

The forward violet thus did I chide:

"Sweet thief, whence didst thou steal thy sweet that smells,

If not from my love's breath? The purple pride

Which on thy soft cheek for complexion dwells

In my love's veins thou hast too grossly dyed."

The lily I condemnèd for thy hand,

And buds of marjoram had stol'n thy hair;

The roses fearfully on thorns did stand,

One blushing shame, another white despair;

A third, nor red nor white, had stol'n of both,

And to his robb'ry had annexed thy breath;

But, for his theft, in pride of all his growth

A vengeful canker ate him up to death.

More flowers I noted, yet I none could see

But sweet or color it had stol'n from thee.