with an underlying pattern of coherence and regularity. If the *Epithalamion* goes to remarkable lengths to affirm this pattern, it is perhaps because it also registers so insistently all that threatens the enduring happiness of wedded love and indeed of human life itself. The greatest threat is the force over which the poem exercises its greatest power: time.

From Amoretti

1

Happy ye leaves[1] when as those lilly hands,
Which hold my life in their dead doing° might, *killing*
Shall handle you and hold in loves soft bands,° *bonds*
Lyke captives trembling at the victors sight.
And happy lines, on which with starry light,
Those lamping° eyes will deigne sometimes to look *flashing*
And reade the sorrowes of my dying spright,° *spirit*
Written with teares in harts close° bleeding book. *secret*
And happy rymes bath'd in the sacred brooke
Of Helicon[2] whence she derivèd is,
When ye behold that Angels blessèd looke,
My soules long lackèd foode, my heavens blis.
Leaves, lines, and rymes, seeke her to please alone,
Whom if ye please, I care for other none.

34[3]

Lyke as a ship that through the Ocean wyde,
By conduct of some star doth make her way,
Whenas a storme hath dimd her trusty guyde,
Out of her course doth wander far astray:
So I whose star, that wont° with her bright ray *was accustomed*
Me to direct, with cloudes is overcast,
Doe wander now in darknesse and dismay,
Through hidden perils round about me plast.° *placed*
Yet hope I well, that when this storme is past
My Helice[4] the lodestar° of my lyfe *guiding star*
Will shine again, and looke on me at last,
With lovely light to cleare my cloudy grief.
Till then I wander carefull° comfortlesse, *full of cares*
In secret sorow and sad pensivenesse.

1. I.e., of the book: pages.
2. The "sacred brooke" is Hippocrene, which flows from Mount Helicon, the mountain sacred to the Muses.
3. An adaptation of Petrarch's Rima 189. See pp. 123–24 for Sir Thomas Wyatt's verse translation of the sonnet, as well as a modern prose translation of it. The Italian original is included in the NAEL Archive.
4. A name for the Big Dipper (after the nymph who, in classical mythology, was transformed into it).