush, especially in hunting

12  **nockt**  notched, fixed the arrow onto the bowstring

12  **elfe**  quite common, but E. C. may consciously imitate Spenser, whose *Faerie Queene* (1590) so refers to some fairyland knights. Cf. 1.1.17; 1.4.51; 1.5.2; etc.

12  **And cri’d [. . .] selfie**  Cf. *Chloris* 27 (1596), 64: “I yeeld to thee O love thou art the stronger”; Sidney, *Certain Sonnets* 1 (1579; ed. Duncan-Jones): “I yield, O love, unto thy loathed yoke.”
SONNET. II.

Homage to love, dutie to thee my deare
   Deare mistris of my thoughts, Queene of my joy:
Then my lifes gratious planet bright appeare,
   My hearts deepe griefe and sorrow to destroy.  
4
Be not (I thee beseech) my cares maintainer:
   For in they power it lyes to save or strike,
To kill the griefe, or els the grieves retainer,
   With love or hate, the infant of dislike.  
8
O if that cruell love did not command
   To slay my heart without remorse or pitie:
Or if he did, that sad doome countermand,
   And be a gratious Queene of gentle mercie:
Sweet, shew thy selfe divine in being pitifull,
   For nature of the gods is to be mercifull.

[A4’]

8    hate, the] hate the
11    did, that] did that
13    Sweet, shew] Sweet shew

1    Homage [. . .] deare  echoes the final line of Sonnet 1: “Homage to him, and
dutie to my deare,” a linking strategy called anadiplosis.  E. C., like other poets of
the period, frequently links sonnets this way, though few can manage a corona
sequence, in which each poem is linked to its successor “until in the final sonnet
we return in the last line to the first line of the whole sequence” (Fuller 41).

3 Then [...] appeare “Brighter” must be understood for “bright”: Emaricdulfe is brighter than even the speaker’s gracious guiding star. Cf. *A&S* 68 (1591), 180: “Stella, the only planet of my light.” Throughout the sequence, the modern “than” is written as “then,” a conventional spelling of the period.

gratious kind

6 strike deprive [the speaker] suddenly of life or faculties, as if by a physical blow (*OED* v. 46). The verb is often used of a planet and therefore recalls “gratious planet” in line 3.

7 To kill [...] retainer If she loves him, Emaricdulfe will kill the grief the speaker feels; if she hates him, she will kill him, the “retainer” of the grief.

9 if that if only that.

love Cupid

11 Or if he did, that sad doome countermand The addition of a comma makes clear that it is Emaricdulfe, not Cupid, who is being asked to countermand the judgment.


countermand reverse

12 And be [...] mercie By countermanding Cupid’s judgment, Emaricdulfe demonstrates mercy.

gratious Queene of gentle mercie recalls the second line’s “Queene of my joys” and the regal verb “countermand,” in line 11. “Gratious” conventionally describes royalty, but also suggests Emaricdulfe’s kind and generous nature.

mercie Rhymes with “pitie” only by virtue of the “extra,” unstressed syllable.

13-14 Sweet, shew [...] be mercifull With the addition of a comma, “sweet” serves as a form of address, clearing up the awkwardness of Emaricdulfe’s being asked to show herself both sweet and divine. Cf. *Diana* 1.3.5 (1592), 134: “Shew then the power of thy dyvinityes / By graunting me thy favor to obtain”; 55 (1591), 90: “Then sith to heaven ye lykened are the best, / be lyke in mercy as in
all the rest.” The lines of the E. C.’s couplet contain twelve syllables, a departure from the conventional ten.

to be mercifull  Cf. Hebrews 8:12, Bishops’ Bible (1595) (STC2 2165): “For I will be mercifull to their unrighteousnesse, and their sinnes and their iniquities will I thinke upon no more”; Merchant of Venice  4.1.193-195: “But mercy is above this sceptered sway, / It is enthroned in the hearts of kings, / It is an attribute to God himself.”
SONNET.  III.

Why doe I pleade for mercie unto thee,  
When from offence my life and soule are cleere?  
For in my heart I neere offended thee,  
Unlesse the hie pitch of his flight it were.  
Aye, that is it, I to too well consider,  
Thy sparkling beautie is the sunne that melted:  
My thoughts the waxe that joyn’d his wings together,  
And till my very fall I never felt it:  
Despaire the Ocean is that swallowed me,  
Where I like Icarus continue drowned,  
Till with thy beautie I revived be,  
And with loves immortalitie be crowned.  
True love immortall is, then love me truly:  
Sweet doe, and then thy name Ile honor duly.

Here E. C. explores a conventional topic, suggesting that in his aspirations for Emaricdulfe’s affection, he, like Icarus, flies too high. The conceit is exploited by many sonneteers, who compare the dazzling beauty of the lovers to the not-to-be-approached sun. Cf. Diana 1.1.2 (1592), 116:

Fly low (deare Loue) thy sun dost thow not see?  
Take heed doe not so neare his rayes aspire  
Least for thy pride inflam’d with kindled ire  
It burne thy wings as it hath burned me; . . . .

Diana 1.1.7, 121: “Blame not my hearte for flying up so high / Sith thow art cause that it
this flight begun”; *Delia* 27 (1592), 44: “But my desire’s wings, so high aspiring, / Now melted with the sun that hath possess’d me”; *Fidessa* 10 (1596), 86: “Clip not, sweet love, the wings of my desire, / Although it soar aloft and mount too high.” The Icarus myth, of course, is as old as Western literature itself but gained popularity during the period among those who saw as liberating Icarus’s god-like aspirations. Phillipe Desportes, for instance, presents a passionate argument for the idealized notion of aspiration embodied in Icarus: “He died pursuing a noble quest, heaven was his desire, the sea his sepulcher. Is there a finder purpose or a richer tomb?” (*Amours de Hippolyte I*, 1573; trans. Brereton, 114). Poets of the French Renaissance—du Bellay, Ronsard, Marot, and others—exerted enormous influence over the English sonneteers, for almost any educated English poet quite probably read them and might first have been introduced to Petrarch by his French followers. According to Anne Lake Prescott, Desportes was a favorite model for the English poets, who found him “about as easily copied as a poet can be” (133). One notes here, though, that Desportes’ wonder at Icarus’s ambition has been trivialized at least a bit; instead of aiming for the powers of the gods, E. C.’s Icarus aims for Emaricdulfe’s heart.

5   *Aye*] I

2     *cleere* innocent

4     *hie pitch* high pitch, referring to the height to which a falcon soars before it swoops down on its prey; often used figuratively during the period. Cf. 2 Henry *VI* 2.1.11-12: “They know their master loves to be aloft, / And bears his thoughts above his falcon’s pitch”; *Sonnets* 7 (1609), 8+: “But when from highmost pitch, with weary car, / Like feeble age he reeleth from the day”; *Fidessa* 61 (1596), 137: “Wonder, fame, praise, time, her worth doth raise / To hiest pitch of dread astonishment.”

*his flight* the heart’s flight
The original “I” of the text illustrates what Hope Glidden refers to as the “slippage between oral and written forms” (2) that was common during the period as the language was becoming more regulated. Although not the case here, Glidden makes the point that this fluidity of language afforded poets additional opportunity for wordplay. Drayton’s *Idea V* (1594) depends upon the aural rather than the written, as the poem sets forth a dramatic argument between “No!” and “I.”

*to too* common usage during the period, meaning “too too”

*it* refers to “thy sparkling beauty” in line 6. Until he fell in love, the speaker had not truly felt the power of Emaricdulfe’s beauty.

*continue* remain. Generally, the speaker will remain hopeless unless he is rescued by Emaricdulfe’s love and beauty.

*revived* revivèd

*True love [. . .] love me truly* an example of antimetabole, a rhetorical device that inverts the order of repeated words in order to sharpen their sense or contrast the ideas they convey. E. C. uses the device liberally.
SONNET. III.

My forlorn muse that never trode the path
That leades to top of hie Pierion mount,
Nor never washt within the livesome bath
Of learnings spring, bright Aganippe fount:
Mine artles pen that never yet was dipt
In sacred nectar of sweet Castalie,
My lovesicke heart that ever hath yclipt,

Emaricedulfe the Queene of chastitie:

Shall now learne skill my Ladies fame to raise,
Shall now take paines her vertues to record,
And honor her with more immortall praise,
Then ever heretofore they could affoord:
Both heart, and pen, and muse shall think it dutie,
With sighe-swolne words to blaze her heavenly beutie.

[A5']

E. C. postures here as one of the uninitiated, overwhelmed by the need to praise his mistress but unsophisticated in the art of love poetry. Convention demands that poets admit their inadequacies and call upon whatever muse or tradition might make their words worthy of their mistresses. Cf. Chloris 1 (1596), 38: “Curteous Caliope, vouchsafe to lend / Thy helping hand to my untuned song, / And grace these lines, which I to write pretend, / Compeld by loue, which doth poore Corin wrong”; Cynthia (1595), 117: “But ah (alas) how can mine infant Muse / (That never heard of Helicon before) / Performe my promise past.” Contrast A&S 15 (1591), 158, in which Sidney berates poets who turn to Parnassus generally and Petrarch in particular for inspiration instead of
looking to Stella.

7 yclipt] I clipt
14 sighe-swolne] sigheswolne

1 forlorne Along with the conventional understanding of hopelessness and sadness, the word carries an archaic meaning, from the old verb “forlese,” of being irretrievably lost.
2 Pierion mount Mount Pieria, dwelling place of the Muses
3 livesome full of life, spirited
4 Aganippe fountain on Mount Helicon, sacred to the Muses and source of poetic inspiration. Cf. A&S 74 (1591), 184: “I never drank of Aganippe well.”
6 Castalie proper name of a spring on Mount Parnassus, sacred to the Muses; often used allusively.
7 yclipt clasped with the arms, embraced, hugged; the speaker’s heart has always embraced Emaricdulfe. Again, the poet seems somewhat purposefully archaic. Cf. Fidessa 3 (1596), 79: “O that I had my Mistress at that bay! / To kiss and clip me till I ran away!”
8 Emaricdulfe first mention of the beloved’s name. Here, as in the title, the spelling includes a final “e,” but at other moments in the sequence the “e” is dropped, presumably because the printer needed the letter elsewhere or had difficulty fitting line to page. Or, perhaps, the compositor thought the final “e” superfluous.
9 Shall [. . .] raise The muse, the pen, and the heart shall all now learn skill.
12 affoord achieve
13 Both heart, and pen, and muse “Both” suffices, though there are three elements. These elements as listed reverse the order of their introduction in lines 1, 5, and 7.
14  **blaze**  proclaim, make known
SONNET. V.

Nature (Emaricdulf) did greatly favour,
    When first her portrait she began to pencill,
And rob’d the heavens of their chiefest honour:
    Their sacred beautie all her parts doth tincel.  4
Heavens Hyrarkie is in her bright eyes sphered:
    The Graces sport in her cheekes dimpled pits:
Trophies of majestie in her face be reared,
    And in her lookes stately Saturnia sits.  8
Modest Diana in her thoughts doth glorie,
    Love-lacking Vesta in her heart inthroned:
The quired Muses on her lips doe storie
    Their heaven sweet notes, as if that place they owned.  12
But aye is me, Cupid and Venus faire
Have no degree, save in her golden haire.

[A6]

The “portrait” sonnet is a convention of the genre; here E. C. manages to combine several commonplaces, presenting a “blazon” of Emaricdulfe’s qualities while investing her with traits found in mythological figures. Cf. Licia 11 (1593), 94.

3    their] her
4    Their] There
In other instances throughout the work, parentheses suggest direct address or parenthetical comment; here, they appear to indicate “Emaricdulf” as the object of the verb “favour,” though the poet has not used them to indicate such elsewhere in the text. *Emaricdulf* lacks the final “e” here.

**her** Emaricdulfe’s

**she** Nature. It is a standard of the sonnet sequences that Nature gladly sacrifices herself to beautify the mistress.

*And rob’d the heavens* Cf. *Canzoniere* 159, 251: “From what part of the heavens, from what Idea / did Nature take the model to derive / that lovely charming face by which she chose / to show down here her power up above?”

**her** Emaricdulfe’s

**Heavens Hyrarkie** each of the three divisions of angels, every one comprising three orders, in the system of Dionysius the Aeropagite. *Heavens* is monosyllabic.

**spheered** placed in a sphere or among other spheres. Predates the *OED’s* 1606: *Troilus and Cressida* 1.3.89-91: “And therefore is the glorious planet Sol / In noble eminence enthron’d and sphear’d / Amidst the other.” Here, as in other moments in the collection, E. C. turns to a conventional image of the period: the Ptolemaic universe, which is understood as the model of order and decorum and which places humanity in the center of the universe (see Fig. 2, below). The suggestion that angels are reflected in Emaricdulfe’s eyes speaks not only to her goodness but to her *rightness*, to the idea that praising her is decorous.

**The Graces sport [. . .] pits** Cf. *A&S* 11 (1591), 157: “In her cheek’s pit thou [Cupid] did’st thy pit-fold set,” where “pit” (for dimple) suggests a depression or other hazard that serves as a snare.

**Graces** The daughters of Zeus and Eurynome—Aglaia, Euphrosyne, and Thalia—personify grace and beauty.
Saturnia another name for Hera/Juno, the matriarch of the gods, consort of Zeus/Jupiter, and often emblem of regality and authority. Cf. Canzoniere 248, 353: “all virtue, / all loveliness, all regal-mannered ways / joined in one body . . .”

Modest Diana also known as Artemis and Cynthia, from her birthplace, Mount Cynthus, daughter of Zeus and Leto, renowned for her chaste behavior. That Emaricdulfe holds Diana in her thoughts signals her own chaste nature. Cf. Venus and Adonis 724-725: “so do thy lips / Make modest Dian cloudy and forlorn.”

Vesta in [. . .] inthroned “Is” must be understood: Vesta is in her heart inthroned. A devotion to the virginal Vesta again suggests modesty generally and Emaricdulfe’s chastity in particular. Cf. Venus and Adonis: “Love-lacking vestals, and self-loving Nuns.”

Vesta Roman female divinity, daughter of Saturn, goddess of home and hearth

quired assembled in a choir or company; predates the OED’s 1796. The Muses, in choir, engender a rich variety of inspired, musical expression when Emaricdulfe speaks.
**storie**  The Muses sing and speak beautifully through Emaricdulfe.

**heaven**  heavenly; monosyllabic

**that place**  Emaricdulfe’s lips, which are equated with heaven

**But [. . .] haire**  The couplet suggests that despite his admiration for Emaricdulfe’s stateliness and chastity, his attention is captured by her sexual appeal. The beauty of Emaricdulfe’s hair is sensual, not sacred as in line 4. Cf. *Licia 5* (1593), 88: “Love with her hair my love by force hath tied.”

**aye is me**  suggests a lover’s sigh

**degree**  a stage or position in the scale of dignity or rank. Exalted rank is represented by Emaricdulfe, but Venus and Cupid, representing lust, possess no status apart from their association with her. The image of Venus and Cupid hidden in Emericdulfe’s hair is continued in the opening of the next sonnet.
SONNET. VI.

Within her haire Venus and Cupid sport them:
   Sometimes they twist it Amberlike in gold,
To which the whistling windes doe oft resort them,
   As if they strove to have the knots unrold: 4
Sometimes they let their golden tresses dangle,
   And therewith nets and amorous gins they make,
Wherewith the hearts of lovers to intangle:
   Which once inthral’d, no ransome they will take. 8
But as do tyrants sitting in their thrones,
   Looke on their slaves with tyrannizing eyes:
So they no whit regarding lovers mones,
   Doome worlds of hearts to endles slaveries, 12
Unless they subject-like sweare to adore,
And serve Emaricdulf for evermore.

[A6v]

This poem is an example of another often-used conceit, describing the lover’s hair as a lovely, golden snare, a view foreshadowed in the concluding line of the previous sonnet, linking the two poems. Petrarch’s Canzoniere 59 provides the model for this conceit: “Taken from me since then is the sweet sight, / she, of her blond hair; / . . . / I won’t have Love loose me from such a knot” (95).
1. Within [...] them  Venus and Cupid play in Emaricdulfe’s hair.
2. Amberlike  Amber was somewhat exotic, valued for its rich, golden color and malleability.
3. To [...] them  Cf. Amoretti 81 (1591), 101: “Fayre is my love, when her fayre golden heares. / With the loose wynd ye waving chance to marke.”
4. knots  curls. Cf. Canzoniere 90, 145: “She’d let her gold hair flow free in the breeze / that whirled it into thousands of sweet knots.”
5-8. Sometimes [...] take  a conventional image of the lover’s hair holding an admirer fast. Cf. Delia 14 (1592), 37: “Those amber locks are those same nets, my dear, / Wherewith my liberty thou didst surprise”; Diana 1.3.3 (1594), 132: “My Ladie so the while she doth assay / In curled knotts fast to entangle me”; Chloris 46 (1596), 83: “I little did respect love’s crueltie, / I never thought his snares should me enthrall: / But since hir tresses have intangled me, / My pining flocke did never heare me sing”; Amoretti 73 (1591), 97: “My hart, whom none with servile bands can tye, / but the fayre tresses of your golden hayre”; Licia 5 (1593), 88: “Love with her hair my love by force hath tied”; Canzoniere 198, 289: “there with her lovely eyes and hair she binds / my weary heart and lifts my vital spirits”; A&S 12 (1591), 157: “That from her locks, thy day-nets, none ‘scapes free.”
5. gins  engines, devices. The g is soft.
6. they  Venus and Cupid
7. tyrants [...] tyrannizing  an example of polyptoton, repetition of words with the same root but different endings. This kind of wordplay flourishes during the period.
11. no whit  not at all
8. mones  moans
SONNET. VII.

I will persever ever for to love thee,
   O cease divinest sweetnes to disdaine mee:
Albeit my loves true types can never move thee,
   Yet from affection let not pride detaine thee. 4
Although my heart once purchast thy displeasure
   With overbold presumption on thy favour:
Yet now Ile sacrifice my richest treasure
   Unto thy name and much admired honour:  8
Teares are the treasure of my griefe-gal’d hart,
   Which on (thy love) my altar I have dropped
To thee, that my thoughts temples godesse art,
   Hoping thy anger would thereby be stopped. 12
If these to get thy grace may not suffice,
My heart is slaine, accept that sacrifice.

Again, E. C. offers his take on a thoroughly conventional topic for the sonnet sequences of the period, the sacrifice poem, which was based on a religious understanding of ritual sacrifice. The offending would-be lover, seeking expiation for the sin of presumption, offers as sacrifice his tears and heart to the object of his worship and affection.

1 persever with a stress on the second syllable, rhyming with “ever”
3 types perfect representations. Tears are the “type” or symbol of the suffering
heart of a lover. During the period, the study of typology results in an understanding of the world in which the phrase “loves true types” suggests a model of love that is foretold and inevitable. The concept of types is grounded in a study of the Bible that seeks to link Old Testament to New. The near-sacrifice of Isaac, then, foretells the sacrifice of Christ, which becomes the perfect representation of sacrifice.

**move thee** a feminine rhyme, with “love thee” in line 1. See also “disdaine mee/detaine thee” and “displeasure/treasure” for other examples of feminine rhyme herein.

5-6 **Although [ . . . ] favour** hints at some past indiscretion. Cf. Sonnet III.

**overbold presumption** Cf. Delia 28 (1592), 44: “My slender means presumed too high a part; / Her thunder of disdaine forced me retire.”

9-10 **Teares [ . . . ] dropped** Tears represent the speaker’s contrition and desire for expiation. Cf. Diana “To his absent Diana” (1592), 109: “And when thou deignst on their black teares to looke, / Shed not one teare my teares to recompense”; Chloris 4 (1596), 41: “Whole showres of teares to Chloris I will powre, / As true oblations of my sincere love”; Phillis 37 (1595), 67: “These fierce incessant waves that stream along my face, / Which show the certain proof of my ne’er-ceasing pains”; Coelia 4 (1594): “Have I not shed upon thine yvory shrine, / Huge drops of teares with large eruptions?”

**griefe-gal’d** chafed, rubbed bare by grief

**(thy love)** The parenthetical expression more fully identifies the speaker’s altar.

11 **To [ . . . ] art** Cf. Delia 15 (1592), 38: “To her that sits in my thoughts Temple sainted”; Amoretti 22 (1591), 77: “Her temple fayre is built within my mind.”

12 **Hoping [ . . . ] stopped** the speaker as supplicant, offering his tears in sacrifice upon the altar of Emaricdulfe’s love, seeking absolution and Emaricdulfe’s gracious mercy for whatever fault he has committed

13-14 **If [ . . . ] sacrifice** If his tears are not sufficient to earn Emaricdulfe’s pity, the speaker’s heart becomes the sacrifice.

**My [ . . . ] sacrifice** Note the movement from the speaker’s tears, his “richest
treasure” of line 7, to his heart as sacrifice. Cf. Fulke Greville, *Caelica* 68 (1633), 95: “While that my heart an altar I did make / To sacrifice desire and faith to love”; Barnfield, *The Affectionate Shepheard* (1594; ed. Klawitter), 106: “Hear on Loves Altar I doo offer up / This burning hart for my Soules sacrifice.”
SONNET. VIII.

Emaricdulf, thou grace to every grace,
   Thou perfect life of my imperfect living:
My thoughts sole heaven, my harts sweet resting place,
   Cause of my woe and comfort of my grieving.  4
O give me leave and I will tell thee how
   The haples place and the unhappie time,
Wherein and when my selfe I did avow
   To honour thee, and give my heart to thine.  8
Wearie with labour, labour that did like me,
   I gave my bodie to a sweet repose:
A golden slumber suddenly did strike me,
   That in deaths cabbin every sense did close:  12
And either in a heavenly trance or vision,
I then beheld this pleasing apparition.

This poem opens the dream vision sequence, a form that is extremely rare by the end of the sixteenth century, especially incorporated into an English sonnet sequence. In the commentary on Emaricdulfe found in the second volume of his English and Scottish Sonnet Sequences of the Renaissance (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1984), one of the few comments one finds on these poems, Holger Klein suggests that the story told in sonnets VIII through XI might be an allegory of Death and the Maiden. The story, he suspects, would be more fitting and felicitous “if the rider/guest became the husband of Emaricdulfe, and a girl was eventually born but died young—three days after the poet saw her, and before she was half-grown” (131). The events described within the dream
visions, especially the “vision within a vision” described in Sonnet XI, might be purely allegorical or otherwise fanciful, or they might reflect real events in Emaricdulfe’s life. If real, the dream vision carries a significance that would have been immediately felt by those few who knew the players but is lost to us now.

1 **thou [. . .] grace** Emaricdulfe represents the grace that is the essence of all the graces, in all the contexts of that term: religious, social, physical, mythological. Cf. *Diana* “To his mistress” (1592), 113: “Grace full of grace though in these verses heere / My love complayne of others then of thee”; *Macbeth* 5.9.37-39: “and what needful else / That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace, / We will perform in measure, time, and place.”

2 **perfect life [. . .] imperfect living** nice example of double polyptoton, with both words of the phrase altered in the repetition

4 **Cause [. . .] grieving** a Petrarchan paradox, as Emaricdulfe both causes and comforts the speaker’s pain

6 **hapless [. . .] unhappie** again, an example of polyptoton, repetition with variation

   hapless    unfortunate

7-8 **my [. . .] thine** This declaration seems to mark a second avowal of love, as in Sonnet I the speaker had already yielded to Cupid’s demands.

   wherein    where

9 **Wearie [. . .] me** the beginning of the dream vision suite

   labour, labour an example of epizeuxis, “repetition of a word with no other words in between” (Lanham70-71)

   labour [. . .] me labor that pleased me

11-12 **A golden slumber [. . .] close** Cf. *Fidessa* 15 (1596), 91: “Care-charmer sleepe! . . . Brother of quiet-death”; *Delia* 45 (1592), 53: “Care-charmer sleep, son of the sable night, / Brother to death. . . .” A convention of the period holds that sleep rehearses death.
deaths cabbin a casket. The speaker’s physical senses are dead to the world.

13 either [. . .] vision Though there seems to be some ambiguity here, an obsolete sense of the word “either,” when modifying plural nouns, means “both.” “Both” seems appropriate here; it is only in the speaker’s nearly unconscious state–his “trance”—that the “vision” appears. There might have been, during the period, a serious distinction between the two terms that is lost to us now.

14 pleasing The dream vision includes two scenes; only the first is pleasing in the conventional sense of the word.
SONNET. IX.

A Wight was clad most Foster-like in greene,
   With loyal horne and hunting pole in hand:
Whose chanting hounds were heard in woods & seene.
   The deere amasde before the rider stand:
The keeper bids goe choose the best in heard:
   The huntsman sayd, my choise is not to change:
And drawing neere the deere was sore affeard,
   Into the woods the rider spurd to range:
There did he view a faire young barren doe
   Within the hay fast by the purley side,
And woodman-like did take the winde then soe,
   Whereby the deere might better him abide.
At length he shot, and hit the very same
   Where he best likte and lov’d of all the game.

[A8]

In traditions of medieval poetry, the hunt was a conventional metaphor for the poet’s pursuit of his beloved. According to Maecelle Thiebaux, “By the sixteenth century the amatory chase found its principal expression in short lyrics, songs, and sonnets” (244). And Don Allen notes that “in French literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the game of love as a deer hunt, the beloved as a deer, and the lover as a wounded deer are common metaphoric equations” (105). E. C., then, is conventional here as he re-imagines the genesis of his love for Emaricdulfe. This poem recalls Amoretti 67 (1591), 95, though in Spenser’s poem, the “gentle deare” surrenders to the speaker of her own accord, leaving him to wonder at “a beast so wyld, / so goodly
wonne with her owne will beguyld.” See also Thomas Wyatt’s “Whoso list to hunt.” See Introduction, p. 33.

3  **seene.**] seene

10  **hay]** hey

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1  **Wight** archaic for “man”


**Foster-like** like a foster or forester (*OED n. 3*). While a forester is specifically charged with managing forest lands, in poetical and romantic use, the term often means huntsman.


**hunting pole** Hunting poles served two functions: one provided a means for carrying game after the hunt, and the other, with its sharpened end, was a spear for killing. (See fig. 3, below.)

**chanting hounds** Cf. *Midsummer Night’s Dream* 4.1.105-106: “And since we have the vaward of the day, / My love shall hear the music of my hounds.”

**seene** wordplay, perhaps, suggesting “scene” as this dream vision is played out

2  **amasde** dazed

6  **my [. . .] change** The rider will remain true to his original choice. Cf. *Fidessa* 44 (1596), 120: “No choice of change can ever change my mind; / Choiceless my choice, the choicest choice alive”; *Sonnets* 10 (1609), 12: “O change thy thought, that I may change my mind.”
Fig. 3 Two men, one with a three-pronged pike and the other carrying a net over his arm. Retrieved from digital.library.mcgill.ca/.../images/tavola4.jpg

7 **drawing neere** as the huntsman draws near

**sore affeard** Cf. Bishops’ Bible Luke 2:9 (1576; EEBO): “And loe, the Angel of the Lorde stoode hard by them, and the glorie of the Lorde shone round about them, and they were sore afraid.”

8 **range** ride over a large area

9 **barren** when used of animals, not pregnant in the usual season (OED a. 2.a)

10 **purley** obsolete form of **purlieu**: a piece or tract of land on the fringe or border of a forest. Cf. *As You Like It* 4.3.75-77: “Pray you (if you know) / Where in the purlieus of this forest stands / A sheep-cote fene’d about with olive-trees?” Additionally, to hunt “in the purlieus” is to pursue illicit love, making the word choice here intriguing, as it presents the possibility that Emaricdulfe is somehow an unacceptable object of the speaker’s affection.

11-12 **take [. . .] abide** moved downwind so as to be undetected by the deer
SONNET. X.

But stay conceit where he best likt to love,
   Yea better he if better best might bee:
The Rider thought the best of better prove,
   Till fortune sign’d his fortune for to see.  4
Now wearie he betooke himselfe to rest,
   Devised where he might good harbour finde:
Emaricdulf (quoth he) I am her guest,
   And thither went: she greeted him most kinde:  8
Welcome sayd she, three welcomes more she gave:
   His hand she tooke, and talking with him then,
What wine or beere to drinke wilt please you have,
   Sixe welcomes more, and so she made them ten.
He dranke his fill, and fed to his desire,
   Refresht himselfe, and then did home retire.

[A8v]

E. C. quite possibly turns to a well-known Middle English lay, the story of Sir Launfal, for inspiration in telling his dream vision. Sir Launfel appears in Marie de France’s twelfth century Lanval and a late fourteenth century version written by Thomas Chestre (Laskaya & Salisbury 201). Those are ealy written version of the story, which undoubtedly existed in earlier oral versions. In the story, Sir Launfel, one of Arthur’s knights, finds himself weary, as does the rider here, and enjoys the ministrations of two fairy lovers, something that is clearly suggested in E. C.’s dream vision. The language introducing Sir Launfal’s dalliance with these fairy lovers certainly calls to mind E. C.’s: “He lyghte adoun, and gan abyde / Under a fayr forest . . . / And sette him doun to reste.
Thus sat the knight yn symplyté, / In the schadwe under a tre, / Ther that hym lykede beste” (221-228).

1-3 **stay [ . . . ] prove**  The rider’s fancy has fixed keenly on the one he finds attractive, who cannot be bettered.

**stay**  stop

**conceit**  notion, with the sense of fancy, imagination.  Cf. *Hamlet* 2.2.551-554: “this player here, / But in a fiction, in a dream of passion, / Could force his soul so to his own conceit / That from her working all the visage wann’d.”


**prove**  turn out better (*OED* v. 10 *Obs.*)

4 **Till [ . . . ] see**  until fortune fixes its mark upon him, anticipating his suffering.

Note the repetition of “fortune”: throughout the sequence, E. C. makes use of this popular poetic device.  Introduces the second part of the dream vision.

**sign’d**  placed a distinguishing mark upon hunter has killed (*OED* v. 1., 2.a, *fig.*). “Sign” is a term often associated with the hunt.  Cf. *Julius Caesar*: “here thy hunters stand, / Sign’d in thy spoil.”

5-6 **Now [ . . . ] finde**  Cf. *Amoretti* 67 (1591), 95: “Lyke as a huntsman after weary chace, / Seeing the game from him escapt away, / Sits down to rest him in some shady place.”

**devised**  devisèd

**harbour**  place of rest.

7 **Emariculf [ . . . ] her guest**  Emariculfe herself seems to extend welcome here,
though E. C. evokes a tradition of more mysterious, ethereal welcoming women, from the time of medieval lays through Keats’ La Belle Dame. See, for example, Thomas Churchyard’s A Dreame, in Churchyard’s Challenge (1593; EEBO), in which a mysterious hostess reassures the inchanted speaker, “A woman sure I am” then leads him into a hall to serve him food and drink: “Not for to pay as travelers do, / for every thing they take: / But feed and find great welcome to, / full free for friendships sake.” In The Folktale Stith Thompson describes a “fairy lover” that might serves as a potential model for these encounters. According to Thompson, these female fairy lovers, who are often embodied as wood- or water-nymphs, desire relationships with mortal men, entice them, and then are likely to abandon them (247). Here, the vision of Emaricdulfe appears in a wooded setting and attends to the dreamer in a way that might very well entice. The fairy or wood-nymph lover embodies one of the complaints of the sonneteers, that the mistress entices lovers but eventually abandons them to their sorrows.

so [. . .] ten The poet very carefully enumerates the welcomes to arrive at ten, a conventional number suggesting abundance. Cf., later, Sonnet XIII: “oh ten times happie was that day”; Measure for Measure 5.1.44-45: “this is all as true as it is strange; / Nay, it is ten times true, for truth is truth”; Sonnets 6 (1609), 8: “That’s for thyself to breed another thee, / Or ten times happier be it ten for one. / Ten times thyself were happier than thou art, / If ten of thine ten times refigured thee”; Louise Labe’s “Kiss me again” in Three Women Poets, Renaissance and Baroque, trans. Frank Warnke (Cranbury, NJ: Associated U Presses, 1987), 37+: “Let me soothe the pain, / Giving you now ten kisses more, but sweetly.” The insistence on “ten” might contain a clue to identity, as well. For instance, it might suggest a heraldic device, or it might intimate a specific name, such as Fit-ten or Fitton (variously spelled), the surname of one of E. C.’s dedicatees, and as well the name of Mary Fitton, Edward Fitton’s sister, the woman considered by many to be Shakespeare’s Dark Lady. One Zouch family heraldic shield is adorned with ten bezants.
SONNET. XI.

Forthwith I saw, and with the sight was blest,
A beautious issue of a beautious mother,
A young *Emaricdulf*, whose sight increast
Millions of joyes each one exceeding other:  
Faire springing branch sprong of a hopefull stocke,
On thee more beauties nature had bestowde,
Then in her heavenly storehouse she doth locke,
Or may be seene disperst on earth abrode.  
Thrise had the Sunne the world encompassed,
Before this blossome with deaths winter nipt:
O cruell death that thus hast withered
So faire a branch before it halfe was ripte!  
Halfe glad with joyes, and halfe appal’d with feares,
I wak’t, and found my cheekes bedwe’d with teares.

B

The vision set forth herein seems to suggest a real loss and creates a certain gravity not often associated with the English sequences. While Dante and Petrarch each lament the deaths of their mistresses, presumably describing actual losses, such episodes are, for the most part, absent from the English sonnet cycles, perhaps because, felicitously, the English mistresses did not die. In describing the loss of Emaricdulfe’s young child (it remains unclear whether the child is a boy or girl), E. C. brings to his collection a sense of the profound loss that Dante and Petrarch describe more fully. One might ask whether the loss and grief are purely imaginative and represent E. C.’s efforts to comport more fully with the medieval sensibilities he displays at other moments in his
sequence. However, if this poem describes a real loss, it represents one of the sequence’s best clues for discerning Emaricdulfé’s and E. C.’s identities.

1  **Forthwith** immediately
2  **beautious** Repetition, as here, was a conventional rhetorical feature of the period’s poetry.
3  **whose sight increast** the sight of whom increased
5  **springing** originating by birth or generation

**hopefull** promising. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*: “She’s the hopeful lady of my earth.”

**stocke** literally, stem; figuratively, line of descent. “Zouch,” the surname of one of E. C.’s dedicatees, can mean “stocke,” as in family tree, in French, perhaps suggesting a rather close link to the narrative.

6-7  **On thee more beauties [. . .] doth locke** recalls Sonnet V, in which the speaker describes Emaricdulfé’s having been adorned by nature with all the heavens’ beauty

9  **thrise [. . .] encompassed** ambiguous: Death might have claimed this child after three days or three years.

**encompassed** encompassèd


**blossome** “one lovely and full of promise” (*OED* n. 2.b). Cf. *Titus Andronicus*:
“Sweet blowse, you are a beauteous blossom sure”; 1 Henry VI 4.7.15-16: “and there dies / my Icarus, my blossom, in his pride.”

12 **ripte** ripened
13 **appal’ed** appalled; terrified, made pale
14 **I wak’t** signals the end of the dream vision suite
SONNET. XII.

My cheeks bedew’d, my eies even drown’d with teares—
   O fearfull storme that causde so great a showre!
Griefe ty’d my tongue, sorrow did stop my eares,
   Because earth lost her sweetest paramoure.
O cruell heavens and regardlesse fates!
   If the worlds beautie had compassion’d you,
You might by powre have shut deaths ebongates,
   And been remorsefull at her heavenly view.
O foolish nature why didst thou create
   A thing so faire, if fairness be neglected?
But fairest things be subject unto fate,
   And in the end are by the fates rejected.
Yong Emaric yet thou crost the destinie,
For thou surviv’st in fame, that nere shall die.

[B1³]

1    teares--] teares

1    even  steadily (OED adv. 1)
2    storme  “a passionate manifestation of feeling” (OED n. 3.b)
3    stop  plug
4    paramoure  While this term can intimiate a sexual relationship, evidenced by
   Flute’s assertion that “a paramour is (God bless us!) a thing of naught”
   (Midsummer Night’s Dream 4.2.13-14), earlier usage could suggest either
religious devotion—the Virgin Mary was sometimes referred to as a paramour—or courtly devotion—unattainable objects of courtly love were referred to as paramours. Neither of these usages seems quite right here, but the word clearly suggests a pure, innocent love.

5 **cruell** [. . .] **fates** The fates refuse to regard—take notice of—human grief. Cf. Gervase Markham, *The Lamentable Complaint of Paulina* (1609) in EEBO (STC2 17359): “O cruell heauens, unrelenting fate, / To wage a warre gainst me of so much hate”; *FQ* 5.5.36 (1596), 782: “And cruell heauens have heapt an heavy fate.”

6 **compassion’d** engendered compassion. Cf. *Titus Andronicus* 4.1.123-124: “O heavens, can you hear a good man groan / And not relent, or not compassion him?”

you The speaker addresses the “cruell heavens and regardless fates” of line 5.

7 **ebongates** the black gates of death, in contrast to white gates, which are often associated with heaven or good, auspicious dreams.

8 **heavenly view** beauty


13-14 **Yong** [. . .] **die** Though Emaric has died, she/he has crossed or defied that destiny, having been immortalized in this work, an example of the eternizing conceit, which held that through the poet’s words a beloved one survives forever. *Emaric* presumably disyllabic, with a the first syllable stressed, or else the first syllable eliding with *Yong*. This diminutive of “Emaricdulfe” names the child.
SONNET. XIII.

That I did love and once was lov’d of thee,
         Witnesse the favours that I have received:
That golden ring, pledge of thy constancie:
         That bracelet, that my libertie bereaved:  4
Those gloves, that once adorn’d thy lillie hands:
         That handkercher, whose maze intbral’d me so:
Those thousand gifts, that like a thousand bands
         Bound both my heart and soule to weale and woe.  8
All which I weare, and wearing them sigh forth
         You instancies of her true loyaltie:
I doe not keepe you for your soveraigne worth,
         But for her sake that sent you unto me: 12
Tis she, not you, that doth compell my eyes,
My lifes sole light, my hearts sole paradice.

The “gift sonnet” conventionally describes tokens of affection that lovers have exchanged; these tokens represent varying degrees of interest, affection, commitment. See Hamlet 3.1.93-96, in which Ophelia, cautioned by Laertes regarding the sincerity of Hamlet’s affection toward her, tries to return remembrances, tokens that Hamlet denies having given her.

1 of by
2 favours gifts, looking backward to the world of medieval courtly love, when
ladies presented their champion knights with favours to be worn as conspicuous signs of affection. The speaker has received from Emaricdulfe gifts that symbolize the relationship.

4 **That [...] bereaved** The bracelet acts as a shackle, quashing the speaker’s “libertie” to pursue other lovers.

*bereaved* snatched away, removed


6 **maze** intricately embroidered pattern; also, a labyrinth, suggesting the speaker’s imprisonment

*inthral’d me so* Cf. *Othello* 3.4.57-62: “That handkerchief / Did an Egyptian to my mother give / She was a charmer, and could almost read. / The thoughts of people. She told her, while she kept it, / ‘Twould make her amiable and subdue my father / Entirely to her love.”

*inthral’d* enthralled; “enslaved” or captivated by pleasing qualities. Cf. *Two Gentlemen of Verona* 2.4.134: “Love hath chas’d sleep from my enthralled eyes.”

7 **thousand** often used vaguely or hyperbolically for a large number

*bands* literally, that with which or by which a person is bound, but here, used figuratively to suggest the force by which a union or relationship is maintained, a pledge. Cf. *Amoretti* 1 (1591), 69: “shall handle you and hold in loues soft bands.”

8 **weale and woe** a common expression of the period. The speaker’s ties to Emaricdulfe create both happiness and sorrow, a truly Renaissance state of love. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet* 3.2.50-51: “If he be slain, say aye, or if not, no. / Brief sounds determine my weal or woe.”

9 **weare, and wearing** a play on “weary,” leading to the sigh

10 **instancies** instances (*OED* 4 Obs., rare); predates the 1613 entry. These instances serve as proof of Emaricdulfe’s affection for the speaker.

11 **I [...] soveraigne worth** The speaker addresses the “favours” described above.
Their value to him lies not in their value in coinage.

14 My lifes sole light Cf. Diana “To his absent Diana” (1594), 109: “Seuer’d from sweet Content, my lives sole light.”

hearts sole paradice nice development of the or “heart and soule” in line 8, with its soul-sole play

paradice place of unequaled beauty and delight; not at all the restrictions suggested by the favors, rather, the best place for the speaker’s heart to dwell.

Paradice, in its sense as garden leads nicely to the next sonnet.
SONNET. XIII.

One day, oh ten times hapie was that day,

_Emaricdulf_ was in her garden walking,

Where _Floras_ imps joy’d with her feete to play,

And I to see them thitherward ran stalking.

Behind the hedge (not daring to be seene)

I saw the sweet sent Roses blush for shame,

The Violets stain’d, and pale the Lillies beene:

Whereat to smile my Ladie had good game.

Sometimes she pleasde to sport upon the grasse,

That chang’d his hew to see her heavenly presence:

But when she was imasked, then (alas)

They as my selfe wail’d for her beauties absence:

They mourn’d for that their mistris went away,

And I for end of such a blessed day.

[B2v]

A conventional “garden” or “spring” poem. Petrarch’s *Canzoniere* 126 (trans. Musa) provides a model: “kind branch on which it pleased her / (I sigh to think of it) / to make a column for her lovely side; / and grass and flowers which her gown, / richly flowing, covered / with its angelic folds . . .” (195).

4 _stalking._] stalking,
ten times happie  Cf. *Hek.* 35 (1582), 256: “O ten times happie blinded Theban wight”; *Sonnets* 6 (1609), 8: “Oh ten times happier be it ten for one. / Ten times thouself were happier than thou art, / If ten of thine ten times refigured thee”; Francis Sabie, *Adam’s Complaint* (1596), in EEBO (STC2  21534): “Proud *Adam,* not content with thy condition, / Blessed estate, and ten times happie calling”; “Icilius and Virginia” (1576), in *A Petite Pallace of Pettie His Pleasure.* ed. Herbert Hartman (London: Oxford UP, 1938), 109: “O ten times happie are the dead, if death bee any thyng like this sleepe”; Alexander Craig, “To Lithocardia” from *The Amorose Songes, Sonets, and Elegies: Of M.*

*Alexander Craig, Scoito-Britaine* (1606), in *The Poetical Works of Alexander Craig of Rose-Craig,* ed. David Laing (Glasgow: The Hunterian Club, 1873), 41: “One day, O ten times happie was that day.” In fact, Craig’s poem, printed in 1606, is an almost verbatim reproduction of this sonnet, suggesting at the very least that they share a common source and possibly that Craig lifted his sonnet from E. C.:

As Marigould did in her Garden walke,  
One day, O ten times happie was that day  
I thitherward to see my Saint, did stalke:  
Where *Flora’s* Imps joyed with her feet to play,  
And loe unseene behind a Hedge I lay,  
Where I beheld the Roses blush for shame,  
The Lillies were empaled upon the spray,  
The Violets were staynd about my Dame:  
My Mistris smiled for to behold the game,  
And sometimes pleasd upon the grasse to sport,  
Which canging hews cullors did acclaime,  
For blythness of so sweete a Saincts resort,  
And from that walke while as away she went,  
They weepe with deaw, & I in teares lament.

ten  used generally to suggest abundance.  See Sonnet X.
3 **Floras imps** In Roman mythology, Flora is the goddess of flowers; hence, in poetic language, she personification of nature’s production flowers (*OED* 1). Her imps are literally the young shoots of plants or trees but also suggest mischievous children who might play with Emaricdulfe.

4 **stalking** In 1595, as now, the suggestion is that the speaker follows stealthily in order to watch Emaricdulfe without being seen. Cf. *Lucrece* 365: “Into the chamber wickedly he stalks”; *Much Ado* 2.3.92: “O ay, stalk on, stalk on, the fowl sits.”

6-7 **I [. . .] beene** Cf. *Diana* 3.1 (1594), 130: “My Ladies presence makes the roses red / Because to see her lips they blush for shame / The lilies leaves for envy pale became / And her white hands in them this envy bred”; *Fidessa* 37 (1596), 113: “See where my Love sits in the beds of spices, / Beset all round with Camphere, Myrrhe, and Roses.”

sweet sent sweetly scented

blush for shame The shame is that they are not so lovely as Emaricdulfe. Cf. *Hek.* 15 (1582), 182: “Nowe Musicke hide thy face or blush for shame, / Since thou hast heart hir skill & warbling voice”; Henry Peachem, “The Authors Conclusion” in *Minerva Britannia* (1612), ed. John Horden (Mentson, Yorkshire: Scolar, 1973), 210: “For Roses by, did blush for shame, / To see a purer, red and white”; *P&P* Sonnet 72 (1593), 43: “There in her cheeks the graces blush for shame.”

stain’d disgraced because Emaricdulfe is so much lovelier

beene were

8 **Whereat [. . .] game** which to see amused my lady

Whereat at which

game amusement, sport

10 **his hew** The green grass, previously envious of Emaricdulfe’s beauty, is no longer envious when he is near her; her general goodness overcomes his tendency to envy.

11 **imasked** imaskèd. Hidden from view; perhaps Emaricdulfe covers her face with
a mask to protect it from the sun; from the Middle English “ymasked” and another instance of E. C.’s use of archaic language. Cf. 1 Henry IV 1.2.180: “I have cases of buckrom for the nonce, to immask our noted outward garments.”

12 **They** Flora’s imps, the flowers and grasses among which Emaricdulfe has walked

13 **for that** because
SONNET. XV.

What meane our Merchants so with eger minds
To plough the seas to finde rich juels forth?
Sith in Emaricdulf a thousand kinds
Are heap’d, exceeding wealthie Indias worth:
Then India doth her haire affoord more gold,
And thousands silver mines her forhead showes,
More Diamonds then th’ Egyptian surges folde,
Within her eyes rich treasurie nature stowes:
Her hony breath, but more then hony sweete,
Exceeds the odours of Arabia:
Those pretious rankes continually that meete,
Are pearles more worth then all America.
Her other parts (proud Cupids countermate)
Exceed the world for worth, the heavens for state.

E. C. bows to convention again: this sonnet treats a common topic for the genre, the blazon of rarities. Cf. Amoretti 15 (1591), 74: “Ye tradefull Merchants that with weary toyle / Do seeke most pretious things to make your gain: / And both the Indias of their treasures spoile, / What needeth you to seeke so farre in vaine?”; Amoretti 81 (1591), 101: “Fayre when her brest lyke a rich laden barke, / With pretious merchandize she forth doth lay”; Chloris 18 (1596), 55: “O Chloris thou dost imitate thy selfe, / Selfs imitating passeth pretious stones, / Or all the Easterne Indian golden pelfe”; Barnes, Parthenophil 48 (1593), 30: “I wish no rich-refinde Arabian gold, / Nor Orient Indian pearle rare natures wonder, / . . . / But onely this, this onely Venus graunt, / That I my
sweet Parthenophe may get.”

1 eger  eager; impatient, ardent
2 minds  inclinations, or ways of thinking and feeling (*OED* n₁. 13.a)
3 thousand  as in line 6 below and Sonnets XIII and XVII, a generic suggestion of “very”
4 wealthie Indias  India, Arabia (line 10), and America (line 12) are, during this time of exploration, considered exotic and wealthy almost beyond imagination. These far-off regions serve as conventional symbols for the bountiful mysteries of a new world. Cf. Thomas Dekker, *The Famous History of Sir Thomas Wyat* (1607), in *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker*, vol. 1, ed. Fredson Bowers (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1953), 412: “The Golden Mines of wealthy India, / Is all as drosse compared to thy sweetnesse.”
5 Then [. . .] gold  Her hair provides more gold than does India.
6 affoord  afford; furnish or yield (*OED* v. 5)
7 thousands [. . .] showes  Perhaps the speaker refers to some sort of jewelry that Emaricdulfe wears upon her brow, or perhaps he refers to the value of her intelligence.
8 More [. . .] stowes  Nature has placed the sparkle of almost countless diamonds in Emaricdulfe’s eyes.
9 hony  honied; as sweet as honey. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet* 5.3.92-93:
   “Death, that hath sucked the honey of thy breath, / Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty”; *Titus Andronicus* 2.4.25: “Coming and going with thy honey breath”;

surges  waterways; specifically, a river’s (i.e., the Nile’s) source (*OED* n.1.b).
E. C. demonstrates a rather imperfect knowledge of geography and geology; diamonds are not associated with Egypt or the Nile.
folde  enfold
treasurie  disyllabic
stowes  stores
"Scarce were those honywords breath’d from her lips.”

See also Sonnet XXIII.

more [. . .] sweete sweeter than honey

odours Though the connotation has come to suggest unpleasantness, in earlier usage “odour” meant “a sweet or pleasing scent” (OED n¹. 1), especially of exotic lands.

Arabia Arabia was associated with spices, the scent of which had a great deal to do with making 16th century life bearable.

pretious [. . .] meete Emaricdulfe’s teeth

Are [. . .] America As with the notion of diamonds from Egypt, E. C.’s understanding of geography is a bit imperfect; the suggestion always is that exotic and precious materials come from exotic locales. “America” is possibly a glance at the name “Emaricdulfe.”

her [. . .] state Cf. Diella 3 (1596): “Her other parts so farre excell the rest, / That [the speaker’s] wanting words, they cannot be exprest.”

countermate generally, something in opposition to something else, so here, a foil to Cupid, which seems not to be the point that E. C. wants to make. Perhaps the suggestion is that Emaricdulfe is Cupid’s equal in her ability to inspire love.

state rank, dignity
SONNET. XVI.

Looke when dame Tellus clad in Floras pride,
   Her summer vaile with faire imbroderie,
And fragrant hearbs sweet blossom’d having dide,
   And spred abrod her spangled tapistrie: 4
Then shalt thou see a thousand of her flowers
   (For their faire hew and life delighting savours)
Gathered to deck and beautifie the bowers
   Of Ladies faire, grac’d with their Lovers favours. 8
But when rough winter nips them with his rage,
   They are disdain’d and not at all respected:
Then love (Emaricdulf) in thy yong age,
   Lest being old, like flowers thou be rejected: 12
Nature made nothing that doth ever flourish,
   And even as beautie fades, so love doth perish.

[B3’y]

A conventional carpe diem theme drives this poem, like Sonnet XIII, which is a spring poem.

1-2 **Look [. . .] imbroderie** Cf. Diella 10 (1596; EEBO): “When Flora vaunts her in her proude array, / clothing faire Tellus in a spangled gowne”; Hek. 22 (1582), 211: “When Flora first adorn’d Dame Tellus lap”; Cynthia (1595), 118: “There might one see and yet not see (indeede) / Fresh Flora flourishing in chiefest Prime / Arrayed all in gaye and gorgeous weede.” Pericles 4.1.13-14:
“No; I will rob Tellus of her weed / To strow thy green with flowers.”

**Tellus** Roman goddess of the Earth

**Floras** Flora is the Roman goddess of flowers.

**pride** the abundance of flowers, Flora’s great achievement. As well, Flora is **proud** with flowers, suggesting an excess of growth (**OED a. 7.d**).

**vaile** vale; a broad and relatively flat expanse of land between two hills (**OED n.1. a**), with a play on **veil** (that which Flora wears)

3 **dide** dyed; infused their color. Though it is unclear, the Huntington text suggests a period at the end of this line, possibly as a result of a tear or fold in the paper. The Folger clearly presents a comma, the appropriate mark.

4 **tapistrie** woven cloth; complements the quatrain’s cloth metaphors—**vaile**, **imbroderie**—which elaborate on Tellus’s cladding.


13-14 **Nature [. . .] perish** Cf. *Chloris* 26 (1596), 63: “And time may come when that whereof you boast / (Which is your youths chief wealth and ornament) / Shall withered be by winters raging frost”; *Phillis* “An Ode” (1595), 72: “And when time shall eat thy glory, / Then too late wilt thou be sorry”; *Caelica* 8 (ed. Crow), 49: “Beauty whose scorching beams made wrinkles flourish; / Time hath made free of tears, sighs, and despare, / Writing in furrows deep, ‘she once was fair’”; *Sonnets* 6 (1609), 8: “Then let not winter’s ragged hand deface / In thee thou summer ere thou be distilled.”

**perish** rhymes with “flourish,” an unconventional rhyme based on unstressed syllable

**even** monosyllabic
SONNET. XVII.

I am inchanted with thy snow-white hands,
That mase me with their quaint dexteritie,
And with their touch, tye in a thousand bands
My yeelding heart ever to honour thee:
Thought of thy daintie fingers long and small,
For pretie action, that exceed compare,
Sufficient is to blesse me, and withall
To free my chained thoughts from sorrowes snare:
But that which crownes my soule with heavenly blis,
And gives my heart fruition of all joyes,
Their daintie concord and sweet musick is,
That poysons griefe and cureth all annoyes.
Those eyes that see, those eares are blest that heare
These heavenly gifts of nature in my deare.

A sonnet in praise of the mistress’s beautiful white hands appears in almost all the sequences of the period. Here, Emaricdulfe’s hands appeal to two of the speaker’s senses: lines 1-8 describe the visual impact of their appearance, and lines 9-12 explain their auditory power as they create music.
1-2 I [. . .] dexteritie Though not stated, the suggestion here and in line 7’s “pretie action” is that Emaricdulfe is playing a musical instrument, perhaps the virginals; well educated ladies of the period had musical training.

I [. . .] hands Cf. Diana 2.4 (1594), 125: “Not that thy hand is soft is sweete is white”; 3.2, 131: “Sweet hand the sweet (yet cruel) bowe thou art / From whence at me five ivorye arrowes flye.”

mase amaze

quaint elegant, highly refined (OED a. 6)

3-4 And [. . .] thee Cf. Amoretti 1 (1591), 69: “those lilly hands/ which hold my life in their dead doing might / shall handle you and hold in loves soft bands”

touch grace, dexterity, presumably

thousand bands looks back to Sonnet XIII: “Those thousand gifts, that like a thousand bands / Bound both my heart and soule to weale and woe”

My [. . .] thee recalls “I will yeeld my selfe” in Sonnet I and “honour her” in Sonnet III


8 chained chainèd

11 Their [. . .] is E. C. makes specific what is generalized earlier. It is a convention of the love poetry that a woman’s hands are seen to best advantage when she plays and that an instrument sounds sweetest when played by a lady love. Cf. Fidessa 17 (1596), 93: “Sweet stroke,—so might I thrive as I must praise—/ But sweeter hand that gives so sweet a stroke! / The lute itself is sweetest when she plays”; 37, 113: “There doth she tune her Lute for her delight, / And with sweet musick makes the ground to move”; Sonnets 128 (1609), 111: “How oft, when thou my music play’st / Upon that blessed wood whose motion sounds / With thy sweet fingers when thou gently sway’st / The wiry concord that mine ear confounds”; Diana 2.4 (1594), 125: “A lute of senselesse wood by nature dumbe / Toucht by thy hand doth speake devinelye well.”
12 **annoyes** distress. Cf. Sonnet XXI.
13 **Those [. . .] heare** Emaricdulfe appeals to both sight and sound.
14 **heavenly gifts of nature** echoes Sonnet V, in which the heavens and nature compete to adorn Emaricdulfe.
SONNET. XVIII.

Emaricdulf, if thou this riddle reade,
    This darke Ænigma that I will demand thee,
Then for thy wisedomes well deserving meede,
    In loves pure dutie thou shalt ay command mee.  
4
A Turtle that had chose his loving mate,
    Sate seemly percht upon a red-rose breere:
Yet saw a bird (ayers paragon for state)
    That farre surpast his late espoused deere:  
8
He chang’d himselfe into that lustfull bird
    That Juno loves, and to his love resorted:
And thought with amorous speeches to have firde
    Her constant heart: but her in vaine he courted.  
12
When bootles he had woo’d her to his paine,
    He tooke his leave and turn’d his shape againe.

[B4v]

Short, lyric poetry has long been associated with riddles, and the “riddle poem” is a staple of the period’s sonnet sequences. *Astrophel and Stella* 24, a riddle that invites readers to identify Penelope Rich and her husband, is an excellent example. The solutions to these riddle poems often depended upon intimate knowledge of the actors described. A satisfying solution to E. C.’s aenigma would require knowing the characters involved. The riddle seems to suggest that E. C. abandoned Emaricdulfe momentarily, perhaps for someone who outranked her.

1  reade  “to guess, to make out or tell by conjecture what, who, why, etc.”  (*OED*
Ænigma “a short composition in prose or verse, in which something is described by intentionally obscure metaphors, in order to afford an exercise for the ingenuity of the reader or hearer in guessing what is meant” (OED 1.a). E. C.’s metaphors are hardly obscure here; the surface meaning of the riddle is fairly easily understood. The riddle generates more interest if it describes, or appears to describe, a real-life circumstance recognizable to Emaricdulfe and other contemporary readers; the identities of the shape-changing turtle dove and the lady he so admired might lend this riddle a certain bite.

demand thee demand of thee. Emaricdulfe is asked to solve the riddle.

meede reward

ay always

Turtle turtledove. The turtledove is “often mentioned as a type of conjugal affection and constancy,” (OED). Cf. 1 Henry VI 2.2.30-3: “Like to a pair of loving turtle-doves / That could not live asunder day or night.”

breere briar, dial; here, a wild rose bush

ayers paragon for state the stateliest—loveliest, most regal—bird in the air

late espoused deere Since the mate was lately—recently—espousèd, the turtledove’s actions mock the bird’s reputation for constancy.


resorted turned his attention to

to his paine The conventions of courtly love hold that the only recompense for many a wooing lover is his pain. Cf. Anthony Munday’s introduction to the third
ditty in his *A Banquet of Daintie Conceits* (1588), in EEBO (STC2 18260): “In this Dittie is expressed, the sundry and daily mishaps that chaunce in Love: deciphered by him that felt them, to his paine.”

14 **turn’d his shape** returned to his original form, a turtledove
SONNET. XIX.

The Heavens and Nature when my Love was borne,
  Strove which of both shuld most adorne & grace her:
The sacred heavens in wealthie natures scorne
  With wisedomes pure infusion did imbrace her:  4
Nature lent wings to wisdome for her flight,
  And deckt my Ladie with such heavenly features,
As nere before appear’d in humane sight,
  Ne ever sithence in terrestriall creatures.   8
(Quoth Wisdome) I will guide her constant hart
  At all assaies with policie to relieve her:
(Quoth Nature) I will cast those gifts apart,
  With outward graces that I meane to give her.  12
Yet were they reconcil’d, and swore withall
To make her more then halfe celestial.

This poem recalls Sonnets V and XVII as it describes the competition between heaven and nature for the privilege of adorning Emaricdulfe. Ironically, as they compete, they collaborate.

1-2 **The Heavens [. . .] her** Cf. *Canzoniere* 248, 353: “Who seeks to see the best Nature and Heaven / can do among us, come and gaze on her . . .”; *Chloris* 45 (1596), 82: “When she was borne whom I intirely love, / Th’ immortall gods hir birth-rites foorth to grace / Descending from their glorious seat above / They did
on hir these severall vertues place.”

**my Love**  Emaricdulfe

**in wealthie natures scorne**  in scorn of nature’s contribution

**infusion**  The heavens fill Emaricdulfe with pure wisdom.

**imbrace**  enfold. Emaricdulfe is well endowed with wisdom, as it becomes both an internal characteristic and the atmosphere that surrounds (embraces) her.

**sithence**  since

**assaiies**  obsolete form of assays: trials, tribulations.  *Cf. Measure for Measure* 3.1.161-163: “Angelo had never the purpose to corrupt her; only he hath made an assay of her virtue to practice his judgment with the disposition of natures”; *FQ* 1.7.27 (1590), 125: She heard with patience all unto the end, / And strove to maister sorrowful assay.”

**policie [. . .] her**  sagacity that will allow Emaricdulfe to overcome her trials

**policie**  disyllabic

**cast**  dispose, arrange (*OED* v. 45)

**apart**  aside

**they**  the Heavens and Nature, who had been competing over the value of their mutual contributions to Emaricdulfe’s make up

**withall**  moreover, as well

**celestiall**  of divine or heavenly nature. Despite their competition, the Heavens and Nature agree, finally, that Emaricdulfe will be more heavenly than natural; she’ll be angelic.
SONNET. XX.

That thou art faire exceeding all compare,
   Witnes the eyes that gaze upon thy beautie,
Witnes the hearts thou daily dost insnare,
   And draw to honour thee with lovers dutie:  4
That thou art wise witnes the worlds report,
   Witnes the thoughts that do so much admire thee,
Witnes the heaven-borne Muses that resort,
   And for their mistris meekly do desire thee:  8
That thou art both exceeding faire and wise,
   Witnes the anguish of my sillie hart:
Thy heavenly shape hath caught me by my eyes,
   Thy secret wisdome that gives art to art,  12
So circumvents me and procures my paine,
That I must dye, unles thou true remaine.

[B5]

Note the parallel construction of the quatrains here: “That” introduces each claim, while “Witnes” provides the evidence for those claims. This poem recalls Sonnet XIX, which suggests ways in which wisdom and “outward graces” are embodied in Emaricdulfe.
That [...] beautie  Cf. Amoretti 3 (1591), 69: “The souerayne beauty which I
doo admire, / witnesse the world how worthy to be prayzed.”
faire  with “compare,” an internal rhyme
compare  comparison.  Cf. Sonnets 130 (1609), 112: “And yet, by heaven, I think
my love as rare / As any she belied with false compare.”
insnare  recalls Sonnet VI
lovers dutie  evokes the conventions of courtly love
worlds report  that which is said about Emaricdulfe, her reputation.
Witness the thoughts  Clearly, one cannot witness thoughts; the suggestion here is
that Emaricdulfe can gather from the way that others respond to her that she is
well thought of.
heaven-borne Muses  The daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, these nine beings
inspire and foster artistic creativity.  Cf. Christopher Middleton, The Legend of
Humphrey Duke of Gloucester (1600), in EEBO (STC2 17868): “Send some
small current from those silver springs / By whose faire banks the heaven-borne
muses sits.” Joan Orwin, who printed Emaricdulfe in 1595, printed at least two of
Middleton’s works, the second part of The Nature of a Woman and The Historie
of Heaven, both in 1596.
resort  turn their attention to, with the suggestion that the Muses, who
conventionally inspire others, look to Emaricdulfe for inspiration
exceeding  exceedingly
sillie hart  Cf. Thomas Morley, “Flora faire Nymph wilst silly Lambs are feeding”
in Madrigals to five voices (1598), in EEBO (STC2 18129): “For your sweet love
my silly hart doth languish”; ARBOR 26 (1597), 30-32: “Each comlie parte from
toe, / Will breed my sillie hart much woe.”
sillie  innocent, defenseless against Emaricdulfe’s charms. “Silly,” used thus to
suggest vulnerability, was most often associated with women and children.  Cf.
Two Gentlemen of Verona 4.1.68-70: “I will take your offer, and will live with
you / Provided that you do no outrages / On silly women or poor passengers”;

secret unavailable to the initiated, suggesting that Emaricdulfe possesses an elevated wisdom. Cf. “The Psalter” in Holy Byble conteyning the Old Testament and the New / set foorth by authoritie; whereunto is joined the whole service used in the Churche of England (1576), in EEBO (STC2 2115): “But loe, thou requirest trueth in the inward partes: and shalt make me to understande wysdome secretly”; Arbor 14 (1597), 17: “Reason set downe that secret wisdome nam’d”; Gervase Markham, The English Arcadia Part 1 (1607), in EEBO (STC2 17350.5): “dooest thou not know the famous Shepheard Mopsus, he that understands the language of the Birdes, the Vertue of stones, the nature of herbes, and what ever else can be covered under the habit of secret wisdome?”

gives art to art Emaricdulfe’s wisdom improves that which is already beautiful, contributes its essence. She inspires art, as the Muses do.

circumvents controls him utterly. This Latinate word is unusual and leads one to wonder whether E. C. might be showing off his Latin.
SONNET. XXI.

Al those that write of heaven and heavenly joyes,
   Describe the way with narrow crooked bendings,
Beset with griefe, paine, horror and annoyes,
   That till all end have never perfect endings.  
4
The heaven wherein my thoughts are resident,
   The paradice wherein my heart is sainted,
Through street-like straight hie-waies I did attempt,
   Nor with rough care nor rigorous crosse attainted:  
8
I must confesse faith was the only meane,
   For that with some for want thereof did misse.
Only thereby at length I did obtaine,
   And by that faith am now instal’d in blisse:  
12
There sleepe my thoughts, my heart there set thy rest,
Both heart & thoughts thinke that her heaven is best.

[B6]

Stephen Minta points out that “Petrarch’s ideal, the standard against which he constantly measured himself, is that of the good Christian life” and suggests that, with the exception of Spenser, 15th and 16th century English sonneteers largely ignored this religious tradition or paid scant notice to it, as E. C. does here, by conflating the notions of romantic and Christian struggles (3). E. C. uses the imagery and language of Protestant struggle to glorify his devotion to Emaricdulfe. He alludes to biblical injunction to take care to follow the straight and narrow path to salvation, forgoing the easy pathway to destruction, and at first reading, the suggestion that Emaricdulfe is rather
easily attained seems unflattering. One realizes, however, that it is not the case that
Emaricdulfe’s love is too easily won; rather it is precisely the speaker’s devotion to her
that makes the way straightforward. His heaven, embodied in Emaricdulfe, is not
reached through a bending, difficult pathway, but through “street-like straight hie-waies,”
that are open and direct. E. C.’s suggestion is that his commitment to Emaricdulfe is so
firm, and her appeal so strong, that his service to her does not constrain him. E. C. blends
the figurative language of religious and romantic hopes to present an almost allegorical
description of his pursuit of Emaricdulfe.

misse.] misse,

heaven [. . .] joyes  Cf. Henry Lok, *Ecclesiastes otherwise called The preacher*
(1597), in EEBO (STC2 16696): “But heaven and heavenly joyes will remaine, / When youth and earthly works prove merely vaine.”
griefe, paine, horror “griefe,” “paine,” and the first syllable of “horror” are all
stressed.
annoyes graver than mere annoyances: “a mental state akin to pain arising from
the involuntary reception of impressions, or subjection to circumstances, which
one dislike” (*OED n. 1*). Cf. Richard III 5.3.151; Titus Andronicus 4.1.49.
till [. . .] endings There can be no true satisfaction until the end of the world.
Note here and in the opening line E. C.’s continued use of the popular rhetorical
device of repeating words in different inflections.
The heaven [. . .] sainted Through both reason and emotion E. C. recognizes
Emaricdulfe as his salvation.
paradice [. . .] heart recalls Sonnet XIII’s “hearts sole paradice”
sainted Emaricdulfe’s love sanctifies the speaker.
street-like straight hie-waies Contrast with the “narrow crooked bendings” of
line 2. Cf. Matthew 7:13-14 (*Bishop’s Bible*; 1576; EEBO): “Enter ye in at the
straite gate, for wide is the gate, and brode is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which goe in thereat. Because straite is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth into lyfe, and fewe there be that fynde it.”

Nor with [.] cross attained The speaker does not presume to compare his travails with Christ’s; he is not burdened with severe, repressive obligation.

attainted corrupted, sullied. Cf. FQ 4.1.5 (1596; ed. Roche), 566: “For Amoret right fearful was and faint, / Lest she with blame her honour should attaint.”

I must confesse [.] meane echoes the Protestant understanding that salvation is contingent upon faith alone, the doctrine of sola fide. The speaker apparently has faith that his devotion will be rewarded, though other sonnets in the work suggest that his faith did, in fact, waver and that he did, in fact, engage in “works” designed to win Emaricdulfe’s love. With “confesse,” the speaker reinforces the religious motif, and, introduces, a bit playfully, a Protestant critique of Roman Catholic ritual.

For that [.] misse Because some lack faith, they miss out on heaven.

Only thereby only through faith

obtain The object of this verb is the “blisse” of line 12.

instal’d officially placed. Cf. 1 Henry VI 4.1.16-17: “unworthily, / Thou wast installed in that high degree.”

blisse figuratively, heaven: perfect joy, carrying with it a spiritual connotation. Cf. Amoretti 22 (1591): 77: “There I to her as th’ author of my blisse.”

Midsummer Night’s Dream 3.2.143-144: “O, let me kiss / This princess of pure white, this seal of bliss!”

There sleepe [.] rest The speaker directs his reason and his emotion to rest in his devotion for Emaricdulfe. Both his heart and thoughts can take their ease, secure in Emaricdulfe’s sway.

set thy rest Cf. Romeo and Juliet 5.3.109-110: “O, here / Will I set up my everlasting rest.” Romeo announces his resolve to pass into eternity with Juliet. E. C., while not facing Romeo’s dire circumstances, emphasizes his firm belief that under Emaricdulfe’s influence he can gain at least figurative salvation.
heart & thoughts One of the overriding philosophical concerns of the period was finding an appropriate balance between these two ways—passion and reason—of knowing and evaluating the world. E. C. affirms that devotion to Emaricdulfe satisfies both heuristic models.
SONNET. XXII.

Ye subjects of her partial painted praise,
   Pen, paper, inke, you feeble instruments:
Unto a higher straine I now must raise
   Your mistris beautious faire abiliments.
Thou author of our hie Meonian verse,
   That checks the proud Castalians eloquence:
With humble spirit if I now rehearse
   Her several graces, natures excellence:
Smile on these rough-hewd lines, these ragged words
   That never stil’d from the Castalian spring:
Nor that one true Apologie affords,
   Nor never learn’d with pleasant tune to sing:
So shall they live, and living still persever
   To deifie her sacred name for ever.

[B6’y]

Protesting inexperience and humility, the poet approaches the inspiration and subject of his poem.

8  graces, natures  graces natures

1-2  Ye subjects [. . .] instruments  Note the heavy, overly literary alliteration: partiall, painted, praise, pen, paper.
partial
partially. E. C.’s praise of Emaricdulfe is incomplete.
painted expressed; in this case, set down in words. Cf. Love’s Labor’s Lost 2.1.13-14: “Good Lord Boyet, my beauty, though but mean, / Needs not the painted flourish of your praise.”
feeble instruments These workaday tools that can do only so much can hardly be expected to do justice to Emaricdulfe, who commands and inspires them.

Unto a higher straine [. . .] abiliments Cf. Zepheria 17 (1594), 217: “How shall I deck my loue in loues habiliment, / And her embellish in a right depaint?”

straine kind or class (OED n 1. 9.b). As he calls upon Homer to smile upon his efforts, E. C. hopes that his verse can assume some of the power of his poetic ancestor’s. Cf. Nathaniel Baxter, Sir Philip Sidney’s Ourania (1606), in EEBO (STC2 1598): “This modest sute, (quoth Cynthia) is not fit / For thee to crave; nor for my state to graunt: / Thou oughtst in higher straine t’aduauce thy wit.” E. C. searches for a statelier mode of expression.

Your mistris The speaker addresses the “feeble instruments” of line 2.

abiliments most often associated with the costumes of battle, but also, as here, something worn as dress or ornament. Alternatively, a figurative term for abilities and powers of the mind. The sense here is of Emaricdulfe’s appearance and persona.

author [. . .] verse Homer, who wrote of Meonian battles in The Iliad.

“Meonic” indicates a kind of artistic creativity that depicts that which has not been seen or experienced in reality (OED a.). Cf. William Warner, Pan his syrinx (1584), in EEBO (STC2 25086): “one while frequente the delectable Springes, sweete Groves, and braue prospectiue Hills, dedicated to the Meonian Muses”; Josuah Sylvester, Du Bartas his deuine weke and workes translated “a briefe Index, explaining most of the hardest words scattered throughout the whole Worke” (1611), in EEBO (STC2 21651): “Meonian Bard, Homer.” In emphasizing “our hie Meonian verse,” E. C. perhaps suggests Spenser, whom the poet clearly admires and whose Faerie Queene serves as England’s great epic.

checks challenges
Castalians The Castalian spring inspires poets with greatness. See Sonnet III.

rehere describe at length (OED “Rehearse” v. 2.a). Cf. Barnfield, Cassandra (1595; ed. Klawitter), 140: “Queene of my thoughts, but subject of my verse, / (Divine Eliza) pardon my defect: / Whose artlesse pen so rudely doth reherse / Thy beauties worth.”

severall graces Cf. Lucrece 1410-1411: “All jointly list’ning, but with several graces, / As if some mermaid did their ears entice.”

severall many


Smile [. . .] words E. C. speaks directly to Homer—and, perhaps, Spenser—and indirectly to any readers of these poems, asking them to treat gently the poetry of Emaricdulfe. Self-deprecation is a convention of the period, and throughout the sequence, E. C. notes that his is not the smooth, fashionable and lyrical poetry of his betters. Cf. Chloris 33 (1596), 70: “These homely lines abject of Poesie.”

rough-hewd roughly shaped. Cf. Hamlet 5.2.10-11: “There’s a divinity that shapes our ends, / Rough-hew them how we will.”

That never [. . .] spring recalls Sonnet III: “Mine artles pen that never yet was dipt / In sacred nectar of sweet Castalie.” Poetry inspired by the springs of Castalia is smooth, accomplished, musical.

stil’d (were) distilled; also, a play on the word “styled”

Apologie written defense or justification, as in Sidney’s Apology for Poetry. Because E. C.’s lines are so poor, they cannot merit an honest defense.

affoords manages to create. E. C.’s efforts cannot do justice to his subject.

So shall they love [. . .] ever Though he denigrates his own verse, E. C. nonetheless embraces the period’s infatuation with the eternizing conceit, which suggests that by writing about his beloved, a poet immortalizes her. Cf. Diana “To his absent Diana” (1594), 109: “My verse still lives, to witnes thee divine”;
Amoretti 75 (1591), 98: “My verse your vertues rare shall eternize, / And in the heavens wryte your glorious name.”

persever In Sonnet VII, the speaker vows to “persever” in loving Emaricdulfe. Stress the second syllable.
SONNET. XXIII.

Ye moderne Laureats of this later age,
That live the worlds admirement for your writ,
And seeme infused with a divine rage,
To shew the heavenly quintessence of wit: 4
You on whose weltun’d verse sits princely beautie,
Deckt and adorn’d with heavens eternitie,
See I presume to cote (and all is duetie)
Her graces with my learnings scarsitie. 8
But if my pen (Marcias harsh-writing quill)
Could feede the feeling of my thoughts desire,
And shew my wit coequall with my will,
Then with you men divine I would conspire, 12
In learned poems and sweet poesie,
To send to heaven my Ladies dignitie.

[B7]

1-2 Ye moderne Laureats [. . .] writ Cf. Zepheria, “Alli veri figlioli delle Muse” (“To the true sons of the Muses”) (1594), 197: “Ye moderne Lawreats famoused for your writ”; Chloris “To all Shepheards in generall” (1596: ed. Sasek), 37: “You whom the world admires for rarest stile, / You which have sung the sonnets of true loue; / Upon my maiden verse with favour smile.”

moderne During the period “modern” could mean “ordinary.” This usage, according to the OED, is found especially in Shakespeare; i.e., As You Like It 2.7.155-156: “With eyes severe and beard of formal cut, / Full of wise saws and modern instances.” So, early on in this poem, it seems that E. C. could be
speaking sarcastically, suggesting that these laureates are poets who only “seeme” inspired by poetic rage. However, his description of them as “divine” in line 12 makes clear that his praise is straightforward.

**Laureats** those distinguished for excellence in poetry, worthy of the Muses’ crown. See the final sonnet in this collection, as E. C. specifically invokes Edmund Spenser and Samuel Daniel in his quest to sing Emariedulfe’s praises.

**That live ... your writ** who live with, bask in, the world’s admiration of your writing

**admirement** admiration. The word is not found in *OED*.

**writ** written work, also carrying a connotation of formality, as in sacred or legal texts

**seeme** appear to be. The best of poets are infused with poetic spirit, but lesser poets can only seem to be.

**infused** infused; filled with, through divine influence

**rage** poetic or prophetic enthusiasm or inspiration (*OED n. 8*); predates the OED’s 1600 entry: *Sonnets* 17 (1609), 17+: “And your true rights be termed a poet’s rage.” *Furor poeticus* names this inspirational frenzy that George Puttenham describes in *The Arte of English Poetry* (1589), ed. Gladys Willcock and Alice Walker (Cambridge: University P, 1936), 3: “This science in his perfection can not grow, but by some diuine instinct, the Platonicks call it *furor*.”

**quintessence of wit** Boccaccio’s *Decameron* (1353), trans. Guido Waldman (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998) is subtitled, in part, “The quintessence of wit,” and Edward Allde printed Francisco Sansovino’s *The Quintesence of Wit, being A currant comfort of conceites, Maximies, and politicke deuises* in 1590 (STC2 21744). The text promises help to “all those that please to read and vnderstand the works and worth of a worthy writer.”

**quintessence** the purest or most perfect form of an abstraction, from ancient and medieval philosophy’s “fifth essence,” supposed to be the substance of which the heavenly bodies were composed. Cf. *A&S* 77 (1591), 185: “Those words, which do sublime the quintessence of bliss.” Stress first and third syllables.
You the “moderne Laureats”

princely beautie Cf. *King John* 4.3.35: “O death, made proud with pure and princely beauty!”

princely dignified, noble (*OED* a. 3)

Deckt [. . .] eternitie The work of these poets is eternal. Cf. *Zepheria* “Alli veri figlioli delle Muse” (“To the true sons of the Muses”) (1594), 197: “On your sweete lines eternitie doth sit.”

See see that

presume E. C. acknowledges that he lacks the desired authority and skills with which to honor Emaricdulfe. Cf. Barnfield, *Greenes Funeralls* (1594; ed. Klawitter), 67: “Why should my Pen presume to write his [Robert Green] praise.”

cote adorn, dress, as in *coat*. There is a subtle difference in dressing and adornment; the verse of true poets is decked and adorned by eternity and intrinsic beauty, while E. C.’s verse, despite his best effort, is merely dressed.

(and all is dutie) It is the speaker’s duty to attempt to describe his lover’s graces, even as he realizes that he hasn’t the requisite poetic capabilities. The notion of his being bound in duty to Emaricdulfe harkens back to the opening poem in which the speaker explains his initial vow of duty to her. Cf. Robert Tofte, *Laura* “Alla bellissima sua Signora, E. C.” (1597), in EEBO (STC2 24097): “Accept in gree these Verses rudely pend, / (A signe of dutie, which to thee I owe).” See also Sonnet XX.

(Marcias harsh-writing quill) E. C.’s appreciation of his own shortcomings invokes the story of Marsyas, a satyr whose story is found in mythology, who made the mistake of challenging Apollo to a contest of musical skills, and upon losing the contest was flayed to death by the god.

feede the feeling feed on the feeling. If the poet’s mean pen could only absorb and distill his feelings, that pen would be worthy of Emaricdulfe.

wit [. . .] will Philosophers and artists of the period struggled with the kind of tensions indicated in this phrase and sought to find proper balance between the
wit and will, the reason and passion, the head and heart. Cf. Zepheria 31 (1594), 233: “Ne paynt like passion, though he shew more wit.” See also Sonnet XXI.

12 you men divine Throughout the poem, the speaker addresses the “moderne Laureats.”

c conspire There may be a suggestion of breathing or blowing together (OED 6), in the sense that “inspiration” or the taking in of breath is associated with creativity.

13 learned [. . .] poesie in poems that are both correct (well-crafted) and pleasant.

learned è. Contrast “learnings scarrisie” in line 8.

14 To send [. . .] Ladies dignitie Emaricdulfe is worthy of praise, which is what true poets provide; heaven pays attention and rewards with fame.
SONNET. XXIII.

Oft have I heard honey-tong’d Ladies speake,
    Striving their amorous courtiers to enchant,
And from their nectar lips such sweet words breake,
    As neither art nor heavenly skill did want.  4
But when Emaricdulf gins to discourse,
    Her words are more then wel-tun’d harmonie,
And every sentence of a greater force
    Then Mermaids song, or Syrens sorcerie:  8
And if to heare her speake, Laertes heire
    The wise Ulisses liv’d us now among,
From her sweet words he could not stop his eare,
    As from the Syrens and the Mermaids song: 12
And had she in the Syrens place but stood,
    Her heavenly voyce had drown’d him in the flood.

[B7v]

1 **hony-tong’d** conventional. Cf. *Love’s Labor’s Lost* 5.2.334: “Pay him the due of honey-tongued Boyet”; Barnfield, *Cassandra* (1595; ed. Klawitter), 137: “Scarce were these honywords breath’d from her lips.” See also Sonnet XV.

2 **inchant** Cf. Barnfield, *The Affectionate Shepheard* (1594: ed. Klawitter), 79: “Fayre lovely Ladie, whose Angelique eyes / Are Vestall Candles of sweet Beauties Treasure, / Whose speech is able to inchaunt the wise.”

3 **nectar** drink of the gods. *OED* does not note the adjective.

**breake** burst forth. Cf. *FQ* 2.3.24 (1591), 239: “Twixt the perles and rubins softly brake a silver sound.” Rhymes with “speake” in line 1, though modern
readers might think this a sight rhyme.

4 As neither art [. . .] did want The “sweet words” lacked neither learning nor inspiration.

    heavenly disyllabic

    want lack

5-6 But when Emaricdulfe [. . .] wel-tun’d harmonie Cf. Diana 2.3 (1594), 124: “The basest notes from which thy voice proceed / The treble of the Angels do exceed.”

    gins begins

    discourse Hamlet 3.2.358-359 suggests a musical quality to discourse: “give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music.”

6ff. Her words [. . .] flood conventional discussion of the mistress’s voice as charmingly dangerous. In The Odyssey, Ulysses was able to withstand the temptations of the sirens’ songs only by ordering all his men to stop their ears with beeswax and having himself bound to his ship’s mast. The speaker claims that even these strong measures would not protect Ulysses against Emaricdulfe’s lovely voice. Cf. Pericles 5.1.45-46: “She questionless with her sweet harmony, / And other chosen attractions, would allure”; Tempest 3.1.39-42: “Full many a lady / I have ey’d with best regard, and many a time / Th’ harmony of their tongues hath into bondage / Brought my too diligent ear”; Sonnets 129 (1609), 112: “I love to h ear her speak, yet well I know / That music hath a far more pleasing sound.”

    sentence In addition to its obvious reference to grammar, “sentence” also means sententia, the opinion of one whose counsel has been sought (OED n. 2.a). Cf. All’s Well 1.3.75-79: “With that she sighed as she stood, / And gave this sentence then: / ‘Among nine bad if one be good, / Among nine bad if one be good, / There’s yet one good in ten.’” The suggestion is that Emaricdulfe’s words are quite important, in addition to their being beautifully spoken. Additionally, from the French, “feeling.”

    Mermaids “Mermaid” was traditionally conflated with “siren” in reference to the
myth. Also “mermaid” suggested any woman who used her charms to deceive and could even suggest a prostitute. Cf. *Comedy of Errors* 3.2.45-47: “O, train me not, sweet mermaid, with thy note, / To drown me in thy [sister’s] flood of tears. / Sing, siren, for thyself, and I will dote”; Spenser, “I saw a fresh spring,” from *A Theatre wherein be represented as wel the miseries & calamities that follow the voluptuous Worldlings* (1569), in *Spenser’s Minor Poems*, ed. Ernest de Selincourt (Oxford, Clarendon, 1910), 499: “There was to heare a noise alluring slepe / Of many accordes more swete than Mermaids song.”

wise [. . .] now among wise Ulysses lived among us now

As from [. . .] Mermaids song as he had done to withstand the songs of the sirens and mermaids

had she [. . .] flood Cf. *Lucrece* 264-244: “Whereat she smiled with so sweet a cheer / That had Narcissus seen her as she stood, / Self-love had never drown’d him in the flood.”

flood sea
SONNET. XXV.

Let gorgeous Tytan blush for of her haire
Each trammel checks his brightest summers shine:
The cleerest Comets drop within the aire
To see them dim’d with those her glorious eine:

\[ J\nu no \text{ for state she matchles doth disgrace,} \]
\[ S\text{urpassing eke for stature } D\text{yan tall,} \]
\[ V\text{enus for faire, faire } V\text{enus for her face,} \]
\[ \text{In whose sweet lookes are heap’t the graces all:} \]
For wisedome may she make comparison
With \( P\)allas, yet I wrong her over-much:
For who so sounds her policies each one,
Will sweare \( T\)rytonias wit was never such:
Her she exceeds, though she exceed all other,
Being \( J\)oves great daughter borne without a mother.

Following convention, the poem offers a series of comparisons cataloguing
Emaricdulfe’s superior beauty and character.

2 \textit{trammel} trannel

1-2 \textbf{Let gorgeous Tytan [. . .] shine} a popular comparison. The sun (Tytan) must
blush because Emaricdulfe’s hair outshines him. Cf. Thomas Lodge, \textit{Rosalynde}
(1590; ed. Greg), 17: “The trammels of her hair, folded in a caul of gold, so far surpassed the burnished glister of the metal as the sun doth the meanest star in brightness”; Arbor 44 (1597; ed. Rollins), 47: “Whose haires are like those beames, that hang about the Sunne, / When in the morning forth he steps, before his course be runne.”

for  because

trammel  braids or plaits of a woman’s hair, often used figuratively to suggest nets or traps (OED n¹. 6). Cf. Barnfield, The Affectionate Shepheard (1594: ed. Klawitter), 79-80: “If it be sinne to love a sweet-fac’d Boy, / (Whose amber locks trust up in golden trammels / Dangle adown his lovely cheeks with joy”;

Licia 52 (1593): “O wreathes too strong, and trammels made of hair!”

checks  dims

his  Tytan’s

3-4 The clearest [ . . . ] glorious eine  Even the brightest comets are outshone by Emaricule’s eyes.

clearest  brightest

drop  fall from the sky, but with the additional sense of their losing place, reputation

them  themselves
eine  eyes


Juno is the Roman queen of the gods, known for her regal bearing.

state  stateliness, dignified bearing
disgrace  put out of countenance, eclipse (OED v. 2 Obs.). Cf. Robert Tofte, Alba. The Months Minde of a Melancholy Lover (1598), in EEBO (STC2 24096): “To have a sight of Her, (to him so deare) / Whose beautious shape all Beauties doth disgrace.”

6 Surpassing eke [ . . . ] Dyan tall  also taller than Diana, goddess of virginity and the hunt, who must have been thought tall. Great height reinforces the suggestion of stateliness.
**Eke** also

**Dyan** Diana, goddess of virginity and the hunt

7 **Venus for faire [ . . . ] face** Both texts show a piece of turned type, *n* for *u* in *Venus*. Venus, Goddess of Love, is, of course, acclaimed for her beauty, but Emaricdulf is more beautiful. Cf. *A&S* 77 (1591), 185: “That grace, which Venus weeps that she herself doth miss”; “Cephalus and Procris” (1576), in *A Petite Pallace of Pettie His Pleasure*, ed. Herbert Hartman (London: Oxford UP, 1938), 195: “I would you knew, a wife, whose face doth disgrace all the ladies of Venice, yea Venus her selfe.” Note the repetition with inversion of “Venus” and “faire.”

8 **sweet** to the senses; esp. to the sight; lovely (*OED* a. 5.b)

**graces** something that imparts beauty; an ornament; the part in which the beauty of a thing consists (*OED* n. 2.b Obs.). Attractive features are embellished through an association with the graces of mythology, who bestow charm and beauty and are considered to be exquisitely beautiful.

10 **Pallas** Pallas Athena, Zeus’s favorite child, Goddess of Wisdom

11 **For who [. . . ] policies each one** for whoever completely probes Emaricdulf’s wise positions . . . .

12 **Trytonias** Trytonia is an epithet for the witty Athena.

13 **Her she exceeds [. . . ] all other** Emaricdulf surpasses Trytonia (Athena), even as Trytonia surpasses all other women. Note the repetition, considered witty, of “she exceeds,” with different identifications for “she.”

14 **Joves** Jupiter, the Roman god equivalent to the Greek god Zeus. Athena sprang from Zeus’s forehead and hence had no mother.
SONNET. XXVI.

Emaricdulf reade here, but reading marke
As in a mirror my true constancie:
The golden Sunne shall first be turn’d to darke,
And darknes claime the Sunnes bright dignitie: 4
The starres that spangle heaven with glistring light,
   In number more then ten times numberlesse,
Shall sooner leave to beautifie the night,
   And thereby make the world seeme comfortlesse: 8
First shall the Sea become the continent,
   And red-gild Dolphins dance upon the shore:
First wearie Atlas from his paine exempt,
    Shall leave the heavens to tremble evermore, 12
Before I change my thoughts and leave to love thee,
And plead with words and direful sighs to move thee.

[B8v]

Reflecting the popular rhetorical technique of anynata, a stringing together of impossibilities, this poem protests the depths of the speaker’s commitment to Emaricdulfe. This conventional approach appears also in Richard Linch’s Diella 14 (1596) and Thomas Lodge’s Rosalynde (1590; ed. Greg), among others. Bartholomew Griffin turns the tables a bit; in Fidessa 62 (1596), Griffin presents a similar list of impossibilities that suggests that Fidessa will never take pity on the speaker. Phillipe Desportes (trans. Brereton) served as at least one of the popular contemporary continental models: “And my heart shall cease to worship your eyes when no more light is seen in the sun, waters in the sea, grass in the meadows, and stars in the sky.” Petrarch’s
Canzoniere 57 serves as a foundation for all: “Alas, the snow will fall both warm and black, / the sea waveless, the fish up in the mountains, / the sun will come to rest beyond that place / where Tigris and Euphrates share one source, / before I find in this some peace or truce . . .” (93).

1 **rede [. . .] reading** As in Sonnet XVIII, “reading” suggests the act of interpretation. As in other moments throughout the sequence, E. C. uses the rhetorical trick of repeating a word in a slightly altered form.

2 **mirror** a model of excellence; a paragon. Cf. Coelia 4 (1594): “Coelia, as faire as virtuous, / The only mirror of true chastity”; 3 Henry VI 3.3.83-84: “Henry the Fourth, / Whose wisdom was a mirror to the wisest.” Alternatively, the speaker suggests to Emuricdulfe that he is as constant as she is, so that seeing his constancy is as if looking at her own in a mirror. Cf. Winter’s Tale 1.2.381-382: “your chang’d complexions are to me a mirror / Which shows me mine chang’d too.”

**true constancie** fidelity. The phrase is, of course, redundant, and illustrates one of the period’s favorite methods of amplification. Cf. Two Gentlemen of Verona 2.2.8: “Here is my hand for my true constancy.”

4 **dignitie** excellence, status. An eclipse is suggested. Also, perhaps, an astrological term referring to a situation of a planet in which its influence is heightened, either by its position in the zodiac or by its aspects with other planets (OED “Dignity” 5).

5 **spangle** decorate. Cf. A&S 26 (1591), 163: “To have for cause no birthright in the sky, / But for to spangle the black weeds of night”; Taming of the Shrew 4.5.31: “What stars do spangle heaven with such beauty”; Barnfield, Cassandra (1595; ed. Klawitter), 138: “Looke how a brightsome Planet in the ski, / (Spangling the Welkin with a golden spot).”

**heaven** monosyllabic

**glistring** glittering
ten times numberlesse  “Ten” is used hyperbolically to suggest extremes of numberlessness. Cf. Richard II 1.1.180: “A jewell in a ten times barr’d up chest”; Diella 30 (1596): “Or number numberlesse small Attomie.”

Shall sooner [. . .] night The stars shall readily cease beautifying the night.

comfortlesse desolate

First shall [. . .] the continent Cf. Chloris 3 (1596): “The raging sea within his limits lies / . . . / But my loves sea which never limit keepeth”; 2 Henry IV 3.1.47-49: “and the continent, / Weary of solid firmness, melt itself / Into the sea.” The line appears exactly in Robert Greene’s the Tragedy of Selimus, Emperor of the Turkes 1638; STC2 12310b), in EEBO, sig. B: “First shall the sea become the continent.”

red-gild Red was a conventional poetic epithet for gold, and “red gold” also suggests an alloy of gold and copper.

Dolphins The term “dolphin” was popularly applied to the dorado, a fish celebrated for its beautiful coloring and which, when taken out of the water, underwent rapid changes of hue. There may be some sense of that color-changing characteristic here. One cannot ignore the possibility that “dolphin” plays into speculations about identity as well; the word suggests, perhaps, Adolphus Cary and certainly echoes the name Emariculfe.

First wearie Atlas [. . .] evermore As punishment for having challenged Zeus, Atlas was condemned to hold the heavens on his shoulders for all eternity. Should Atlas abandon his post, the heavens will tremble. Cf. A&S 51 (1591), 173: “But find some Hercules to bear, in steed / Of Atlas tired, your wisdom’s heavenly sway.”

from his paine exempt Cf. 3 Henry VI 3.3.127-128: “Exempt from envy, but not from disdain, / Unless the Lady Bona quit his pain.”

exempt free from allegiance or liability to (OED a. 4); predates the OED’s 1667

Before I change [. . .] thee Cf. FQ 1.3.28 (1591), 74: “The earth shall sooner leaue her kindly skill / To bring forth fruit, and make eternal derth, / Then I leaue
you, my liefe, yborne of heavenly berth."

*change my thoughts* recalls Sonnet IX, in which the dream vision’s huntsman declared, “my choice is not to change”

*leave to* cease to

14 *And plead [. . .] move thee* This line completes the idea begun in the previous line with “leave.” In other words, the speaker will not stop pleading with words and sighs.
SONNET. XXVII.

Sweet are the thoughts of pleasures we have usde,
   Sweete are the thoughts that thinke of that same sweet,
Whose sweetnes is too sweet to be refusde,
   That vertuous love-tast for my faith was meet:  4
The taste whereof is sweeter unto me,
   Then sweetest sweet that ever nature made.
No odours sweetnes may compared be
   To this true sweetnes that will never fade.  8
This Sonnet sweet with cheerefull voyces sing,
   And tune the same so pleasing to mine eare,
That Emaricdulf thy praises so may ring,
   As all the world thy honours fame may heare.  12
Once didst thou vow, that vow to me observe,
   Whose faith and truth from thee shall never swerve.

C

Herein is illustrated a popular poetic strategy of the sonnet sequence: building a sonnet around one word, developing copia of a different sort. Sonnet 9 of William Percy’s Sonnets to the Fairest Coelia (1594) is built upon the repetition “hope.” “Heart” inspires Bartholomew Griffin’s Fidessa 23 (1596), while Robert Tofte’s Laura 25 (1597: EEBO) invokes “pearl.” And Henry Constable finds “favour” in Diana 2.2 (1594). E. C.’s Sonnet XXVII most closely resembles Amoretti 26 (1591), “Sweet is the Rose,” more evidence of the esteem in which E. C. held Spenser, and Nicholas Breton’s An Arbor of Amorous Devices 30 (1597), titled “A Poeme upon the word sweet.”
Sweet are the thoughts [. . .] usde Cf. the first lines of “Maesia’s Song” (1591) in The Plays and Poems of Robert Greene, Vol. 2, ed. J. Churton Collins (Oxford: Clarendon, 1905), 308: “Sweet are the thoughts that savour of content”; ARBOR (1597), 28-29: “Sweet is the lewre that feeds my gazing eyes. / Sweeter the lookes that whet my hote desire.”

usde pursued, enjoyed, with a suggestion of on-going behavior. The speaker mentions past pleasures here with a subtle sexual suggestion; in an obsolete usage, “use” meant to have sexual intercourse with (OED v. 10.b).

sweetnes is too sweet Cf. Troilus and Cressida 3.2.23-24: “some joy too fine, / Too subtile, potent, tun’d too sharp in sweetness.”

vertuous love-tast The speaker is careful to affirm the virtuous nature of his relationship with Emaricdulfe.

for my faith recalls Sonnet XXI, in which the speaker acknowledges that “faith was the only meane” through which he could win Emaricdulfe meet appropriate; also, a play on “meat,” or food.

The taste [. . .] nature made Cf. Robert Tofte, Honours Academie (1610), in EEBO (STC2 18053): “Nay more, I could haue bene content, that thou shoudst tasted have, / That sweetest sweet, that Lovers seeke, and still is, that they crave”; FQ 3.10.22 (1590), 525: “he easily / Might scerne, that it was not his sweetest sweet.”

compared comparèd

this true sweetnes the speaker’s love for Emaricdulfe.

This sonnet [. . .] sing E. C. reminds us here that sonnets are lyric in nature, often intended to be sung.

tune to adapt (the voice, song, etc.) to a particular tone, or to the expression of a particular feeling or subject; to modify or modulate the tones of, according to the purpose in view (OED v. 1.b). Cf. FQ 6.10.7 (1596), 989: “But Nymphes and Faeries by the bancks did sit, / In the woods shade, which did the waters crowne, / Keeping all noysome things away from it, / And to the waters fall tuning their accents fit”; Zepheria, “Alli veri figlioli delle Muse” (1594), 197: “Report
throughout our western Isle doth ring, / The sweete tun’d accents of your Delian sonnetrie.”

11 *Emaricdulf* [. . .]* ring* The line contains an extra syllable; *Emaricdulfe* must be trisyllabic; to maintain pentameter, some elision is required.

13 *Once thou* [. . .]* observe* As at other moments in the sequence, and as is conventional for the genre, the speaker suggests that his mistress once committed herself to him.

14 *truth* fidelity, with an additional suggestion from an obsolete usage, of betrothal (*OED n. 2.a).*
SONNET. XXVIII.

If ever tongue with heaven inticing cries,
    If ever words blowne from a rented hart,
If ever teares shed from a Lovers eyes,
    If ever sighes, issue of griefe and smart,
If ever trembling pen with more then skill,
    If ever paper, witnes of true love,
If ever inke, cheefe harbenger of will,
    If ever sentence made with art to move,
If all of these combinde by Cupids power,
    My long-borne liking to anatomise:
Had but the art, with art for to discover
    What love in me doth by his art comprise,
Then might the heavens, the earth, water and ayre,
    Be witness that I thinke thee only fayre.

[C1^]
sighes,] sighes

comprise,] comprise.

blowne breathed out, whispered (OED ppl. a¹ 4). Predates the OED’s 1604 entry: Othello 3.3.181-183: “When I shall turn the business of my soul / To such exsufflicate and [blown] surmices, / Matching thy inference.”

rented hart broken heart. Cf. A&S 33 (1591), 165-166: “Heart, rend thyself, thou dost thyself but right”; 2 Henry VI 1.1.126-127: “France should have torn and rent my very heart / Before I would have yielded to this league.”

eyes Sonnet XXV reflects an older spelling and usage, “eine,” evidence of the fluidity of spelling during the period and the ways in which rhyme’s demands influenced usage.

sighes The sighs indicate longing.

issue offspring (OED n. 6.a)

smart pain, either physical or emotional. A convention of the sonnet sequences holds that emotional anguish manifests itself in physical discomfort. Here, cries, words, teares, and sighes inexorably pour forth as love consumes the speaker.

If ever trembling pen [. . .] to move Cf. Chloris 29 (1596), 66: “My painfull pen shall ever sue for grace.

trembling The poet, overcome with emotion, trembles as he puts pen to paper. Cf. Arbor 20 (1597), 19: “A trembling hand, but not a traitors heart, / Writing for feare and fearing for to write.”

more then skill not, as might be supposed, an inflation of the speaker’s skills. Rather, a quality other than skill. E. C. has previously decried his lack of poetic skill (See Sonnets IIII, XXII, and XXIII). He writes with something other than skill, though, guided not by his talent but by his passion for Emaricdulfe.

paper, witnes of true love Cf. Arbor 33 (1597), 38: “Goe paper all be blurd, be blurd, / with bootles teares in vaine, / Goe tell, goe tell the heavie newes, / Of my
consuming paine.”

**harbenger** one sent forth to announce an arrival. Alternatively, “one who provides lodging” (*OED* n. 1). Both meanings seem to work here, and in these images E. C. addresses ways in which writing both generates and expresses content.

**sentence** grammatical sentence, but also carrying the notions of gravity and feeling, as in Sonnet XXIII

9 **If all of these** “Ever” is implied. Refers to the specific cries, words, etc., in lines 1-8. This line, then, illustrates a characteristic structural model of the sonnet, with line 9 signaling a change in the movement of the sonnet, a turn.

**Cupids power** E. C. wishes that the strength of his love for Emaricdulfe might allow him to succeed in winning and in praising his mistress.

10 **anatomise** lay open minutely, analyze (*OED* v. 3 fig.). In this collection, E. C. lays bare his love for Emaricdulfe. Cf. *King Lear* 3.6.76-77: “Then let them anatomize Regan; see what breeds about her heart”; Tofte, *Alba* (1598; EEBO): “Ah do not (*Surgion* like) Anatomize, / Each muscle of my grief in cruell wise.”

11-12 **Had but the art [. . .] comprise** had the poetic talents and skills to help E. C. adequately express the feelings that Cupid’s art has created within him. The subject is “all of these” (9).

**discover** reveal

**love** Cupid

**comprise** compose (*OED* v. 7 Obs.)

13-14 **Then might the heavens [. . .] only fayre** completes the if/then construction, answering the string of “ifs” in lines 1-9

**heavens [. . .] ayre** the four basic elements of life. Cf. *Henry V* 3.8.21-22: “He is pure air and fire; and the dull elements of earth and water never appear in him.”

**I think thee onely fayre** I think that you alone are fair. Emaricdulfe is unmatched in her beauty. Cf. *Amoretti* 79 (1591), 100: “He onely fayre, and what he fayre hath made, / all other fayre lyke flowres unymely fade”; Gervase
Markham, *The poem of poems. Or, Sion’s muse* (1596), in EEBO (STC2 17386):

“O thou the fayrest womens onely fayre.” Line 14 is an overwhelming understatement given all that’s gone before, thereby ironically carrying the speaker’s message.
SONNET. XXIX.

My hart is like a ship on Neptunes backe,

Thy beautie is the sea where my ship sayleth,

Thy frownes the surges are that threat my wracke,

Thy smiles the windes that on my sailes soft gaileth.  

Long tost betwixt faire hope and foule despaire,

My seasick hart arrived on thy shore:

Thy love, I meane, begges that he may repaire

His broken vessell with thy bounteous store.  

_Dido_ reliev’d _AEneas_ in distresse,

And lent him love, and gave to him her heart:

If halfe such bountie thou to me expresse,

From thy faire shore I never will depart:

But thanke kinde fortune that my course did sorte,

To suffer shipwrack on so sweete a porte.

C2

The distressed ship or peril at sea motif is a convention of the genre, going back at least to Petrarch. See _ Phillis_ 11 (1595); and _Amoretti_ 34 and 63 (1591); _Diella_ 28 (1596); and _Chloris_ 35 (1596), among others. This sonnet does double duty; it refers to the story of Dido and Aeneas, treated famously in Book IV of Virgil’s _Aeneid_ and a popular model for the sonneteers.

3  _wrack,_ wrack

4  _gaileth,_ gaileth

6  _hart_ hart,
love,] love

Neptunes  The Roman god of the sea.

Thy frownes [. . .] wrack  Emaricdulfe’s displeasure would threaten to break his heart, the “ship” of line 1. In *Shepherdes Calender* (1579), in *The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser*, ed. William Oram (New Haven: Yale UP, 1989), E. K. glosses “wrack” thus: “ruine or Violence, whence commeth shipwreck; and not wreake, that is vengeaunce or wrath” (48). Cf. *Amoretti* 38 (1591): “*Arion*, when through tempests cruel wracke, / He forth was thrown into the greedy seas.”

surges  rolling, threatening waves. Cf. *Tempest* 2.1.115-116: “I saw him beat the surges under him, / And ride upon their backs.”

soft gaileth  blows softly. In nautical terms, a gale is a strong wind, but in poetics is often used to mean a gentle breeze (*OED n.3.1.b*). This verb usage is not represented in the *OED*.

faire [. . .] despaire  “Faire and foule” are often paired as antitheses of one another, most famously by Shakespeare: “Fair is foul, and foul is fair” (*Macbeth* 1.1.11).

My seasick hart arrived on thy shore  Cf. *Amoretti* 63 (1591), 93: “I doe at length descry the happy shore, / in which I hope ere long for to arryue.”

Thy love, I meane  E. C. explains that he means his love of Emaricdulfe.

His broken vessell  a bit confusing, as the heart is both like a ship and apparently owns or pilots a ship. The speaker’s heart is broken, of course, because Emaricdulfe resists him. The speaker hopes to repair himself in Emaricdulfe’s presence.

store  articles maintained for the upkeep and stocking of a ship (*OED n. 1.c*). An older meaning of the word is “something precious, a treasure” (*OED n. 6*), which is also appropriate here.
9-10  **Dido [. . .] heart**  The sonnet’s turn occurs here as the speaker invokes the Dido story. Dido was Queen of Carthage, to which Aeneas and his men fled after the sack of Troy. Dido rescued Aeneas from his distress; then, more than hospitable, she fell in love with him. Aeneas abandoned her to travel to Italy, whereupon the broken hearted Dido committed suicide.

12  **From thy [. . .] depart**  E. C. will not abandon Emarcidulfe as Aeneas left Dido. As at other moments in the sequence (in XXXIX, for instance, in which he confidently asserts that, though her voice is as sweet as any siren’s, her innocence precludes any thought of the siren’s deceit), E. C. here invokes a classical comparison but suggests that this couple excels classical models because their love is thoroughly reciprocated or he imagines that it will be.

13  **kinde fortune that my course did sorte**  kind fortune, which determined my course. Modern readers might be tempted to think of fortune as pure chance, but E. C.’s contemporaries would have appreciated the fact that fortune sorts events out in such a way as to change people’s lives. The speaker’s shipwreck was unplanned, but it was ordained by a fortune that allowed this interaction with Emaricdulfe. Cf. William Wyrley, *The true vse of armories hewed by historie* (1592), in EEBO (STC2: 26062): “Thus coy fortune sourts, / Some now aloft and then cast downe we see.”

**sorte**  To dispose, ordain, order (events) (*OED* v1. 1.b *Obs.*, rare)

14  **suffer shipwrack**  Cf. *1 Henry VI* 5.5.7-9: “So am I driven by breath of her renown / Either to suffer shipwreck, or arrive / Where I may have fruition of her love.”
SONNET. XXX.

On Tellus bosome spring two fragrant flowers,
    The milkwhite Lilly, and the blushing Rose,
Which daintie Flora for to deck her bowers
    Above all other colours chiefly chose.  4
These in my mistris cheekes both empire holding
    In emulation of each others hew,
Continually may be discerned folding
    Beautie in lookes, and majestie in view.  8
Sometime they meet, and in a skarlet field
    Warre with rebellious hearts neglecting dutie,
And never cease, untill they force to yeeld
    Them coward captives conquered by beautie. 12
Emaricdulf thus didst thou play the foe,
And I the rebell, and was conquer’d so.

[C2v]

A description of the warring rose and lily, striving to create the perfect shade of pink in a lady’s cheek, or the red and white in general standing for her facial beauty, is de rigueur in the sonnet sequences of the period. Sonnets 130 (1609) most famously deals with this convention by undercutting it: “I have seen roses damasked, red and white, / But no such roses see I in her cheeks.” And Richard Barnfield’s The Teares of an Affectionate Shepheard Sicke for Love (1594; ed. Klawitter, 80) alters the formula by describing Cupid’s cheek in terms usually reserved for the lady love’s:

    His Ivory-white and Alablaster skin
    Is stained throughout with rare Vermillion red . . .
But as the Lillie and the blushing Rose,
So white and red on him in order growes . . . .

The rustic actors of *Midsummer Night’s Dream* are characteristically askew in invoking this convention, as Flute describes Pyramus: “Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-white of hue, / Of color like the red rose on triumphant brier” (3.1.93-94).

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1. **Tellus** Roman goddess of the earth. She and *Flora* figure also in Sonnet XVI.

2. **The milkwhite [. . .] blushing Rose** Cf. as other examples of the commonplace *A&S* 100 (1591), 206: “O tears, no tears, but rain from beauty’s skies, / Making those lilies and those roses grow”; *Phillis* 37 (1595), 67: “Of rose and lilies too, the colours of thy face”; *Licia* 52 (1593), 136: “O rose and lilies in a field most fair.”

3. **owers** “vague poetic word for . . . idealized abode[s], not realized in any actual dwelling” (*OED* n.1.1.b). Also, a lady’s private abode and a recess created by an arch of trees or shrubs. The three meanings frequently converge in the sonnet sequences. Cf. *Amoretti* 64 (1591), 94: “Me seemd I smelt a gardin of sweet flowers: / that dainty odours from them threw around / for damzels fit to decke their louers bowers”; *Midsummer Night’s Dream* 3.2.6-7: “My mistress with a monster is in love / Near to her close and consecrated bower.”

4. **These in [. . .] empire holding** The proportions of the colors shift in response to shifting emotional phases; the result is a perfect and varying complexion. Cf. *Taming of the Shrew*: “Hast thou beheld a fresher gentlewoman? / Such was of red and white within her cheeks!”

5. **empire control.** Cf. *All’s Well* 1.1.62-63: “Thy blood and virtue / Contend for empire in thee.” *Timon of Athens* 4.3.391-392: “that beasts / May have the world in empire!”

6. **In emulation [. . .] hue** in competition to present the more glorious hue. An obsolete meaning of “emulation” is “ambitious rivalry for power or honours; contention or ill-will between rivals” (*OED* 2).
Continually [...] view  One notes that these two warring colors work continuously to envelop Emaricdulfe’s appearance with beauty and majesty. The majestic quality of red and white recalls the historical wars of the roses, resolved in the Tudor unification of the two warring houses.

discerned discernèd

discerned discernèd

folding enwrapping (OED “Fold” v. 1. 8.b)

view appearance

Sometime [...] neglecting dutie  The cheek reddens, suggesting anger at male suitors who neglect the duties of love.

Them themselves

coward captives conquer’d  Note the heavy alliteration
In tedious volumes I doe not intend
To write my woes, my woes by love procured,
Nor by my infant muse implore the end
Of loves true life, this (love) I have abjured:
Only my face (faire deare) shall be the booke
Wherein my daily care shall be rehearsed:
Whereby thou shalt perceive when thou doest looke,
How by thy beauties darts my heart was piersed.
My eyes shall witnes with distilling teares,
And heart with deepe fetcht sighes shall manifest
My painfull torments causde by griefes and feares,
And hourely labours mixt with deepe unrest:
Both heart, and eyes, and face shall all expresse,
That only thou art cause of my distresse.

1-2 In tedious volumes [. . .] procured One doubts that E. C. intends the potential irony here.
tedious “wearisome by continuance” (OED 1). Cf. Romeo and Juliet 5.3.229-230: “I will be brief, for my short date of breath / Is not so long as is a tedious tale.”
volumes Volumes—books—make up one of the conventional motifs of the sonnet sequences
to write my woes Cf. Barnes, P&P 53 (1593), 34: “Why do I write my woes, and writing greeue / To think upon them?”
procured produced

3 Nor [ . . . ] implore the end nor trust my unskilled poor poetry to achieve the true love, a commitment

infant undeveloped (OED n¹ (a.) 5.b). Throughout the collection, E. C. repeatedly acknowledges his poor poetic skills.

implore beseech, petition (a person) with deep emotion (to do something) (OED v. 1.b)

4 Of love’s true life a life of true love

this [ . . . ] abjured Presumably the speaker has sworn not to rely upon an infant muse to win her love.

(love) addresses Emardulfe.

abjured formally rejected. Cf. Twelfth Night 1.2.40-41: “They say, she hath abjur’d the [company] / And [sight] of men.”

5-8 Only my face [ . . . ] heart was piersed He has given up trying to express the depth of his feeling in writing, but Emardulfe need only look at his face to appreciate how his love for her has affected him. Cf. Fidessa 33 (1593), 109: “He that would faine Fidessas image see, / My face of force must be his looking glass: / There is she portraide and her crueltie.” E. C.’s love sorrows are shown in his heart, his eyes, and, finally, his heart.

(faire deare) as above, indicate direct address

booke recalling the “volumes” in line 1

care mental suffering, sorrow (OED n¹ 1.a Obs.)

rehearsed related, narrated. Cf. Winter’s Tale 5.2.61-62: “Like an old tale still, which will have matter to rehearse.”

thy beauties [. . . ] heart was piersed Emardulfe assumes Cupid’s powers, casting darts and wounding hearts. Cf. Midsummer Night’s Dream 3.2.58-59: “So should the murthered look, and so should I, / Pierc’d through the heart with your stern cruelty.”

beauties beauty’s
distilling falling in minute drops (OED “Distill” v. 1). Distillation suggests transformation; E. C. has been transformed by his love of Emaricdulfe.

deepe fetcht emotion fetched from deep within the heart and soul. Cf. 2 Henry VI 2.4.33: “To see my tears and hear my deep-fet groans.”
torments mental anguish, as “care” above

griefes and feares Cf. John Wilby, The first set of English Madrigals to 3. 4. 5. and 6. voices 23 (1598), in EEBO (STC2 25619): “And mee and thee, of griefe and feare deliver.” Wilby suggests that attention from the beloved can deliver one from griefs and fears, while E. C. laments the fact that unrequited love creates the griefs and fears that are evidence of his painful torment. In any case, it is the willingness of a woman to acknowledge and accept the love of a suitor that determines his relative happiness.

hourely Here the suffering seems to intensify; the cares are “daily” in line 6.
labours mental toil, but also E. C.’s efforts to win Emaricdulfe
deepe unrest Cf. Lucrece 1725-1726: “That blow did bail it from the deep unrest / Of that polluted prison where it breathed.”

both As the OED explains, “both” was often extended to more than two objects. See Sonnet III.

SONNET. XXXII.

Thy image is plaine portrait in my thought,
   Thy constant minde is written in my heart,
Thy seemely grace and pleasing speech have wrought
   To vow me thine, till death a sunder part:  4
Thy favours forst me subject unto thee,
   Thy onely care extended to my good,
Thy lovely lookes commaunded all in me
   For thy deare sake to spend my dearest blood:  8
My joy consists in keeping of thy love,
   My bale doth breede if I enjoy it not:
My service true, from thee none can remove,
   Unless both life and love I shall forgot.  12
Though life and love in time must have an end,
Yet ever I have vowde to be thy frend.

[C3v]

The poet entertains his readers to some rather nice wordplay here: throughout most of the first two quatrains, he insists upon a “thy—my/me” construction, which he inverts in the third quatrain. It is a convention of the period that the sonneteer should not only extol the virtue of love but also do so in a witty way.

1  portrait] porturde in Huntington.
7  Thy] Ty in Huntington.
   lookes] lookes,
plaine plainly
portrait portrayed. One meaning of “portray” is to “form a mental image of” (OED v. 3).

constant steadfast, true

seemely grace becoming charm. Cf. FQ 1.10.8 (1590), 162: “Which doen, she up arose with seemly grace.”
wrought early past participle of “work”

To vow [...] part To bind me to you until death separates us. This line evokes the language the Anglican marriage ceremony and of Bishop’s Bible, Matthew 19:6 (1576: EEBO): “Let not man therfore put asunder that, which God hath coupled together” E. C.’s two-word spelling of asunder is old-fashioned by 1595.

vow me thine Cf. Robert Daborne, A Christian turn’d Turke: or, The tragical lifies and deaths of the two famous pyrates, Ward and Dansiker (1612), in EEBO (STC2 6184): “I vow me yours.”

Thy favours [...] unto thee Thy favors forced me to become your subject.
favours Multiple meanings of this word work to illustrate the complete appeal of Emaricdulfe: she has treated him with kindness, she has beautiful features, and she has acknowledged his love with tokens (see Sonnet XIII). In the tradition of courtly love, the lover has a duty to serve his mistress.

lovely also carries several meanings that work together here: beautiful, affectionate (OED a. 1.a Obs.), and amorous (a. 1.b Obs.). Any one of these meanings can apply here, or all, to give insight into the complex attractions that guide these sonnets.

lookes appearance, but also the glances that Emaricdulfe casts

spend my dearest blood This line presents several layers of meaning. At his most literal, the speaker asserts that he would risk his life for Emaricdulfe. In addition to being recognized as the vital force of life, blood is “the supposed seat of animal or sensual appetite; hence, the fleshy nature of man” (OED n. 6). These two ideas came together during the period to suggest that blood was
exchanged during sexual intercourse, an idea most famously explored in John Donne’s “The Flea.”

10 **My bale [. . .] not** Cf. *Amoretti* 2 (1591): “Unquiet thought, whom at the first I bred, / Of th’ inward bale of my love pined hart.”

**breede** increase

11 **service** “Service” suggests a feudal obligation or profession of devotion (*OED* *n*. 8). It reinforces the many points at which the speaker acknowledges his duty to Emaricdulfe. Generally, it is the obligation of a courtly lover to serve, in whatever way she deems appropriate, the object of his affections.

**true** constant

**from thee none can remove** E. C. reasserts the faithfulness he has claimed throughout the sequence.

12 **Unlesse [. . .] forgot** Love, then, is as important to the speaker as is his own life. A more generalized and philosophical statement of the “impossibilities”catalogued in Sonnet VVXI.

**forgot** archaic and poetic form of “forget” (*OED* “forget” *v.*

13-14 **Though [. . .] frend** conventional statement of the eternal nature of love

**vowde** refers back nicely to “vow” in line 4

**frend** friend; a lover or paramour, of either sex (*OED* “Friend” *n*. 4). Cf. *Measure for Measure* 1.4.29: “He hath got his friend with child.”
SONNET. XXXIII.

Emaricdulf, my Orphan muses mother,
    Pure map of vertue, Honors onley daughter:
Bright gemme of bewtie, fayre above all other,
    True badge of faith, foule ignominies slaughter,
Ensigne of love, soure enemie to lust,
    The graces grace, faire Erecines disgrace:
Wrongs cheefe reprover, cause of what is just,
    Advices patron, councels resting place:
Wisdomes chiefe fort, wits onely pure refiner,
    Grave of deceite, the life of policie,
Fates best beloved, natures true diviner,
    Nurce of invention, hould of constancie,
Poyson of paine, Phisition of anoyes,
    Eliziums pride, and paradice of joyes.

This poem is comprised of a series of epithets cataloguing Emaricdulfe’s perfections. Only two of the fourteen lines are devoted to Emaricdulfe’s physical beauty; the intent here is to affirm her noble nature. Structurally, each line except the first consists of two balanced phrases that explore ways in which relationships between words create meaning. The sonnet has no verb.

1  Emaricdulf,  Emaricdulf
14  Eliziums  Elixiums in Huntington
Orphan muses mother Because his poetic talents are weak—hence, his muse is orphaned—E. C. must look to Emaricdulfe, as he would a muse, for inspiration. It is a convention of the sonneteers to describe “orphaned” or “infant” muses or verse as they lament their poetic insufficiencies. Cf. Diana “To the Gentlemen Readers” (1594), 110: “these / insuing Sonnets . . . are now / by misfortune left as Orphans.” Sonnet XXXI laments the insufficiency of E. C.’s “infant muse,” Sonnet III a “forlorn muse.” Throughout this poem, often words that appear to be plural are in fact possessive.

map of an embodiment or incarnation of a quality, characteristic, etc.; the very picture or image of something (OED n. 1.5.b Obs.)

Honors admiration’s. In addition to the meanings usually associated with the word, for women “honor” carries specific connotations: “Chastity, purity, as a virtue of the highest consideration; reputation for this virtue, good name” (OED n. 3.a). Cf. Tempest 1.2.347-348: “thou didst seek to violate / The honor of my child.” Emaricdulfe illustrates “honor” in its broader sense but also in its sexual sense.

onely unparalleled (OED a. 3.a). Among all women, Emaricdulfe is singular as an embodiment of honor.

Bright gemme of bewtie[. . .] other Perhaps believing that he has said enough elsewhere about Emaricdulfe’s physical beauty, E. C. here devotes only this line to the topic.

badge symbol

ignominies slaughter Emaricdulfe’s presence alone is sufficient to end disgraceful behavior.

Ensigne symbol, badge. Cf. Shepheardes Calender “April,” gloss 124 (ed. Oram), 83: “The Olive was wont to be the ensigne of Peace and quietnesse.” sourc disagreeable, unpleasant

graces grace graces’ grace. Throughout the sequence, E. C. asserts that Emaricdulfe is the grace to which the graces aspire. See Sonnet VIII, for
instance. This kind of amplification, with three instances of “grace” in this line, was a favorite rhetorical strategy of the period. There may be a suggestion of the classical graces.

**Erecines disgrace** Aphrodite, conventionally believed the loveliest and most desirable of creatures, is associated with lust, not love, and thus cannot compare to Emaricdulfe. Sonnet XXV asserts that Emaricdulfe similarly excels Juno. Erecine was a common surname for Aphrodite (see Sonnet I).

7 **Wrongs** “Wrong” is any thought or behavior that is improper or morally unjust.

**reprover** one who condemns and, in an obsolete usage, impairs *(OED “Reprove” v1. 6)*

**cause** suggests the “final cause” of Aristotelian philosophy, “the end or purpose for which a thing is done” *(OED n. 4)*. Emaricdulfe inspires just thought and action and is the final end of such justice.

8 **Advices patron** The effect of *patron* is two-fold: Emaricdulfe is one who takes advantage of—uses—deliberation and, as a patron *(OED n. 5.b Obs.)* is also a “supporter, upholder, or advocate of a theory or doctrine” In other words, she acts with deliberation and encourages others to do so as well.

**councels resting place** echoes Sonnet XXI, in which the speaker’s heart set its rest in the paradise represented by Emaricdulfe.

9 **wits** As in the line above, in which “advice” and “councel” name the same quality, “wit” renames “wisdome,” being defined as “wisdom, good judgment, discretion, prudence” *(OED n. 6.a)*. This kind of amplification is frequent in the period.

**pure refiner** “one who, or that which, imparts elegance, polish, or culture; a remover of rudeness, grossness, or vulgarity” *(OED 2)*.

10 **Grave [. . .] policie** The construction of the line would suggest “policie” as an antonym for “deceite,” but the *OED* does not list such a usage. There is a sense of “policy” itself that suggests dissimulation or deceit *(OED n1. 4.a)*.

11 **Fates [. . .] diviner** The line asks readers to consider the relationship between “fate” and “nature,” or describes opposition to make essentially similar claims.
Line 7 sets up opposition in “Wrongs” and “just” but, by naming Emaricdulfe’s appropriate response to those two, leaves readers with one notion of her character. Neither of those approaches is perfectly represented here, however, because, though “Fate” and “nature” do, in one sense, share meaning in that both terms suggest a sort of inevitable influence over human behavior, Emaricdulfe’s description as “best beloved” and “diviner” do not invite the same kind of reading that serves with earlier lines. Emaricdulfe is both smiled upon by fortune and one who is wise to the influences of nature.

12 **invention** creativity, inspiration

**hould** stronghold

**constancie** Constancy, not strictly opposite to invention, nonetheless balances invention’s variety.

13 **Poyson [. . .] anoyes** “Poyson” and “Phisition” seem to suggest different intents; it is as these agents relate to potential conditions that they emerge as similar. Emaricdulfe works against pain and to heal distress. Sonnet XVII says that the music Emaricdulfe plays “Poysons griefe and cureth all annoyes.”

14 **Eliziums** From Greek mythology, the abode of the blessed dead, the classical counterpart to a heavenly afterlife.

**paradice of joyes** Cf. A&S 68 (1591), 180-181: “O think I then, what paradise of joy / It is.” “Paradice” renames “Elizium.”
SONNET XXXIII.

Emaricdulf, love is a holy fire
    That burnes unseene, and yet not burning seene:
Free of himselfe, yet chain’d with strong desire:
    Conquered by thee, yet triumphs in thy eine:
An eye bewitching vision thee in seeming,
    That shadow-like flyes from a lovers eyes:
An heaven aspiring spirit voyd of seeing:
    A gentle god, yet loves to tyrannize:
Bond-slave to honour, burthen of conceit,
    The only god of thine eyes Hyrarkie,
Decay of friendship, grandsire of deceit,
    More then a god, yet wants a monarkie:
Bastard of nature that to heaven did clime,
    To seeme the misbegotten heire of time.

This poem defines love in the abstract and personified—Cupid. The nature of love was the major concern of sonnet sequences and lyric poetry generally. Shakespeare most famously addresses the nature of love in Sonnets 116 (1609), 100: “it is an ever fixed mark / That looks on tempests and is never shaken.” Twelfth Night 2.3.47-49 offers a comic but somewhat cynical view of love: “What is love? ‘Tis not hereafter; / Present mirth hath present laughter; / What’s to come is still unsure.” And Thomas Lodge offers a rather bittersweet lesson in Phillis 26 (1595) 56: “And this is love, / Whom in our youth we count our chiefest treasure, / In age for want of power we do reprove.” Here, E. C. presents an understanding of love that develops from a catalogue of paradoxes, a list of
characteristics explaining the one poem’s one verb—“is.” Like the preceding poem, this asks readers to look closely at linguistic relationships. One might imagine that the definition of love contained within a set of poems designed to praise the beloved and persuade her to accept its writer would be wholly positive, but E. C., following the moral and philosophical dictates of his day, must expose its seamier side.

1 **holy fire** suggests love as transformative, recalling Sonnet XXI, which describes love as a sanctifying condition. “Fire” is a small word packed with meaning: flame, of course, but “also a burning passion or feeling, esp. of love or rage” (*OED* n. 13.a). Fire is one of the primary elements of life and is a tempering agent, making stronger that which passes through it.

2 **burnes [. . .] seene** an inverse allusion to Jehovah’s appearance in the burning but unburnt bush. The first of the many paradoxes presented herein. Note the rhetorical device: “burnes unseene” becomes “burning seene.”

3 **himselfe** love personified

4 **Conquerd [. . .] eine** recalls the initial sonnet of this sequence, in which the Cupid positions himself in Emaricdulfe’s “faire lookes” and the speaker surrenders to the conquering god. “Eine” must have rhymed with “seene.”

5-6 **An eye [. . .] lovers eyes** Love tricks the eye by assuming the appearance of Emaricdulfe, or is projected onto mistresses from the eyes of their lovers. Those in love were said to “exchange eyes.”

7 **voyd of seeing** Cupid was represented as blind.

8 **loves to tyrranize** See Sonnet VI, which describes the pleasure Venus and Cupid take in surveying with “tyrannizing eyes” those whom they hold hostage.
9 **Bond-slave to honour** Love must abide by the constraints of honor; otherwise, it becomes lust. See Sonnet XXXVII. “Bond-slave” is emphatic for “slave.”

**burthen of conceit** ambiguous, depending on the meaning of “conceit,” which can mean over-weening pride in oneself or a trick of the imagination. “Burthen,” “that which is borne in the womb; a child” (*OED n. 4.a*), suggests that love is the offspring of either over-weening pride or a trick of the imagination, giving rise to negative implications of love.

10 **Hyrarkie** hierarchy, comparing the order of the heavens and the shape and power of the eyes with Cupid in residence there. Cf. Sonnet V: “Heavens Hyrarkie is in her bright eyes sphered.”

11 **Decay [. . .] deceit** The intensity of love’s feelings can overcome friendships, either between the lovers or between those competing for another person’s attention. Love fosters deceit as, unfortunately, lovers, consumed by passion, lie to one another and others—perhaps even themselves. Recall that one definition of “fire” in line 1 linked love and hate, perhaps foreshadowing the harmful consequences of love described here.

12 **More [. . .] monarkie** Cupid has powers beyond those of gods, yet lacks a definite realm.

13 **bastard of nature** the illegitimate child of nature, suggesting that love does not really “belong” to the realm of nature, though “bastard” is defined as a “natural child” (*OED n. 1.a*)

14 **misbegotten** illegitimate

**heire of time** Eros—Love—is the son of Chronos, Greek god of hours or time.
SONNET. XXXV.

O Faith, thou sacred Phœnix of this age,
   Into another world from hence exiled,
Divorc’d from honor by unheedfull rage,
   Pure vertues nest by hatefull vice defiled: 4
Thou faith that cal’st thy sirname Constancie,
   Christned above the nine-fold glorious sphere,
And from the heavens derives thy pedegree,
   Planting the roote of thy faire linage there:  8
Let this thy glorie be above the rest,
   That, banisht earth where thou didst once remaine,
Thou yet maist harbour in my mistris brest,
   So a pure chest pure treasure may containe, 12
And in her living beautie never old,
Seem like a pretious Diamond set in gold.

[C5]

2  exiled,] exiled
10  That,] That

**Faith, thou sacred Phœnix**  The suggestion is that, even as faith seems to be
imperiled, it will regenerate as the mythological bird does. The brilliantly plumed
red and gold bird that regenerates every 500 years from its own ashes, the phoenix
is one of the more popular mythological images of the period. Petrarch,
according to Hyder Rollins, editor of *Phoenix Nest* (Cambridge: Harvard UP,
1931), “of course, often refers to the phoenix, and Elizabethan poetry is crammed with figures based on that rare bird” (152). Originally located in Egyptian and Middle Eastern mythology, the phoenix was adopted as a Christian symbol for resurrection and rebirth in Christ. The phoenix is not typically identified with faith, as here, though *OED* contains an entry from 1673 that links the two: “Faith is the Phoenix grace, as Christ is the Phoenix mercy” (*n*¹. C1d). As well as a religious symbol, the phoenix served as a cultural symbol of power and magnificence; Elizabeth is often signed as the phoenix, and the image recurs in poems celebrating James I’s ascension to the throne.

3 **unheedfull rage** One of the key concerns of the period was the degree to which unmediated passion could debase human character and action. Recall from Sonnet XXXIII that Emaricdulfe is the model of deliberation and thus not tempted into “unheedfull” emotion or behavior.

4 **Pure [. . .] defiled** Faith is the nest—safe haven—of virtue which is otherwise defiled by vice.

5 **Constancie** steadfastness, and, in matters of the heart, fidelity. Spiritual faith and romantic faithfulness are often conflated during the period.

6-7 **Christned [. . .] pedegree** Faith is ancient, a child of the heavens. **nine-fold glorious sphere** alludes to the Ptolemaic universe, the model of a well-ordered, human-centered world. See Sonnet V. One of the tenets of Ptolemaic astronomy is that everything beneath the moon had been corrupted by the Fall of Man, but as E. C. explains here, faith was christened above that dividing line and is therefore inviolate.

**pedegree** (family) origin

8 **Planting [. . .] there** At its point of origin in the heavens, above the nine spheres, faith establishes a foundation that will nurture a line of heirs. **roote** a person or family forming the source of a lineage, kindred, or line of descendants (*OED* *n*¹. 8.a). Botanically, the root is the means by which an organism is fed. Faith not only establishes a foundation in heaven for its followers but also nurtures them.
Let this [. . .] the rest signals a turn in the poem’s direction. E. C. has been engaged in a philosophical discussion of faith and now turns to illustrating how that concept is embodied in Emaricdulfe.

That, banisht [. . .] mistris brest That, even though you have been banished from the earth, you may yet find hArbor in my mistress’s breast

remaine live

harbour moor, find safe haven

So [. . .] containe It is fitting that this pure chest might hold the purest of treasures. Wordplay here, as the idea that the anatomical chest contains the mistress’s breast and heart, the repository of faith, an abstract treasure, is couched in terms that evoke the visual image of a treasure chest. Perhaps the line should read “So pure a chest pure treasure may containe.”

pretious [. . .] gold reinforces the allusion to treasure chest above
SONNET. XXXVI.

When I behould heavens all behoulding starres,
    I doe compare them to my woes and smart,
Causde by the many wounds and mightie scarres
    That love hath trenched in my bleeding hart:  4
And when I thinke upon the Ocean sands,
    Me thinkes they number but my ladies bewties,
And represent the infinites of bandes
    Wherein my heart is bound to endles duties:  8
And when I see natures faire children thrive,
    Nurst in the bosome of the fruitefull earth,
From my chast vowes they their increase derive:
    And as they spring, so have my vowes their birth:  12
And as the starres and sands have endles date,
    So is my love subject to naught but fate.

[C5v]

1 When [. . .] starres  Cf. Amoretti 34 (1591), 78: “When I behold that beauties wonderment;” Sonnets 12 (1609), 28: “When I behold the violet past prime.”

   all behoulding stares  By virtue of their position, the stars see all that goes on below. Sonnet XXVI describes the stars as “more than ten times numberlesse”; in their association with those “numberlesse” stars, the woes and smart (pain) inflicted by the speaker’s love for Emaricdulfe are infinite.

3 wounds and mightie scarres  The presence of both fresh wounds and scars makes the case that the speaker has loved for a long time and continues to do so.
trenched trenchèd; gashed, carved. Cf. Two Gentlemen of Verona 3.2.6-7):
“This weak impress of love is as a figure / Trenched in ice”; Venus and Adonis 1052-1053: “the wide wound that the boar had trench’d / In his soft flank.”

the Ocean sands like the stars above, numberless.

infinites [. . .] duties recalls Sonnets XIII and XVII, which speak of the “thousand bands” that bind the speaker to Emaricdulfe’s service

infinites infinite number of. The bands are countless, as are the stars and sands.

endles duties The first sonnet of this sequence ends with the speaker swearing “dutie to my deare,” and the notion of his duty as a lover infuses the sequence and, indeed, the genre. The duties of a Petrarchan lover are as endless as are the mistress’s beauties.

when I see [. . .] fruitefull earth The abundance of natural life, with its infinite cycles of regeneration. Cf. Sonnets 15 (1609), 16: “When I consider everything that grows.”

chast vowes Though he speaks here of procreation and regeneration, and though throughout the sequence he has included the occasional sexual overtone, E. C. remains faithful to a foundational principle of these sequences: that the suitor’s love for his mistress is honorable, not lust-driven (the following sonnet describes very forcefully the corrupt nature of lust).

they their refers to the bandes above. The speaker’s ties to Emaricdulfe increase as he observes the reproductive power of nature, just as when he observes the stars and sands.

increase with “fruitefull” above, calls to mind the biblical injunctions to be fruitful and multiply and increase. Cf. Genesis 9: 7 (Bishop’s Bible; 1576; EEBO): “But be fruitefull, and multiply you, breede in the earth, and encrease therein.”

they natures faire children

spring grow

so [. . .] birth Nature’s children grow naturally, inevitably, and the speaker’s devotion to Emaricdulfe has come about just as naturally and inevitably.
The final couplet sums up the argument of the poem, with each quatrain providing evidence for the couplet’s claims. That claim is purely conventional: that true love is as endless.
SONNET. XXXVII.

O Lust of sacred love the foule corrupter,
    Usurper of her heavenly dignitie,
Follies first childe, good counsels interrupter,
    Fostered by sloth, first step to infamie,
Thou hel-borne monster that affrights the wise,
    Love-choking lust, vertues disdainefull foe:
Wisdomes contemner, spurner of advise,
    Swift to forsweare, to faithfull promise slow,
Be thou as far from her chast-thoughted breast,
    Her true love kindled heart, her vertuous minde,
As is al-seeing Tytan from the west,
    When from Auroras armes he doth untwine.
Nature did make her of a heavenly mould,
    Onely true heavenly vertues to infould.

[C6]

Here E. C. engages in a conventional diatribe against the ravages of lust; though the sonnet sequences of the period are, perhaps necessarily, tinged with sexuality, the writers are usually careful to distinguish between their pure love and degrading lust. One of the period’s most damning portrayals of lust’s debasing nature occurs in Shakespeare’s Sonnet 129. See also Amoretti 79 (1591), 100: “For all the rest, how ever fayre it be, / shall turn to nought and loose that glorious hew: / but onely that is permanent and free / from frayle corruption, that doth flesh ensew.” E. C. presents an allegory here, describing lust’s ancestry.
interrupter, interrupter

contemner, contemner

**O [ . . . ] corrupter**  “Sacred love”—*agape*—is grounded in the example of Christ and is frequently contrasted with erotic love. Lust corrupts love just as surely as the serpent lured humankind into the Fall. Cf. *Sonnets* 144 (1609), 122+: “and would corrupt my saint to be a devil.”

**Follies**  Modern readers might think of folly as mere lighthearted foolishness, but the word carries far more serious meanings in the period, including weak-mindedness or mental imbalance. Also, from the French *folie* the word meant lewdness or sexual wantonness (*OED n*1. 3.a). Cf. *Othello* 5.2.132: “she turn’d to folly, and she was a whore.”

**good counsels interrupter**  An obsolete meaning of “interrupt” (*OED v. 6*) suggests not only breaking the continuity of something but actually destroying that which has been interrupted; Lust interjects itself into deliberation. Sonnet XXXIII lauds Emaricdulfe as the model of good counsel.

**sloth**  laziness, failure to pay proper attention to one’s thoughts and actions. Sloth is allegorized here as a nursemaid or teacher to lust and therefore the “first step to infamie.” E. C. embarks upon a “slippery slope” argument here, suggesting that once someone has fallen prey to lust, he or she is utterly lost and will deserve the vile reputation of infamy, deserved because of shameful behavior.

**Thou**  The three previous lines have described lust; the speaker here returns to his direct address.

**contemner**  condenser. An obsolete meaning of “condemn” is to damn (*OED v. 5.a*), making lust’s opposition to wisdome rather grave.

**spurner of advise**  Sonnet XXXIII presents Emaricdulfe as “advices patron,” clearly placing her in opposition to lust.
Swift [. . .] slow  The second phrase inverts the first, both in structure and in content, giving balance to the line.

forswears  swear falsely, lie

faithfull promise  suggests the formal promise made in a marriage ceremony

9-10  Be [. . .] minde  Cf. Amoretti 84 (1591), 102: “Let not one spark of filthy lustfull fyre / breake out, that may her sacred peace molest: / ne one light glance of sensuall desire / Attempt to work her gentle mindes unrest. / But pure affections bred in spotlesse brest.”

Be thou  The speaker reminds us again that he addresses lust directly. The first eight lines of the poem address and describe lust; here the speaker commands lust to leave Emaricdulfe alone, with the central verb of the poem, an imperative.

11-12  As [. . .] untwinde  Tytan, the sun, spends his nights with Aurora, the Roman goddess of the dawn; the sun arises in the east as he leaves her bed. The daily span of the natural world separates Tytan from the west at this moment. In addition to suggesting the great distance the speaker directs lust to maintain between himself and Emaricdulfe, this personification of daybreak provides a model of eternal, if periodic, commitment, in stark contrast to lust’s facile dalliances.

untwinde  disentangle. Tytan extricates himself from Aurora’s embrace.

13-14  Nature [. . .] infould  Emaricdulfe was created to encompass only virtuous qualities. These lines recall the earlier described competition (see Sonnet V and XIX), in which personified nature and heaven vie to equip Emaricdulfe with sterling qualities.

heavenly  disyllabic

mould  “distinctive nature of a person or thing, esp. as indicative of origin; constitution, character” (OED n³. 1). Cf. Taming of the Shrew 1.1.59-60: “No mates for you, / Unless you were of gentler, milder mould.”

heavenly  disyllabic

infould  embrace
SONNET. XXXVIII.

My thoughts ascending the hie house of fame,
    Found in records of vertuous monuments
A map of honours in a noble frame,
    Shining in spight of deaths oft banishments:  4
A thousand colours Love sate suted in,
    Guarded with honour and immortall time;
Lust led with envie, feare, and deadly sin,
    Opposde against faire Loves out-living line.  8
True Constancie kneeld at the feet of Love,
    And begg’d for service, but could not procure it:
Which seene, my heart stept forth & thought to move
    Kind Love for favour, but did not allure it:  12
Yet when my heart swore Constancie was true,
Love welcom’d it, and gave them both their due.

This sonnet is difficult. It appears to plead the case for the speaker’s sincere intentions in love through an allegorical game of cards, one involving Love, Lust, Constancy, and perhaps, if it is a four-handed game, as seems likely, Death (not capitalized in the poem). As Constancy, the speaker assists Love in defeating Lust, and, perhaps, Death, thereby winning her favor. The battle may be couched in terms of the popular sixteenth-century game called variously “Ruff,” “Honors,” “Trump,” or “Triumph,” a relatively simple game, played with some variations, that would later evolve into Whisk/Whist and then Bridge and then Contract Bridge. Points were earned by the number of tricks taken and by the number of honors or court cards that are trumps held by partners. In the poem hearts appear to be trumps. The speaker (who affiliates
himself with Constancy) is able to help Love in one of two ways or both. First, he apparently has the ace of hearts, and Love has the other trump honors (she’s “suted in” a “thousand colours”), so that together, in some versions of the game, they can earn two points. Second, his having the ace, and none of the (morally debased) suit or suits led by Lust, allows him, when Lust leads “envie, feare, and deadly sin,” to play a trump (his heart, though any trump would have worked here). He gets the lead then, which he can transfer to Love, who should be able to run the board. But it is hard to speculate with great confidence.

See OED “Triumph” n. 8.a and b, “Trump” n²; Parlett 215-219; Jacoby and Morehead 23.

My [. . .] banishments The speaker thinks about the abstract, eternal love, and its embodiment in Emaricdulfe’s “noble frame.”

ascending to must be understood, signaling that the idea that occupied the speaker’s mind is pure, not base, in nature

hie house of fame allegorical House of Fame (Fama) that serves as a means to praise those of great virtue and of martial heroism especially and, in its qualified, ironic or negative aspect, sometimes as Rumor, to ridicule the powers of gossip and the means to ill-deserved reputations. The reference here is thoroughly positive, unlike those of Chaucer’s House of Fame, Virgil’s Aeneid (4.173-97), and Ovid’s Metamorphoses (12.39-64). With Virgil the abode is “caeli medio terraeque” (“twixt heaven and earth” [l.184]), with Ovid “Fama tenet summaque domum sibi legit in arce” (“Rumour dwells here, having chosen her house upon a high mountain-top” [l.43]). A search of the current EEBO to 1700 yields 63 hits, the vast majority positive. George Peele refers to it in The Araygnement of Paris (1584) and four times in The Honour of the Garter (1593),
and Ben Jonson uses it as a setting for his *Masque of Queenes* (1609), drawings for which survive.

**in records of** accounts preserved in writing or some other permanent form, memorials, inscriptions (see *OED* 5.a). The allegory that follows reflects the style of the written accounts. Should *records* be stressed on the second syllable?

**virtuous monuments** monuments of or to virtue. Cf. *Lucrece*, 391-92, of Lucrece in bed: “Where like a virtuous monument she lies, / To be admir’d of lewd unhallowed eyes,” usually glossed as like an effigy (on a tomb) (*OED* 4.b *Obs.*), which may serve here. *Lucrece* is “Showing life’s triumph in the map of death” (402). More suitable, perhaps, is “An enduring, memorable, outstanding, or imposing example of some quality, attribute, etc.” (4.b), in this case virtue, with special emphasis on chastity.

**map of honours** *fig.*, epitome, summation of (*OED* 5 *Obs.*). In view of the narrative to follow, one is tempted to find or anticipate a secondary sense for “honors” here from card-playing; *OED* (8.a) gives 1674 as its first reference (from Cavendish, *Complete Gamester*). “Map” is a frequent image for “face” (“face cards”?). Worth noting is a 1622 quotation from the *OED* (“Suit” *n.* 20.a): “I have seene French cards to play withall, the foure suits changed into Maps of severall Countries.

**noble frame** body (*OED* 9.a), or else “the house of fame” itself (as a structure)

**in spite of** in defiance (scorn or contempt) of (*OED* “Spite” 5.a *Obs.*)

**oft** frequent

**banishments** occurrences of having been dismissed. Though virtues, including those associated with love, have been dismissed and appeared to die through the ages, they continue to shine in these old accounts.

**thousand colours Love sate suted in** clothed in, but also arranged in a set, sequence, or series (8.a *Obs.*), as with the *suits* in card playing. Love’s hand is heavy with court or coated cards, with their variety of colors.

**Guarded with honour** presumably, ornamented or trimmed (*OED* 3.a) with
lace or braid, *fig.* for chastity (*OED* “Honor” 3.a). There may well be here the
*OED*’s sense from *card-playing* (*ppl.* a., “Guarded” 1.d): “Said of a card,
especially the next to the highest of a suit, when it is protected (in the same hand)
by a lower card of the suit,” though the first quotation is from 1742 (Hoyle). Is
her hand so full of aces, kings, queens, and jacks (honors cards), that a low *honor,*
rather than a lower, sacrificial card, protects a high *honor?*

**immortal time** Recall that one of the complaints against lust in the previous
poem was that it is “swift to forswear e, to faithfull promise slow,” in clear
contrast to the eternal nature of love. Love appears to have what card players
call “strength and length.”

7-8 **Lust led [. . .] line** the imagery of battle as love and lust vie for ascendancy. The
weapons that lust brings to the battle are ugly: envy, fear, and sin.

**led** First usage in the *OED* for this card-playing sense of *lead* is 1677 (17.a).
Lust sits to the left of the dealer, presumably, who must be Love. Does Lust lead
one card (with all these features) or three in succession?

**envy** not only the ill-will attached to observing and coveting another’s good
fortune but also, in an obsolete usage, any active harm or evil (*OED n.* 2)

**deadly sin** While venial sins can be forgiven and ameliorated through the charity
of others and the grace of God, mortal sins are destructive at their very core and
have the dreadful capability of destroying the sinner’s character completely. Lust
and envy are two of the seven mortal sins.

**out-living line** Love’s lengthy series of high cards or perhaps trumps; *fig.* for
enduring progeny (*OED* “Line” 24.a). John Ford wrote a pamphlet called *A Line of Life. Pointing at the Immortalitie of a Vertuous Name* (1620; STC2
11162).

9-10 **True Constancie [. . .] procur**e Constancy is honest or accurate, is playing
the game properly, and thus asks permission to permitted to play a trump (*fig.* for
faithful). The following from *Antony and Cleopatra* (4.14.18-20) has a long
history of comment: “–she, Eros, has / Pack’d cards with Caesar’s [stacked the
deck in Caesar’s favor], and false-play’d my glory /Unto an enemy’s triumph”

11-12 **Which seene [. . .] allure it** which, when my heart saw, it tried to persuade Love by making a personal appeal to her generosity. The speaker asks for permission to serve. He can legitimately play a heart trump.

13-14 **Yet [. . .] due** It is the swearing of an oath that convinces Love that the speaker’s heart and Constancy itself are acceptable. By swearing, the heart includes the faculties of the mind and will to its original emotional appeal.

**gave them both their due** give them what they have won or, figuratively, deserve. Does *both* refer to the heart and the card (the trump)? the partners Love herself and Constancy? the speaker and Constancy? or Constancy and, ironically, Lust and Death (*both* sometimes extending to more than two [*OED adv. 1.b*])? Is there a play on Italian *due* for the *two* points earned because the partners (Constancy and Love) have between them the four honors cards?
SONNET. XXXIX.

Image of honour, Vertues first borne childe,
    Natures faire painted stage, Fames brightest face,
Syren that never with thy tongue beguild,
    Sibill more wise then Cumas Sibill was,   4
When learnings sun with more resplendent gleames,
    Shall with immortall flowres of poesie,
Bred by the vertue of Bram bigning beames
    Deck my invention for thy dignitie:   8
With heavenly hymnes thy more then heavenly parts
    Ile deifie, thy name commands such dutie.
Though many heads of poisest poets arts
    Are insufficient to expresse thy beautie,  12
Thy name, thy honour, and loves puritie,
    With Stanzas, Layes, and Hymnes Ile stellifie.

The first four lines of this poem are a series of epithets for Emaricdulfe, as the speaker addresses her. Line five introduces a “when” clause that is answered by the “then” clause (the “then” is implicit) starting in line nine: when E. C.’s poetic skills are enhanced, he, as duty commands, will more adequately sing her praises.
Recall from Sonnet XXXVII that Lust is “Follies first childe”; Sonnets XXXVII and XXXVIII work together to describe lust and all its evils and state firmly that Emaricdulfe has no dealings with lust. With that truth established—and reinforced here as Emaricdulfe’s parentage is contrasted with Lust’s—the poet moves into his final two sonnets with high praise of his virtuous mistress.

**first borne** As the first born, Emaricdulfe stands to inherit all of Virtue’s title and riches.

**Natures [ . . . ] face** Cf. Sonnets 20 (1609), 20: “A woman’s face, with Nature’s own hand painted, / Hast thou . . . .” In certain circumstances “painted” can suggest artifice and deceit, as women who paint their faces are assumed to be harlots; Cf. Hamlet 3.1.50-52: “The harlot’s cheek, beautied with plast’ring art, / Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it / Than is my deed to my most painted word”; Idea 5 (1593), 5: “How many paltry, foolish, painted things, / That now in coaches trouble ev’ry street, / Shall be forgotten, whom no poet sings.” However, Emaricdulfe’s beauty is the gift of nature and therefore honest.

**Fames brightest face** Emaricdulfe is the best representative of the good character and action that create good reputation.

**Syren [ . . . ] beguild** Though her voice is captivating enough to do so, Emaricdulfe is too innocent and virtuous to beguile. See Sonnet XXII.

**Cumas Sibill** Aeneas was told by the prophet Helenus to approach the Sibyl of Cumae, priestess of Apollo and a woman known for her wisdom, for guidance in his journey to the underworld; Emaricdulfe is wiser, even, than this mythic seer.

**When [ . . . ] dignitie** when his inspiration and talent have been refined and adorned so that he is better able to do justice to Emaricdulfe’s attributes

**learnings sun** The sun, of course, is the most powerful star in the heavens, the life-giving center of the universe, and often associated with Apollo, whose epithet was “the bright.” Apollo was a patron of poetry and music. The word also serves to note a type of clearness or brightness (OED n1. 1.d). Possibly a pun, as well: “learning’s son.”
gleames  During the period, “gleam” referred to light shone by the sun.
flowres  brightest and best examples (OED n. 9). Flowers are often figurative for
Bred by  come about because of, are the children of
Bram bigning beames  one of the most difficult passages in the text. One
is tempted to discard the phrase altogether as a printer’s error and replace it with
something like “bright shining (or burning) beames,” with a possible reference to
Emaricdulfe’s eyes as inspiration for E. C.’s poetic aspirations. The OED and
EEBO allow for other possibilities, including “brain (or wit)-enhancing
(enlarging, intensifying) beams,” meaning “inspiration,” that of Apollo,
“learnings sun.” Half of the 24 hits for brame in EEBO attest to the sense brain,
as, for example, in 1578’s The historie of man (STC2 1359): “The figure of the
brame Pi pater taken away . . . .” Cf. also OED “Biggen” 1 trans. “to make big,”
etc., this being the verbal adj. biggening. The metaphor may well be from the
developing fetus, conventional then for the inspiration in process (note “Bred”
here and cf. bairn [=child]; and cf. EEBO [search] Biggening, “up-rising [of
women],” from a 1677 dictionary. OED, defining Brame 1 as “longing,” gives
only one quotation, from FQ 3.2.52 (1596): “Through . . . hart-burning brame,
/ She shortly like a pyned ghost became.”

Deck  adorn
invention  product of his poetic imagination, inspiration
for thy dignitie  to more appropriately praise your dignity

With [. . .] parts  The speaker will then—after the “when” clause above—be able
to carry out his poetic project.
thy [. . .] parts  Emaricdulfe’s perfections place her even above heaven. Recall
that in Sonnet XIX nature and the heavens agreed to make her “more than halfe
celestiall.”
heavenly  Each instance is disyllabic.
parts  personal qualities or attributes (OED n 1. 15). As the thirty-eight poems
that precede this one affirm, the speaker loves Emaricdulfe in her entirety.
deifie  make god-like. Emaricdulfe will be praised so beautifully that she will be recognized as a goddess.

thy name  Here in the penultimate poem of this sequence, E. C. calls attention to Emaricdulfe’s name, which brings us full circle to the sequence’s title and our inability to determine just who this woman is. Does her name command such duty because of her social position, her virtue and beauty, or merely because she is the perfectly beloved?

dutie  E. C. deifies Emaricdulfe because it is his duty; Cupid demanded that E. C. swear duty to Emaricdulfe in the first sonnet of this series, and the notion of duty has been reiterated throughout, as is the convention of service owed to the mistress of courtly poetry throughout the period.

Though [. . .] beautie  though the work of a gathering of the best poets cannot sufficiently laud Emaricdulfe’s beauty

heads of poiest poets arts  wits of the gravest poet’s arts

Thy name [. . .] stellifie  Throughout the sequence, the speaker has downplayed his own poetic abilities, calling upon mythic powers of poetry as well as actual poets to help him in his cause. However, he also suggests that his passion for Emaricdulfe empowers his efforts. His longing in this poem, as throughout, is that, somehow, he will be equipped to do poetic justice to his feelings for Emaricdulfe. Interestingly, in the final sonnet, he gives way, finally admitting that he is not up to the task..

Stanzas, Layes, and Hymnes  a variety of poetic forms (“stanza” was a relatively new term in 1595). This is not a logical division scheme; E. C. might have thought stanza another word for a kind of poem. Given the appropriate talent, this poet will laud Emaricdulfe in myriad ways.

stellifie  make a star of, calling to mind Sidney’s Stella. Cf. Sonnets 24 (1609), 23+: “Mine eyes hath played the painter and hath stelled / Thy beauty’s form in table of my heart.”
SONNET. XXXX.

Some bewties make a god of flatterie,
   And scorne Eliziums eternall types,
Nathes, I abhorre such faithles prophesie,
   Least I be beaten with thy vertues stripes.  4
Wilt thou survive another world to see?
   Delias sweete Prophet shall the praises singe
Of bewtis worth exemplifried in thee,
   And thy names honour in his sweete tunes ring:  8
Thy vertues Collin shall immortalize,
   Collin, chast vertues organ, sweetst esteem’d,
When for Elizas name he did comprise
   Such matter as inventions wonder seem’d.  12
Thy vertues hee, thy bewtis shall the other,
Christen a new, whiles I sit by and wonder.

Mea fortuna tua

Ut hodie sic cras, & semper.

FINIS.            qd. E. C.

[C7v]

This poem is an elaborate version of the eternizing conceit. About this
collection of the genre, Sidney Lee says, “that conceit spread from classical literature
through the whole of Renaissance poetry. But Ronsard was mainly responsible for its
universal vogue among the Elixabethan sonneteers” (lv).
1 flatterie faddish, insubstantial praise. Cf. A&S 80 (1591), 186: “Loathing all lies, doubting this flattery is.” Some mistresses are so eager to be praised that they foolishly believe flattery.

2 Elizium Elizium is a place of perfect happiness, Greek mythology’s abode for the blessed dead. A boon for poets of the age, the name was made to coincide nicely with their efforts to praise Queen Elizabeth.

eternall types contrasts with the “flattery” of line 1. Genuine, lasting praise extols eternal virtues and suggests as well the means to achieving eternal life.

3 Nathes [. . .] prophesie E. C. will not stoop to hyperbolic flattery in his praise of Emaricdulfe. Shakespeare offers a counter to “faithless prophesie” in Sonnets 106 (1609), 92: “So all their praises are but prophesies / Of this our time.” Nathes nevertheless. Monosyllabic (?) prophesie poetic praise. In an obsolete usage, “prophet” means an inspired bard (OED n. 1b).

4 Least [. . .] stripes If E. C. did indulge in easy, insubstantial flattery of Emaricdulfe, her virtues would reproach his efforts.

Least lest stripes marks from being whipped. Cf. A&S 17 (1591), 159: “the boy refused, for fear of Mars’s hate, / Who threatened stripes if he his wrath did prove.”

survive “survie” in the original, possibly a printer’s error. One might also consider “surview,” an earlier form of “survey” commonly used in 1595 (OED v. 1).

another world heaven, of course, and perhaps the earthly future
Samuel Daniel will praise Emardulfe’s beauty. After the first printing of Delia in 1592, Daniel was lauded and often imitated by lesser poets and was recognized especially for his celebration of physical beauty.

Cf. Anthony Chute, Bewtie dishonoured written under the title of Shores wife (1593), in EEBO (STC2 5262): “My bewties worth and excellence seeing / Reporte my bewtie so divine.”

Cf. Sonnets 106 (1609), 92: “They had not skill enough your worth to sing.”

E. C. again reminds readers of the lyric quality of sonnets, especially Daniel’s.

As Daniel immortalizes Emardulfe’s physical perfection, Collin—Edmund Spenser—will attest to her moral perfection. R. M. Cummings, who read Emardulfe in the Roxburghe Club edition of 1881, cites this poem in his anthology of poets who have praised Spenser and notes that “nothing is known of E. C.” and that “the editor of the Roxburghe Club reprint, is unable even to identify him” (84). He finds as well another “E. C.” writing poetic praise of Spenser in 1632 and tentatively identifies him as a man named Ezekiel Clarke, a friend of Phineas Fletcher (165). Cummings does not connect these poets who share the same initials, and there does not seem to be any reason to believe that they are the same person.

Spenser assumed his lofty position with the 1590 publication of the first three books of The Faerie Queene, dedicated to Elizabeth and a marvel of creativity. His text, the “matter” he put forth, was the wonder of invention.

As he ends his forty-sonnet praise of Emardulfe, E. C. fails in this curious final rhyme. The rhyming of “other” and “wonder” suggests that he has perhaps reached his limits. It is therefore appropriate that these greater poets will take up the task and that he will wonder not only at Emardulfe’s perfection (beauty and virtue) but also at the perfection of their
verse.

_the other_ Daniel

_Mea [ . . . ] semper_ “My fortune is yours / As today, so tomorrow, & always.”

_qd. E. C._ quoth E. C.
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The Hunterian Club, 1873.


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APPENDIX
Appendix: Joseph Sobran’s views on E. C.’s identity

1. RETRIEVED 4/2/07 FROM
http://www.sobran.com/emarintr.shtml

Sobran's --- Emaricdulfe --- Introduction

A Note from the Editor
(Modified from SOBRAN’S, January 1998, page 3)

In the January 1998 issue, of SOBRAN’S I announced what I believe is an extremely important discovery: a previously neglected work by the man who was Shakespeare. Moreover, it tends strongly to confirm that he was actually, as I tirelessly contend, Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford.

I think the evidence, even in a short summary, speaks for itself. The 40 sonnets of Emaricdulfe bristle with Shakespearean phrases. Whoever wrote the Shakespeare plays wrote these sonnets. And it could hardly have been the man from Stratford.

The title page and dedication identify the author of the poems only as “E.C., Esquire,” and the very little that has been written about them says only that E.C. has never been identified. Well, he has now. Even the dedication has echoes of the dedications of Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece.

It all sounds implausible, I know; even after I had found seemingly definitive proof, I kept asking myself whether I’d made some huge mistake. Sometimes it seemed like a dream I might be about to awake from. And yet every time I checked again, there it was.

I found Emaricdulfe nearly a year ago; until now I’ve kept it to myself to make sure I’d considered every angle. The same questions that must be occurring to you, dear reader, occurred to me.

Chiefly, of course, I wondered how all the scholars could have missed these poems, which have existed for more than four centuries and were published in 1595. I’ve learned not to put too much faith in the experts in any field, but I thought Elizabethan literature had been pretty thoroughly covered. Surely some doctoral candidate had
pored over this work and noticed the abundance of Shakespearean touches and verbal parallels! Apparently not.

On reflection, it doesn’t seem so strange. Most scholars nowadays are like bureaucrats; they stay within the system, and they hardly notice anything outside it. The literary scholars believe that the name “William Shakespeare” means the son of Stratford, so it isn’t surprising that they should take “E.C., Esquire” at face value too. It’s really no more amazing than that lawyers, legal scholars, and Supreme Court justices have forgotten the plain meaning of the U.S. Constitution. You can overlook just about anything if you aren’t looking for it. (I regret to say I’ve also proved this myself, many times over. Several times just today, in fact.)

I’m still trying to piece the story together. Of Oxford we know that he had a towering literary reputation in his own day — Edmund Spenser was one of many who praised him lavishly — and also that he thought it was vulgar for a gentleman to publish his work under his own name. My guess is that Emaricdulfe was written many years before it saw print and had been privately circulated; it may have been among the poems Francis Meres had in mind in 1598 when he said that “Shakespeare” had passed his “sugared sonnets among his private friends.”

At some point in the future I’ll discuss other poems I have reason to believe Oxford wrote before he became “Shakespeare.” An incredible story is just beginning to unfold.

Joseph Sobran

2. RETRIEVED 4/2/07 FROM http://www.sobran.com/emar.shtml

Sobran's -- The Real News of the Month

The Mystery of Emaricdulfe

"(Reprinted from SOBRAN’S, January 1998, pages 5-6)"

"Nearly a year ago, as I was finishing Alias Shakespeare, I happened on what may turn out to be one of the most important finds in the history of English literature."
"While browsing through a couple of poetry anthologies, I ran across a few sonnets, author unknown, from an Elizabethan sonnet cycle oddly titled Emaricdulfe, published in 1595. I was already sure that the Earl of Oxford, better known as "William Shakespeare, had written the lovely sonnet published under the mythological name ?Phaeton? in 1591; could he have written these too?"

"I soon found the complete text of Emaricdulfe, and an hour with the 40 sonnets was enough to convince me that Shakespeare— that is, Oxford—had had indeed written it. I was amazed, ecstatic."

"The style, though erratic, was sufficient. But there also were details that had close matches in the Shakespeare works. The more I studied the poems, the more Shakespearean parallels I found. Eventually I identified more than 200; five per sonnet, or one every three lines!"

At this point even my most devoted readers must be skeptical. So allow me to present some of the evidence.

Number 24 of the 40 sonnets is the most vivid and interesting example:

1  "Oft have I heard honey-tongu’d ladies speak, "  
2  "Striving their amorous courtiers to enchant, "  
3  "And from their nectar lips such sweet words break, "  
4  As neither art nor heavenly skill did want.  
5  "But when Emaricdulfe gins to discourse, "  
6  "Her words are more than well-tun’d harmony, "  
7  And every sentence of a greater force  
8  "Than Mermaids’ song, or Sirens?’ sorcery; "  
9  "And if to hear her speak, Laertes’ heir "  
10  "The wise Ulysses liv’d us now among, "  
11  "From her sweet words he could not stop his ear, "  
12  As from the Sirens’ and the Mermaids’ song;  
13  "And had she in the Sirens’ place but stood, "  
14  Her heavenly voice had drown’d him in the flood.

"Obviously “Emaricdulfe” is a code name. Though these poems are highly stylized in the Petrarchan tradition and far from realistic, there would be no need for a code name if the lady they describe weren’t a real person. She is apparently a lady of the court (possibly Elizabeth I
herself), and her admirers are courtiers. Presumably the author is a courtier too. This, of course, suggests Oxford; it can hardly be William of Stratford (who in any case would not be writing anonymously if he were the author).

"But if the author is the poet we know as Shakespeare, and if he was writing anonymously (the title page identifies the author only as “E.C., Esquire”), “Shakespeare” very likely not his real name either. If he was a courtier, he was probably Oxford. In the future I’ll offer additional proof of this. For now I’ll content myself with showing only that “E.C.” and “Shakespeare” were the same poet."

Let’s begin with Shakespearean parallels in the poem cited above:

Line 1: “honey-tong-ed” Love’s Labor’s Lost: “honey-tongued Boyet”

"Lines 2, 5, 6: “enchant ... discourse ... harmony" Venus and Adonis: “Bid me discourse, I will enchant thine ear”

Comedy of Errors: “of such enchanting discourse”

Love’s Labour’s Lost: “doth ravish enchanting harmony”

Line 3: “from their nectar Lips” Venus: “such nectar from his lips”

Line 6: “well-tun?d harmony” Titus Andronicus: “the well-tuned horns”

The Rape of Lucrece: “well-tuned warble”

Sonnet 8: “well-tuned sounds”

Line 7: “And every sentence of a greater force” Henry V: “sweet and honeyed sentences”

Lines 8, 12, 14: “Mermaids ... Sirens ... drown’d” 3 Henry VI: “I’ll drown more the mermaid shall”
Comedy of Errors: “O, train me not, sweet mermaid, with thy note / To drown me in thy sister’s flood of tears. Sing, siren, for thyself?

Line 9: “And if to hear her Speak” Sonnet 130: “I love to hear her speak”


Lines 11-12: “stop his ear... Mermaid?s song” Comedy of Errors: “I’ll stop mine ears song”
Lucrece: “As if some mermaid did ears entice” Venus: “Bewitching like the wanton mermaid’s song”

"Lines 13-14 clinch it: “And had she in the Sirens’ place but stood,” Her heavenly voice had drown’d him in the flood.” Lucrece: “That had Narcissus seen her as she stood, Self-love had never drown’d him in the flood.”

And note this rhyme pattern, in another sonnet of Emaricdulfe, and compare a quatrain from Lucrece:

Emaricdulfe: "O Lust, of sacred love the foul corrupter, / Usurper of her heavenly dignity, / Folly’s first child, good counsel’s interrupter,/ Foster’d by sloth, first step to infamy.”
Lucrece: “Her house is sack’d, her quiet interrupted, / Her mansion batter’d by the enemy; / Her sacred temple spotted, spoil’d, corrupted, / Grossly ingirt with daring infamy.”
(Also compare the first quatrain with Venus: “love to heaven is fled, Since sweating lust on earth usurp’d his name.”)

The style and themes are equally Shakespearean; these lines, with their wistful reflection on beauty and mortality, would be at home among the 1609 Sonnets:

"O foolish nature, why didst thou create A thing so fair, if fairness be neglected? But fairest things be subject unto fate, And in the end are by the fates rejected.

If any doubt remains, consider some parallel lines and phrases from E.C. and Shakespeare:

EC: “A beauteous issue of a beauteous mother” WS: “Sweet issue of a more sweet-smelling sire”; “When your sweet issue your sweet form should bear”

EC: “Fair-springing branch sprung of a hopeful stock” WS: “That from his loins no hopeful branch might spring”

EC: “For nature of the gods is to be merciful” WS: “Wilt thou draw near the nature of the gods? Draw near them then in being merciful.”

EC: “The stars that spangle heaven with glistening beauty” WS: “What stars do spangle heaven with such beauty?”

EC: “to yield Them coward captives” WS: “The coward captive vanquished doth yield”

EC: “a ship on Neptune’s back” WS: “o’er green Neptune’s back With ships made cities”

EC: “True badge of faith” WS: “the badge of faith to prove them true”

EC: “So pure a chest pure treasure may contain” WS: “Some purer chest to close a purer mind”

EC: “in her heart enthroned” WS: “enthroned in the hearts of kings”; “enthroned In your dear heart”

EC: “eyes that gaze upon thy beauty” WS: “an eye to gaze on beauty”
EC: “my heart’s deep grief and sorrow” WS: “grief and sorrow still embrace his heart”

EC: “love-lacking Vesta” WS: “love-lacking vestals”

EC: “modest Diana” WS: “modest Dian”

EC: “love-choking lust” WS: “choked by unresisted lust”

EC: “the high house of fame” WS: “the house of fame”

EC: “virtuous monuments” WS: “virtuous monument”

EC: “heavenly mould” WS: “moulds from heaven”

EC: “bastard of nature” WS: “nature’s bastards”

EC: “my yielding heart” WS: “my unyielding heart”

EC: “in wealthy nature’s scorn” WS: “in scorn of nature”

EC: “heavenly shape” WS: “a shape of heaven”

EC: “plough the seas” WS: “plough’st the foam”

EC: “rich jewels” WS: “rich jewel”

EC: “the whistling winds” WS: “the whistling wind”

EC: “changed his hue” WS: “change this hue”

EC: “christen anew” WS: “new-christened”

EC: “love’s purity” WS: “purity in love”

EC: “love-kindled” WS: “love-kindling”

EC: “chaste vows” WS: “vowed chaste life”

EC: “Juno for state” WS: “highest queen of state, Great Juno”

EC: “higher strain” WS: “high strains”
EC: “heavenly gifts”  WS: “heavenly gift”
EC: “so sweet a saint”  WS: “sweet saint”
EC: “there all enraged”  WS: “here all enraged”
EC: “high pitch”  WS: “higher pitch”
EC: “death’s ebon gates”  WS: “death’s ebon dart”
EC: “richest treasure”  WS: “rich treasure”
EC: “true types”  WS: “true type”

E.C. and Shakespeare use identical phrases, including these: “the world’s report,” “sweet repose,” “golden slumber,” “virtue’s nest,” “holy fire,” “hell-born,” “endless date,” “deep unrest,” “golden tresses,” “cruel death,” “suffer shipwreck,” “pretty action,” “ten times happy,” “snow-white,” “true constancy,” “several graces,” “well-deserving,” “lily hand,” “honey sweet,” “outward graces,” “honey breath,” “the golden sun,” “weal and woe,” “sacred beauty,” and “princely beauty.”

And all this is the short list. Coincidence, copying, influence, plagiarism, and so forth are out of the question. Only one poet commanded this style.

The evidence could hardly be more conclusive. Yet no scholar has even noticed these parallels, which have been lying in plain sight for four centuries. It’s one of the most astounding oversights in the history of literary scholarship.

How could it happen? Simple. Most of the scholars have never taken the Shakespeare authorship question seriously. And by the same token, they’ve never questioned other Elizabethan authorship attributions.

And so this incredible treasure was left to me, courtesy of those countless academic scholars who, rejecting as absurd the possibility that Oxford was “Shakespeare,” therefore never paused to wonder whether other works from the same golden quill, under other guises, were waiting to be noticed."
Maybe I'm crazy. I've long since learned not to rule out that possibility when I think I have a bright idea. When I began to suspect, back in 1986, that the great Bard "William Shakespeare" was actually Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, I tried not to accept the Oxfordian theory too rashly.

Ten years later, when I was finishing my book ALIAS SHAKESPEARE, I found an obscure sonnet cycle, EMARICDULFE (see the January 1998 issue or the website articles "A Note from the Editor" [www.sobran.com/emarintr.shtml] and "The Mystery of EMARICDULFE" [www.sobran.com/emar.shtml], which seemed to me to bear all the signs of the Bard's authorship. It was published in 1595 under the initials "E.C., Esquire." But if Oxford could write under one alias, why not another? Still, I waited over a year before committing myself. I wanted to be good and sure before I took the radical step of proposing to expand the Bard's canon.

Five more years have passed, and I think it's time to advance what is either my brightest idea or my craziest. I can only sketch the evidence here, but I
submit it as worthy of consideration.

I believe Oxford also wrote, under various pseudonyms, much of the poetry for which the Elizabethan Age is remembered.

This wasn't a conclusion I was predisposed to reach. Just the opposite. I was quite content with a single important discovery. I didn't want to discover too much, for fear of sounding like those Baconians who "discovered" that Francis Bacon wrote not only the Shakespeare works, but also the King James Bible and the works of Milton, Bunyan, and Robert Burton. The Shakespeare authorship question doesn't need any more absurd exaggerations.

{{ Then again, }} think of it this way: if the Baconian theory *had* panned out, it *would* have been a tremendous discovery, {{ what? }} We should give even far-fetched ideas a fair chance. Anyway, here goes.

During the 1590s and beyond, about two dozen sonnet cycles -- about a thousand sonnets in all -- were published in England. This has led scholars to speak of an "Elizabethan sonnet craze," whose stellar names include Sir Philip Sidney, Samuel Daniel, Thomas Watson, and Edmund Spenser, along with Richard Barnfield, Thomas Lodge, Michael Drayton, Bartholomew Griffin, Henry Constable, Barnabe Barnes, and others, lesser known or only vaguely identified, if identified at all.

I studied these sonnets for a couple of years and was struck by their similarities of style, as well as by hundreds of recurrent images and turns of phrase. Some were better than others, but that is also true of the Bard's plays at different stages of his development. All but a few of the sonnets showed technical proficiency.

Could most of them have been the work of a single poet? The more I read, the more plausible this seemed. Still, I resisted the idea, for the reasons I've mentioned.

It was more than a matter of style. Many of the supposed poets, whose identities scholars have seldom doubted, were friends, relatives, acquaintances, and
employees of Oxford! In most cases, even less is known of these men than of William of Stratford, whose meager biographical record has frustrated scholars for centuries. It's a striking point that among the few facts we do know of these poets is their connection to Oxford. One of the oddest things about "Shakespeare" is that we have so little evidence that he had any literary friends in London. Apart from Ben Jonson, no other writer seems to have met him!

Many of the dedicatees also belonged to Oxford's circle. One sonnet cycle, HECATOMPATHIA, was dedicated to Oxford himself; it was ascribed to Thomas Watson, one of Oxford's secretaries. Another, CYNTHIA, supposedly by Richard Barnfield, was dedicated to Oxford's son-in-law, the Earl of Derby, in 1595 -- the year Derby married Oxford's daughter Elizabeth. WIT'S PILGRIMAGE, ascribed to John Davies, was dedicated to the Earl of Montgomery a few years later, around the time Montgomery married Oxford's daughter Susan. Several works were also dedicated to Montgomery's mother, the Countess of Pembroke; others to "the gentlemen of the Inns of Court," especially Gray's Inn, where Oxford had studied law. (These poems were published between 1582 and 1628; the Bard's between 1593 and 1634. Two of the poets speak of writing their sonnets in Italy, where Oxford spent a year as a young man.)

These might all be coincidences, but there were other things too, chiefly the wording of the dedications. In several cases the poet refers to his sonnet cycle as his first effort, usually in the metaphor of offspring: as his "first fruit," "first-born," "child," "issue," "infants," "babe," "maiden verse," "orphans," even "bastard orphan." Compare the Bard's reference to VENUS AND ADONIS as "the first heir of my invention"; the poem was dedicated in 1593 to the Earl of Southampton, who nearly became Oxford's son-in-law. Usually the poet disparages his verse as "rude" or "unpolished" (the Bard calls his "unpolished" and "untutored"), though it's anything but. Often the poet professes his gentlemanly reluctance to publish his verses, but explains that his friends (or some villainous publisher) have left him no choice in the matter.

Your first impression, reading these dedications, is
of a sort of courtly monotony. They all sound alike. They use hundreds of the same phrases. They belittle their poetic "children." They apologize for their unworthiness. They grovel to the dedicatees. Was all this just standard Elizabethan practice? Or didn't these rhymesters have any sense of dignity?

How odd, too, that so many able sonneteers, some of them brilliant, should make their debuts in quick succession -- and never reappear! Each makes his debut as sonneteering Rookie of the Year, as it were, and then never writes another sonnet! Contrast French sonneteers like Pierre Ronsard, who poured out reams of sonnet cycles. What's more, these English boys keep promising to write something better in the future, just as the Bard promises "some graver labor" to follow VENUS, but the promise is never kept.

The casual reader may dismiss the whole issue with the vague explanation that "they all wrote pretty much alike in those days." But this will hardly do. Consider some parallel passages from PHILLIS (1593), usually ascribed to Thomas Lodge, and from CHLORIS (1596), assigned to William Smith. No two poets in any age ever wrote *this* much alike:

PHILLIS:
Long hath my sufferance labor'd to enforce
One pearl of pity from her pretty eyes,
Whilst I with restless rivers of remorse,
Have bath'd the banks where my fair Phillis lies

CHLORIS:
Long hath my sufferance labor'd to enforce
One pearl of pity from her pretty eyes;
Whilst I, with restless oceans of remorse,
Bedew the banks where my fair Chloris lies

~ ~ ~

PHILLIS:
When as she spied the nymph whom I admire,
Combing her locks, of which the yellow gold
Made blush the beauties of her curled wire,
Which heaven itself with wonder might behold,
Then, red with shame, her reverend locks she
rent,
And weeping hid the beauty of her face

CHLORIS:
There did I see the nymph whom I admire,
Remembering her locks; of which the yellow hue
Made blush the beauties of her curled wire,
Which Jove himself with wonder well might view.
Then red with ire, her tresses she berent;
And weeping hid the beauty of her face

~ ~ ~

PHILLIS:
And as nor tyrant sun nor winter weather
May ever change sweet Amaranthus' hue,
So she though love and fortune join together,
Will never leave to be both fair and true

CHLORIS:
But as cold winter's storms and nipping frosts
Can never change sweet Amaranthus' hue,
So, though my love and life by her are cross'd,
My heart shall still be constant firm and true

~ ~ ~

PHILLIS:
For you I live, and you I love, but none else.
O then, fair eyes, whose light I live to view,
Or poor forlorn despis'd to live alone else

CHLORIS:
For her I live, and her I love and none else.
O then, fair eyes, look mildly upon me:
Who poor, despis'd, forlorn, must live alone else

~ ~ ~

PHILLIS:
Burst, burst, poor heart: thou hast no longer hope ...
Let all my senses have no further scope
CHLORIS:
But burst, poor heart: thou hast no better hope,
Since all thy senses have no further scope

~ ~ ~

PHILLIS:
And should I leave thee there, thou pretty elf?
Nay, first let Damon quite forget himself
CHLORIS:
And I cannot forget her, pretty elf...
Yet let me rather clean forget myself

~ ~ ~

PHILLIS:
Look, sweet, since from the pith of contemplation
Love gathereth life, and living, breedeth passion
CHLORIS:
To penetrate the pith of contemplation...
Nor move her heart on me to take compassion

Is Smith simply plagiarizing Lodge? If so, he's doing it awfully blatantly, and you'd expect Lodge to have a thing or two to say about it. Yet there is no record of any complaint by Lodge. In fact, as far as I can tell, no scholar has ever noticed these parallels, let alone surmised that "Lodge" and "Smith" were actually the same poet. I think they were the same poet -- Oxford -- and that the latter work was actually a revision of the former.

Over several years, I found about 3,000 such parallels among these poems. Many of them could hardly be coincidental. A sonnet from THE TEARS OF FANCY, published in 1592 by "T.W." (often assumed to be Thomas Watson), is a near twin of the only sonnet published under Oxford's name. Here is the last of T.W.'s 60 sonnets:

Who taught thee first to sigh, alas, sweet heart?
Who taught thy tongue to marshal words of
plaint?
Who filled thine eyes with tears of bitter smart?
Who gave thee grief and made thy joys so faint?
Who first did paint with colours pale thy face?
Who first did break thy sleeps of quiet rest?
Who forc'd thee unto wanton love give place?
Who thrall'd thy thoughts in fancy so distress'd?
Who made thee bide both constant firm and sure?
Who made thee scorn the world and love thy friend?
Who made thy mind with patience pains endure?
Who made thee settle steadfast to the end?
Then love thy choice though love be never gain'd,
Still live in love, despair not though disdain'd.

Compare this with Oxford's sonnet:

Who taught thee first to sigh, alas, my heart?
Who taught thy tongue the woeful words of plaint?
Who filled your eyes with tears of bitter smart?
Who gave thee grief and made thy joys to faint?
Who first did paint with colours pale thy face?
Who first did break thy sleeps of quiet rest?
Above the rest in court who gave thee grace?
Who made thee strive in honour to be best?
In constant truth to bide so firm and sure,
To scorn the world regarding but thy friends?
With patient mind each passion to endure,
In one desire to settle to the end?
Love then thy choice wherein such choice thou bind,
As naught but death may ever change thy mind.
In various ways, the evidence kept pointing to Oxford.

I checked out all these poets in THE DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY and other sources. Of some of them nothing is known; "William Smith" could be anyone named William Smith, or the name could be a blind. The poets who gave only their initials are of course untraceable. One, the author of the cycle ZEPHERIA, didn't even give his initials.

Some were real men. There was a man named Richard Barnfield, said to have been a friend of Watson and Drayton, but though a few works were published under his name in the mid 1590s he doesn't seem to have been a writer. He published nothing else before his death in 1627.

Samuel Daniel wrote loads of poetry after the exquisite sonnet cycle DELIA, but none of it was anything like DELIA: his major work was a verse history, so prosaic it's almost doggerel. Here I found an interesting clue: Ben Jonson, who knew practically every writer in London, said that Daniel was "an honest man ... but no poet." He could hardly have said that if he thought Daniel wrote DELIA.

Finally it hit me: What if all these rookie poets were the *same* poet? What if all these dedications were a running inside joke? What if it was Oxford, amusing his friends? That would explain almost everything.

Another interesting detail is that most of these sonnet cycles appeared in only one edition, and there is very little contemporary comment on them. The genre seems to have been less popular than the scholars have assumed. This suggests that the sonnets were published at the author's or authors' own expense, not by popular demand. {{ (Could a large reading public be snared by titles like PARTHENOPHIL AND PARTHENOPHE?) }}

Desperate for at least some scholarly support for my outlandish theory, I found a little in an unexpected and utterly respectable source: C.S. Lewis's magisterial history of English literature in the sixteenth century. Not that Lewis agrees with me. Not at all. The idea never crosses his mind, and he would surely have found it
But he does name seven poets who remind him of the Bard in some respect— and all seven are among my suspected masks of Oxford! He finds Daniel's sonnets as lovely as the Bard's; he thinks Barnfield imitates the Bard; he thinks Watson's "conception of the sonnet" is much like the Bard's; Barnabe Barnes sounds like "a weaker Shakespeare"; and so on.

Sometimes, in the dedications, the verbal parallels with the Bard are unmistakable: after apologizing for his "rude and unpolished lines," Barnfield adds: "If my ability were better, the signs should be greater; but being as it is, your honor must take me as I am, not as I should be. But howsoever it is, yours it is; and I myself am yours; in all humble service,..." Compare the Bard's dedication to LUCRECE: "What I have to do is yours, being part in all I have, devoted yours. Were my worth greater my duty would show greater, meantime, as it is, it is bound to your lordship." Again, Barnfield: "Small is the gift, but great is my good will." The Bard, in PERICLES, writes, "Yet my good will is great, though the gift small." The dedication to DIELLA (by "R.L., Gentleman," 1596) addresses "your ladyship ... to whom I ever wish long life, lengthened with all honorable happiness. Your ladyship's in all duty," et cetera. Again, compare LUCRECE: "your lordship, to whom I wish long life still lengthened with all happiness. Your lordship's in all duty," et cetera.

The poems themselves afford hundreds of matches like these: "O dear vexation of my troubled soul" (PARTHENOPHIL AND PARTHENOPHE, Barnes, 1593); "The deep vexation of his inward soul" (LUCRECE). And "Hunting he lov'd, nor did he scorn to love" (DIELLA); "Hunting he lov'd, but love he laugh'd to scorn" (VENUS).

Still, there are difficulties. Sidney and Spenser are so renowned that it gives me pause to include them in my list of Oxford's beards. The short (though insufficient) answer is that Sidney's supposed writings were published many years after his death; and Spenser's supposed sonnets, the AMORETTI, are markedly different from his other poems, whose authorship (in most cases) I don't question. I mean to explore this more fully in another book. (One important link here is the Countess of Pembroke, to whom DELIA is dedicated. In addition to
being Montgomery's mother, she was also Sidney's sister. Small world.)

All this calls for an explanation. How could this have happened? I can only guess. But here is my guess:

Oxford grew up in a highly literate family. One of his uncles was the great poet Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, who introduced the Petrarchan sonnet in English; he was the first to use the "Shakespearean" sonnet form {{ (never dreaming, of course, that one of his nephews would actually become "Shakespeare"). }} Another uncle was Arthur Golding, a great classical scholar and translator of Ovid. Under these two influences, Oxford aspired to become England's Petrarch (through the sonnet cycle) and also its Ovid (through narrative poems).

For many years (I'm still guessing, but not, I think, unreasonably) Oxford wrote sonnet cycles and narrative poems, which he circulated among his friends, but, like a good gentleman, refrained from publishing. Print was still considered a vulgar medium; no gentleman would write for money or popularity.

This is the part modern men find hard to understand. When we write nowadays, it's usually for the very things English gentlemen used to sniff at: money and popularity. Otherwise, we feel, why bother writing? Very few of us now write only for a small coterie. (For an illuminating study of how the old attitude lingered but eventually changed, see Alvin Kernan's SAMUEL JOHNSON AND THE IMPACT OF PRINT.)

Maybe (still guessing here, but, I hope, plausibly) Oxford came to realize that if he wanted literary immortality -- and his poems were lavishly praised by those who saw them -- he'd better get them into print. Yet it wouldn't do to put his own name on them. So he borrowed other men's names, invented fictitious names, or just used initials. By the time he reached full maturity, he had begun to use the name William Shakespeare.

When he pulled his old sonnet cycles and narrative poems out of the drawer and prepared them for the printer, Oxford added dedications, in which, for the amusement of insiders, he played the humble novice poet,
using a different pseudonym each time. The fake humility was part of the gag. His friends would get the joke; the reading public (and later scholars) would be taken in. But if you read the dedications in succession, you can feel the phantom poet winking at you.

The hoax worked only too well. To this day, the pseudonyms and dedications are taken at face value. It took more than four centuries for someone (ahem!) to crack the code, so to speak. Meanwhile, a poor country bloke has reaped most of the glory due to Oxford's works.

This could explain a great paradox: the Bard says, in his most famous sonnets, that he expects his poems to be immortal while hoping his own name will be "forgotten." As a rule your name is remembered as long as your poems are. But if virtually *all* of Oxford's poems were pseudonymous, the puzzle is resolved. And as I've written elsewhere, Oxford had an additional motive for concealing his authorship: his own scandalous personal life.

My theory could solve another puzzle. In 1599 came the small volume THE PASSIONATE PILGRIM, "by William Shakespeare"; yet scholars have found that several of its 20 poems had already appeared under the names of Barnfield, Griffin, and others, so its place in the Bard's canon is now considered marginal. But if I'm correct, Oxford may indeed have written the whole thing under various names.

All this would mean that we possess hundreds of priceless pages Oxford wrote in his poetic apprenticeship, before he became "Shakespeare." It would also mean that the entire history of Elizabethan literature must be overhauled. The "Elizabethan sonnet craze," it appears, was pretty much a one-man show.

If I'm right, Oxford would be surprised, and probably disappointed, that his plays have lasted better than his poems. But considering all the confusion he has caused, he'd be in a poor position to complain.
Georgia Caver hails from Arkansas but has lived in Knoxville, Tennessee, for about twenty years, surely long enough to think of it as home. She has been at the University of Tennessee in various capacities since the early 1990s. In her current position she serves as program coordinator for the writing program at the Thornton Athletics Student Life Center on the Knoxville campus.

Georgia interest in English Renaissance literature was piqued many years ago when she sat in on an introductory Shakespeare course taught by Dr. Allen Carroll. At the time, she planned to study nursing or some other practical—and in demand—field and thought Carroll’s course would serve merely to relieve the sensible. Alas, she was caught, smitten by the lovely language and the character of the Elizabethans she encountered. Who could resist a population so busy and curious, redoubtable in even the most uncertain of times? Georgia could not, and her initial interest in and love for the people and literature of the period continue to grow.