

3. THE DEATH OF LESBIA'S SPARROW



ourn, O you Loves and Cupids
and such of you as love beauty:
my girl's sparrow is dead,
sparrow, the girl's delight,
whom she loved more than her eyes.
For he was sweet as honey, and knew her
as well as the girl her own mother,
he never moved from her lap,
but, hopping about here and there,
chirped to his mistress alone.
Now he goes down the shadowy road
from which they say no one returns.
Now let evil be yours, evil shadows of *Ortus* [p. 223],
that devour everything of beauty:
you've stolen lovely sparrow from me.
O evil deed! O poor little sparrow!
Now, by your efforts, my girl's eyes
are swollen and red with weeping.



'Pluto'
Hendrick Goltzius (Dutch, 1588 - 1590)
The Rijksmuseum