

FOR DESSERT:

The following is a prose translation of a sonnet by Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas (1580-1643), who is considered to have been one of the greatest figures of Spanish literature. Such samples of his writing as I found in the book about him that I read were very difficult to decipher -- some were to me practically incomprehensible. So don't count on the accuracy of the following translation.

TO A NOSE

Francisco de Quevedo

There was a man attached to a nose.
 It was a superlative nose.
 It was a fierce-looking fellow and a scribe.
 It was a well-bearded swordfish.
 It was a badly-aimed sun-dial.
 It was a pensive still.*
 It was an elephant lying on its back.
 It was Ovid provided with more nose.
 It was the beak of a galley.
 It was an Egyptian pyramid.
 It was all the twelve tribes of noses.
 It was an infinite supernose, a vast quantity of nose, a nose so frightful that on the face of Adam it would have been a crime.

*I.e., apparatus for distilling. No doubt an alembic →
 is intended.

(Quevedo must have had an acromegalous uncle.)

