

'To return into Vabrillax': fragments of a new early modern prose romance [with text]

Lockwood, Tom

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TOM LOCKWOOD

*'To return into Vabrillax': fragments of a new
early modern prose romance [with text]*

Three substantial manuscript fragments of a previously unknown and apparently unpublished early modern prose romance survive among the papers of the Jervoise family of Herriard, now on deposit in Winchester at the Hampshire Record Office (HRO). Transcribed across what is now a sequence of manuscripts, HRO 44M69/M4/13/3-5, these fragmentary drafts amount to just under 6,500-words of a prose romance across two related plot sequences. It is likely that the romance fragments, as I argue on material and contextual grounds below, date from the last decade of Elizabeth's reign, c.1593-1603. In adding an early manuscript romance to our knowledge of a genre that has to this point been largely understood through print, the Vabrillax romance (as I will call it) substantially extends our knowledge of Elizabethan romance writing, complementing the recent discovery of Hester Pulter's post-Restoration romance, *The Unfortunate Florinda*, while confirming at the same time the centrality of political readings to understanding early modern romance.¹ The Vabrillax romance, in its quirks and improbabilities, and its narratives of desire and survival, is also terrific fun.

I am grateful to the Jervoise family for permission to publish this account of material held within the Jervoise of Herriard Collection, and to the staff of the Hampshire Record Office, in particular David Rymill, for their help during the preparation of this article. Joe Lockwood's advice on etymologies has been crucial, as have the comments on earlier drafts offered by Paul Salzman and Gillian Wright.

¹ For Pulter, see Peter C. Herman, 'Lady Hester Pulter's *The Unfortunate Florinda*: Race, Religion, and the Politics of Rape', *Renaissance Quarterly* 63 (2010), 1208-46; for a foundational account of

The earlier part of the romance narrative as it now survives in the HRO manuscripts is occupied with the events put in train when Sabassie, the son of Sarmadroy, an aged ruler of the Isle of Vabrillax, refuses to relinquish his life as a shepherd so as to take up his father's throne. This narrative opening is told out across two not-quite-perfectly connected fragments in the surviving manuscripts, transcribed as Fragments 1 and 2 below. The second and much longer plot-sequence describes the dispersed travels and travails of three main characters, Doylus, Plorynus and Krego, who search for, or hinder attempts to recover, Plorynus's lost daughter in the period after Krego has villainously taken to himself the crown of Vabrillax. This second plot-sequence also involves a narrative of mistaken erotic identity in which a cross-dressed page is courted by, among others, Krego's virtuous son, Dyrmathylos. It ends with Dyrmathylos afloat with his fleet, anchored off shore, not knowing that his father, aggrieved at an apparent snub in dynastic marriage negotiations, is pursuing him.

Even in its physically consecutive sections, narrative coherence is not strong in this romance (if indeed ever in this genre), and the make-up of the manuscript today implies that some parts of this story necessary to its full explanation no longer survive, or perhaps were never written. The abrupt cessation of this narrative, if not its closure, leave the reader today, not unlike

Dyrmathylos, in the middle of a larger sequence whose points of origin and whose destinations

the wider generic context, see Paul Salzman, *English Prose Fiction, 1558-1700: A Critical History* (Oxford, 1985); for Classical and European contexts, see Helen Moore, 'Ancient and Modern Romance' in Gordon Braden, Robert Cummings and Stuart Gillespie, eds, *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English, Volume 2: 1550-1660*, pp.333-46; and among the many valuable essays in Andrew Hadfield, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of English Prose, 1500-1640* (Oxford, 2013), see especially R.W. Maslen, 'Robert Greene', pp.188-203.

remain suspended. In the shorter first part of this article, I offer a contextualising introduction to the three romance fragments, describing the manuscripts, the status of the text, and the literary-historical contexts within which we might understand them today; in the longer second part of the article, I offer a semi-diplomatic transcription of the three fragments.

The manuscripts

Fragments 1 and 2 of the Vabrillax romance each occupy one bifolium, now HRO 44M69/M4/13/4-5. They are written on two sheets from a single paperstock, measuring c.320x400mm, and bear the watermark of a tall thin single-handled pot of a kind in use right across the early modern period. The much longer, and in narrative terms slightly later, Fragment 3 is transcribed across five bifolia and a single half-sheet that are now collectively HRO MS 44M69/M4/13/3, parts 1-6. These six parts are transcribed on a second, shared paperstock measuring c.270x295mm. This paper, bearing a watermark apparently of a trefoil set within a crown and mounted above a capital M, is related to paper documented elsewhere as in use in 1602.² The torn outer edge of the half-sheet part 6 shows that it was formerly part of a sixth bifolium, one leaf of which is now lost. Parts 2-6 are in fact each numbered 2-6 in an early modern hand in the place of a catchword on the final verso of each leaf; and the pattern of the folds in the sheets in Fragment 3, and the darkening to the outer leaf of the first bifolium, indicate that all six pieces of paper were at some period folded together as a unit.

All three fragments are transcribed by a single scribe, who uses in the main a mixed early modern hand, and inconsistently an italic hand using graphs from this mixed hand in order to emphasise names of characters and places. The scribe's mixed hand shows a distinctive rightwards slope,

² The watermark is related to Gravell M.001.1, used 1 December 1602 in legal correspondence from John Reale to Walter Bagot (Folger Shakespeare Library, MS L.a.761).

and an equally characteristic strongly spurred a-graph, which is used interchangeably with a spurless a-graph; initial hooks both to v- and w-graphs are very pronounced; and the d-graph in this hand, both in initial and terminal positions, is very open, with its ascender often crossing back to the left. H-graphs, both in majuscule and miniscule forms, extend their closing stroke to the right in a regular flourish. Often it can be hard to distinguish initial majuscule from miniscule forms, something repeatedly apparent in the various forms of the names Doylus and Dyrmathylos. This hand does not appear elsewhere in the Jervoise family papers, save perhaps for one occasion, where a list of fourteen associative nouns, two of which are deleted, are transcribed on the initial leaf of a manuscript of Sir John Davies's *Epigrams*, probably dating from c.1595 and once (as I have argued elsewhere) in the possession of Sir Richard Paulet.³ The hand in which the list on the *Epigrams* manuscript is transcribed provides such a small sample for comparison with the Vabrillax romance fragments that it can be no more than suggestive, but it does share the characteristics noted above, and particularly the combination of spurred a- and open d-graphs. These similarities do not amount to an identity of the one hand with the other. Nonetheless, in confirming that the hand in which the romance fragments are transcribed is broadly consistent in date with the evidence of the paper on which it is transcribed, the palaeographical evidence may allow us to engage more closely with the nature of the text that is transcribed in these manuscripts.

The status of the text

Central to the status of the text of the Vabrillax romance fragments is the relationship of the transcriber to the text transcribed. Is this an author's compositional manuscript? A scribal copy of a now-lost authorial manuscript? Or is perhaps an authorial copy of an earlier compositional

³ Tom Lockwood, 'Another Manuscript of Sir John Davies's *Epigrams*', *The Review of English Studies* (forthcoming).

manuscript? At times, the scribal habits witnessed in these manuscripts can give evidence for all three possibilities, themselves by no means limiting the whole field of manuscript possibilities in the early modern period. In a sequence such as ‘~~But (quoth he)~~ whereat they began to replie, But (quoth he)’ (HRO 44M69/M4/13/5, fol. 2v) the deleted and then repeated phrase might perhaps signal an eye-skip error, as also might the later sequence ‘that if the worst happened shee ~~would~~ ~~and~~ Could and would by force save his lieP’ (44M69/M4/13/4 P.5, fol. 2r). But a rather different authorial habit seems to be visible when the travel plans of ‘Plorynus and his wife’ are rapidly adjusted. As the compositional drafting in this section of the text makes clear, this is a text in process, and almost certainly in the hand of its author. Plorynus, originally having been due to leave with his wife, very quickly leaves alone: ‘~~they departed~~ \leaving Sarmilla in an Abbey there/ \he departed/. Later in the narrative, an author’s composing *curente calamo* revisions are again visible, when a ‘Companie of Ladies or rather Nymphes’ becomes – within the space of a sentence, a second thought and some strategic deletion – a more easily managed in narrative singular ‘Nymphe’. Such moments lead me to argue this manuscript is a witness to a text that had not found a final form, and probably never did, so that it records a text in process towards completion in the hand of its still-revising, but unidentified and almost certainly amateur, author.

Literary-historical contexts

Many of the narrative motifs in the Vabrillax romance have parallels at large in the genre. In Robert Greene’s *Pandosto*, first published in 1588 and in its third edition by 1595, one can see in Bohemia and Sicilia clear analogues to the sea-bound locations of Vabrillax and Cubadro; the court intrigues of Greene’s cupbearer Franion as a model for those of Kregog; an oracle’s pronouncement as a central plot device; the assumed pastoral identities of major characters as shepherds in both texts, and the discoveries of their real identities; as well as the lost daughters of the nobility. In the hands of a more knowing author than this, such identities between Greene’s over-determined narrative mode and the Vabrillax fragments might amount almost to

pastiche; in the case of the Vabrillax romance, however, I take it that they are much more the marker of sincere if sometimes inapt imitation. A second instance of such imitative practice may well present itself in the form of its (anti)hero's name, Krego, which is strikingly close to the name given by Thomas Nashe to Petro de Campo Frego in *The Unfortunate Traveller*, a text completed on 27 June 1593, as its first edition confirms, and published in 1594, proving then so popular that two editions were printed in the same year (STC 18380 and 18381). Krego in the Vabrillax romance is much more varied and thorough-going villain than Nashe's 'pander', but the form of their names is so striking, and so strikingly rare, as to be suggestive. Greene and Nashe, I would suggest, provide the coordinates within which future readers of the Vabrillax romance might look to plot its course.

Research remains to be done across the romance's imagined locations – Vabrillax, Cubadro, Medynum and their courts, groves and monasteries – as well as into the careers of its often Hellenic characters, Dyrmathylos, Brachymella and their supporting cast of Queens, love-struck pages, shipwrecked ship captains and nuns with healing powers. In its names, though, some of its roots are visible. The majority of the romance's names are made up of a patchwork of genuine Greek and Latin roots and suffixes, recombined in new configurations unattested in the ancient languages themselves and without any obvious significance. There are, however, a few exceptions. Some, most notably Vabrillax itself, though sounding plausibly classical, have no etymological connection to Latin or Greek words. Others have a relatively transparent Latin or Greek etymological significance: the name of the kingdom Medynum might plausibly be derived from the Greek verb μέδω (protect, rule over). Mastusia, also spelled Mestusia in the manuscript, suggests both μαστός (breast) and μεστός (full). Two characters' social roles are reflected in their names: Doylus and Basillia are anglicisations of the Greek words δοῦλος (slave) and βασίλεια (princess). Finally, the 'province of Melos' might possibly recall a real place: the Greek island Μῆλος (*Mēlos*), rendered, due to the changing values of Greek vowels, as Milos in modern

English. I annotate this aspect of the romance further in the notes below.

If, then, these are the literary and etymological contexts for the Vabrillax narratives, what of its political contexts? The situation from which these stories depart, I argue, is very much of a piece historically with the presumptive date of the romance's composition, in the decade or so between 1593 and 1603. Such a reading of the romance sees it as a series of thought experiments in elective monarchy told out as stories in Fragments 1 and 2, from which the longer narrative sequence in Fragment 3 then picaresquely departs. Such thought experiments in a ruler's 'governing and carefull *providinge* for the quiett of his Countrie' are in many ways of a piece with those late-Elizabethan propositions classically discussed by Patrick Collinson in his account of 'The Monarchical Republic of Queen Elizabeth I'.⁴ From the mid-1580s onwards, mechanisms by which an aging ruler without a natural heir might confer succession in her or his realm were an unavoidable consideration, whether or not the frustrations of that political succession were primarily biological (as in Elizabethan England) or oracular (as in Vabrillax). What Peter Lake has termed 'proposals to perpetuate the Elizabethan state into the period after Elizabeth's death' took many forms, of course, from Cecil's proposed interregnum to the eventual accession of James VI and I, with romance narratives, safely licensed by fiction and their imagined geographies, to explore the workings of polities not unlike England's own, by no means the least

⁴ Patrick Collinson, 'The Monarchical Republic of Queen Elizabeth I' in his *Elizabethan Essays* (London, 1994), pp.31-57; the subsequent debate is usefully taken forward in John F. McDiarmid, ed., *The Monarchical Republic of Early Modern England: Essays in Response to Patrick Collinson* (Burlington, VT, 2007); and see most recently Peter Lake, 'The "Political Thought" of the "Monarchical Republic of Elizabeth I," Discovered and Anatomized', *Journal of British Studies* 54 (2015), 257-87.

obvious.⁵ Indeed the model of elective monarchy by ‘nomyñacion and election’ explored at length in Fragment 2 resonate very strongly with debates that persisted into the early years of James’s reign.⁶ Such contexts provide a vital reason to explain *why* such stories might have been told at this period, even they go only some way towards glossing the oddities of the narratives that follow.

The Text

Transcription conventions

What follows is a semi-diplomatic transcription of HRO 44M69/M4/13/3-5 which expands contractions but otherwise seeks to present these manuscript texts in a form as close as possible to their original. I employ the following conventions:

<i>letters within a word</i>	letters supplied by the expansion of contractions
text	text deleted by the scribe
\text/	text added between the writing lines by the scribe
[text]	editorial additions

As noted above, it can be difficult in context to differentiate majuscule and miniscule forms of some initial letter forms; I have silently promoted all proper nouns to majuscule forms, but other capitalisation follows manuscript usage. Because of inconsistencies in the scribe’s usage I do not

⁵ Lake, ‘Discovered and Anatomized’, p.258.

⁶ Rei Kanemura, ‘Kingship by Descent or Kingship by Election? The Contested Title of James VI and I’, *Journal of British Studies* 52 (2013), 317-42; and Lake, ‘Discovered and Anatomized’, pp.276-80.

attempt to differentiate names transcribed in italic from those transcribed in a mixed hand. The foliation of the manuscripts from which this text is transcribed is recorded in what follows.

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Fragment 1

[HRO 44M69/M4/13/5]

Basrilla daughter vnto A famous shephard *inhabiting* in the Isle of Cubadro opposite to that populous nation of the vexeres) noe less vertuous , then fayre, \yet/ wanting noe ornamentes of beautie that Nature ever afforded to any nor any perfection that educacion and artes giue waye vnto, beloved of her father, deare vnto her mother, affected of her kinsfolke and Frinds, and generallie admired of all sorts./

Sabassieⁱ the father of this fayre mayden (for soe was his name) although he were by his lief and then profession ~~and~~ A shephard, and had in such habite lyved by many yeares together, Yet was he the ~~oldest~~ \onlie/ Sonne andheyre of a mightie Prince, to whome the Crowne and diademe of A neighbouring Island called Vabrillax, didby right of Birth and due succession solely apperteyne Having in the lief tyme of his father (the then Regent of that Isle) married A fayre young Virgen named Sarmilla, daughter vnto A noble man of that Countrie and having soe lived with her by the space of *twentie* yeares without any Child, did then despayre and hopeles of ever having any *which* was noe less discomfort vnto his aged Father, then grief to himself.

Sarmadroyⁱⁱ the father of this Sabassie (for soe was he called) having ruled and governed the same Isle of Vabrillax by the space of lxxx yeares, and then by reason of the extremitie of his age and ymbecillitie of nature (being about xviiij years of age at the beginning of his Raigne) growen weary [fol. 1v] of that heavy burden, ~~h~~ *which* by governing and carefull providinge for the quiett

of his Countrie he had then longe susteyned and being desirous not onlie to free himself from all troubles and cares, and with A quiett and disburthened mynd to prepare himself for that tyme, that noe fleshe can avoyde. But alsoe in his lief tyme with Ioye to see his sonne invested in that seate of government wherein he himself had longe since sate. On a tyme summoning all his nobles and Peers of his Countrie to A Councell, did to that end frame a short speche to them in this manner. That forsomuch as they had all by the space of soe many yeares submitted themselves and been contented to haue bene governed by A man of soe meane desert as himself, and were (as he thought) well pleased soe longer to subiect themselves, yet forsomuch as he was by nature decayed and vnable longer to p^reserue the part of A gouernour (especiallie over soe worthie A people as they were) And soe that that after his death, it was not vnknowne vnto them, that by right of succession, the Crowne and dyademe of that Realme did belong vnto Sabassie his ~~eldest~~ onlie sonne and heyre apparant, and because that his tyme could be by course of nature but very short. And for that he doubted not but as they had ever seemed carefull and desirous of his quiett, soe now they would in noe sort contradict that, *which* was of all things in the world chieflie desired of him. *Which* was that they would be all contented, that he might resigne his Crowne and government vnto Sabassie his Sonne, and that they would submit themselves vnto [fol. 2r] him, and become his faithfull and loving Subiects. ~~Which~~ *Which* spech being noe sooner ended, but that noble assemblie (although they seemed desirous to haue their aged Kinge ~~bene should~~ ever (if it had bene possible) their Governour) with a generall good liking of that his mocion, did all giue therevnto their free consentes./

Wherevpon the kinge did p^resentlie cause his Sonne Sabassie to be sent for, to Repayre vnto that noble assemblie. At whose Coming thither the Nobles there assembled by thappoyntment of their kinge, did make knowne vnto Sabassie both the honorable mynd and princelie regard of their good king vnto his Subiects and his and their desire and the generall humble peticion of the whole Commons by his fathers voluntary resignacion to create him their kinge and gouernour. And did therefore in the name of the kinge his father, of themselves, and of all the Commons,

most earnestlie expect his kind and willinge acceptance thereof, and his free consent therevnto. To *which* (though honorable yet unlookt-for) *moçion* Sabassie in reverent manner vnto the kinge his father and friendly countenance vnto that honourable assemblie did shape such an aunswere as the present *moçions* of his mynd without *premeditacion*, or desire of *deliberacion* presented. *which* was That as bothe by the Lawes of nature and lymittes of dutie he should iustlie incurr the scandal of a disobedient sonne yf he should in any wise contradicte the *Commaund* and Will of his Princelie father, soe, if he should seeme slacke in yealding to the *Requestes* of his soe many noble Frinds, (especiallie the same being for soe high an *advancement* vnto himself) he should not onlie deserve the name of an ingratefull *person* but alsoe minister vnto them iust cause to call his originall in question as one *proceeding* rather from some base Peasaunt, then from the loynes of soe Wise A ~~prince~~ mynded Prince, as his kinglie Father, in neglecting or refusing soe high and honourable an estate [fol. 2v] estate. That therefore \aswell/ in regard of his dutie vnto his aged Father in accomplishing his desires, ~~bothe to free him of the heavy burden he complaines he hath long susteyned and for his more encrease of ioyes in seeing him his sonne invested in his seate of hono~~ As alsoe to shew himself both gratefull and A willing accepter of soe kind an offer of such his honourable frindes, ~~and not to be thought degenerate from soe worthie and honourable A father.~~ Although in regard of partes, or any desert *proceedinge* from himself, he were farr vnworthie of soe high A dignitie, and though (as he then vowed) he had an inward hartie desire (if it might stand with his noble Fathers and their good liking) to leade a private lief, and to be freed of soe weightie A chardge and great care \by being kinge/, as it behoved a good king to haue of \he should haue for the/ well ordering and governing his Realme, ~~and~~ yet in respect of the *promisses*, he *oas* and would be most willinge in all obedience to his Father and thankfulnes to that noble assemblie to accept of his and their honorable offer. ~~But (quoth he)~~ whereat they began to replie, But (quoth he) vnder the Kinges my ~~honorable~~ fathers Correction, and your honorable pacience That forsomuch as, it is not vnknowne to you all how long my father hath raigned kinge over you, and how that for theis many hundred yeares the Crowne and

dyademe of this nation hath contynued in his *progenito^{urs}*, and hath in a lyneall descent from tyme to tyme bene rightlie Carried. And that there hath never (as Chronicles report) bene any kinge of *our* Auncesto^{urs}, without yssue apparent of his bodie begotten, to whome the same should descend. Yet that now (the gods ~~as it seems~~ being angrie and displeas'd for some offence or other haue (as it seems) fullie determin'd that I shall be that barren stocke from whome noe fruite shall springe, and that in me shall blast and wither that fruitfull happie plant, *wh*ich hath for soe many ages flourished \and that I shall be the last of my fathers house that shall be kinge of Vabrilax/and that I even I shalbe that yssues kinge, of whome our auncient prophetes and wise men ~~to~~ haue for many yeares

Fragment 2

[44M69/M4/13/4]

Crowne and kingdome to some one man whoe for his ~~virtuous~~ \well ordered/ *mann^{er}* of lief, wisdome and discreete demeano^{ur} should be of all his Countriemen most admired, and such a one as should be seene to exceede all other in Leuitie and curteous behaviour, and one ~~to~~ soe abounding in the gift of pacience that could not by any Crosses be moved to Dollor or impacience and to Conclude such a one that should be seene a mirrour to the world for all manner of Vertuos Conversacion. ~~Theis, and such like were in Sabassies conceipt *perswasie* arguments,~~ And as to the prophecie of the Childles kinge, If he were the man meant (whereof he scarce doubted) that contynewing Kinge, he had noe hope of having any children because it was otherwise decreed of the gods/ Yet had he this hope that by unkinging himself he might without contradiction to the gods determinacions haue yssue *wh*ich might in tyme be successo^{rs} to the Crowne of Vabrilax. Theis and such like were in Sabassies conceipt *perswasie* reasons to enduce him to hold on that deternynate course and theis did soe prevayle *with* him That he could ~~to~~ not be in any sort satisfied or not reste vntill he had put his resolucion in practyse. For

before he had Raigned as kinge of Vabrilax the spane of Twoe Yeares, he had by his studious
endeavours wonne the greatest part of his Nobilitie to giue their Consents therevnto [fol. 1v]
therevnto and before much longer tyme passed, he had procured the generall Consent of all his
Peeres and Commons./ Although the greater part of bothe sortes would gladlie haue ~~vsed~~ lost
what soever they held dearest vnto them to haue still had him their kinge and governour For
\yet/ he had during the tyme of his raigne, ruled his Realme and demeanes himself toward his
~~subiects~~ \them/ with such Clemencie Justice Wisdome and vertuous Care, that he had soe
wonne the hartes of his subiectes that never was Prince more faithfullie beloved/ and by reason
thereof, they were able in noe sort to deny or gainsaye anything that stood with his liking, still
assuring themselves ~~that what~~ (having by experience found it true,) that what soever he did was
intended by him for the speciall good of his Countrie. Wherein they were nothing at all
deceyved. But his greatest lett and stay in this his proceedings was his aged Father, whoe had to
thend to make him kinge made himself ~~A sub~~ of A Kinge a subiect, and if he must resigne his
Crowne reason \dutie/ and naturall instinccion tould him that it was most fitt to ~~re~~ yeald it to his
father, ~~which~~ had ~~a~~ bene contrary to his purpose, although he could haue ~~desired~~ bene contented
that aboute all other choyces it should be soe, yet then was he still in doubt, that his father being
verie old and not likelie ~~longe to~~ by [fol. 2r] Course of nature long to liue, that the Crowne would
againe by his death be ymposed on him to be freed whereof he had then such care. But while he
was most busied in beating his braynes about his best course therein his father falling sicke of A
fever sodeynlie died./ whose death (although it were by reason of nature and ~~the deare affection~~
and sonnelike ~~ten~~ deare affection grievous vnto Sabassie and by him much bewayled) yet was it
the onlie meane to giue passage vnto his almost smothered enterprise./ For he being once
deceased ~~that~~ there was none that did contradict Sabassies endeavoured purpose, Insomuch that a
generall Consent of all the Peeres nobles and Commons was obteyned; that Sabassie should
resigne his Crowne and government, to some one such person as should by them all be thought
best worthie of soe high an estate. and to such a one as might by all coniectures ~~be~~ seeme to be

farthest from A tirannous disposicion. For the nomynacion and election of *which person* there were divers Conueracions and Counsels, but to none end, for ambicion and desire of wearing A Crowne did take such hold of the hartes of all the Nobles and Pieres that each of them attributing the highest desert vnto himself and thinking himself best worthie of high dignitie would not giue their Consentes for the election of any one. Soe that Sabassies intended purpose was there likelie to take an end \and from thence great strife to arise/ howbeit some small tyme \Sabassie/ by his provident and discreete wisdom ~~th~~ had appeased their debates and controuersies and soe much prevayled *with* them, that they were [fol.2v] all Contented that ~~he~~ whome soever Sabassie should of his owne choyce elect should be king and Ruler, and that they would all *without* repyning or envying at him or at Sabassie for his choyce, *with* most willing hartes submitt themselves vnto his government. Wherevpon Sabassie *with* due and carefull regard weying and foredeeming *with* himself what might be best, and intending to make choyce of such A *person* as might by all likelihoods of coniecture, desire ~~and~~ \to/ preserve the good of his Countrie, And at the last ~~by~~ after long deliberacion finding that ~~to~~ what Piere soever of his Realme he did elect, might to establish himself oppresse his Countrie, (*which* by reason that they were then of great power they might the more easilie effect) he did fullie resolve *with* himself to make choyce of some private man, ~~who~~ ~~we~~ and emongest all that were his subiects he could not find out any whoe soe well ordered carriage widome leuitie and vertuos life was soe much revered ~~as~~ and beloved as a private \gentel/ man of the Cittie of Heka named Krego Fellie.ⁱⁱⁱ Whome indeed after sufficient triall of his wisdom and vertues had and the good will and liking of all the Nobles and Commons obteyned Sabassie did elect and appoynt ~~Not with standinge~~ \But/ before ~~sh~~ he should be Created or Crowned Kinge it was agreed between Sabassie and the Nobles That the Reuercion and Remaynder of the Crowne after the decease of Krego should by Acte of parliament be lymited and established to the heyres of the bodie of Sabassie lawfullie begotten. And for want of such heyres To the heyres Males of the bodie of Krego And for want

Fragment 3

44M69/M4/13/13 P.1

Kregō was sent to the oracle, he contrary ~~to~~ his oathe, opened the Scroll, of the Aunswere, and added some words of himself rather of an evill & busy disposition then of ~~purpose~~ \any/ substanciall ~~purpose~~; as it may be guessed The king resigned his Crowne by meanes of the Oracle to Kregō reserving to himself a dukedome, ~~after K Plorinus had a daughter~~ And tying the Crowne to the heyres of his body. After he had a daughter. ~~From the~~ Whome by all meanes the elected king endeavoured privilie to make away, and fayling hereof wrongfully lay treason to Plorinus Chardg. He fearing the worst feyt himself garded as long as he Could within his Castle of Mountpery, but deprived by Kregō daylie of his Friends, was forced to save his owne wives and daughters lives to flie privilie in a night out of the Castle, having *with* him only his wiefe and young daughter And being soe escaped, they in short tyme Conveyed themselves out of that Island into the Countrie of Cubadro, and after some short tyme of stir there bought a small Countrie lyving and endeavoured shepherds Liues, being indeed of the natiues taken for people of that *profession*, Contynued soe till such tyme as their daughter was grewen to any yeares of age. About *which* tyme their daughter being in the field looking to their sheepe Was by Pyrates *which* roved on the Sea coste neare and when [fol. 1v] by force taken and Carried a board their shippes, *which* facte was seene only by twoe shepherds of that Country both of *which* were farr in loue *with* her, whereof shee never vnderstood, ~~N~~ Newes thereof was brought to Plorynus^{iv} her

father, whoe therewithall exceedingly grieved, but knowing noe remedie was determynd himself to travell from Country to Countrie during his lief in search of her; But before he departed, it fortun'd that Krego to whome he resigned his Crowne, being deprived by Dyrmathylos^v his sonne of his kingdome to save his owne lief, fled privilie alsoe into that Island of Cubadro lyttle Imagining that Plorynus was there [~~hating~~]. for he had never heard of him after his departure though he had sent many spies aswell into that as into other Countries to find him out) And having travaylled there some small tyme, ~~the ye~~ one daye as it was his chaunce to com neare the Cottage wherein Plorinus dwelt, ~~the y~~ he was sodenly striken blynd, having then not one in his Companie And being at that tyme in a thicke wood [~~folded deletion~~] [fol. 2r] ~~Lay~~ bemoyning even hopeles of life, was happened on (as he lay lamenting his msysery on the ground) by Plorinus himself, whoe had then bine walking and full of melancholick *Circonstawnce*; but by reason of his owne griefe and loathenes to be over long from his wief, and being indeed sent for her, ~~sent his~~ Caused his serv^{ant} whoe came for him, to repayre to ~~Plor~~ Krego (but not knowing him to be Krego) and to bring him home to his house his serv^{ant} (called Doylus)^{vi} repayred to him, and Comforted him the best he could, Krego despayring indeed of lief, disclosed himself and whole state to Doylus, vpon promise of him of secreacie; after all *which* doylus brought him home to Plorynus house, whoe was cheerfully recyved of Plorynus and his wife, neyther of them knowing him, nor as much as as once conceyving him to be whome he was./ Plorynus much moved *with* charytie, vsed his best meanes to Comfort him and was indeed drawne *with* a *certain* kind of special affection and love to his words, and in a farr higher [fol. 2v] degree, then ever he had bine to any other but to him himself when he knew him; And by meanes thereof having then in purpose to leave his Countrie and never returne *without* he could find his daughter; did after a Covert sort open to Krego what he had bine, and how he had favoured a young man, and geven all that ever he had to him, and how evillie he requited him, ~~by~~ first by seeking his only daughters lief and next by banishing him; ~~Krego and~~ Doylus to whome Krego had forme^{lie} Confest himself began to haue many straunge Conceytes, hearing the likeness of their tales in

substance, though under severall and different names and qualities of persons; And Krego though he was blynd, yet ~~And he~~ could he not but Imagine him to be Plorynus himself; yet ~~keep~~ imagining if it were soe indeed, that seeing he knew not him or he Coniectured intended to keepe himself vnrevealed to him; and therefore having heard his full discourse not knowing whether Doylus had heard his *Masters repeticion* as soone as he could be alone with him, besought him of his seacrecy in what he had disclosed vnto him Concerning [44M69/M4/13/3 P.2, fol.1r] his person and estate, *which promises* to him of straunge good fortunes that should through his meanes happen to him whereat doylus (regarding more then his new promises, his *new* frend plited faith & *protestacons* of secreacie,) faith fully consealed. Krego not quiett in mynd, desired rather to remove from his new hoste then longer to Contynewe for that he could not well tell what to resolve on, *For* he could not yet indeed trulie repent him of his villanous *demeanour*, had conceyved further mischief *against* Plorynus to whome he had *formerie* done soe much, though indeed deeply dissembling it; Made shewe to Plorynus, that he desired to be Conducted to A *certen* Pilgrims house some twentie leagues distant from thence, there to spend in *devocion* the small remnant of his dayes, and desired Plorynus that he would not only giue him leave to *departe*, but alsoe to send as his guide his *servant* Doylus, to *which purpose* he had before sollicitated him. Plorinus consented and they & (Krego geving many many thankes, and [fol. 1v] *promising* his contynewall prayer both ~~of~~ that he might haue good newes of ~~h~~ his daughter and *prosperous* successe in all other *acconts*) *departed* together toward the monastery of despazar. But Krego after that tyme began to be more sparing in opening himself to doylus, and indeed thinking that he had not heard his *Masters* discourse, and therefore vnderstood not soe much as ~~th~~ otherwise he thought he might haue done, never spake one word to him of the same; *which* doylus well observing thought surley (wherein he was nothing mistaken) that he was even the *person* of whome his *Master* soe much complayned yet keeping his Conceit to himself *performed* trustely his chardge, and brought him to the Monastery whither, being brought Krego was entertayned and placed accordinglie; And then offered some Iewells to doylus for his

reward; *which* he refusing Kregio doubting that he would bewray him, wished his death, and to effect it having poison about him, *which* he had long kept, vnawares^{CH} to doylus gaue *parte* of it to him in drinke, wherevpon he falling [fol. 2r] sudenly sicke, was recovered by a Monke of that house whoe had great skill that waye, ~~He~~ Doylus after his recoverie little Imagining how his sicknes came, *prop*osing to *departe* tooke his leave of Kregio, whoe seeing his *purpose* had fayled was enforced to let him *departe*. Doylus coming home to his *Masters* house, having in *purpose* to have revealed his conceipt whome the blynd man was, found strangers in his *Masters* house, and vnderstood that he *with* his dame were gone in search of their daughter, but whether none of them knewe, each one lamenting their losse – and withal that before their *departure* his *Master* had geven to him all the lyving and goods he had; and had left a Writing *pur*porting the same *which* they deliuered him. But doylus exceedingly Lamenting the losse of his *Master*, e nothing respecting his goods; deliuered them all to \them/two Shepheards, *which* soe much affected ~~armylla~~ Basillia^{vii} his *Masters* daughter, to be redeliuered if they should com backe, And soe departed to find eyther his *Master* or ~~her~~ his daughter. [fol. 2v]

Plorynus and his wife toke their Journey first into Coselo thence *without* tydings of their daughter \leaving Sarmilla in an Abbey there/ ~~they departed~~ \he departed/ into the Countrie of the vexoes; where travelling one evening something late he was assayed of twoe theeves or Robbers, in such sort that if he had not bestirred him they had slayine him. But he by good fortune geving one of them a wound thether fled he *which* was hurt, fell downe on the ground, and indeed began to faynt, wherewith Plorynus being moved did his best to succour him; but he suddenly faynting more and more, *with* weake voice besought *pard*on of the gods soe many synnes and amongst the rest, for a foule synne he once Committed in the Ile of Cubadro, for taking a younge girle from her friends by force. Plorynus hearing him name Cubadro, and a girle ~~su~~ taken away, vrdged him to tell him when ~~wh~~ow and whome, he described her and the place & tyme, and how by Chaunce the first night after they had tane her the^{viii} [44M69/M4/13/4 P.3, fol. 1r] Shippe lyghting on A Roke was splitted, and shee and all in the Ship himself only except were

drowned. *which* Plorynus hearing was soe much moved that he thrust his sword to his hart and soe he dyed. *With which* newes Plorynus thinking search in vayne returned where he had left his wiefe, and there contynewed resolving *with* her there to end his dayes.

Doylus contynewing his search happened *with* many accidentes and was often in great of lief; Itt happened while Krego Contynewed in the Monastery the Monke *which* recouered † Doylus recovered alsoe in very short space his sight; *which* when he had having playd the villeyne at his departure by robbing the house of their treasure went his way having in purpose to returne into Vabrillax and there to redeeme grace at his sonnes hands whoe had banished him, *which* he the rather hoped to effect by bringing him newes of Plorynus *for* [fol. 1v] he assured himself that that would be very gratefull to him; yet that he might be assured of it by his sight, he *purposed* to returne by his house, in disguised mann^{er}, but being com thither he heard of his departure but could not learne whether this much changed his resoluc^{ion}, for he knew it to noe purpose to Carry such newes, that there he was; Then Crost he the Sea and landed at Medynum,^{ix} being indeed indifferent whether he went, as he was travelling towards the great Cittie Idena he happened in company *with* a younge boye thither alsoe travelling, † of him he demaunded many questions; of whome he received such quicke and wittie aunsweres that conceyving extraordinarie of him he enterteined him to serve him, the youth being indeed without ~~service~~ having gotten him such an attend^{ant}, he travelled to the Court of Medynum,^w and there in short space grew in great Favour of Brachymella^x the Queene of that Countrie, whoe was about his age, him she [fol. 2r] shee reared to much honour, and in thend indeed marryed him; but altogether *against* the good wills of her Nobilitie, yet he being king, having bine formerly practised in such matters, soone gott himself in *with* the greatest parte of them This Queene had only one daughter, about fifteene yeares of age Shee beholding Kregoes boye, whome he had then made his page, and much esteemed him, ~~entre~~ made meanes to obteyne him for her page, *which* Krego though very loathe granted; *with* him shee fell deeplie in loue, and vsed many

meanes to make him vnderstand it, but he seemed not to perceyve any such matter and still held in dutiful obseruance.

\Dyrmathylos/ ~~Meryno~~ sonne of Krego who had soe expeld his father and raigned in his steed, did soe demeane himself to all in generall and especiallie to such as were ~~Chab~~ Plorynus kinsemen or Friends, that he [fol. 2v] truly merited the name of a vertuous and good king soe farr loathing the steps of his father and his actes that he even to free the Countrie of such a Tyrant banished him the land. He sent spies every wayes to fynd out Plorynus intending as his daughter were lyving to resigne the Crowne to her, and to restore her father to his dukedome./ or to the Crowne if soe he would desire it. during which tyme, ~~his Fa~~ Krego whoe had then wedded the Queene of Medynum hearing that Meryno \Dyrmathylos/ his sonne the king of vabrillax remeyned vnmarried sent Ambassadors with the consent of the Queene to Meryno \him/; (not opening himself to be his father) with offer of marriage Mastusia^{xi} the heyre to that Crowne in marriage vnto him provided that he came in person to wooe her for somuch as shee would not in other sort consent./ A

Meryno \Dyrmathylos/ after some fewe interchange of Ambassages was content, and made A voyage in person to the Land of Medynum where he was royallie intertayned and had with much ~~more~~ ease concluded the marriage^{xii} [44M69/M4/13/4 P.4, fol. 1r] had not ~~shee~~ \Mestusia/ had such former affection to her page

Doylus contynewing his search, having wandred over Cubadro, Valdrsyum the Countrie of Portugo, bothe the Madessyes, ~~bs~~ and likewise that Landge € of Erythoos,^{xiii} about to departe thence being one daye in a groue in that Countrie sate him downe fast by A R brooke side, and there bewayling his hard fortune, bewrayed himself to himself (as he thought) bothe what he was, and what his occasions of travel were, when looking behind him, he sodenly espied A good ~~Companie~~ of Ladies or rather \a/ Nymphes behind him with whome having much Conference, after his astonishment was passed over, ~~one of them~~ \shee/ told him that he should not

despayre, but should Contynew his search, For he might attayne his desire, and that shortlie and soe ~~they all~~ \shee/ vanished out of his sight./

Leaving that Countrie he toke shipp for Medynum but his voyage was dangerous to him, for they suffered Shipwracke, and all his Companie perished except himself and one person besides whoe was Capten of that Shipp, whoe saved themselves by the **folded word** [fol. 1v] Boate; whoe being together in the boate, the Capten amongst other speches told him, that he now doubted not of drowning, For (quoth he) This is the third tyme I haue bine endangered by Shipwrack and every tyme noe more haue escaped but my self and one more at the most, the last (quoth he) was in Coming from the Coastes of Cubradro; ~~with~~ which trulie was a chaunce that hath much grieved me since; for at that tyme was drowned ~~with~~ the rest, a most fayre young Girle. Doylus asked him what she was; Quoth he I know not what she was, but I toke her by chaunce in the province of Melos^{xiv} in Cubadro neare the Towne Vao. Doylus perceyving it was his Masters daughter, drew out his sword, and ran him through. and soe turned him over board into Sea. Then being alone in the boate he was the next day brought ashore, even as he wished at a port Towne in Medynum [fol. 2r] where having a while stayed, hearing of the kinge^{xv} of Vabrillax and great Royaltie at the Court he repayred thither but was soe much altered by the newes that he heard of the death of Basrilla, that he little regarded eyther himself, or any spectacle whatsoever. yet went daylie vp and downe, but desiring rather death then lief

Doylus ~~well~~ frequenting thus the Court in the habite onlie of a private gent, ~~was~~ had bine often noted by the Queene, insomuch as she speciallie affected him, He was reteyned by her, and by her as she thought much advanced, and in theme made to vnderstand her mynd soe fullie, that he must eyther fulfill itt or be in danger of his lief by refusing. Att a Juste he was by the Queenes meanes soe much honoured above all the nobles of that Countrie, that he was matched with S Dyrmathylos the young King of Vabrillax, in *which* he soe behaved himself that *with* the preyse and honour of the field he wanne the heart of that young Kinge, Insomuch as from thenceforth

he was thonlie *person* in his [fol. 2v] favours, his advise he onlie vsed in wooying his Love, wherby he was much envyed.

In Company with him he often had accesse unvto Mestusia from whose hands he receyved more favours, then ever Dyrmathylos could, althought unsought for, and against his will; Being one tyme in her Chamber, her page (*which* she obteyned from her father), was playing on a Lute and singing therewith, *which she* hee performed soe exquisitely, that each one admyred him and doylus, he knew not how was soe inchaunted with beholding him, that he began though against ordinary Course of nature to be in Love with him/ Mestusya alone in her Chamber revolving each thing, and greeving at the dullness of her page, that he could not (as she thought) vnderstand her love in soe long tyme, wished that she could cease louing him and vowed if she could doylus should be the man for hee deserved her/ But checking herself for such Conceiptes *pp*posed to hold on with her Page./

Brachymella burned more and more in affection to Doylus, and vsed many pollicies to let him know her mynd./ But he yet carried a deafe eare^{xvi} [44M69/M4/13/4 P.5, fol. 1r]

Doylus being alone, Complayned himself of his strange loue Condemping and yet excusing himself, by such excuses as indeed were none/ walking by himself in the garden Brachmillia having espied him came to him, whome he not able to avoyde stood to itt. betweene whome were many discourses and very neare the matter but that doylus willinglie mistooke them./

during their busynesses, Dyrmathylos put in the head by some of his followers, rather of malice then of any cause by him, grew jealous of doylus, thinking that through his meanes he had soe ill successe in his wooying; Therevpon after some tyme he Challenged Doylus for it, and grew to such poyntes with him, that he wisht him neare his equall *which* if he were, he would fight with him. Doylus Cleered himself of all meanes, and sought to appease him./ yet tould him in the end, (*which* on his honour he bound him to keep seacreat) that he was every way his equall. / They fight in single Combate, and Doylus had him att his mercy [fol. 1v]

After that Kregio taking it whotlie, that any one should demesne himself in such sort toward his Sonne, to whome (although he concealed himself) had he some [nrald] affection had Doylus without the Queenes privitie in [execucion], and in thend Committed him to prison/ Whereof the Queene hearing grew much discontented, yet dissembling it to the Kinge, shee seemed all otherwise./

While he was in prison, he had often by the Q: meanes Mestasiars Page sent to him, ¶ in messages and to playe on his Lute and to singe to refresh his spiritt./

In thend the Queene herself having sought his deliuerance of the king, and being denied itt disdayned it in her hart, ~~that~~ and repented her to haue made herself subiect to soe ill a deseruing person yet still dissembled all./ Att last disguising herself in homelie apparell, shee Conveyed herself out of her Chamber (*which* shee then kept in phisicke) and repayred to the prison [fol. 2r] to him, at first delivering him A letter from the Queene, but in the end disclosed herself and forgetting modestie besought his Loue/ – He for that tyme satisfied her with the heavy disposicion of his soule; *which* did presage his death to be neare, but made her such promises as shee seemed satisfied for that tyme, and being advised by him how shee should behaue her self concerning him and his deliuerie, Comforting him, that if the worst happened shee ~~would and~~ Could and would by force save his lief, shee departed, and requeened herself./

Dyrmathylos recouered of his wounds in the fight, would delay his business noe longer, for eyther he would now speed or haue a full denyall; And yet first made he meanes to the King for doylus deliuerie *which* pleased much the king, to find such true valour in his sonne, yet determyning to trie his sonne farther that waye made excuses of delay and still reteyned him, yet with this purpose, that [fol. 2v] he would haue dyrmathylos himself to be a suter for him, Intending vpon such occasion to make himself knowne vnto him./ But Dyrmathilos taking it in scorne to be denied such a request, made by message, resolved that ~~he~~ if he speedd noe better in his wooying ~~no~~ sute, That he would in despite of him and all els bothe haue her and his deliverance, or to make them all repent the offering him such dishonour/

Then ~~pe~~ made he his sute againe for his Loue. or att least if he must haue deniall to haue it without longer delay for death delayed was worst/ he receyved from Mistusia noe flatt denyall, but yet such as he tooke for a deniall, wherevpon causing \privylie/ his Ships to be made readie, he in A night with all his Companie ~~to~~ without the knowledge of any of that nacion departed./ Whose such departure Krego tooke soe grievouslie, but that he would not dye with grieffe he had dyed; exceedinglie repenting that he had soe longe concealed himself from his sonne, that by meanes thereof all this had^{xvii} [44M69/M4/13/4 P.6, fol. 1v] happened.

Att this tyme whether with Loue or some grief else, or els some other disease, the Queene was exceeding sicke and indeed in such sort that much doubt upon her lief was had.

All theis things thus Croslic happening to Krego; he being much opprest with melancholie, Caused Doylus to be brought forth purposing to put him to death Imputing all theis mischiefes to him. Doylus was brought forth, and by sentence from his owne mouth adjudged to present death; Thexecucion whereof he himself before he departed would behold. Mestusiars Page beholding this business sodanlie poasted to his Ladie, and shee to her mother, the Queene with those newes being very weake before, fell into a swowne, A messenger was presentlie sent to the king with newes of the Queenes extremitie in sickness, which came in good tyme for Doylus for as the Execucioner was making him readie he came which with newes the King being much troubled with Comandment to haue doylus backe to prison he departed [fol.1r]

He soone his weake very weake with sicknes, he vsed comfortable Speeches, but she began to hate him in her hart, for his such proceedinges with doylus, yet spake shee not a word to him of him. – while they were thus together newes came that Lettres were com from Dyrmathylos/ He receyves reades them, and much moved with the manner of them./ vowed to revenge himself and to \him/self promised to Chastice his sonne aswell for his banishment, as for this his over mightie message./ Resolving if it were possible to overtake the fleete yet on the Seas and to surprise the king being there but weake, he presentlie toke shipping with Twenty sayle his sonne having only Ten. – His purpose therein was that hauing taken Dyrmathylos, he would eyther by

force or otherwise recover againe that kingdome and suppress his sonne as he had forme^rlie done him.

Plorynus being arryved neare the Coastes of Vabrillax he was mett by a A boate *which* came from thence as sent to him *with* letters from A Noble man his Friend advertising him of strang accidentes *which* were that Plorynus and Sarmylla were ~~een~~ returned to Vabrillax, and were soe Ioyfully receyved of all the Subiectes that there was great and *perillous* likelihood of Rekinging him./

Dyrmathylos *with* theis newes somewhat astonished came *with* all his Fleete to an anker, and there spent some day or twoe in Consulting what was best to be done/ – yet at last resolved to try the vttermost of his Fortunes, and to land in some Towne

ⁱ Sabassie] Suggests both σαβακός (rotten, shattered, effeminate) and Σαβάζιος (one name for the god Dionysus).

ⁱⁱ Sarmadroy] Suggests Greek σάρμα (chasm) and Latin *sarmentum* (brushwood), with French *roi* (King)

ⁱⁱⁱ Krego] Suggesting, perhaps ironically, κρήγυος (good).

^{iv} Plorynus] From μέδω (protect, rule over).

^v Dyrmathylos] Probably from δύρομαι (lament, mourn) and a root *math-* deriving from the verb μανθάνω (learn, perceive, understand), found in such words as μάθημα (knowledge) and μάθησις (knowledge).

^{vi} Doylus] From μέδω (protect, rule over).

^{vii} Basillia] From βασιλεια (princess).

^{viii} ‘2’ in early modern hand positioned as a catchword.

^{ix} Medynum] From μέδω (protect, rule over).

^x Brachymella] Seemingly from βραχύς (short) and either μέλας (black), μέλι (honey), or μέλλω (I

intend to do, am fated to do).

^{xi} Mastusia] Suggests both *μαστός* (breast) and *μεστός* (full).

^{xii} ‘3’ in early modern hand positioned as a catchword.

^{xiii} Erythoos] From *ἐρυθρός* (red).

^{xiv} Melos] Perhaps modelled on the Aegean island of *Μήλος*.

^{xv} kinge] kinke *ms*

^{xvi} ‘4’ in early modern hand positioned as a catchword.

^{xvii} ‘5’ in early modern hand positioned as a catchword.