

GIORDANO BRUNO

Even thou, Giovanni, my familiar friend
In whom I trusted? What! thou art afraid
To look at me? Do Bruno's eyes hurt thee?
Nay, do not hide behind the chasubles
Of Holy Inquisition; speak thy mind,
And tell the Fathers that which they would know:
How certain books I wrote traduce the creeds
Of Mother Church!

What pleasant nights we spent
Within thy palace; what discourse we had
While others slept, and I led thee beyond
The crystal spheres of old to boundless space!
What moved thee, O Venetian, to betray
Thy friend? . . . Nay, mutter not, nor cross thyself!
Giordano hath not made a covenant
With devils! . . . Yea, my Father, read the charge.

So that is what my accusation saith?
The Monk of Nola is indeed no more!
He was a curious boy who loved to look,
Without distraction of crude, painted things
Hung on the wall, tarnished by candle-smoke,
Out of the window where he knelt to pray;
For he had learned that God is not confined
In paint and mortar, that He is revealed,
As the Apostle saith, through what He made.
He found no virtue in a Saint's thighbone;