

I23 Once he was Grace it selfe

Notes. This poem survives in the news diary of William Whiteway of Dorchester. He ascribes it to a local man, the “Poet Laureate of Dorchester”, R[ichard] Beech.

Once he was Grace it selfe
And could make others gracious.
Envie that crooked Elfe¹
Thought that life was to spatious.

And therefore did confine him
Into a narrower place²
Where she meant to assigne him
The dregs of all disgrace.

5

But vertue then provided
Sorting his Fortunes so
That they should be divided,
Some good with bad to goe.

10

And in despight of Envies face,
To live and dy, grac't in disgrace.

Source. BL MS Egerton 784, fol. 5v

Other known sources. Whiteway 23

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¹ *crooked Elfe*: possibly an allusion to the crook-backed Robert Cecil, blamed here for engineering Raleigh's fall in 1603.

² *confine...narrower place*: reference to Raleigh's imprisonment in the Tower in 1603.
