

THE CHRIST COLLOQUY Andrew Grattan

Book I *Commedia*

CANTO XIV 39-102

‘Beloved

Master, you know there was one, who sat in
A Horton grange to prime himself, for effort
Delivery against, that other one, whom he ennobled

In a pink Sonnet XIX, and my garrulous eyes, are as his,
When he looked upon Parliamentarian, Andrew Marvell
For help; I look, but I cannot see, and I ask you now for aid’.

And looking up, to blood haemorrhagic swirls, thickest Hell,
I saw her *imago*, - the Aprilian face, - hanging, in the ether,
As *corpus* body, ‘The Christ Sonnets’, are suspended,

Within cloudy ether, jetsam, outside, castle of Limbo.
‘Well, Andrew, look to where the mud of Inferno,
Is laced with mud of your face, which has been

In a Pauline glass darkly, ever since, you gazed upon her face.
I weep, for I am unhappy, and my child, April
Child is unhappy too’. ‘Why is your beloved April,

So unhappy, *magister?*’ ‘*Tu*, ‘At a Vacation Exercise’, pupil,
What are you to say, supportive, of such direct questioning
Of me? Gemma Donati took me to her bosom, and she

Bore me three, of plus one twos. My *beata* butterfly Bea, you,
Orientated to truth, by *confusio-intellectus*, of the three woods,
She had relations marital, with her husband, Simone dei Bardi.

And, who are you, Andrea, to ask *quaestiones* of April, my daughter?
Yes, Aprila, yes, even Apriliana, for, Hell ever
Teems thickly with foment of inventiveness, her name’.

‘For her name is so very beautiful, Durante, that there is always
A neologism, a new coinage, in my mouth about it too.
But, Dante’, I pressed him, ‘why is your beloved daughter,

April so sad, for she is in twirly clots of clothly mud, hanging
Before me, and, I see her face, so that I could scrape my fingers
Singly, along the whimpering winds of Hell, draughtily encasing me,

But I see no smile upon her sacred image; her lips hang sour’.
‘O Andrew, do not ask of such things,
For April is in my heart, so that all is love in my heart for her’.

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He paused and exhaled: 'Well, Andrew, I will speak. April
Held that place most lofty in Heaven, that, when a girl-child,
Was installed aside the *Virgo's* throne in Heaven,

But, she yearned for life human, and incarnation,
Within human parentage. She begged Jesus,
That she could become a girl-child human,

But Jesus bid, that as she was Our Lady's nix delight,
With her glorious visage, that she must abide a
Heaven April Child awhile'. And Dante exhaled slowly,

'Perhaps, she will tell you of herself to you, if she is
Ever released from Purgatory of her visage incarnation,
Here in Hell, why she is so industrious concerned here,

Her mournful visage to inspire all lost, to rawest gutsiness
Of penitence. Her origin of soul, was linked too with a great
Playwright Englishman, such that, Jesus, for that man's labour,

Cut in greatest drama, 'The First Folio', promised her, that
In recompense for that man's English work, she would one
Day be born in England, to parentage English, and babish be

A baby-child within an English mother's arms; but,
Our Lady took such sweet delight in her face, that
Jewish-shaded, should be mated, with an English rose,

That she was bid to hold plates *Ave Maria*, ever before
The Blessed Virgin. But, was born then, most late in
History, a wilful destructor, who desecrated *verbum*

Dei, in a shameful book, he called 'Finnegan', and in tearful
Upset, April bid Jesus, that she would not be born at all,
Instead be sited, weighted floaty, in Inferno, with

Sorrow, carved upon her unrouged cheek, to ravage
All to penitence, that one man could so wreck
The Word of God'.