

Queen

There is a willow grows askant the brook
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream.
Therewith fantastic garlands did she make
Of crowsfeet, nettles, daisies, and long purples,
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do “dead men’s fingers” call
them.

There on the pendant boughs her coronet weeds
Clamb’ring to hang, an envious sliver broke,
When down her weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,
And mermaid-like awhile they bore her up,
Which time she chanted snatches of old lauds,
As one incapable of her own distress
Or like a creature native and endued
Unto that element. But long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.