

# O that most rare breast

William Byrd (c.1540-1623)

Superius  
[Soprano]  
*The first singing part*

Medius  
[Alto]

Contratenor  
[Tenor]

Tenor  
[Tenor]

Bassus  
[Bass]

O that most rare breast, O that most rare  
O that, O that most rare  
O, O that, O that most rare  
O that, O that most rare

O, O that, O that most rare  
breast, most rare breast, O that most rare breast, most rare  
breast, most rare breast, O that most rare breast, O that most rare breast, crys -  
breast, most rare breast, crys - tal-line sin - cere, O that most  
breast, most rare breast, O that most rare breast, most rare

10

breast, crys - tal - line sin - cere,  
breast, crys - tal-line sin - cere, sin - cere, through which like gold, thy  
- tal - line sin - cere, through which like gold, thy prince -  
rare breast, crys-tal-line sin - cere, through which like gold, like gold,  
breast, crys - tal - line sin-cere, through which like gold thy prince - ly heart did

through which like gold thy prince - ly heart did shine,  
 prince - ly heart did shine, did \_\_\_\_\_ shine, O sprite he - roic, he -  
 - ly\_\_ heart did shine, thy prince - - ly\_\_ heart did shine, O sprite he -  
 through which like gold, thy princely heart did \_\_\_\_\_ shine, O sprite  
 shine, through which like\_ gold thy prince - ly heart did shine, O

20

O sprite he - roic, O va - li - ant wor - thy\_ knight,  
 - roic, O va - li - ant wor - thy knight, O Sid - ney, O  
 - roic, he - roic, O va - li - ant wor - thy knight, wor - thy\_\_  
 he - roic, he - roic, O sprite he - roic, O va - li - ant wor - thy\_\_ knight, O Sid -  
 sprite he - roic, O va - li - ant wor - thy knight, wor - thy knight,

O Sid - ney, O Sid -  
 Sid - ney, prince of \_\_\_\_\_ fame, O  
 knight, O Sid - ney, prince of \_\_\_\_\_ fame, and \_\_\_\_\_ men's  
 - ney, O Sid - ney, O Sid - ney, O Sid - ney, prince \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ fame, prince  
 O Sid - ney, \_\_\_\_\_ O Sid - ney, prince of \_\_\_\_\_

-ney prince of fame and men's good will,  
 Sid - ney, prince of fame and men's good will, O Sid -  
 good will, and men's good will, and men's good will, O  
 of fame, and men's good will, and men's good will,  
 fame and men's good will, and men's good will,

O Sid - ney, O Sid - ney, prince -  
 -ney, Sid - ney, O Sid - ney, O Sid -  
 Sid - ney, O Sid - ney, prince of fame and men's -  
 O Sid - ney, O Sid - ney,  
 O Sid - ney, O Sid - ney, prince of

of fame and men's good will.  
 -ney, prince of fame and men's good will, good will.  
 good will, and men's good will, and men's good will.  
 prince of fame, and men's good will, and men's good will, and men's good will.  
 fame, of fame, and men's good will.

40

For,

For thee, for thee, both kings and prin - cess - es do

For thee, for thee, both kings and prin - cess - es do

For, for thee both kings and prin - cess - es do mourn,

For thee, for thee both kings and prin - cess - es do

for thee, for thee both kings

mourn, for thee, both kings and prin - cess - es do

mourn, for thee, both kings and prin - cess - es do mourn, and prin -

for thee, both kings and prin - cess - es, for thee both

mourn, for thee, both kings and prin - cess - es

50

and prin - cess - es do mourn,

mourn, and prin - cess - es do mourn, do mourn, thy no - ble **Tomb** three

- cess - es do mourn, thy no - ble **Tomb** three Ci -

kings and prin - cess - es do mourn, thy no - ble **Tomb**, no - ble **Tomb**,

do mourn, do mourn, thy no - ble **Tomb**, three Ci - ties

thy no - ble **Tomb**, three Ci - ties strange de - sired,  
 Ci - ties strange de - sired, de - sired, foes to the cause, the  
 - ties\_ strange de - sired, three Ci - ties\_ strange de - sired, foes to the  
 thy no - ble **Tomb**, three Ci - ties strange de - sired, foes to  
 strange de - sired, three Ci - ties strange de - sired, foes

Foes to the cause thy prow - ess did de -  
 cause, thy prow - ess did de - fend, be -  
 cause, to the cause, thy prow - ess did de - fend,  
 the cause, the\_ cause, foes to the cause, thy prow - ess did de -  
 to the cause thy prow - ess did de - fend, thy prow - ess did de -

60  
 -fend. be - wail the day,  
 -wail the day, be - wail the day, that crossed thy fa - mous\_ race,  
 did de - fend, be - wail the day, the  
 -fend, be - wail the day, that crossed thy fa - mous race, be - wail the day, the  
 -fend. be - wail the day, be - wail the

be - wail the day that crossed thy fa - mous

be - wail the day, that crossed thy fa - - - - mous

day, be - wail the day, that crossed thy fa - mous

day, the day, that crossed thy fa - mous race, thy fa - mous

day, the day, that crossed thy fa - mous

70

race, be - wail the day, be -

race, be - wail the day, the day, be - wail the day,

race, be - wail the day, be - wail the day, be - wail

race, be - wail the day,

race, be - wail the day, the day, be - wail the

-wail the day that crossed thy fa - mous race.

be - wail the day that crossed thy fa - - - - mous race.

the day, the day that crossed thy fa - mous race, thy fa - mous race.

be - wail the day that crossed thy fa - mous race, thy fa - mous race.

day, the day, be - wail the day that crossed thy fa - mous race.

The dole - ful debt

The dole - ful debt due to thy hearse, due to thy hearse I

The dole - ful debt due to thy hearse, I pay, the dole - ful debt due

The dole - ful debt due to thy hearse, I pay, the dole - ful debt due

The dole - ful debt due to thy hearse I pay, due

due to thy hearse I pay,

pay, due to thy hearse I pay, tears from the

to thy hearse I pay, tears from the soul, that aye thy

to thy hearse I pay, I pay, tears from the soul,

to thy hearse I pay, I pay, tears from the soul, that

tears from the soul, that aye thy want shall moan,

soul, tears from the soul that aye thy want shall moan, shall

want shall moan, shall moan, that aye thy want shall moan, and by my

that aye thy want shall moan, that aye thy want shall moan, and

aye thy want, that aye thy want shall moan, and by my

and by my will my life it - self would \_\_\_\_\_  
 moan, and by my will my life it-self would yield, it-self would  
 will my life it - self would yield, my \_\_\_\_\_ life it - self would yield, would  
 by my will my life \_\_\_\_\_ it - self would yield, my life it - self would \_\_\_\_\_  
 will my life it - self would yield, my life it - self would

yield, if hea - then blame \_\_\_\_\_ ne might, my  
 yield, would \_\_\_\_\_ yield, if hea - then blame ne might, my faith dis - -  
 yield, if hea - then blame, if hea - then blame ne  
 yield, if \_\_\_\_\_ hea - then blame, \_\_\_\_\_ ne might, my faith dis -  
 yield, if hea - then blame ne might, my faith, my faith \_\_\_\_\_

100  
 faith dis - dain. O hea - vy time, O  
 - - dain. O hea - vy time, \_\_\_\_\_ O hea - - vy time, O hea -  
 might, my faith dis - dain. O hea - vy time, O hea - vy \_\_\_\_\_  
 - dain. O hea - vy time, O hea - vy time, hea - vy \_\_\_\_\_ time, hea -  
 \_\_\_\_\_ dis - dain. O hea - vy time, O hea - vy \_\_\_\_\_ time,

*hea - vy time,* O *hea - vy time,* that my days draw  
 - *vy time,* O *hea - vy time,* O *hea - vy time,* that my days draw  
*time,* O *hea - vy time,* O *hea - vy time,* that my days  
 - - *vy time,* O *hea - vy time,* that my days draw be -  
 O *hea - vy time* that my days draw be - hind thee, that my days

110

- be - hind thee, thou dead dost  
 - be - hind thee, thou dead dost live, do - est  
 draw be - hind thee, thou dead do - est live, thou dead  
 - hind thee, thou dead dost live, dost live, thou dead do-est live,  
 draw be-hind thee, thou dead dost live, thou dead dost

live, thou dead dost live, thy friend here liv - ing  
 live, thou dead dost live, thy friend here liv - ing,  
 dost live, do-est live, thou dead dost live,  
 thou dead do - est live, thou dead do-est live, thy friend here liv - ing di -  
 live, thou dead dost live, do - est live, thy friend here liv - ing



thou dead dost live, *thou dead*  
 thee, thou dead dost live, do - est live, thou dead do - est live,  
 thou dead do - est live, thou dead dost live, do-est live, thou  
 dead dost live, do-est live, thou dead do - est live,  
 thou dead dost live, *thou dead dost* live, thou dead dost live, do -

140

dost live, thy friend here liv - ing di - eth,  
 thy friend here liv - ing, di - eth, *thy friend here liv - ing*  
 dead dost live, thy friend here liv - ing, thy  
 thou dead do-est live, thy friend here liv - ing di - eth, *thy friend here*  
 - est live, thy friend here liv - ing di - eth, thy friend here

thy friend here liv - ing, di - eth. di -  
 di - eth, here liv - ing, di - eth, thy friend  
 friend here liv - ing, liv - ing di - eth, thy friend here liv -  
 liv - ing di - eth, thy friend here liv - ing di - eth, thy  
 liv - ing di - eth, thy friend here liv - ing

- eth, di - eth, di - eth, di - - - - eth.  
 here liv - - ing di - eth, di - eth, di - eth, di - eth.  
 - ing di - eth, liv - - ing, di - eth, di - eth.  
 friend here liv - ing di - eth, here liv - ing di - eth.  
 di - eth, di - eth, di - eth, di - - eth.

### **Editorial notes**

Source: William Byrd, *Psalms, Sonets, & songs of sadnes and pietie* (London, 1588), no.35.

The second of the funerall songs of that honorable Gent. Sir Phillip Sidney, Knight.

Text: Thomas Watson (c.1557-92) or Edward Dyer (1543-1607).

II.17 & all voices following: *Heroic* is set throughout as a disyllable and is probably therefore to be pronounced hirɔk'.

It is a word seldom found in Elizabethan writing: only once in the whole of Shakespeare, for example, although Shakespeare makes occasional use of 'heroical' apparently scanned as a trisyllable (see for example Henry V, II.iv.63 or Troilus and Cressida, III.iii.202; line-numbers from editions at <http://www.shakespeare-online.com>)

IV.111.2 & all voices following: the varied underlay of *dost* and *doest* is preserved from the source.

Part of my complete edition of the published vocal works of William Byrd made available through the Choral Public Domain Library (<http://www.cpd.org>). For general editorial notes, please visit my user page at <http://www.cpd.org/wiki/index.php/User:DaveF>. All scores are made freely available according to the CPDL Licence for downloading, printing, performing and recording. No further conditions are or can be attached, although it's always good to hear of any performances. Please do not, without consulting me, make copies of my scores available through other websites – there's no need, first of all, as CPDL is always here, and secondly by doing so you put these editions beyond my control and so will miss out on any updates and revisions.