

THE FIRST BOOKE OF SONGS OR AYRES

IOHN DOWLAND

1597 [1613]

V. Can she excuse my wrongs with vertues cloake.

Can shee excuse my wrongs with vertues cloak ?
Shall I call her good when she proues vnkind ?
Are those cleer fires which vanish into smoak ?
Must I praise the leaues where no fruit I find?

No no : where shadows do for bodies stand,
Thou maist be abusde if thy sight be dim.
Cold love is like to words written on sand,
Or to bubbles which on the water swim.

Wilt thou be thus abused still,
Seeing that she wil right thee neuer ?
If thou canst not orecome her will,
Thy loue wil be thus fruitles euer.

Was I so base, that I might not aspire,
Vnto those high ioyes which she holds from me ?
As they are high, so high is my desire :
If she this denie, what can granted be ?

If she will yeeld to that which reason is,
It is reasons will that loue should be iust.
Deare make me happy still by granting this,
Or cut off delayes if that die I must.

Better a thousand times to die,
Then for to liue thus still tormented :
Deare but remember it was I,
Who for thy sake did die contented.