From The XV. Booke of P. Ovidius
Naso, entytuled Metamorphosis [1567]
a.k.a. Shakespeare's Ovid ed

Leat us that serve a better Saint Minerva, finde some talke
To ease our labor while our handses about our profite walke.
And for to make the time seeme shorte, let ech of us recite,
(As every bodies turne shall come) some tale that may delight.
Hir saying like the rest so well that all consent therin.
And thereupon they pray that first the eldest would begin.
She had such store and choyce of tales she wist not which to tell:
She doubted if she might declare the fortune that befell
To Direcutes of Babion whome now with scaly hide
In altered shape the Philistine beleeveth-to abide.
In watrie Pooles: or rather how her daughter taking wings
In shape of Dove on toppes of towres in age now sadly sings:
Or how a certaine water Nymph by witchcraft and by charms
Converted into fishes dumbe, of yongmen many swarmes,
Untill that of the slye same saucy hir slye did last at last:
Or how the tree that used to beare fruites white in ages past,
Doth now beare fruites in maner blacke, by sprinkling up of blood.
This tale (because it was not staled nor common) seemed good
To hir to tell: and thereupon she in wise begun.
Hir busie hand still drawing out the flaxen threadee shee spun.
Within the towne (of whose huge walles so monstrous high and thicke
The fame is given Stymphalis for making them of brique)
Dwelt hard together two yong folkes in housejoynde so nere
That under all one roofe well nigh both twaine conveyed were.
The name of hir was Pyramus, and Thisbe callde she was.
So faire a man in all the East was none alive as he,
Nor nere a woman maide nor wife in beautie like to hir.
This neighborhood acquaintance first, this neighbohood first did stirre
The secret sparkes, this neighborhood first an entrance in did showe,
For love to come to that to which it afterward did growe.
And if that right had taken place, they had bene man and wife,
But still their parents went about to let which (for their life)
They could not let.  For both their hearts with equal flame did burne.
No man was privye to their thoughts.  And for to serve their turne
In stead of talke they used signes: the closelie they suppret
The fire of love, the fiercer still it raged in their brest.
The wall that parted house from house had riven therein a crany.
Which shonde at making of the wall.  This fault not marke of any
Of many hundred yeares before (what doth not love espie?)
These lovers first of all found out, and made a way whereby
To talke together secretly, and through the same did goe.
Their loving whisperss verie light and safely to and fro.
Now as a toneside Pyramus and Thisbe on the tother
Stood often drawing one of them the pleasant breath from other,
O thou envious wall (they sayd,) why lest thou lovers thus?
What matter were it if that thou permitted both of us
In armes eche other to embrace?  Or if thou thinke that this
Were overmuch, yet mightest thou at least make roome to kisse.
And yet thou shalt not finde us churies: we thinke our selves in det
For the same piece of courtesie, in voucing safe to let
Our sayings to our friendly earres thus freely come and goe.
Thus having where they stode in vaine complayned of their woe,
When night drew nere, they bade adieu and eche gave kisses sweete
Unto the parget or on side, the which did never meete.
Next morning with hir cherefull light had driven the starres asynde
And Phoebus with his burning beames the dewie grasses had driue.
These lovers at their wonted place by foreappointment met.
Where after much complaint and mone they covenanted to get
Away from such as watched them, and in the Evenyn late
To scape out of their fathers house and eke the Cittie gate.
And to thentent that in the feeldes they strayde not up and downe,
They did agree at Ninus Tumb to meete without the townne,
And tarie underneath a tree that by the same did grow
Which was a faire high Mulferrie with fruite as white as snow,
Hard by a coole and trickling spring. This bargaine please them both,
And so daylyght (which to their thought away but slowly goth)
Did in the Ocean fall to rest : and night from thence doth rise.
Assome as darkenesse once was, straight Thibis did devise
A shift to wind hir out of doores, that none that were within
Perceved hir : And muffling hir with clothes about hir chin,
That no man might discerne hir face, to Ninus Tumb she came
Unto the tree, and sat hir downe underneath the same.
Love made hir bold. But see the chaunce, there comes besmerde with blood,
About the chappes a Lionsse all coming from the wood.
From slaughter lately made of kine, to staunch hir bloudie thurst
With water of the forestall spring. Whome Thibis spyeing first
A faire by moonelight, therupon with fearfull steppes gan flye,
And in a dareke and yokesome cave did hidde hirselle therby,
And as she fled away for haste she let hir mantle fall
The whych for feare she left behind not looking backe at all.
Now when the cruel Lionsse hir thurst had stanched well,
In going to the Wood she found the slender weede that fell
From Thibis, which with bloudie teeth in pieces she did teare.
The night was somewhat further spent ere Pyramus came there:
Who seyng in this sattle the print of Lions paw,
Waxe pale for feare. But when also the bloudie cloke he saw
All rent and tore, one night (he sayd) shall lovers two confounde,
Of which long life deserved she of all that live on ground.
My soule deservis of this mischaunce the perill for to beare.
I wretche have bene the death of thee, which to this place of feare
Did cause thee in the night to come, and came not here before.
My wicked limmes and wretched guttes with cruel teeth thencefor
Devoure ye Os ye Lions all that in this rocke doe dwell.
But Cowardes use to wish for death. The slender weede that fell
From Thibis up he takes, and straight doth bear it to the tree,
Which was appointed erst the place of meeting for to bee.
And when he had bewept and kist the garment which he knew,
Receive thou my bloud too (quoth he) and therewithall he drew
His sworde, the which among his guttes he thrust, and by and by
Did drawe it from the bleeding wound beginning for to die
And cast himselfe upon his backe. The bloud did spin on hir
As when a Conduit pipe is crackt, the water bursting out

Doth shote it selfe a great way off and pierce the Ayre about.
The leaves that were upon the tree besprinkled with his bloud.
Were die blacke. The roote also bestained as it stooide,
A deepe darke purple colour straight upon the Berries cast.
Anon scarce ridded of hir feare with which she was agast,
For doubt of disappointing him comes Thibis forth in hast,
And for hir lover lookes about, rejoicing far to tell
How hardily she had scapt that night the daunger that befell.
And as she knew right well the place and faciën of the tree
(As which she saw so late before:) even so when she did see
The colour of the Berries turnde, she was uncertaine whither
It were the tree at which they both agreed to meete together.
While in this doubls foute she stood, shee cast hir eye aside
And there bewerled in his bloud hir lover she espide
Lie sprawling with his dying limmes : at which she started backe,
And looked pale as any Boe, a shuddering through hir stracke,
Even like the Sea which sodenly with whissing noysie doth move,
With when a little blast of winde it is but toucht above.
But when approching nearer hee saw it was hir love,
She beate hir brest, she shrieked out, shee tare hir golden heares,
And taking hym betweene hir armes did wash hir wounds with teares.
She maynt hir weeping with hir bloud, and kising all his face
(Which now became as colde as yse) she kisse in wofull case
Alas what chaunce my Pyramus hath parted thee and mee?
Make aunsware O my Pyramus: It is thy Thib, even shee
Whome thou doste love most heartily that speakest unto thee.
Give care and rayse thy heavie heade. He hearing Thibes name,
Lift up his dyng eyes, and having seene hir close his the same.
But when she knew hir mantle there and saw his scabbard lie
Without the sworde: Unhappy man thy love hath made thee die:
Thy love (she said) hath made thee slay thy selfe. This hand of mine
Is strong enough to doe the like. My love no lesse than thine
Shall give me force to woyke my wound. I will pursue the dead.
And wretched woman as I am, it shall of me be sed
That it like as of thy death I was the only cause and blame,
So am I thy companie eke and partner in the same.
For death which only could alas a sunder part us twaine,
Shall never so dissiever us but we will meete againe.
And you the Parentes of us both, most wretched falke alwaye,
Let this request that I shall make in both our names bylive,
Entreat thee to permit that we thome chaste and stedfast love
And thome even death hath joyndye in one, may it as doth behove
In one grave be together layd. And thou unhappie tree
Which shroudest now the corse of one, and shalt anong through mee
Shroude two, of this same slaughter holde the sicker signes for sy.
Blacke be the colour of thy fruite and mourninglike alwaye,
Such as the murder of us twain may evermore bewray.
This said, she tooke the sword yet warme with slaughter of hir love
And settit it beneath hir brest, diid too hir heart it shoue.
Hir prayer with the Gods and with their Parentes tooke effect.
For when the fruite is throughly ripe, the Berrie is bestrept
Rejected from thy company did for thy love abide
Most grievous torments in his heart thou seemest for to care.
Thou mindest hir so much that all the rest forgotten are.
Hir mother was Euryndom of all the fragrant clime
Of Arabia esteemede the flower of beautie in hir time.
But when hir daughter came to age the daughter past the mother
As far in beautie, as before the mother past all other.
Hir father was king Orchemmus and ruled the publicke weale
Of Persie, counted by descent the seventh from auncient Bela.
Far underworld the Westerne clyme of Heparna doe runne
The pastures of the fire steedes that draw the golden Sunne.
There are they fed with Ambrosie in stead of grasse all night
Which doth refresh their waren limmes and keepeth them in plight
To bore their dailie labor out. Now while the steedes there take
Their heavienly foode, and night by turne his timely course doth make:
The God disguised in the shape of Queene Euryndom
Doth prease within the chamber doore of faire Lacuothet
His lover, whome amid twelve Maidens he found by candlelight
Yet spinning on his little Rocke, and went me to hir right.
And kissing hir as smoother use to kisse their daughters deare,
Saide Maydes withdraw your selues a while and sit not listing here.
I have a secret thing to talke. The Maidens avoyde one each,
The God then being with his love in chamber all alone,
Said: I am he that meetes the yeares, that all things doe beholde,
By whome the Earth doth all things see, the Eye of all the world.
Trust me I am in love with thee. The Ladie was so nipt
With sodaine feare, that from hir hands both rokke and spindel slipt.
Hir feare became hir wondrous well. He made no mo delays,
But turned to his proper shape and tooke hys glistring rayes.
The damsell being sore abashd at this so strange a sight,
And overcome with sodaine feare to see the God so bright,
Did make no utterie nor no noyse, but helde hir pacience still,
And suffered him by forced powre his pleasure to fulfill.
Hereat did Clytie sore repine. For she beyond all measure
Was then enamoued of the Sunne: and stung with this displeasure
That he another Leman had, for verie spight and yre
She playes the blab, and doth defiance Lacuothet to hir Syre.
He cruel and unmercifull would no excuse accept,
But holding up hir hands to heaven when tenderly she wept,
And said it was the Sunne that did the deede against hir will:
Yet like a savage beast full bent his daughter for to spill,
He put hir depe in delved ground, and on hir bodie laide
A huge great heape of heavie sand. The Sunne full yll appalde
Did with his beams disperse the sand and made an open way
To bring thy buried face to light, but such a weight ther lay
Upon thee, that thou couldst nor raise thine head aloft again,
And so a corse both voice of blood and life thou didst remaine.
There never chaunte since Phaeno fire a thing that grieved so sore
The ruler of the winged steedes as this did. And therfore
He did attempt if by the force and vertue of his ray
He might againe to lively heate hir frozen limmes convey.